

June 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](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 Society" page on our website: [www.granthamcanal.org](http://www.granthamcanal.org)

**1. Mudlark**

Mudlark, our own ex BW dredger is now safe and sound in the grounds of the Carpenters Workshop at Woolsthorpe. The big problem now is how to pay for her. One of your Committee members has kindly provided a six month interest free loan but of course the days seems to fly by and we will soon have to pay the money back.

Now a short story. Those of you who have been interested / involved with the Canal over the years will remember our good friend Martin Day who sadly passed away in February 2010. A not unsubstantial amount of money was collected at Martins funeral and his family, Sue, Justin and Melissa wanted GCS to find something that we could buy that would be a lasting memory to Martin's many years of service on Workparties and as you may remember, editor of the earlier paper edition of 'Bridge'. We looked at seats but felt there must be something else which was more suitable. I tried to think of a piece of equipment that was long lasting and we could use for the Society but in these days of built in obsolescence there was nothing. Then along came Mudlark! I could almost feel the excitement over the phone after Sue had seen the emailed pictures and confirmed with her family that we had at last found the answer. "Don't change the name, it's Martin. He would love it". These were my instructions from Sue.



By way of a thank you to the family I took them out on Three Shires where we scattered a little bit of Martin and lots of flowers in the winding hole at Denton. I'm not a great believer of things 'spooky' but it was a very wet, cold and windy day and as I nosed Three Shires into the Winding Hole everything changed. We were obviously sheltered by the trees but it became completely calm and the rain

stopped. The Trip Boat often has a mind of her own as to where she wants to go but this time she sat there at 90 degrees to the canal so I decided to turn the engine off. We all reflected on Martin as we threw the individual flowers in the water and then I noticed the boat had gently turned anti-clockwise to face in the opposite direction, still 90 degrees to the canal. It didn't stop there though. A further 90 degree turn put Three Shire alongside the towpath where she sat patiently waiting to start the return trip. I went back to the tiller, started the engine and almost immediately the wind got up and it started to rain again, which continued all the way back to Woolsthorpe. I got soaked! If I had not been there I would have thought it a "tall story" but it's true! Ed.

Picture above: Mudlark with Sue and her Grandchildren - inset: Martin



Photo: Ralph Poore



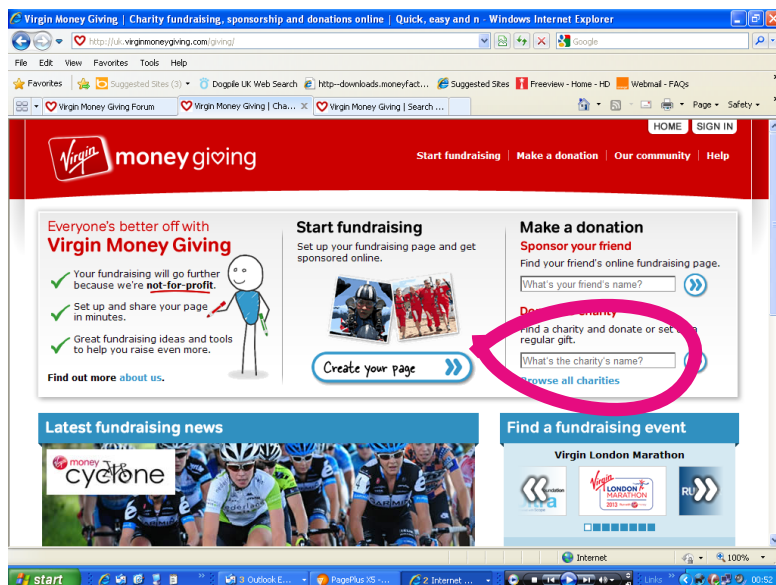
Left: Mudlark leaves Cotgrave.

