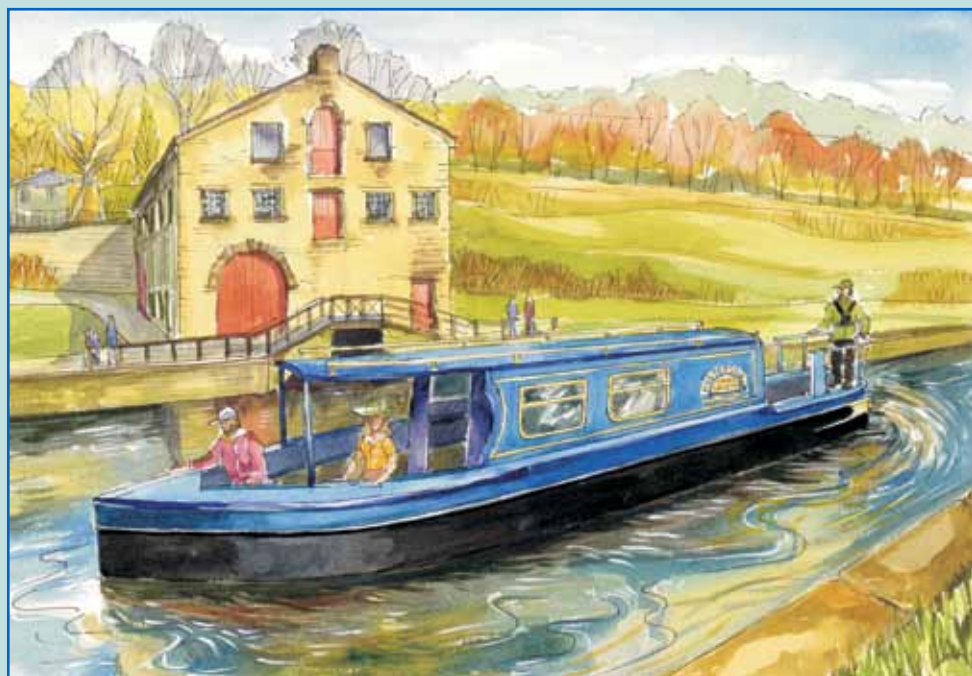


Pennine Link

Magazine of the Huddersfield Canal Society



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Huddersfield Canal Society Ltd

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NON-COUNCIL POST

Bob Gough Administrator



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

Pennine Link

Issue 211

Alan Stopher



This view of Tunnel End and the Standedge Visitor Centre from Reddish Road illustrates the work being undertaken by Canal & River Trust volunteers to make the Centre ready for the long-awaited return of visitors. As well as repainted benches, there is a stage being constructed.

Editorial	4	HCS Volunteers	16
Chairman's Report	6	New Boat for HCS	18
Jidoku 48	12	Letter to the Editor	29
Pioneers	13	220 Club - Twenty-Ninth Draw	31
Uppermill Volunteers (UCAN)	14		

Cover: Rosalind Annis of Holmfirth's watercolour impression of the Society's anticipated electric trip-boat at Tunnel End.



Editorial

The waterways are starting to come back to life and more boaters have returned to the Huddersfield Narrow.

For many people, particularly those living in cities and urbanized environments, the canal has been a wonderful place to take a break and get some exercise within the limits of the various forms of lockdown that have affected us all over the last 15 months or so. Peoples' appreciation of what's available locally has been brought into sharp focus during these restrictive times and I suspect that many more people will have become aware of the delights of the canal in that period.

Formal group volunteering sessions have only recently resumed under strict Covid-

compliant conditions. Quite recently there have been noticeable efforts by individuals across the country to keep public spaces as clean and tidy as they possibly could during lockdown periods. We have seen this locally and hopefully many of these people, who are clearly very passionate about the environment that they live in, will now join in with our collective efforts and volunteer with the established groups for the benefit of the whole community, particularly in our case, along the canal corridor.

In the meantime, the Society's own volunteer group led by HCS Vice-Chair Trevor Ellis has been able to carry out some essential work on behalf of the Canal and River Trust. This has been possible, in these strange and unprecedented times, by operating in small socially distanced teams.



Bob Cough

I've had a 'Letter to the Editor' from Mike Thompson regarding the Obituary in our last issue for our former trustee John Sully. It's clear that John's spirit and tenacity in convincing West Yorkshire County Council to incorporate a new canal box culvert into the major roadworks project at Wakefield Road, Huddersfield was a critical element in the overall restoration of the canal and the key to connecting the Huddersfield Narrow to Aspley Basin, The Broad and the Yorkshire Waterways beyond.

Mike is a former Head of Planning at South Yorkshire County Council who worked extensively with the Society at the time the major funding bids to the Millennium Commission and English Partnerships were being put together and he appreciates the difficulties that John would have faced at the time. We are all in debt to John for his significant and crucial contribution to the successful reopening of the canal. Mike's letter and a couple of lovely photographs of John can be found at page 29.

Our main feature this time concerns the new electric, and as yet unnamed, trip boat that has been commissioned by the Society to replace the Marsden Shuttle.

It seems incredible to think that the Shuttle was launched almost 30 years ago at Tunnel End by David Essex. The fantastic artist's impression of the new vessel by Rosalind Annis of Holmfirth graces our cover and Eric Woulds' detailed report provides a great insight into her development so far.

She's undergoing her 'Sea Trials' at the time of writing and we're all looking forward to seeing her fully fitted out and on the water at Standedge later this year.

