



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. The A46 Road Improvements

I received a very nice but serious email from Pam Hobson at Balfour Beatty asking us all to keep off the site around the new canal bridge whilst the construction work is still in progress:

"Thank you for copying me into Bridge magazine. Unfortunately I do have a bit of a problem relating to the A46 article. I fully understand why members would like to see the progress to the new bridge over the A46. After all it's not every day that this type of thing happens. The front page shots look as though who ever did take them was on our site. Had they had an accident this would have caused major problems for potentially themselves but also Balfour Beatty.

On a monthly basis we do have progress pictures taken from within our boundary, which I can send to you. You can then, with all our consciences clear, use the images.

Please can you ask your members not to cross the fencing at the end of the towpath as there may be hazards which may result in them injuring themselves.

*Thank you
Pam"*

Pam Hobson MCIPR, Public Liaison Manager, A46 Project Office, Newton Business Park, Shelford, Nottingham. NG13 8HA

Ed. Please heed Pam's warning.

Reminder: There are some interesting aerial pictures of the road works including the site of the new Canal Bridge to be found at <http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/27606.aspx>. The work has moved on rapidly since the aerial photos were taken. For instance the Stragglethorpe junction now has two working roundabouts!

Pam has kindly sent the aerial photo on the right, taken about mid April. If you enlarge the page sufficiently you will see that the bridge appears to have its "hat or cap" on. I doubt that either term is correct but I'm sure Pam will enlighten me!



(Ed. Pam tells me it's called "the deck". Thanks Pam.)

2. Letters

Thanks also to Chris Weston for the following email on the subject of clearing the canal.

"I completely understand the concern about the loss of habitat for shade-loving birds and wildflowers expressed by Mark Seabourne in his letter ("Bridge" March 2011).

However during a recent cycle ride along the canal I was shocked to see the overgrown and silted up state of the canal in the Plungar area. This is what happens if no maintenance is done and eventually there will be no canal left. Without boats, canals die, so the GCS's long term aim to restore the Grantham Canal to navigation is the only way forward. I remember reading in the canal press many years ago that when the Basingstoke Canal was being restored to navigation the "nature lobby" were opposed to boats passing along it as they stir up the mud. After a similar process of debate they seem to have come up with a solution which allows for navigation: can the same not be done for the Grantham?

Go to the canal's website <http://www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk/> and click on the link to Conservation Management Plan on the left. You'll see what steps have been taken to address these concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Weston"

3. The Trip-boat:

The work on the Trip Boat over the winter has paid off. There is a noticeable improvement in handling and the engine is much quieter as it now runs slower and so hopefully the crew and passengers will have more relaxing trips.

Unfortunately the idiots have come out of hibernation once again! The boat was set adrift from its moorings on Saturday night /Sunday morning 16th/17th April and then broken into, early Monday morning. Fortunately once again the damage to the boat itself was minimal but the fire extinguisher was let off in the front well and the roof and one side were also covered in white powder from it. The spent extinguisher was thrown in the water, as was the life ring, the two self inflating buoyancy aids and the now broken donation box which was empty anyway! Repairs and replacements will amount to something like £200 + at least 2 days work for two volunteers to sort it out + the wages of FIVE, yes FIVE, police officers who responded to our plight. At least we cannot say that we don't get support. On the lighter side, those responsible for the break in removed some bin liners to take their booty away. This consisted of about 10 muffins, which they abandoned in the trees and the car park. (obviously our catering is not to their liking). Four water glasses and about 20 teaspoons which they also left. (perhaps they planned to weigh the spoons in at the local scrapyard).



1st attack of 2011 - set adrift



Extinguisher powder everywhere



Buoyancy jackets activated



The sliding hatch force back

Our sincere thanks to everyone who took the trouble to phone in on both days, to report that something was wrong.

Despite the best effort of some, the Three Shires is still operational. Please telephone **01949 850 999** to book.

4. Workparties:

As you will have seen from the photos in last months issue, the workparty have been out and about on the Top Section of the canal, now the weather is better, trying to tidy the bankside from all the overgrown shrubs and saplings. It has been hard work but very rewarding. However, someone is determined to throw as much of the cut material into the canal as possible. Any connection with the previous item I wonder? Not all of it is the result of work we have done (there have been other agencies working there over the winter, and I'm not blaming them) but there seem to be a lot of quite large logs and branches appearing from somewhere. Several days have been spent trying using **Centaury** to clear a pathway for **The Three Shires** which has started operation again this month. We will be continuing to remove as much as we can from the water on the next two workparties: Thursday 28th and Saturday 30th April. If anyone wishes to join us and has not already been contacted , please email me at volunteers@granthamcanal.com for details. **Next** months dates will be 26th and 28th May

We received a request, some time ago, to install a memorial seat on the towpath at Casthorpe. Although our remit is really only to maintain the canal, it was felt that we have volunteers with the skills to make a professional job for everyone to enjoy. So on the 16th April, six of us, with Adrian Bellamy firmly in charge, fitted the seat. Adrian had spent the previous Thursday constructing a frame to retain the concrete and also a temporary jig to support the seat whilst the cement set. Those of us assisting were very impressed. When you have a professional around, tasks like this can be made so much easier!