Above: Arriving at Woolsthorpe

Ready for some TLC  
Photos centre & right: Tony Pitman

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

## 2. Donations for Mudlark



As you will have seen on the previous page we need to raise the remainder of the funds to pay for Mudlark. We have set up an account with "Virgin Money Giving" which allows anyone with computer access, who wishes to help us, to make a donation to GCS at any time and for any amount. If you are a tax payer we can claim "Gift Aid" on your donation. Please have a look at the site <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/> (note there is not a 'www' in sight). 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. We all put in many hours and travel for miles as volunteers for

no reward other than the satisfaction of seeing the canal maintained and slowly being restored. This is your chance to help us, so that we can continue this huge task. Please see the flier on the back page. Thank you. Ed

## 3. Canal Inspection



On Wednesday 13th June the GCS Exec Committee, following in the wake of many historic canal companies, undertook an inspection of the canal length for which we are responsible. From my point of view, with my workparty organisers hat on, it was a chance to observe what we had done and to see what was still needing attention. It gave the Committee members a chance to ask questions, make notes. We stopped off at each bridge and landing point en route. We held our monthly Committee Meeting on the return journey which was something of a novelty. Thanks to Tony Jackson and John Trigg who crewed the boat for us.

We were working - honest!

## 4. DIANA

My apologies to Richard & Jane Bartrop for spelling their surname incorrectly last month.

Richard has supplied a little postscript to his day out with Diana on our canal. *"After we had been on the Grantham Canal I thought we had been having trouble with the weed on the prop, but on investigation discovered that grease had blocked the water feed to the "Cutlass" (stern propshaft) bearing, so it was starting to bind through no water getting through. One advantage of keeping the boat on a trailer, and a fairly straightforward fix"*!

I wish we could say the same about Centauri for there is no weed hatch to clear the prop. It's not been a problem yet.....Ed

## 5. HARLAXTON BBQ

The Harlaxton Wharf Committee have regretfully decided that the planned BBQ at Harlaxton Wharf on the 8th July is cancelled, mainly because of the awful weather we are all suffering at present. Sorry about that.

## 6. Sales Stand



Rosemary and Tony go from strength to strength with the sales stand and talks. Don't they look the part? Help is always appreciated but unfortunately not always forthcoming. It's a hard job loading and unloading the stock twice a day and standing in one place for 7 or 8 hours so a little moral support goes a long way, if only to allow them the chance to have a wander round to look at the other stalls. Many thanks to the few 'regulars' who often help. Don't worry if you feel your lack of knowledge is a disadvantage, you will very soon learn by just being there and often the public can fill you in with interesting new information.

Picture: ?



## 6. Lock 18 Top Gate Replacement

At last we have managed to get the new top gates installed, at the 3rd attempt. Best part of 1 week of preparation and a further week of activity on lock 18. The pictures probably say far more than any words so I'll keep the text to a minimum.



Cutting the grass



Lifting and moving the stop planks. Thanks to John Moulsher



The crane arrives



So do the gates



Lifting out the top stop planks for inspection



Clearing away debris



Replacing Stop planks



The pin on the heel post



Removing the balance beam followed by the old gate, smoking from use of a grinder to cut away ironwork.



New gates are lifted in whilst we pump out the lock chamber



Tony Kirkland fits the new lock ladder on the offside wall recess



Balance beams are re-fitted. Final trimming up of gates



Final removal of top stop planks



New top gates having their first taste of water



Bottom gates need to swell



Lock 18 full of water once again

For technical reasons, most, if not all these photos are mine but I will include some which were taken from different angles by other photographers, next month

Sincere thanks to everyone involved in this 'little' project. It was very much a team effort, not just with members of our workparty and support crew but Nigel who made and fitted the gates, the crane operators, drivers, Simon from BW and last but not least, John Moulsher for allowing access through his field.

Our camera shy Chairman pretending to work!



## 7. Google Maps to feature canals and rivers

David Martin, Sustrans Group Coordinator kindly sent me this item that he spotted. Please click on the link.  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jun/19/google-maps-uk-rivers-canals?INTCMP=SRCH>

## 8. Trip Boat

We have had a few silly problems with the Bilge pumps on 3 Shires. We thought there were two but discovered a third, only because it would not switch off, which explains the flat battery. Of the other two pumps, one would not switch on and the third worked when it felt like it! Unfortunately the third one was in the front well deck and as you are probably aware we have had a **few** showers recently so a bit of personal attention in the form of 'Chief Baler', otherwise known as Ralph Poore, GCS Treasurer has been necessary. It doesn't affect the trips but it a nuisance, hopefully to be solved soon.