Great credit is due to colleagues Eric Woulds and Mike McHugh and to Terry Lomas for the time, effort and thought that they have put into progressing the project to this point. I'm sure that the new craft will prove to be a fitting and environmentally friendly replacement to the Marsden Shuttle which has given such sterling service to date.

The Marsden Shuttle is currently being prepared for the season ahead but all, of course, depends on the Government's decision on the relaxation of the remaining lockdown rules. We'll need to see what happens as nothing is certain with this pandemic but let's remain optimistic.

The Shuttle is a fantastic promotional asset for the Society which greatly enhances the visitor experience at Standedge. It helps bring in much needed income from organized wedding parties as well as providing a taxi service to the visitor centre. It is also much valued by the Canal and River Trust and brings an awareness of the Society to other communities when she attends festivals elsewhere. Our thanks are due to the dedicated crew who give so much of their time to look after the boat and operate her.

If you would like to get involved in any of the volunteering opportunities on the canal, please contact the office or one of the Council members. We'll put you in touch with a group in your area or a contact at the Canal and River Trust who can provide more information.

Enjoy your summer on the canal in whatever way you choose to use it. Keep safe and well.

Peter Rawson



Chairman's Report

In starting to prepare this piece I'm acutely aware that it has been some months since the last Pennine Link dropped

through letter boxes. Although the last issue, number 210, was completed by early November 2020 it once again coincided with the start of a Lockdown (the second) and a period of office closure. A digital version was posted on our website but we were not able to retrieve the actual copies from our printers and post them off to members until December when the office was reopened and our Administrator, Bob Gough, returned to work on a day a week basis. Thus our Summer/Autumn edition had merged into being a Winter one.

Since then as we all know there has been more 'stop' than 'start'. With the third Lockdown being imposed in early January we decided to ask Bob to go on furlough until pandemic matters improved. Clearly the safety of our member of staff was paramount but with the lack of Society activity and the limited possibilities which Bob had for working from home, grateful use of the Government's extended furlough arrangements made sense and brought in some income to balance our losses of revenue from boat activities.

During the periods of office closure management of transactions and checking of emails has been done remotely by Mike McHugh and myself respectively. I personally put in a couple

of visits to the office to retrieve mail so that urgent matters could be dealt with. Martin Clark has kept the Society's website up to date with occasional changes of front page notices and Patricia Bayley and Eric Woulds have relayed information via social media.

With the reduction of infection rates, our Administrator returned to work for one day a week from mid-February until the end of April 2021. With further relaxation of measures Bob doubled his hours from the start of May and the gradual return to work has enabled this edition to be produced, albeit later than intended.

What would we have done without the Zoom application? It has proved a very good way to hold meetings of our Council of management and was also deployed for our delayed Annual General Meeting held on 6th October 2020. Whilst attendance for the latter was down, we were able to conduct the business necessary to comply with our company status.

The pandemic has concentrated our minds on how we will run our Society in future. With limited access to our office over the last year or so, a migration of our digital files to the 'Cloud' has taken on new relevance and we aren't the only organisation which realised too late that remote access of information was important. We have recently set up a new Microsoft Office 365 account, freely provided to us as a charity, and work is underway synchronising folders hitherto only held on office computers. By early 2022 we aim to be able to get to the stage whereby all office functions

can be conducted remotely by members of the volunteer team. Elsewhere in this edition you will see an advert for a volunteer magazine editor to take on the production of Pennine Link in whatever form it will appear.

Our limited activities have been mirrored by what has been happening on our waterways. Cruising has been practically a standstill from the end of October 2020 until mid-April this year. Before Christmas, Canal & River Trust completed the planned maintenance work to Locks and leakage reduction measures. However, there was to be no reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow in January as there were a number of unplanned issues to tackle; interestingly all these occurred on the east side.

Two stoppages occurred in Huddersfield. An oil spill in the pound below Lock 5E meant the stretch from Lock 1E to Lock 8E was closed from November 2020 to enable pads to soak up the offending material. The clean up continued till the end of January 2021. *(see photo below - the blue 'boom' prevents any contamination entering the culvert and polluting the river Colne)*

Another significant stoppage involved establishing what was causing the large void to appear on the offside of Lock 5E. *(pictured overleaf)* Leakage through the aqueduct is thought to be part of the cause. The hole was eventually filled in April 2021 but there is sure to be the need for a more permanent fix in due course.



Alan Stophier



A large void appearing on the offside of Lock 5E. Leakage through the aqueduct is thought to be part of the cause. The hole is now filled, but the root problem needs investigating.

Other east side issues requiring attention were a paddle repair at Lock 25E which entailed a fish rescue as water was drawn down, a paddle rod breakage at Lock 31E and a broken bolt at 24E. Each of these took a few days to repair particularly when replacements had to be made to measure.

The perennial loss of water above Lock 1E has again been the subject of investigations with flow tests recently undertaken to find out where water is going. Now that the network has been reopened, boaters have to give advanced notice of a required passage so that CRT staff can bring water down from pounds above. A final disruption to mention was a hydraulic paddle replacement in mid-April at Lock 37E on the Marsden flight.

Since then a few boats have been on the move but the continued temporary use of CRT steerers through Standedge Tunnel will dissuade many boat owners from booking a passage as steering your own craft through one of the Seven Wonders of the Inland Waterways has to be a 'must'. An early return to the usual chaperone operations can't come soon enough.

Elsewhere in our region the major works to rebuild the navigation at Figure of Three Locks on the Calder & Hebble had reached the stage where navigation could resume in April 2021 over a year after the destruction wrought by Storm Ciara.