Starting at 9.00am and away by 1.30 pm. That's being organised! Thanks to Adrian, Pete, Tony, the two Ian's and new member Alan.

Photos: Adrian Bellamy



We caught this one before and it's heavy!



Who would need to burn a pile of papers at Denton Slipway first thing in the morning?



An old metal trough with handles at each end and fitted with a float valve, hiding just beside the towpath



Gently past our friends, The Grantham Anglers and back to Woolsthorpe to unload.



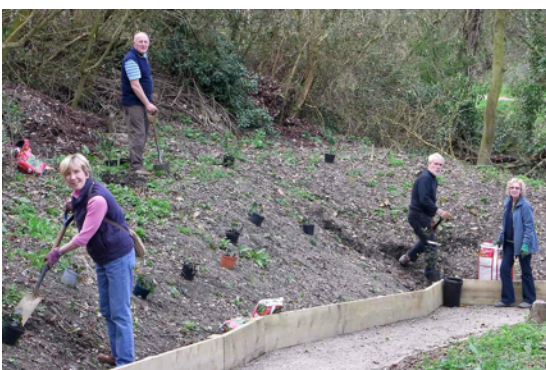
Left: Branches like this litter the whole 4 miles.

Right: Even the Denton Feeder is adding to the problem.

Photos left & right by Bob Terry



5. Harlaxton Wharf



The Harlaxton Wharf community group planting up The Wharf.

Photos from Carol Harris



Grantham Canal Society Supporters' Meeting

**Wednesday 11th May 2011
at 8pm
Harlaxton Village Hall**

**Illustrated Talk
“The Caves of Nottingham”
by
Margaret Harrison
Blue Badge Guide**

**Tickets £2.00 on the door
Includes Light
Refreshments**

**Any Enquiries: Carole Harris
Telephone 01476565890**

A note for the diary

Wed. 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.

Commencing at 7.30pm. Tickets will cost £5.00 and include light refreshments. You are advised to book early as seating capacity will be limited. Venue to be announced later.

6. BW calls time on Waterside Pub Partnership

According to the April postings on Waterways World website, BW's Waterside Pub Partnership with Scottish & Newcastle has ended. Read details on <http://www.waterwaysworld.com/latest.cgi>
If you miss the April posting you can click at the bottom of their page to find April or any other month.

7. Spring Photo Competition.

Once again, **Derek Bolton's is offering a £5 Boots Voucher** to the person who can give the most correct answers when naming the 'plants' that he has photographed on his "Early Spring Walks" from mid March to mid April. Each picture has been taken somewhere on the Grantham Canal. Closing date is 31st May, so it's time to get the books out! I'm sure many of you will know several of the answers anyway so please find a few minutes to enter.

EARLY SPRING WALKS

IDENTIFY CORRECTLY AS MANY OF THE PLANTS AS YOU CAN IN THE CENTRE OF EACH OF THE 12 PICTURES TO HAVE A CHANCE OF WINNING A £5 BOOTS GIFT TOKEN.



1



2



3



4



5



6



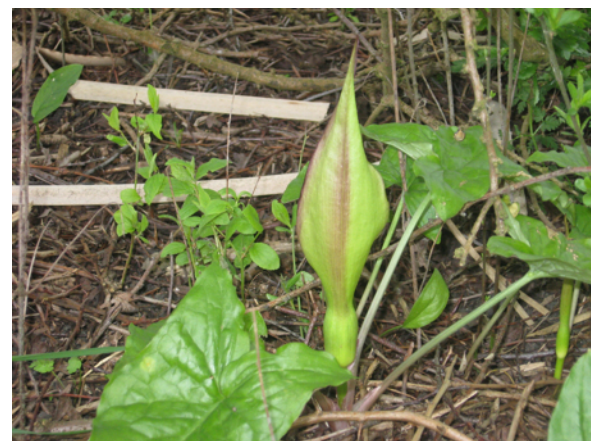
7



8



9



10



11



12

Please enter the competition by sending the editor an email listing the photographs, 1 to 12, with their correct name. A telephone number would help, should you win! Please put **Bridge Competition** in the Subject box of your email.

If you prefer to post your entry, please list the photographs 1 to 12 on a piece of paper, with their correct name and don't forget to include your name and address. Again, a telephone number would help.

Send to: **Bridge Competition, 23 Brownhill Close, Cropwell Bishop, Nottingham. NG12 3DN**
The closing date for all entries will be the 31st May 2011 and the draw will take place the following day.
 The name of the winner will be announced in the June issue of 'Bridge'.

Good Luck!

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