



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 Society" page on our website: www.granthamcanal.org

1. Lock 18

Nigel Lord, from the lock gate manufacturers, Hargreaves, kindly came along to Lock 18 on the 15th August and was met by Ralph Bellamy, one of the workparty team.

Nigel's considered opinion is that the bottom gates are, as we suspected, unsafe to use, so once again Lock 18 is against us. New gates would cost around £45K so as a temporary measure, although still expensive, we are looking for some serviceable second hand gates that can be modified to suit. The original top gates, that we replaced recently, were second hand and they have lasted since 1994 so if we can get 10 year's use out of a pair that will be something. We are now looking to see if there is any funding available to help. If you have any ideas, please let the Chairman know.

2. Donations for Mudlark

Just a reminder that we have set up an account with "Virgin Money Giving" which allows anyone with computer access, who wishes to help us, to make a donation to GCS at any time and for any amount. At present we are trying to pay for 'Mudlark' and would be gratefully to received donations.

Please have a look at the site: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/> (note there is no ' www '). This will take you to the home page where half way down on the right is 'Donate to Charity'. Enter GCS or Grantham Canal Society in the box which will take you to the next page with five other entries, each relating to the word 'Canal'. Ours is the first entry and you can read why we really do need your financial help. If you click on the DONATE box all will be self explanatory. At this point you don't have to make a donation but we sincerely hope you will consider doing so. Thank you from all at GCS.

For great film clips of some GCS activities please click on <http://youtu.be/J911AcqK-eY>

3. July's 'Bridge'

"Many thanks for the latest "Bridge".

.Last page: my guess: the crane is on the wharf by the canal where coal etc was unloaded and put onto trucks which then went by rail (by horse drawn power) up to Belvoir Castle. The path of the railway can still be discerned in places today, including actual rail within the grounds of Belvoir Castle.

Am I right?

Marcus ef Pettman"



Thanks for the email Marcus. You may well be correct, in which case the view is from Bridge 57 at Muston Gorse. Ed.



Looking at the recently acquired picture of the boat moored against the boundary wall of the Carpenter's Workshop, I'm convinced it is the same craft that was used for dredging in the second photograph. Ed

4. Earwig & Discovery Day

What's this Earwig, you may wonder? Well I'm not going to tell you. Not now anyway! You will have to wait until the September issue but if you are really curious then come along to our 2nd Annual Discovery Day at Woolsthorpe on the 7th October. Last year's event was very well received by those who attended so please come and support Rosemary and the team. The Trip Boat will be running and tickets can be purchased on the day. Ed



GRANTHAM CANAL SOCIETY



invite you to a

DISCOVERY DAY

to inform, inspire and involve



**at Woolsthorpe by Belvoir Depot/Carpenter's Shop
behind the Rutland Arms (Dirty Duck) Public House
NG32 1NY**

Sunday 7th October 2012, 10.00 – 5.00

Activities for all the family

Boat Trips starting at 10:00

Heritage Displays

Fun and Fundraising

& 2nd Annual Dirty Duck Race

Sunday Lunches at the Dirty Duck

01476 870111

Light Refreshments Available in the Depot

Donations of saleable items welcome.

All proceeds towards the maintenance and restoration of the Grantham Canal.

More information from:

Rosemary Gibson, RhuMaere@aol.com 01476 978896/07971173069

5. Event Reports

Before I let Tony Jackson loose with his report on the Owthorpe Country Show, I've extracted a few lines from another email he sent me regarding last month's issue:

"I'm terribly embarrassed about the heading on page eight, 'What would we do without Tony Jackson' - if there was ever an undeserved title, then it is this one! Many others work much harder than me! Hope it doesn't put too many backs up!"

Just to make it clear, Tony just happens to be in the right places at the right time as he is always cycling up and down the towpath. There are many of us involved in running the various aspects of the Society. Most avoid the limelight and just enjoy the camaraderie and satisfaction of achieving something for everyone to enjoy. Each and every one of the devoted volunteers, past and present, is so special. They give or have given up hours of their precious free time to keep the society running. Gradually the canal will be completely restored and it's a great feeling to be able to say, "I was a part of that" Ed.

Hello Everyone

It is said that the biggest upheaval in the Vale of Belvoir, since the English Civil War, was the building of the Grantham Canal, when many hundreds of 'rough diamonds' descended upon this tranquil landscape, which had been largely (apart from the occasional marital dispute) peaceful for over a hundred years.

At Owthorpe Country Show, on Sunday last, we were treated to a taste of the Civil War, by the much acclaimed Sealed Knot re-enactment group. Sealed Knoters are Royalists (thanks Rosemary). Now, in the middle of the 17th Century, if you'd been in Owthorpe, and uttered 'Royalist', you would have been thought of, a) Very brave, b) Very unwise, c) A practical joker with questionable taste. Any combination of the above would have led to dire consequences, and without doubt, $a + b + c = \text{dead as a Dodo!}$ (I'm not sure if the Dodo was dead in the 17th Century - I'll Google it). Owthorpe was the home of Colonel Hutchinson, a prominent player on the side of the parliamentarians, who sadly, was to pay the ultimate price for his beliefs. If it wasn't for brave visionaries like him, we wouldn't, today, have David Cameron running the country.....