This will no doubt be a relief to our friends Shire Cruisers at Sowerby Bridge whose customers are the main users of the South Pennine Ring and Yorkshire waterways to the east. After a stop-start season in 2020 let's hope that the resumption of holidays in the UK enable them to get their business back to more normal levels.

So what is there to report on our volunteer activities? Trevor Ellis's maintenance team has continued to work on off-side vegetation clearance at Longroyd Bridge and has painted the Lock gates in the shadow of the viaduct. Covid restrictions have limited the use of the van as personnel transport but at least the team is able to get out in the fresh air and tackle tasks which need doing.

Volunteers working from a pontoon to clear the off-side vegetation at Longroyd Bridge



As I write in late-May, the next stage of relaxation has started to enable hospitality venues to open indoors but concerns over the so-called Indian-variant of Covid-19 are casting doubt on the full relaxation originally suggested for 21st June. We'll therefore have to wait and see whether the planned resumption of Marsden Shuttle operations at the end of June will take place but in the meantime there has been a gathering of crews for a briefing with hot drinks and pizza kindly provided by Lorna and Bryan at their pop-up café.

The boat has had a tidy up of the paintwork after a loan spell for Canal & River Trust tunnel crew training during March. Already seven wedding bookings at Standedge Visitor Centre are in prospect with the Marsden Shuttle

delivering the bride and groom on their special day. On the Shuttle front the big news is the fantastic progress with our new electric-powered craft but I won't steal Eric's thunder by saying any more other than to express thanks to Mike McHugh, Terry Lomas and Eric Woulds for all they have done to bring the project so far.

Those who generously donated to the fund for work on the former icebreaker and maintenance craft 'Marsden' will be eager for news. Unfortunately a move to Standedge from Northwich is still some months off and there are still details to work out about exactly where and how the craft will be positioned.

CRT's Area Operations Manager for the east side of the Huddersfield Narrow

and Rochdale Canals, Victoria Levine, has now taken on the additional role of manager of Standedge Visitor Centre. There is no doubting Victoria's enthusiasm for this special location and we look forward to working with her in the coming months. We already have a good relationship with the CRT volunteer maintenance team who are doing great work to keep the grounds tidy along with the towpath from Marsden Goods Yard car park.

News on other initiatives such as the extension of the towpath improvements from Milnsbridge towards Slaithwaite is slow to emerge following the Society's response to a consultation during the winter. The other towpath-related project I mentioned in the last edition, Experience Community's funding

bid to make the route from Marsden Goods Yard to Standedge Visitor Centre accessible to users of ICE trikes, was rejected but there is still a worthwhile project here should more funds be released by the Green Recovery Fund.

Whilst many developments have been on hold I made representations on the Society's behalf to Kirklees Council as they start to develop a new Heritage and Tourism Strategy and also to a Greater Manchester railway consultation urging the introduction of twice hourly stopping service on the line through the Tame and Colne Valleys. Our 200 year old canal still has a role to play in tourism and access to the countryside, particularly as many are choosing to take their holidays nearer to home.

Alan Stopher
Chairman HCS



Far Left: A gathering of the boat crew at a damp Tunnel End.
Left: Bryan tends the wood-fired pizza.
Below: Lorna serves up much needed hot drinks in the pop-up café.



JIDOKU 48

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The letters in this special version being:

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Fill in the missing blanks using these initial letters, bearing in mind that each 3x3 block can only have one of each letter and there must be no duplication in horizontal rows or vertical columns.

Solution on Page 31

Pioneers

Photos: Alan Stopher

The 20th anniversary of the reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal has passed without an opportunity to physically celebrate the fact.

We now plan to have an event on or around 1st May 2022 to celebrate the restored canal's 'coming of age'. By then our new electric powered Shuttle will be in operation.

Whilst looking at images of the 2001 reopening, I happened across these two pictures in my collection.

The Society's unpowered Standedge Pioneer passenger module provides a good test for one of the newly fabricated, inflatable 'buffers' or 'jebus' to be used to separate towed craft on their tunnel passage.



In late April 2001 the newly delivered craft are put through their paces at Standedge.

Uppermill Community Action Network

February

We have now completed the creation of a pond on land alongside the canal in Uppermill. Excavating the selected area started in late January 2020 but the full team effort had to stop soon after because of Lockdown. However, with socially distanced daily exercise still permitted for two people, we worked in pairs to finish off the pond.

The excavation was lined with old carpet to protect the waterproof liner from puncturing. The liner was installed and a protective layer was laid over it to prevent UV light degradation.

Finally the pond was ready for canal water which took 30 or so trips with bucket-fulls until there was enough in the pond to prevent the lining from blowing away. It is hoped that rainwater will finish the job!



March

A different, but equally rewarding and enjoyable, arm of our voluntary work is maintaining the bird boxes we built in previous years. In the last month or so, two of our volunteers have focused on their annual task of repairing and cleaning the boxes to eradicate any parasites and stop the spread of diseases. Replaced in time for the breeding season, it is always reassuring to see the 'lodgers' flitting back and forth during nest-building and then feeding their young ones.



Our volunteers have, as usual, been litter-picking; an activity appreciated by people walking alongside the canal, saying how nice, clean and tidy the canal walk is. We do like to think all our ongoing work is still making an impact, even though we have had most of the year off.

As a final note, some great news - we are holding ongoing discussions with the Canal and River Trust (CRT) about re-starting group activities which we hope will commence very soon.

