

ISSUE 7

BRIDGE

April 2010



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

Fancy Getting involved in the Society a bit more?

With the coming of the Trip Boat, 'The Three Shires' we really need to get ourselves noticed out there. Volunteers are needed for promotional stalls and displays at local and national events this season. You don't have to have superior knowledge of the workings of the society to encourage people to take part in some fun activities. But you do have to be a member of the Society for insurance purposes. (It doesn't cost much to join!!!) Contact Rosemary Gibson RhuMaere@aol.com 01636 525526 / 07971173069

Confirmed dates: Sat & Sun 1st & 2nd May 10.30 - 5.00 Loughborough Canal and Boat Festival
Sat & Sun 8th & 9th May 9.00 - 6.00 Newark and Notts Agricultural Show

Other possible shows for May: Denton Street Market, Dove Cottage Fete, Stathern, Belvoir Steam Festival, Moira Canal Festival and Crick Boat Show.
Plenty on in June too. Watch this space.

Do you know of an event? Please let Rosemary know contact details of organisers.

PRIZES WANTED for a fun and informative game: anything welcome from a bar of soap to a bottle of something.

1. Battle for Mann's Bridge:

John Brydon attended the 7th day of the inquiry last Tuesday, with Peter Stone. This involved the Kinoulton turn and further delay favoured the Highways agency. An informal chat with the inspector could be interpreted that he was supportive of the GCS cause. The road layout should be altered in 6-7 weeks time. It was suggested that adaptations to the over-engineered Fosseyway Bridge could make savings to meet the cost of Mann's Bridge. Peter had received a copy of the Highways Agency Summing Up which included about 2 lines on the canal. The Inspector's report carries statutory authority, but the appendix, including the Grantham Canal will not be statutory. The MP for Gedling was due to meet with the Minister but this was cancelled on legal grounds. The Report is due in London at the end of this month when, despite the Election, the Minister will be at his desk.

Chairman, Mike Stone has said that the Canal Society should not underestimate the help received from a wide range of people and bodies. Special thanks go to John, Peter and many others for their efforts to try to make things happen. Please contact your new MP's to make them aware of the situation.

2. The Trip-boat:

'The Three Shires' is due to arrive at the end of this month. She has to be moved by canal from Lower Heyford to Kidlington (the location of transfer to road transport), which involves a cruise of 8 miles with 5 locks which should take 4 to 5 hours. The craning out, subsequent transport by road and launching, again by crane at Denton will probably take place on the following day. If anyone is particularly interested in watching proceedings please email the editor and as soon as I have accurate details I will let you know. The cost of moving 'The Three Shires' has kindly been covered by a very generous donation, for which the Society is extremely grateful.

3. Harlaxton Wharf

The landscaping of Harlaxton Wharf site has now been completed. Photos and details next month.

4. Workparties

The April workparty is at Woolsthorpe using **Centauri** to continue preparing the top section for the trip boat. Meet above Lock 18 at 09.30 Thurs 22nd and Sat 24th.

We extend a warm welcome to Jonathan, Adrian, Donna and Mike to the team .

5. The Work-boat: Centauri



Twice during the Easter Holiday some of our “young friends” from Grantham decided to cast **Centauri** adrift. The first time her stern held in the silt and bow wedged in the bank against the towpath where she remained overnight. The second time our “Real Friend”, John Moulsher, spotted the youngsters and suggested in no uncertain terms that they go elsewhere! Fortunately, John was able to secure Centauri alongside the new jetty on the towpath side above lock 18. This interference comes as no surprise to those of us who were involved with the original restoration of Lock 18 in the early 1990's. Then, we had a portable generator stolen, followed a short while later by someone setting fire to our horsebox which contained all our hand tools. We were indebted to the Notts Branch of the IWA who came

to our rescue with replacement hand tools, many of which we still use today. Hopefully the use of ‘chain’ ropes will give us some respite from attack especially as the trip boat will also be moored there. Once the decision on the safety of the gates on Lock 18 has been resolved it is planned to move the boats to a more secure location.

Centauri has made 6 working trips clearing the cut of branches, brambles, logs, 2 car wheels, a builders plank cut into 300mm lengths and various items of fencing (mainly from Denton Wharf). Our two grappling hooks have been invaluable for lifting items into the hold although unfortunately the best one is waiting underwater for collection, *so has anyone got a Sea Searcher Magnet they don't want?* We have made it almost to the A1 embankment although at present we are unable to wind at the very end. On our last two trips we have taken the aluminium work boat in tow and with its electric outboard it was invaluable for reaching the shallower areas.

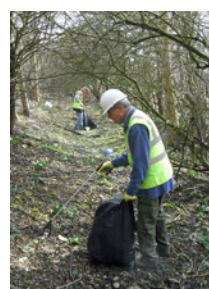
Centauri's engine has always been very reluctant to fire until we discovered the cold start device, now it's almost instantaneous. Nothing a sophisticated as glow plugs on our Lister!

Good job we made this discovery as the alternator did not appear to charge the battery so we removed the regulator for testing. That worked perfectly and it looked as though the alternator itself was faulty. This could have been difficult as this alternator is of military specification, not like those fitted to a normal car and it is also covered in engine cowling. However, during a conversation with Steve, who is a very knowledgeable auto electrician it became obvious that as there is no ignition switch, something else must turn on the ‘ignition’ warning light to *excite* the alternator (his words, not mine). So that's what the pressure switch attached to the oil filter housing does! As one terminal is broken off a simple on / off switch was added and we now have a charging system that works! Bridge is not usually a platform for advertising but Steve Whyatt does deserve a mention. Many thanks Steve. His workshop is in Stapleford. Tel no. 0115 9390634.



Whilst certain people were enjoying themselves, playing boats, Peter Stone, David Martin (Sustains Ranger) and your editor, were busy tidying up the towpath and A1 embankment of a mountain of rubbish, tyres, plastic bottles and dog poo in plastic bags. See the before and after shots below but please magnify them as they look more impressive!!.

By a sheer fluke, a couple of South Kesteven Council staff were driving past in their Land Rover and took at least half of our dozen bags of rubbish away. Don't bother to ask why the editor was wearing a life jacket on the A 607!



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 answer.

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