



## 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](mailto: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](http://www.granthamcanal.com)

### 1. The A46 Road Improvements



Pam Hobson from Balfour Beatty has kindly sent this photo of the new canal bridge under the A46.

### 2. Heritage Lottery Application

The Grantham Canal Partnership supported by the Grantham Canal Society has submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to restore locks 14 and 15. The emphasis of the bid is to undertake the lock restoration using volunteers as part of a national waterway skill training initiative being developed by the Inland Waterway's Association, with an emphasis on learning waterway heritage construction skills.

Although we are only applying for funding for the restoration of only two of the four locks which remain derelict on the Woolsthorpe flight, we are confident that the skills learnt will enable the remaining two locks and indeed other derelict locks elsewhere on the Grantham Canal to be restored. As this is part of a national training initiative we will also, through skills learnt, be indirectly assisting in the restoration of locks on other remainder waterway canals.

In addition to the restoration of the locks, we are also proposing to work with local canalside village communities to research and install bespoke interpretation panels and new signage along the full 33 mile of the canal. It is hoped that this locally based research will discover previously unseen photographs of the canal before it closed and unlock lots of canal memories which can be recorded.

A further emphasis will be the marketing of the many volunteering opportunities on the canal to attract a much wider cross section of people than is currently the case.

It is a long process; our submitted application is only the first step to allow us to commission a series of studies and reports to enable us to submit a HLF stage 2 application. We will hear if we have been successful for our Stage 1 Application in early June and we aim to submit our stage 2 application in August 2012.

The value of the stage 1 application is £55,000, with the estimated overall cost of the proposed works (stage 2) being £750,000. Our application to the HLF would be for £380,000, with the remaining costs being secured through other grant funding bodies, company sponsorship and 'gift in kind', which will primarily consist of the value of volunteers who are involved with the project or are receiving training.

If we are successful then it will give the Grantham Canal and its canal heritage a much needed boost. Restoration of these locks would be the next step in achieving navigation into Leicestershire and eventually through to Redmile. Undoubtedly there will be plenty to do but it will be worth it! In the meantime we must keep our fingers crossed and hope we are successful with the stage 1 application.



Lock 14, one of the two locks referred to in Kevin's report on the previous page. As you can see, a lot of vegetation clearance will be required before any other work starts.

Photo Kevin Mann

### 3. The Trip-boat:

Some 15 or so bookings so far, from Mid April to early July mean that [The Three Shires](#) is off to a flying start. The crews have reported that she is much more responsive and easier to handle after the winter remedial work. The narrow and shallow section of canal between The Bridle Bridge (63) and Casthorpe Bridge (64) continues to cause some concern, especially with a fully loaded boat. However as you will read below we hope to improve matters shortly. The popularity of the cruises means we could do with a few more volunteers to crew the boat. It's not difficult, and if you fancy having a go, 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).

### 4. Workparties:

The workparty have been out on the Top Section of the canal, continuing to use [Centauri](#) to clear the branches and logs from the Canal. A lot of the smaller branches and logs flow with the water from Denton towards Woolsthorpe but get trapped in the shallow section near the Bridle Bridge which is an additional hazard for [The Three Shires](#).

At BW's request we are going to make a few adjustments to the overspill weir at Denton and 'envelopes' on lock 18 at Woolsthorpe to raise the water level slightly. This action should allow us to navigate the shallow section a little easier.

Our next official workparty dates are Thursday 23rd and Saturday 25th June. If anyone wishes to join us, please email: [volunteers@granthamcanal.com](mailto:volunteers@granthamcanal.com) for details.



Vandalism continues to be a never ending problem. The coping stones have been dislodged and pushed into the water at Longmoor Bridge (62) and the pontoon at the A1 has also been damaged. Photos: Anthony Jackson

An update on last month's article on the break in of [The Three Shires](#). Police know the name of the young 'lady' is who kindly left a cigarette butt on the sink. Isn't DNA wonderful. More than a slap on the wrist would be nice too!

### 5. Social Meetings

A very lively and entertaining evening talk on "[The Caves of Nottingham](#)" was presented by [Margaret Harrison](#) on the 11th May. Her knowledge of the cave system and its history showed no limits and I'm sure she could have kept us amused for hours, given the chance. She has been involved with the caves for many years and worked alongside our



own Martin Day, sadly no longer with us. Stories, such as when she and her colleagues broke through the rubble into a "new" cave system only to discovered a complete 'Mini' parked there. (Ask Margaret, not me! Ed.) The only disappointment of the evening was the poor attendance. Those who were not there missed a real treat! Our thanks to Margaret and also everyone at Harlaxton Village Hall for their preparation and refreshments.



Mike Stone introduces Margaret (left) and Margaret captivating the audience (right)

**Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup>** – Harlaxton Wharf BBQ – Trip-boat operating. See June issue of Bridge for full details.

**Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>** - 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.

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 and booking details to be announced later.