April

Working in the usual socially distanced manner, we have now planted some water mint and water iris around the edges of the pond. We have also planted the ever-popular water lilies, providing essential shade and surface cover for the pond wildlife and help reduce algae growth by inhibiting light levels. This mix of plants will look quite lovely and should attract a variety of pollinators including butterflies, moths, bees and hoverflies.

Our last task was to place some stones and logs in and around the pond enabling safe and easy access for the wildlife which undoubtedly will visit. Indeed, Pond Skaters were very quick to take advantage of the still waters, hoping for smaller insect casualties falling in.



This month, subject to the easing of Lockdown restrictions continuing as planned, we are aiming to start up our UCAN group activities on Thursday 10th June. We also intend to take part in a litter pick as part of the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean which runs from 28 May to 13 June 2021.

UCAN Contact:

peterkillan@hotmail.com
01457 878361

May

Two large Ash trees near Cloggers Knoll Bridge on Moorgate Street by the canal have recently been felled. The felling was organised by CRT as a safety measure because the trees were suffering from Ash die-back disease caused by a fungus against which our native species has little defense. Although trees can appear to fight back, year-on-year infections often prove fatal.



The good news is that UCAN has obtained a donation of tree saplings from the Woodland Trust for planting around Uppermill and one of our volunteers has planted a selection of Silver Birch, Hawthorn and Hazel around the Ash tree stumps to regenerate the spot.

Karen Williams





HCS Volunteers in 2020/21

It has been a long time since I reported on the activities of our volunteer team. I think the last thing actually published

was a review of 2019, when we had launched into our usual winter activity of litter picking and lopping of towpath side vegetation. We completed the east side and subsequently started on some lock improvement work, tackling tree growth which was becoming a problem at the tail of Lock 3E at Kirklees College and moving on to improving the lockside and towpath at Lock 38E in Marsden. In February we moved across to the west side and the unadopted stretch around Grove Road, where we worked until early March on the usual litter and vegetation clearance, though we also tackled what had once been ornamental shrubbery around the Grove Road depot. Unfortunately this was to be our last outing for five months.

Around the end of May, CRT decided to restart volunteering opportunities, mainly volunteer lock keeping, but not including any volunteers over 70 years old. It took another month for the latter restriction to be lifted and for volunteers more widely to be cleared to work, when the waterways were re-opened fully. Unfortunately at this point we became enmeshed in difficulties. Probably as a result of their most recent boundary change, CRT appeared to have no record of us and certainly none of our Health and Safety practices and procedures. In addition, their local Volunteer Co-ordinator was still on furlough.

To cut a long story short, we eventually managed to venture back on 14th. August with a return to our traditional winter fare of litter-picking and lopping, working from Milnsbridge down to Lock 3E and up to Scar Bottom, where the aqueduct crosses the River Colne. It was a deliberate choice to go with something that everyone was familiar with, which lent itself to distancing, and at a location which limited travelling. As expected, the distancing worked well – in normal times it is usually regarded as a problem when the team become spread over a mile or so, but not now.

In last year's review, I complained about the lack of a workboat on the east side of the canal. After a rain-off we got the chance to sample the CRT response in the shape of a blue plastic pontoon (pictured below).



Continuing with our plan of working close to town, we started working from Lock 3E, where part of the team painted the lock and the rest took the pontoon to Locks 4E and 5E to clear the lock chambers of vegetation. We moved on in October to the stretch above Lock 1E, with particular attention to the former chamber of Lock 2, which suffers badly from offside vegetation growing into the chamber. Part of the team managed to reach the offside by gaining access to the University car park and rigging a rope system down the bank. This went well and would have been completed with one more visit, but we were frustrated when the car park became a Covid testing station, which it has remained ever since! I apologise to any boater who has had to dodge the remaining foliage.

Back in 2019, I had assisted a boater that I had taken through Standedge Tunnel

during my work as a Tunnel Chaperone and in addition to the problem at the old Lock 2, I knew that the stretch between Locks 3E and 4E was becoming very restricted due to the offside growth. Like the planting around Grove Road depot, this had probably looked fine when the architect drew his plans for the DIY store, but after 20 years plus, it was now over half way across the canal in places, so we moved on to this, still using the pontoon, until the second lockdown intervened, again leaving the job part-finished.

This time the rules were a little more flexible, not to mention variable; they seemed to change every time we were planning to work. At its worst, we could only work in pairs, and then socially distanced and on work of "operational priority". Since then, there has been a gradual easing. We have managed to do work at five sites, sometimes more than one at once to keep the group size down to whatever the rules demanded; Sparth Reservoir and Lock 29E (mainly vegetation), Ramsden Mills/Trojan Plastics at Golcar (Locks 13 & 14E), where we have cleared the wall and trackway overlooking Lock 14E (this one still ongoing), vegetation clearance at Lock 11E, where the bywash had become totally inaccessible, and a return to the unfinished job at Lock 3E-4E. The latter remains unfinished due to the start of the bird nesting season, though we have done some work on the pound above, including painting Locks 4 and 5E.

Our last outing was back to Golcar with work to repair the wall and to fill in a large depression in the towpath. We should be able to complete this in the near future, hopefully painting both Locks.

Trevor Ellis



Our New Trip Boat by Eric Woulds

Sometime, at the back end of 2018, I was stood on the landing outside Tunnel End

Cottages (aka the Waters Edge Cafe) with Terry Lomas and we were having a good look at the Marsden Shuttle.

Launched at Standedge in October 1991, we felt that she was showing her age and, although she was still doing the job we wanted her to do, she wasn't going to last forever. There had been a few minor, but inconvenient, engine issues in the previous months and although all the wedding charter commitments had been successfully met, some had been decidedly 'skin of the teeth' affairs!

