



Grantham Canal News Sheet

This latest issue of the Electronic News Sheet is for **anyone** who would like to be updated on GCS activities and progress. If this is the first issue you have received and you would like future monthly issues, please send an email to: Membership@granthamcanal.com stating your name, confirming your e-mail address and indicating that you wish to receive the News Sheet. Future copies will not be sent without your permission. You do not have to be a member but please consider joining. Details on the "Contact Us" page on our website: www.granthamcanal.com

1. Heritage Lottery Application

We are delighted to report that Grantham Canal Partnership supported by the Grantham Canal Society has been successful in its Bid to restore locks 14 and 15 using volunteers as part of a national waterway skill training initiative being developed by the Inland Waterways Association, with an emphasis on learning waterway heritage construction skills. The official Press release is printed below



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
 through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Heritage Lottery Fund backs next stage in restoration of the Grantham Canal.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has approved a development grant to the Grantham Canal Partnership of £48,000, a grant that could lead to a £3/4 million pound investment in the next stage of the 33 mile long restoration project.

Part of the project aims to capture local people's memories, photographs and stories about the heritage of the canal.

This first award will allow the Partnership to prepare a detailed application for an innovative programme of works on the canal with a focus on heritage skill training.

The eventual overall project value could be approximately £750,000 with £400,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

There are two key themes to the project; the establishment of a heritage skills training base at Woolsthorpe near Grantham, where the focus will be on lock restoration, in addition the project will provide interpretation panels and signage alongside the canal.

13 of the 18 locks on the Grantham are in various stages of dereliction. This initiative will fully restore 2 of those locks to extend the navigable length of canal at Woolsthorpe and provide volunteers with the skills to tackle other locks along the canal and on other canals elsewhere. The training programme will be part of a national training initiative being developed by the Inland Waterways Association.

The interpretation part of the project will work with local communities (in particular their schools and the elderly) to unlock old photographs, stories and to identify heritage that has been lost. The information resourced will then be available for all, on new interpretation canalside panels.

Kevin Mann of the Grantham Canal Partnership said "This whole project is about the communities that border the Canal, their memories, their history and what gave the canal its life. Local people will be learning how to restore a lock, to point up brickwork, how to re-use old materials and have an enjoyable time in the process".

The final focus of the project will be to attract new volunteers from further afield and from a wider cross - section of people, particularly from Nottingham and Leicester.

Michael Stone, the chairman of the Grantham Canal Society said, "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has approved this grant. It will provide volunteers with the skills to move the restoration of the Grantham Canal and other canals forward".

2. The Trip-boat:

The Three Shires has continued to be popular with 8 trips booked for July

If you fancy helping to crew the boat, it's not difficult, so contact Mike Oliver: michaeloliver31@aol.com or tel 0163 681 4348

If you would like to book a trip, please telephone Fiona on **01949 850 999**. (Please note new boat timings and prices shown on GCS website).

3 Water Maintenance



15 of us attended a 2 hour session run by BW's Richard Wylie, ably assisted by Steve Scott and Simon Gent at locks 17 & 18 on Thursday 23rd June. After years of being told the opposite, the new thinking is that the locks need to be kept full (?) of water. Two reasons:- 1) to swell the gate timbers which have dried out since they were fitted in 1994 and therefore leak and 2) to find out where the leaks are within the lock chambers and elsewhere. We have been saying



this for years but for some reason known only to themselves, BW now want to see more water in the canal. Not that we are complaining. All we need now is the weed boat!

Pictures above with Richard Wiley giving instructions.

(Above right) Pay attention Rosemary!

4. Jim Barker



Jim has been the Treasurer of The Grantham Canal Society for the last 40 years and throughout that time, when he was not on boating or walking holidays or even playing trains, has also been an active workparty volunteer too. In the early days, looking after the Society's finances was not difficult as there was nothing the volunteers were permitted to do but year by year things slowly changed until we now have all the complications and responsibilities of running a business which involves the Charity Commission, Vat Inspectors, Accountants etc. Jim always maintains his dislike of computers, (he doesn't mind his wife Joan using hers) but as so many financial dealings are or can be dealt with on-line, he understandably decided to hand over the reins. We are lucky that Ralph Poore, another workparty stalwart, has continued to

help keep us 'afloat'. In gratitude of Jim's service the committee decided to present him with two tickets for an evening meal on the Great Central Dining Car. Our sincere thanks to Jim and Joan and we hope you enjoy your gift from GCS.

