

BRIDGE

November / December 2012



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

Sorry if you thought Bridge had disappeared again. No, it's still here. I don't give up that easily! I trust you all had a good Christmas. So belated best wishes for 2013 from everyone involved in GCS. Ed

1. Mudlark Appeal

How can we thank you enough for your generosity? Benefactors have helped us with donations, both large and small and now **Mudlark belongs to the Grantham Canal Society** and will shortly be showing off her new colours on the water. One of the conditions from the previous owners, BW, (now CRT) was that the dredger's colour scheme should be changed. That was no problem to the workparty and some of our volunteers have 'adopted' her as their pet project. As you can see from the photos, her appearance has changed but there has been lots of other less obvious jobs done, some of which our devoted team have taken home to complete (probably in the comfort of their own warm shed or garage!). Our thanks go out to everyone involved.



Mudlark's transformation from arrival (top left) through various stages to completion (centre). The "support team" pictured: John Brydon, Ralph Bellamy, Tony Kirkland, Dave Booth, John Trigg and David Moretti.



2. New Lock Gates



You will remember how delighted we all were when the new top gates on lock 18 were finally installed in June, only to be devastated to find that despite examining the condition of the lower gates when the lock was empty, they proved to be in worse condition internally, than we thought. Each time the lock was filled, more and more water escaped and it became more obvious that the gates were not safe to use. Reluctantly we decided that sometime in the future, they too would have to be replaced at considerable cost, something in the region of £58,000.

Chairman, Mike Stone, approached Hargreaves, who manufactured and installed the top gates and due to a postponed order elsewhere they have kindly made us an offer that we cannot refuse.

Can we once again ask for your help. If each member could make just a small donation (or a bigger one if you have just had a refund from the tax man!), we could easily get these gates installed in 2013.

Please read the notes below and if you can help we would be so grateful.

- The Grantham Canal Society has an opportunity to replace two unsafe gates with new ones. An offer to supply them 'at cost' has been made by the manufacturers, Hargreaves Lock Gates. This will reduce our costs by over 30%!!
- **We must not miss this opportunity!!!** So far we have raised just over 50% of the cost – thanks to generous donations from supporters. We now need to raise a further **£14,500** quickly.
- **Please will you help us?** How? By making a donation, preferably with Gift Aid and, should you feel able, perhaps make it a regular monthly donation.
- **Thank you for your interest in the waterway.**
- By raising funds, the aim of the Grantham Canal Society is to complete the restoration of the Grantham Canal, and to promote its use by the communities through walking, cycling, angling, bird watching, canoeing and boating. Take a walk along the canal towpath and enjoy the tranquility of your surroundings. Watch for the Kingfisher in the Harlaxton cutting and for the swans and their cygnets. Just look - and enjoy! You can make a difference - go on! See our website: www.granthamcanal.org Here maybe you could hire our trip boat and view your countryside with a different perspective!

If you feel that you would like to help, 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. Every little helps! Thank you from all at GCS.

**THE GRANTHAM CANAL SOCIETY WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING
FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS DURING THE LAST MONTH.**

THE NAMES ARE IN NO ANY SPECIFIC ORDER SO IF YOURS IS MISSING PLEASE LET THE TREASURER KNOW.

DAVID CROSS

DAVID GALE

DAVID LYNEHAM-BROWN

DAVE TARRANT

3. LOUGHBROUGH STUDENTS

Lack of space in previous issues meant that details of the Loughbrough Students visit has had to be held back. There were 109 young folk from the University who gave us a day, well half of one, to work on the canal. It was a sunny day but was cold and windy so trying to paint the lock gates was a test for our visitors. Others went on a tidy up around the towpath and the remainder continued the work clearing the feeder channel from Knipton Reservoir. From the rather muddy ditch where they were working, there were gasps of surprise at the view of the reservoir from the top of the steps. Fortunately it was much warmer clearing out the feeder. Our thanks to Billy Marsh, all the students who helped, Amanda Morgan from CRT and our workparty team for their support on the day.



(Left and above) Some of the Students that came to help on the Knipton Feeder.

(Right) The GCS team stayed to repair a previously identified leak at the entrance to a culvert after the students had left.



Photos - Tony Pitman

4. WORKPARTIES

Workparty members have been busy recently, removing logs and car plastic bodywork from the canal using Centauri. Then there was the run up to Discovery Day where we tidied up the site, erected the marquee generally got in Rosemary and Tony's way and then on the day itself, we and many other volunteers were there to help out. Then of course everything has to be dismantled and put away. The marquee came down a lot quicker than it went up!! Then there are the boats. The Three Shires will be coming out of the water over the winter to have its hull blacked, the propeller straightened and various bits of paintwork repaired. To make economical use of the transport and craneage Mudlark will go in the water and 3 Shires will move to the Carpenters Workshop. As mentioned on page 1, CRT have insisted that Mudlark must be repainted in different colours, so that is what the team have been doing. The hulls of both Mudlark and Earwig have been shot blasted and bitumen applied. The cabin sides have had any rust removed and primer applied. Mudlark has now been painted in Hollybush Green and now the excavator cab has been done too, she is ready to go in the water. The team have really enjoyed this work. They are always enthusiastic but each seem to have 'adopted' their own part of the boats and progress has been remarkable. Everybody seems to know exactly what to do. Brilliant!



Photo Ralph Bellamy



Where shall we start?