All 'spick and span'; the newly christened Marsden Shuttle at Tunnel End in 1991. Master of Ceremonies, David Essex posing at the tiller with Society Trustee, Bob Maycock.



Brian Minor/HCS Archive

One thing led to another and our discussions spread to include Mike McHugh, the HCS Boat Manager and Treasurer, and then HCS Council of Management.

Apart from the regular public 'Taxi' trips from Marsden Station to Tunnel End, the Shuttle has become an integral part of the new, and very successful, wedding venue business that's being developed at the Visitor Centre.

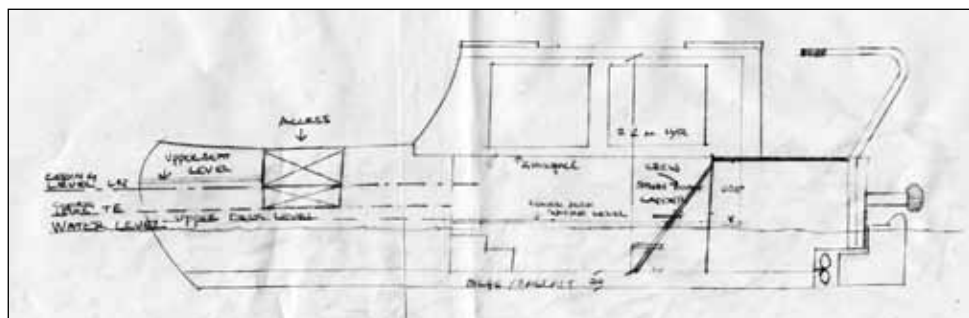
Whilst this may well be regarded as being peripheral to HCS activities, it's becoming fundamental to the success of Standedge as a visitor destination. As a major source of income for Canal and River Trust (CRT), the business supports the maintenance and development of the 'Standedge Experience' and of course, as a Society, we want to achieve the same end.



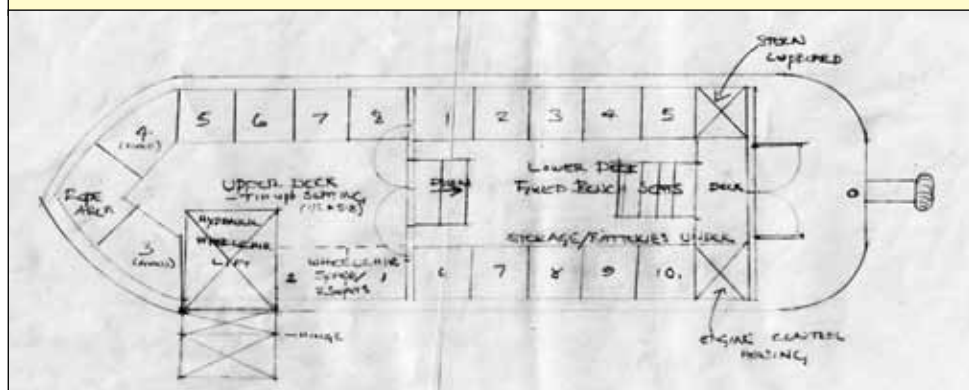
HCS Archive

The Shuttle is in demand as a wedding taxi operating from Lock 42 to the wedding venue; as public trips and private charters aren't possible at the same time, Saturdays are often without a public service.

On the other hand, the wedding taxi operation is providing significant income for the Society and if we want to secure the future of this income, then we need to consider how best to achieve this.



Eric's sketch plans for a new trip boat (plan view below enlarged).



It transpired that HCS Trustees were quite enthusiastic with the idea of a new boat to complement our Standedge Visitor Centre operation, so Mike, Terry and I started the process of looking into what was required. The first draft of a specification appeared in January 2019. The key objectives were listed as:

- *Elegant steel craft particularly suited to carrying wedding parties.*
- *Inside cabin seating for a maximum of 12 persons.*
- *Outside front deck seating for approximately 6 persons including one wheelchair space.*
- *Good accessibility for passengers & crew with drop down access ramps either side for wheelchair access.*
- *Electric propulsion powered by batteries capable of being fully recharged overnight from a 230V AC landline.*

- *Capable on a single charge of a full day's work at Standedge or a trip to the boatyard at Portland Basin (15 miles maximum) or approximately 6 hours continuous running at moderate speeds.*
- *Simple maintenance*
- *Designed to minimise susceptibility to damage to hull & roof both in normal use and particularly when travelling through the Standedge Tunnel*
- *Low running costs*

Surprisingly, the specification almost survived intact up to the point of the order being placed.

During early 2019 the design was discussed intensively and many options were considered and adopted or dismissed.

Electric propulsion was regarded as essential. Although specifying a diesel engine would have been far easier, we wanted to promote the concept of 'green' boating. Like cars, it's the way things are going, and the new boat will still be around many years after this becomes the norm. Currently, in the UK, it's still quite a novel means of propulsion, so builders with the relevant expertise aren't that common.

Fortunately, both Mike and Terry have extensive knowledge of matters electrical (*I can just about wire a plug*) so although it was a steep 'learning curve' they knew what to look for. Mike in particular researched the subject thoroughly and we were regularly updated with information about the latest developments in electric boat propulsion. It narrowed itself down to a few options, and although lithium-ion batteries would have been the ideal solution, the cost was going to be prohibitive. However, lead-acid batteries for boating were a very reliable alternative, so a system using these was adopted.