Apart from leaping out of our skins, every time the muskets were fired - we loved it really! We had a wonderful show. The sun shone - yep, the sun shone! Boy, did it shine - surely I wasn't the only one who thought it had been extinguished for good by all the rain we've had? The organisers of the show have to be complimented on such a diverse, and interesting mix of stalls and side shows. And, thank the Lord, not a bouncy castle in sight - I've seen enough bouncy castles to last me for a while. I helped the Punch and Judy man erect his theatre - he was troubled with the wind. As I've matured, I've come to adore Punch and Judy shows. So politically incorrect - throwing the baby down the stairs and whacking crocodiles with truncheons! How I love this childish comedy of terrors!

The Grantham Canal stand has been going to Owthorpe for many years. It's the third time Rosemary and I have been there since we 'picked up the baton'.

We were joined also, by Anne and Fred, and, it goes almost without saying - Tony Pitman. Thank you one and all!

We had another caller to the garrulous green gazebo, an unexpected caller. I first thought he'd come to the wrong stand, clutching an armful of hand crafted walking sticks - 'I've brought these for you to sell on your stand - to raise some money for the canal - I've made them out of wood from the clearing of the canal.'

I felt humbled by this generosity, which came right out of the blue. Our caller was Ralph Bellamy - one of our society's hard working members of the workparty - thank you so much Ralph!

I'm going to say something now. I might be getting above my station - being a mere foot soldier like. I shall probably be put in the cookhouse, besides, I'd rather be a pieman, than a pikeman - having watched the pikemen in the Sealed Knot - I could never be mean enough, I know I couldn't.

From a casual observer's stand point - the view from the bottom up - this society of ours, has one hell of a lot going on lately, which is good of course! There was the lock gate installation, which, (through no fault of our own), over ran, and cost us a load of extra dosh for the crane hire etc. There's the purchase of Mudlark, the dredger (I love that name - I'm pleased they've decided not to change it) - we still need to raise money to pay for it, and to get it all shipshape and Bristol fashion. That's two big things for starters! I'm going to plant a seed, no, fear not, I haven't become uncontrollably virile.

What I'm leading up to, is, if you sell anything on eBay, have a car boot sale, or, for the more gregarious among you, what about a coffee morning? Maybe, from the proceeds, chuck a quid or three in the Grantham Canal Pot? There, the seed is sown - I wonder if it'll germinate?

I don't know how much money we raised at Owthorpe - the donations box didn't feel particularly heavy.

Just before I sign off - I'm gonna blow a trumpet! I happened upon our workparty today, whilst cycling along the towpath. It was lunch time, and I guess they'd been out since around 9.30 that morning. I went shopping, and, passing Lock 18, on my way home, just after 6.00pm - they were still there - unloading a boat full of logs and branches. I reckon they had at least another half an hour's work ahead of them - it was hot, and they all looked like they'd done a bloomin' good day's work! Let's all give 'em a cheer! (I know they'd rather have a pint - but pints cost money).

The Oilrag

.....and the last credible sighting of the Dodo, was in 1662 - so it was teetering on the edge in the Civil War.

6. Not the Grantham Canal

During a recent trip from Long Eaton to Foxton Locks and back I looked out for some interesting sights. Ed



At least someone in the Canal & River Trust has a sense of humour



Now read each line carefully, using the punctuation. (Clue: ½ a boat.) I'm told this boat belongs to Chris Doucher, 1960's Grantham Canal Workparty Leader.



Not the way to look after a dredger!



"Lets just pretend we hadn't noticed each other"



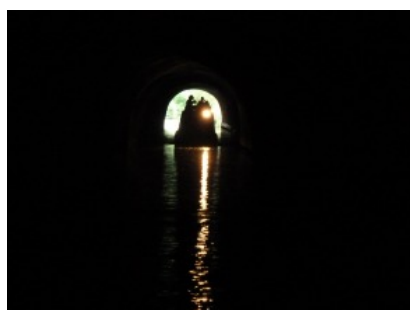
Oh! to be tidy!



Is it copper? No it's fibreglass. Top of Foxton Locks



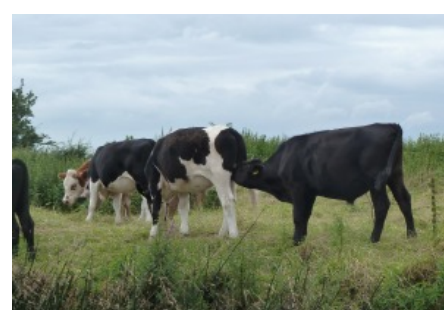
Bill Potts was the Forman at Harby depot for many years and this boat, based on the Grantham Canal, was named after him. It's now languishing at Kilby Bridge and according to the Boat Safety Certificate has not been used since May 2010. Can we have it back?



Saddington Tunnel



Don't think we should worry too much about our brickwork.



Hey! Do you mind.

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

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