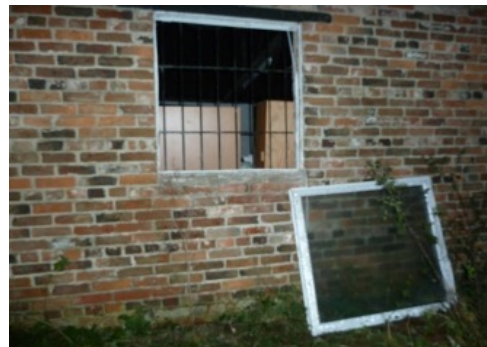
Nearly finished

Another little project that some of the team have taken on is the rebuilding of parts of the perimeter wall surrounding Woolthorpe Depot. As you can see from the photos, after removing and cleaning the loose bricks, the team did have plenty to do but as always, the job was completed to the usual high workparty standard.

In theory, now the wall is repaired, the site should be rather more secure but as we complete one job, someone gives us another! Over the weekend of 10/11th November we had some more unwelcome visitors.



This time it was the Carpenter's Shop that was the target. Our farmer friend, John Moulsher, noticed that the rear windows to the building had been removed and Dave Cross and I went over to see how much damage had been done.



Previously, the windows themselves had been covered in a toughened plastic material so the glass was still intact but the actual frame, with the glass was jemmed out of the wall. Fortunately, a small amount of damage was limited to the frame itself. Both windows had metal grills on the inside but only the one to the main room was removed, again with minimal damage. It still took a couple of days, in time, to replace the windows and make them, hopefully, even more secure. Many thanks to Dave Cross for making outer grills and replacing the window frames. Ed



Dave using a suitable 'tool' to replace the window beading after temporary repairs.



Bars on the inside and the outside should make life a little more difficult.

What did we lose? Well, ironically the 'valuables' from the trip boat! Crisps, drinks and biscuits, smoke alarm, carbon monoxide alarm, first aid kit, tea and coffee, kitchen rolls and toilet rolls, all brought in for safety!

Every cupboard was open and paint rollers, brushes and wet and dry paper also went. Perhaps the miscreants are going to do some social work!!!

An old water heater and some of the unwanted contents of several boxes of jumble, have also found new homes. The police have logged it as yet another crime against us. It could have been much worse!

5. WRG November Dig Weekend

Malcolm Bridge and members of the WRG North West Group were with us again on the weekend of 10/11th November and did a superb job clearing the invert (brick bottom) of lock 10 of the Cropwell Flight, just off the A46. It was no mean feat to clear an area of something like 80ft x 14ft. Our team continued above and below lock 11. Thanks to Amanda from CRT, who gave up her free time to come and chat to everybody, to Michael Rowan (GCP Chairman) and of course our visitors and our own workparty members.



(Above) Before, during and after the NW Group assault on the vegetation in Lock 10. It's amazing what can be achieved in a day and a half. (Below) GCS tackle the previously cut material around Lock 11.



6. IWA

IWA Notts and Derby Branch

Programme 2012 - 2013.

Meetings held on the third Friday of the month throughout most of the year. Meetings are held at 7.45pm at Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 7HY, about 20 minutes from M1 Junction 24 up the A453. Further information about Meetings can be obtained from Social Secretary, Mavis White Telephone 01636671726.

Friday January 18th 2013.

Manchester Ship Canal by Rod Pearson. Review on the Manchester Ship Canal, with a few engineering issues that have cropped up.

7. Water Fern

C&RT have achieved encouraging results in the control of Water Fern (*Azolla filiculoides*), in a report by Richard Bennett - Senior Ecologist East Midlands. Weevils which attack the water plant were introduced in areas along the canal at Tollerton Rd and Hose Rd Bridges in July and in August between Bridges 33,34,40,41. Significant reduction in plant numbers have been observed. This is the plant which develops a very dense matt turning red creating a hazard since the canal surface appears solid.

Tony Pitman



10.10.12

www.nonnativespecies.org

Produced by Olaf Booy, Max Wade and Vicky White of RPS

Water Fern

Species Description

Scientific name: *Azolla filiculoides*

AKA: Fairy Fern, Cyfrdwy (Welsh)

Native to: North and Central America

Habitat: Still and slow flowing water bodies (e.g. ponds, drainage channels, ditches, canals)

Very small free-floating water plant that forms dense mats. Unmistakeable when in its red form and relatively easy to distinguish from duckweeds in its green form. Can be seen most months of the year. Spreads mainly vegetatively though can produce minute spores.

Introduced for ornamental use in ponds and aquaria. First recorded in 1883 and has spread rapidly throughout England in the last 50 years. Infrequent in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Can be inadvertently carried on water plants from garden centres. Out-competes native species by forming a dense covering on the surface of the water, blocking out light, causing deoxygenation, preventing air-breathing insects from reaching the surface and reducing water temperatures. Dense and continuous stands can be a health hazard as the water surface appears solid.

Water fern is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England, Wales and Scotland. As such it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause this species to grow in the wild.

For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



If you would like the chance to know what it feels like to be in the bottom of a lock, have a trip to Redhill Lock (59) on the River Soar on Sat. 19th Jan 10.00 - 3.30 where CRT are having an open day during repair works. Access is off the A453 not far from junction 24 of the M1. Follow the signs to Redhill Marina, NG11 0EB. It is an interesting experience!

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

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