Having sorted out a specification we made arrangements to visit a few selected boat builders, so we could find out if what we wanted was possible. Our first trip was to a builder in Liverpool, and then another near Coventry in June 2019. We soon found out that our project wasn't going to be straightforward. The relatively small size and specification (*particularly the electric propulsion*) wasn't what builders were used to and interest was limited. Discussions with a third builder fizzled out as it became apparent they weren't really interested in taking on the commission.

Also, we quickly discovered that a 26ft boat like the Shuttle would, in fact, fail current regulations relating to a 'tilt test' for passenger vessels. This is a stability requirement for newly built passenger boats to make sure that in an emergency, if all passengers suddenly rush to one side of the boat, it doesn't capsize or allow water in above the sides.

A heavier and therefore longer boat would be required if we wanted to maximise capacity, so we had to decide how we could achieve this. Although we'd like to be able to continue carrying 12 passengers, ultimately this will be determined by the tilt test. Interestingly, in these days of computer modelling and being able to drop a vehicle on to the surface of Mars without ever having done it before, the outcome of a tilt test still involves a practical demonstration involving real people (of a specified weight) hanging on to the boat.

There is a problem with a longer boat. At the moment, we are able to turn the Shuttle at both ends of the Marsden/ Standedge run. The width of the canal above Lock 42 is around 36ft, but at Tunnel End it's only around 28ft (*if you hit the right spot*). As the new boat will have to turn somewhere, we decided to specify a length of 32ft - short enough to turn in the canal at the Marsden end, but will have to be reversed in to the Tunnel End landing.

To assist the manoeuvre, a 'bow thruster' has been specified to make life easier (*and reduce the number of scrapes going under Tunnel End Bridge*).

Hopefully, it'll be possible to maintain the 12 passenger capacity with a thicker than normal base plate, heavy batteries and plenty of ballast!

Another difference between the original specification and what's being built is the access - the 'drop down access ramps' were simply too difficult to achieve, particularly in relation to the tilt test, so the new design incorporates a wheelchair lift with stern passenger loading and unloading. With some minor changes to the landing at Tunnel End, it should be possible to have level access at each end from the boat to dry land. Also, it was decided to specify a fixed canopy over the front deck open seating knowing what the Marsden weather can be like...

We reconsidered the specification and began to look for other builders who might be interested. Then something called Covid 19 happened. Like most other things around the world everything ground to a halt, and the project was parked until we could realistically, and safely, start looking for a builder.

Mike was relentless in approaching possible builders, and at last he found one who expressed real interest.

In August 2020, while there was a lull in the pandemic, we paid a visit to Brayzel Boats at Garstang (on the Lancaster Canal). We chatted the specification through with Andrew, the builder, who not only was very positive but also offered some suggestions as to how we could make improvements.

He also organised a 'tilt test' of a 32ft boat to determine the likely numbers of people we could have on board, and the results left us feeling optimistic, although not certain, that we would be able to have 12 people on board.

Detailed discussions then started - the specification for the electrical parts of the build and the wheelchair lift were especially complex - and earlier this year we received approval from the HCS Management Council to place the order.

Andrew managed to organise a 'build' slot with Cauldon Boats, near Stoke on Trent, in April 2021. Mike and I couldn't wait to see what the new boat would

look like so we made the trip down to the workshop to have a look. Very impressed!

The hull and forward and aft bulkheads were complete. The stern deck had been fabricated to the exact specifications of the wheelchair lift, and while we were there one of the welders was finishing the roof. Our first thought was 'that looks a bit too big...' Tape measure out, 32ft exactly. Phew!

A few days later we received some photos of the completed shell undercoated and blacked and on it's way to Garstang.



Cauldon Boats

Bottom Left: Mike McHugh (in mask) examines the build in progress and anticipates being at the tiller!
Above & Below: The two-tone finished shell ready for its fit-out and propulsion systems. The bow thruster port (above) will give the extra manoeuvrability required for this 32' craft.



Eric Wouds



Cauldon Boats



It's now about to be fitted out. It's a fairly straightforward fit as the interior is only required to have bench seating and there are no sanitary or other facilities on board. The extensive battery bank will be located under the cabin seating, providing some useful ballast.

Although the electric motor, batteries and control gear took a long time to be organised, it'll all be provided by one supplier so we hope it'll be a fairly straightforward installation. One luxury - we've specified a storage heater for the cabin. Not for crew of course, but for the batteries. Capacity is affected in cold weather so warming the boat up will make a difference to the range. It'll also be welcomed by the bridal parties who often seem to be what might be termed 'lightly dressed'.

Exact timing of the delivery will depend on the availability of all the components but it seems likely that it could be in the water by the end of this season, although we won't even think about a date just yet.

What's happening with our greatly loved and admired little blue boat, I hear you ask? Well, for the time being, she'll still be working her watery socks off transporting visitors between Marsden and the Visitor Centre, and being a wedding taxi too when we get the go ahead from the Government.

Although the new boat will eventually be the first choice to fulfil the wedding bookings and run the taxi service, Marsden Shuttle will still be around for a while, although we'll need to be able to justify longer term ownership financially

and also make sure that we can continue to have moorings at Tunnel End.