## **6. Cotgrave Country Park Grantham Canal Improvements**

Following a successful bid by Nottinghamshire County Council to Nottingham Growth Point for funding - a substantial amount of work is due to commence within Cotgrave Country Park and in particular on the length of the Grantham Canal within the park.

The funding bid was especially supported by the River Trent to Cotgrave Green Infrastructure study and the 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy and was also enhanced by potential benefits to the adjacent development site on the former colliery.

The main benefit for the canal will be the removal of the large concrete colliery culvert bridge (bridge 14a) between Cotgrave Main Road Bridge and Hollygate Lane. This will potentially create the opportunity in the future to develop this length of canal for navigation providing a distance of approximately 1.7km (1.1 miles)

In addition the following works will be undertaken:

- A new bridge will be constructed immediately below Lock 7 on the abutments of the original access bridge. This new bridge will be designed to complement the lock, provide multi use recreational access and allow access for country park maintenance vehicles
- Redundant colliery services which were laid on the bed of the canal to the east of the colliery bridge (14a) will be removed.
- Towpath upgrade to accommodate increased recreational use within the country park.
- Habitat and balancing pond improvements within the country park.
- Improvements to footpaths and horse rides within the country park.
- Landscape / habitat enhancement, new hedgerows, existing pond improvements, grassland enhancement and woodland management.

The total estimated cost of the work is £381,000 with Nottinghamshire County Council providing £90,000 and the remainder being secured as Growth Point Green Infrastructure Grant.

Currently Nottinghamshire Country Council are undertaking engineering surveys and detailed design work. It is hoped that work will commence in late summer or early autumn and the work will be completed by January 2012.



Photo and article from Kevin Mann

## **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. Pictures and details in April Issue.

## 8. GCS at the Shows and Events

With already half a dozen events covered with various helpers, Rosemary, Rhumaere@aol.com needs additional volunteers to assist on the sales stand. Anyone interested who can spare a few hours would be very welcome.

## 9. Request from the Chairman

Has any member experience of writing & issuing Press Releases? If so please contact the chairman on chairman@granthamcanal.com

## 10. Correspondence

Having installed a memorial seat on the towpath at Casthorpe last month, Adrian received, on behalf of the workparty team, a very nice letter from Rosemary Sleaford which is copied below, with her permission.

*"Dear Adrian*

### *Seat on Grantham Canal Towpath*

*I write to thank you, and your willing team of gentlemen helpers so much for the management and hard work that went into the positioning and securing of the seat in memory of my late father, Harry Peel.*

*We know it wasn't going to be an easy task, in particular with the position we had chosen. However, you all have done an incredible job to realise our wishes, allowing visitors to the towpath the opportunity to sit and take in the beautiful surroundings by the canal. Although living in Grantham all of his 96 years, Dad just loved walking, and enjoying the lovely places in and around the town, he didn't ask for anything more. Being an excellent Joiner, he would have approved of the seat, the location and how it has been secured into position.*

*My step mother and I are so grateful for what you have all done for us, and thank you all most sincerely.*

*Our kindest regards. Rosemary Sleaford"*



I received the following email from Pete Reader on the subject of clearing the canal bed at Cropwell. Ed.

*"Being a life long member of Cropwell I have nothing but praise for the clearance efforts. I regularly walk the towpath with my dog and would have liked it to have been extended to the Fosse and also old Gypsum plant to Cropwell Bridge. I regularly saw the lads working really hard and talked to a few of them. Can you expand the scheme?*

*My uncle was the village cobbler and sweetshop owner. He used to skate on the canal in winter in the early 1900's.*

*Nothing would please me more than to see Cropwell in water, bridges and locks restored and navigable in the next few years.*

*Good luck to the society and please ride above any negative comments from the narrow minded who do not understand the magnificent history of our canals and the future benefits.*

*My society map of the Grantham shows bridges and locks but not culverts. Can you be more location specific when you deal with culverts please.*

*What about the badgers packing their bags at Cropwell and Colston bridge ?*

*Very best of luck for the future. Pete Reader."*

I have answered Pete in detail but briefly, the Community Payback Team(s) will be back after the bird nesting season is over, and I will try to be more specific with locations in future. As for the Badgers, there is an approved method of asking them to move but that's down to the animal welfare experts. Ed

And finally: Sincere thanks to Roger Skinner for the email sent to Angie, our Membership Secretary.

*"Dear Angie , but most particularly those who compose and produce "BRIDGE". I should like to congratulate you and thank you for the extremely high quality of the newsletter. It is a cut above many commercial efforts and with its photography too, just stands out. I live in Herefordshire and voluntary help to the society is just not feasible but I wish you all every success in the venture. Yours sincerely, Roger Skinner"*

You may not know that although I write and edit 'Bridge', without the help of the various contributors there would not be much to pass on. Once each issue is complete and proof read (I found a spelling mistake in April's issue today!), I pass the final copy to Angie, (quickly followed by a revised copy when I find something else wrong) and she emails, at present some 250 copies out to interested parties. My thanks to everyone who helps. 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