



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: GranthamCanal.com

MARTIN DAY

Martin's funeral service at Bramcote Crematorium on Friday 26th February was something that none of us who were there, either expected or will ever forget. Martin's arrival, in a cardboard coffin attached to a motorcycle combination, should have told us this was going to be something different and as we walked into the large chapel we were greeted to the sound of the theme from Dad's Army. Friends and colleagues from Royal Mail, GCS, GCP, British Waterways, WRG BITM Group, Bingham Railway Club and Nottingham Caves made up just some of the many guests who had come to pay their last respects to Martin. By the time everyone arrived there was standing room only. Steve, a close family friend, did a wonderful job, giving us a brief insight into Martin's busy and rewarding life. There was laughter, lots of it, tears, only a few. Family and colleagues spoke with affection of the man we all knew and loved. So much was said in such a short time and finally, the nostalgic sound of a steam locomotive gentle puffing across the room, signalled that it was time to leave.



For those who were unable to attend Martin's service, you missed a real treat. Not a term one would expect to use on such an occasion but Martin would have been so proud. Thanks Martin, for your many year's of devotion to the Grantham Canal. We miss your cheery smile and your bottomless pit of information and advice. We won't ever forget you and we WILL open the Grantham Canal one day and a part of you will be there with the rest of us!

As you will probably be aware, Martin's family generously offered to make a donation to the GCS in his memory. If anyone still wishes to send their own contribution, please email me and I will put you in contact with the family.

1. Battle for Mann's Bridge:

Nothing new to report at the moment. We can only keep our fingers crossed.

2. WRG BITM at Mann's Bridge:

Our sincere thanks to Tony Hinsley and his WRG BITM team who did sterling work as usual at Mann's Bridge over the weekend of 21st / 22nd February, despite the snow on the Sunday morning. The use of a chainsaw makes life so easy, allowing the trees to be cut down and converted into logs of manageable size. Of the 25 workers on site there were 8 GCS members, an excellent turn out. There is still some tidying up to be done but at least the bed of the canal is visible now!



Photo's - Peter Stone

3. The Trip-boat:

Stability tests and acceptance trials took place in March and the Society is presently awaiting the completion of the fitted seating. Delivery by road of 'The Three Shires' is now planned for April.

4. The Work-boat: Centauri

A Boat Safety Scheme Certificate has been obtained and "Centauri" is now earning her keep. Overhanging branches and side growth have been trimmed back on the narrow section of the canal between the Bridle Bridge and Casthorpe Bridge. Three trips with the workparty team to the winding hole at Denton have resulted in the boat hold being filled with logs, old fencing from Denton Slipway, sawn off sections of builders planks, branches and brambles. A neat bonfire, started with the aid of Ralph's 'flamethrower' soon disposed of anything that was not worth salvaging. This week we used both "Centauri" and our aluminium workboat to remove some of the less accessible underwater branches. Before moving on toward Harlaxton for more tidying up. The channel near the Bridle Bridge is quite silted up so we need to use the boat as often as possible to make a navigable passage. There seems to be no shortage of volunteers (mainly Captains!) to man the boat but if you are interested in coming along and are not one of our regular workparty team, please send me an email first, as we only have a limited number of lifejackets which have been kindly loaned to us by BW.

Mike Stone and John Brydon took Sean McGinley, Waterway Manager - British Waterways, East Midlands, for a trip on Centauri on the 24th March as part of Sean's plan to cover all of his waterways during 2010. Sean commented on several areas of the canal requiring attention, most of which we had previously identified. He was quite happy that GCS volunteers should tackle the majority of issues although some bridge structures would need more specialised attention.

5. Harlaxton Wharf

Harlaxton Wharf – 17/03/2010. The contract which started on the 1st of March is on course for completing by Easter. The contractor is Willy Albans and Sons Ltd and based in Harby.

The project is funded by WREN and through the Lottery funded Changing Spaces Programme. The works are being managed by The GCP on behalf of the Harlaxton Village Community Spaces Group. A two space car park is also being installed and Harlaxton village will be working on preparing some historical information for an interpretive panel which will be installed later in the year.

Incidentally the timber on the left of one of the pictures is salvaged timbers from the original wharf edge. These timbers certainly were value for money – having probably been in place for around 200 years!

Text and photo's - Kevin Mann



6. Lock 6

From our roving reporter - Peter Stone

Whilst at Bridge 16 this morning, I met a Balfour Beatty man and his dog out for a walk, who told me that he'd spent 1.5 hours last Wednesday watching 'Mudlark' negotiate Lock 6 ... so I had to go and have a look.

'Mudlark' has been sitting in the reeds north of Lock 6 for some months. Apparently, it's recently 'come to life' and is now dredging south of Lock 6 [see pic. right]. The same photo shows how low the water now is - presumably as a result of the opening of the lock.

The bottom photo shows 'Mudlark' close-up, from the footpath to Cotgrave Country Park. Many readers may not be aware that we have a partially restored section of the canal, with 2 fully-restored Locks 6 & 7 alongside the Country Park, as a direct result of landscaping / regeneration work c. 2000, following the demolition of Cotgrave Colliery. It would be interesting to know when the last boat went through Lock 6. Has weedcutter 'John Nuttall' passed through the lock in recent years - or is 'Mudlark' the first in living memory?



If you spot anything new or unusual on the Grantham, please contact the editor with photos if possible.

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