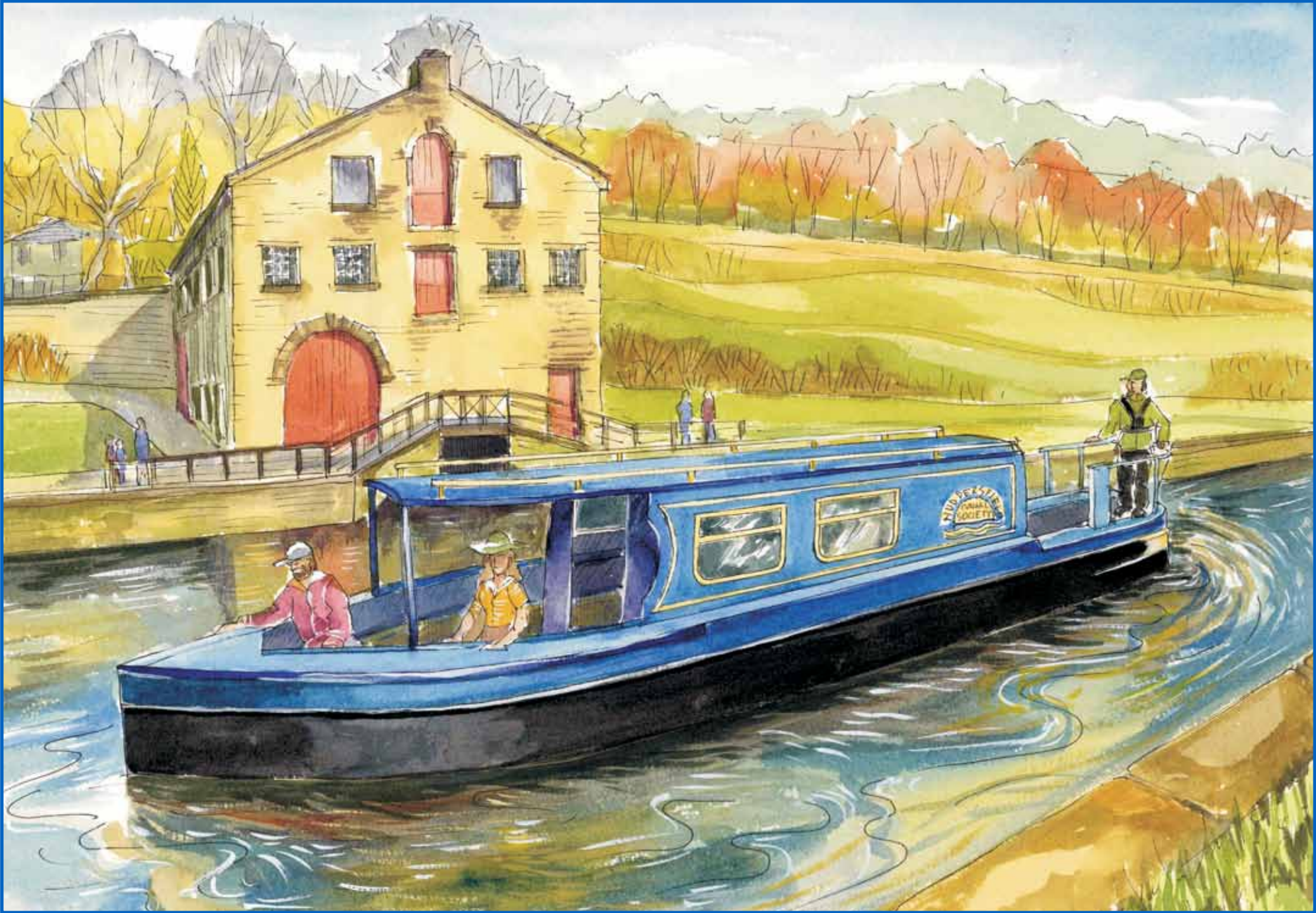
As for the new boats' name, that's still to be worked on. It has been called 'Shuttle 2' ever since we first came up with the plan, but we need something a little catchier; suggestions on a postcard as they used to say. And as to who will officiate at the launch, we need someone who is at least as famous as David Essex was in 1991!

Eric Woulds

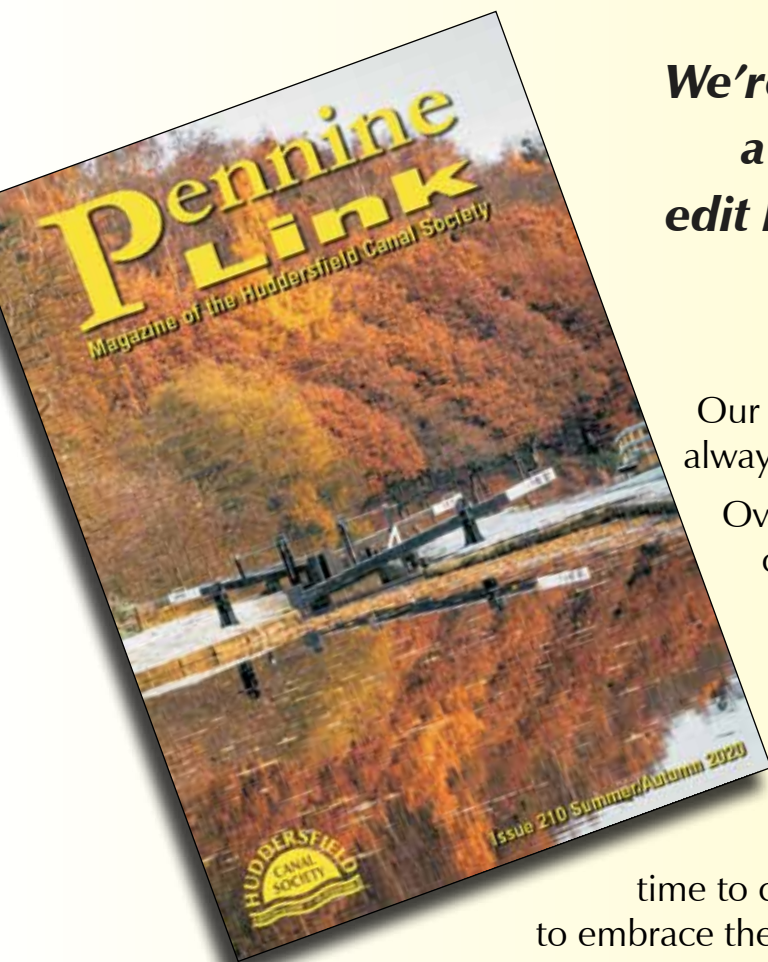
Trustee and Volunteer Skipper

... and if you'd like a closer look at Rosalind's watercolour impression of the boat afloat, please turn over ...