Photo above: Mike Stone presents Jim (right) with his tickets

5. Workparties

The IWA Waterways Festival at Burton on Trent is on the last 3 days of this month so July's workparty dates have been put back a week to **Thurs 4th & Sat 6th August**, 9.00am at Woolsthorpe. Later in the month, Thurs 25th & Sat 27th will be our official August workparties. We are continuing our battle with the vandals. Bridge 62 had new safety scaffolding removed and thrown into the water along with some large coping stones that we had previously retrieved. And now some of the brickwork from the Bridle Bridge 63 has met the same fate. All these attacks have been reported to the police.



Safety scaffolding pre and post attack



Br. 62 Copings underwater



Br.63 gets some unwanted attention

Photos Bob Terry



If you enlarge the picture (left) you will see the Denton Weir overflow to which Adrian has added a couple of inches of timber to raise the water level in the top length. However within a couple of days someone removed the cement sandbag from the right of the picture. BW had previously raised the weir at the A1 but that board has been removed too.

The workparties have continued to remove branches and debris from the canal and it looks as though we will be doing so for the foreseeable future.



Although GCS were not involved BW have piled a leak which went under the towpath just above lock 17. A considerable amount of water was finding its way onto the lane under the old railway bridge. Rosemary Gibson reports that the work was done quickly and the site left neat and tidy. Well done to the construction team Willie Lamb and Bobby Knight.

Picture : Rosemary Gibson

Yet another tree down! We have had our eye on this one at Harlaxton for a while and now we have to do something about it. Hopefully the workparty members will be able to remove it by the end of July and allow the Trip Boat to resume 4 hour journeys.



6. Harlaxton Wharf BBQ

Photos: Tony Jackson



Sunshine, lovely food and refreshments with plenty of visitors taking boat and canoe trips made a very pleasant Sunday afternoon at Harlaxton on July 3rd. Rosemary and Tony manned the sales stand looking every bit the part in their traditional garb and several GCS members were on hand to assist where necessary. Our thanks to The Harlaxton Wharf Community Group for putting the event on.



7. Meet The Committee

Although some of us are familiar faces, you probably don't know much about us (maybe you don't want to!) Anyway, let me start by introducing you to **Mike Stone, GCS Chairman**. Ed



Mike spent his formative years on a farm in the Trent Valley and attended Nottingham High School. A waterway enthusiast for over sixty years, Mike used to 'thumb' lifts on barges going down-stream from Stoke Lock on the River Trent. He won the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce Centenary scholarship in 1960 to study the Inland Waterways of Western Europe and travelled extensively for a summer vacation. The following year he worked on a pair of trading narrowboats working out of Brentford.

Mike has a commercial background in Marketing, Sales and Logistics gained whilst working for J Lyons & Co, Procter & Gamble, National Freight Company and Carlson Wagonlit Travel. He has recently worked for a national charity, the RSPB, where he was instrumental in

changing the RSPB's trading structure.

He's a lifelong supporter of Notts. County and his business life took him to many countries and where football is played he found that the name Notts. County is recognised. Beyond football and waterways – he has a narrowboat - his interests include most forms of transport, agriculture and the environment. He is a Freeman of the City of London and a Liveryman in the Worshipful Company of Carmen. He is married to Sue and they have five children and five grandchildren. He became Chairman of GCS in 2007.

8. Another good reason to have water in the canal?



The Loch Ness Monster seen near Bridge 62.

Ok, so it's a piece of wood but I thought it looked quite realistic. Ed

Last month Russ Hamer sent in the picture. (right)

Several suggestions have been made: Mink, Otter, Muntjac Deer, & Badger Cub. What do you think?

What is it?



9. Social Meetings

Wednesday, September 14th - An evening of **Archive Waterway Films** given by **Rob Foxon**. This is a rare opportunity to see some original footage of historic films on waterways.