Have you considered becoming a volunteer skipper or crew member on the Three Shires? If you are familiar with the characteristics of a narrowboat that would be good but not essential. We will train you. If you are good with people that would help too. A little knowledge of the canal would be good but you will soon learn. We won't throw you in the deep end (excuse the pun) *We will drop you in gently!* If the idea appeals, please get in touch with Ralph Poore email [sugarpineexpress@btinternet.com](mailto:sugarpineexpress@btinternet.com) or phone 01476 570759. You never know you might enjoy the trips as much as we do!

If you wish to book a trip on 3 Shires please ring Fiona on 01949 850 999. All arrangements for trips must go through Fiona to avoid any possibility of double booking. Details of prices and journey times etc can be found on the website.

## 9. Archive photos

It was very nice to hear from Mike Atherley who ran the workparties with Colin Bryan and Myself in the 1990's. Mike was always very good at keeping records, as you will see. His email is in response to Val Roberts article on the rally at Lock 1.

*Hello Ian,*

*Here are a few facts and names of craft attending the rally.*

*Date 13/14th Oct 1973.*

*Organiser Chris Tizzard*

*Moorings officer Chris Bates. (now Deuchar)*

*Opened by Dennis McCarthy and Sir Denis and Lady LeMarchant*

*25 boats passed through the lock, the maximum that could be accommodated in the pound. Many more had to be content with moorings on the Trent, either side of the lock.*

*The only names I have are as follows.*

*NB Mercury, brought Dennis McCarthy and the President and dignitaries to the opening ceremony.*

*NB Ximenes, first boat through. followed by*

*NB Elizabeth reputed to be the last full length narrow boat to leave the canal on the actual day of abandonment in 1936.*

*NB Pulsatilla, Meandrin, Estepona.*

*Sorry I can't name any more but lets hope others that came, can.*

*Regards,*

*Mike Atherley.*

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](mailto:ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.com)





## Grantham Canal Society Ltd

### **“Mudlark” Dredger Appeal**

*At very short notice  
the GCS had the  
opportunity to  
purchase and  
refurbish a dredger –  
so we did.*

*Vital to our role in  
making and keeping  
the canal navigable  
we had to make the  
commitment – now  
we have to pay for it.*



#### **What we have done**

The Society has been able to negotiate the purchase of the Dredger “Mudlark” from British Waterways, but we now need to restore it to working order, paint and commission it. The “Mudlark” is 35’ long, 8’ wide, 7’ 3” high, weighs in at 15 tons and is in our depot at Woolsthorpe. Our objective is to have it fully operational by October 2012.

This is a much needed and vital piece of equipment, a huge asset in helping to achieve the Society’s long term objective of restoring the canal to its former glory as a fully navigable waterway.

#### **Grantham Canal Society launches “Mudlark” Funding Appeal**

A member of the Grantham Canal Society made us an interest-free loan to secure “Mudlark” and now we have launched an appeal to raise £6,500 to fund the purchase and refurbishment of the dredger.

#### **Your support is much valued**

We have always had great support from local communities, our volunteers and the many groups and individuals who love their canal, so we are hoping that once again you will all dig deep and support our appeal.

#### **How to donate**

Please make a donation and support this appeal. You can give online by going to [www.virginmoneygiving.com](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com) or by cheque made payable to Grantham Canal Society and sent to our registered office address; 31 Westgate, Southwell, Nottingham NG25 OJN

#### **Business sponsorship – new opportunities**

There are some excellent and high value opportunities for local businesses to sponsor elements of the “Mudlark” Dredger Project, such as new hydraulic rams, paint, and fluid for hydraulics. If you can help please call 0560 3333 228 or email [chairman@granthamcanal.com](mailto:chairman@granthamcanal.com).

Please pass this appeal leaflet to other people and businesses and encourage their support.

***Thank you so much for caring about the Grantham Canal.***