Your Society still needs you ...



We're looking for a volunteer to edit Pennine Link

Our magazine has not always looked like this.

Over the years it has changed to reflect the Society's activities.

As HCS moves to a more flexible way of working it is an opportune time to consider how best to embrace the new media in its publications.

If you are interested in helping HCS promote what we do in the future, to our members and the outside world, we would love to hear from you.

If this role interests you, please send us an email with the subject line 'Pennine Link Editor' to: hcs@huddersfieldcanal.com

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

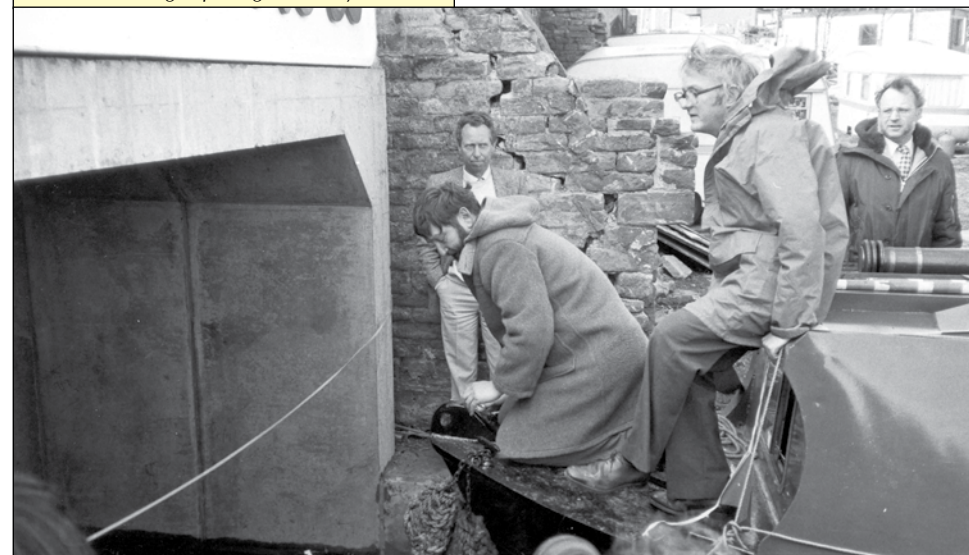
I have just read about John Sully's passing of which I had been aware.

But for John's efforts, there would almost certainly be no connection with the Aspley Basin for a great many years after restoration had started elsewhere and even then the cost, as with other examples (*Stalybridge, Standedge Tunnel*), would be truly enormous.

Against all odds, especially the then not inconsiderable extra financial cost, the professional 'advice' of County Engineers and initially little member support for a 'canal' under the newly to be improved A629 Wakefield Road, he succeeded.

Just how would and where would the Huddersfield Narrow Canal terminate and link up with the Broad Canal and the Basin? His forward thinking, determination and sheer doggedness (*did he wear down his opponents by his tactics?*) to get this

Councillors Garth Pratt and John Sully prepare for the road bridge opening ceremony in 1986.



David Finnis and John Sully resting at Slaithwaite during a cycling tour of the canal's East side.

reinforced concrete, 7ft wide waterway tunnel built was, for its time, exceptional.

I was miles away at the time but heard of the problems, mainly from meeting West Yorkshire engineers and others who regarded John Sully as a maverick.

I'm not normally in favour of plaques, but inclined to make an exception in John's case because had I had a say in the matter, I might have voted the wrong way!

Mike Thompson

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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For a special occasion or simply a great day out with family or friends, hiring one of our self drive day boats is an ideal solution.

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

220 Club - 29th Draw

This quarter, the Club benefits from 51 subscriptions, so we can offer a Prize Fund of £122.40 which means the first prize is £81.60 and the second prize, £40.80. The more who subscribe, the higher the prize fund offered for your £2 a month stake.

To join, you need to complete the form which can be downloaded from our website by following the Members' Area link, or if you prefer, call the office and we'll send you a paper copy by post. 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.



Solution to Jidoku 48

AND here are the results of our twenty-ninth* quarterly draw:

Total Subscribers: 51
Total Prize Fund: £122.40

1st Prize:
Mr F Carter £81.60

2nd Prize:
Mr A Shepherd £40.80

Congratulations to the prize winners!

*** Please note, the 27th & 28th draws were made remotely and the prizes published on our website.**

M	D	A	P	E	S	C	N	I
S	C	P	A	N	I	E	D	M
E	I	N	M	C	D	A	S	P
I	M	E	N	P	C	S	A	D
C	N	S	D	A	M	P	I	E
A	P	D	I	S	E	M	C	N
P	E	C	S	D	N	I	M	A
N	A	M	C	I	P	D	E	S
D	S	I	E	M	A	N	P	C

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