The programme will include: A Cruise down the River Trent in 1930's, There go the Boats. A 1951 film on narrow canals from BTC Film Unit & Broad Waterways a 1959 film from the same unit.

Time:••• 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Place:•• Nottinghamshire Golf & Country Club, Nottingham Road, Cotgrave NG12 3HB (was Cotgrave Place)

Tickets: In advance from R Gibson, Manor Cottage, Sibthorpe, Newark, Notts NG23 5PN price £4.00
On the door: price £5.00

10. Spring Photo Competition

Unfortunately, Linda Brockway, who won the £5 Boots Voucher very kindly provided by Derek Bolton, was unable to make the Harlaxton BBQ so her prize is on its way by post.

11. More from Derek Bolton



A few minutes away from the canal by Longore Bridge you are in one of several meadows that constitute Muston Meadows. These are ancient meadows, some of the finest lowland meadows in England, a site of Special Scientific Interest and managed by Natural England. They consist of some of the last ridge (rigg) and furrow left in England and have been caused in yesteryear by teams of oxen constantly turning the soil the same direction. It is well documented that these hay meadows are managed exactly the same way for decades i.e. cutting the hay in August, livestock being introduced to graze naturally fertilizing the earth until December.

On one of my frequent visits this spring between mid-April and June, I met a visitor. Simon, a botanist, was looking around as part of research for a book. Until two years ago he was employed by Natural England and whilst with them he was responsible for drawing up the maps that you see at the stiles to the meadows. Now retired, he is visiting the two hundred and thirty nature reserves in England from his home in Newbury.

He was so informative to one who thought he knew most wild flowers, particularly in the Midlands!! As we wandered through the bottom and oldest meadow he pointed out PEPPER-SAXIFRAGE and PIGNUT perhaps rather insignificant plants but ones which can easily be overlooked if you didn't know. He also showed me Prunella and Quaking grass one of thirty different species of grasses in all the meadows.

I hope that the montage accompanying this article will show you just a small fraction of the colourful treasures we have on our doorstep and if you only had a passing interest before in our flora, I hope I may have gained another enthusiast.

DEREK BOLTON



Photo top left: Longore Bridge, looking from Muston Meadows

Montage above - left to right. Top row : Yellow Vetch and Great Burnet, Mouse-ear Hawkweed. Centre Row: Pepper-Saxifrage, Green Winged Orchid, Pignut. Bottom row : Ox-eye Daisies & Yellow Vetch, Common Knapweed. *Thanks to Derek for all this information and photos.*

12. Correspondence.

CAMRA Needs Our Help!

We've been approached by The Campaign for Real Ale to help them build up a portfolio of lost pubs in our area. At least one of the "Pubs Along The Grantham" we've previously reviewed in just the last decade is no longer trading - and there must be others in the vicinity that have suffered a similar fate? CAMRA is looking to build up a survey of pubs that have been converted to other purposes such as shops, restaurants, financial & professional services offices etc without the need for change of use planning permission. They are also looking for cases where a pub has been demolished without planning permission in place for a new use.

They are gathering this information in support of Nigel Adams MP's private members bill [The Protection of Local Services \(Planning\) Bill](#), which will give local councils in England the power to close loopholes in planning law which allow local services such as pubs, Post offices, local shops, community and sports facilities to be demolished without the need to seek planning permission.

One lost pub we're aware of so far is The White Hart at Harby (demolished!) but if you have any further details of this (reason, date, etc) or any other recently closed inns in our patch then Graham Wright would like to hear from you please. Also if you have before and/or after photos of them that would be even better! Please email him asap via graham@grahamwright.org.uk.

Thanks.

Please let me know if you are happy with the balance of content in 'Bridge' and also if there is anything you wish me to include. Ed

The website is having a bit of a makeover. Please keep checking but be patient if information that you want is not there yet. Just email or phone any one of us and we will do our best to help.

Photos : Ian Wakefield unless credited otherwise

If you spot anything new or unusual on the Grantham, please contact the editor with photos if possible. Any questions and I will try to find answers.

The editor can be contacted at: ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.com