



PUBLISHED BY  
THE  
*Grantham Canal*  
SOCIETY

APRIL  
2015

### This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

What a great start to the cruising season! Thanks to a considerable effort by volunteers and to visitors who arrived in numbers for the short trip cruises, depot open day and afternoon teas Easter Sunday and Monday raised over £750 for GCS funds. Perhaps I should also mention the excellent weather which also made a difference! Thank you everybody!

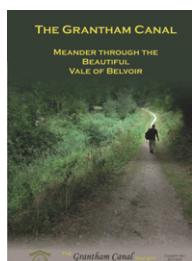
I called at Hickling the other day and thought how well the canal appeared. This is thanks to 'Community Engagement' by a small team of local villagers who have not only cleared the canal of weeds but also removed them from the towpath. Thank you guys for your work and for setting an example for other canal-side villages to follow.



My main reason for going was to see the status of the lengthmens' hut. We are awaiting a delivery of some materials and then I hope the structure can be restored to its original condition. This is also a project with input from Hickling residents. You will have noticed that I said how well the canal appeared; that's because there are things you may not have seen! Much of the canal near the basin has a depth of 2' 6" (OK I am old fashioned! 762mm if you must!) but round the curve towards Bridge 31 it is about 6" deep. This length was navigable in 2000 so in less than 15 years it has silted up. This illustrates why a canal, which is an artificial waterway, needs to be used continuously to keep it clean. Natural watercourses clean themselves; canals do not!

Spare a thought for the GCS Rangers whose lives are made a misery by dog owners – not the dogs! The owners feel it essential to pick up the dog poo in plastic bags ... and then leave them next to the towpath or, worse still, hanging from trees and fences. If owners don't wish to take the stuff home than please do not bag it but move it (sans bag) into the hedge bottom.

The March winds have left a few trees in the Harlaxton cutting leaning across the towpath so please be aware if you are walking in that area. We are awaiting approval to remove them.



We are launching a copy of the new Canal Guide in May. If you would like a copy of this fine publication please email Tony Jackson [anthonyk.jackson@btopenworld.com](mailto:anthonyk.jackson@btopenworld.com) It costs £7.00 delivered to your door or £5.00 if you come and collect your copy. The Society is most appreciative of the input and help received for many contributors whose contributions are acknowledged in the guide.

We also hope to launch *Osberton*, our weed removal craft, in May. Thanks to a lot of hard work by Dave Booth and his team the craft is now fully restored and ready for trials. This should be of great assistance to crews of *The Three Shires* during the coming months.

Talking of *The Three Shires* why not 'Get on Board' our trip boat during this fine spring period and see the canal from the water. A party of up to ten friends can have a very enjoyable 2 to 4 hours cruising – especially if you bring a picnic and a few drinks! Our skippers and crews are waiting for your booking!

Enjoy the Summer

*Mike Stone.*  
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Supported by  
**The National Lottery®**  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



The Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative is a five year project that will see the careful restoration of locks 14 and 15 on the Grantham Canal, led by volunteers. The project will also involve training, giving local people important heritage skills, as well as the development of interpretation and education resources to help people to build a greater appreciation of their local history and the waterway environment.

The project is being supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Grantham Canal Society with Canal & River Trust as lead partner.

## **Site Supervisor**

**Up to £30,000**

**Fixed-term contract for 2 – 5 years**

**Newark on Trent**

Put your construction industry experience to work with the Canal & River Trust on a Lottery-funded restoration project that will bring the Woolsthorpe to Stenwith stretch of the Grantham Canal back to its former glory.

### **About the role**

In partnership with The Grantham Canal Society and the Waterway Recovery Group, as well as the project's main sponsors at the Heritage Lottery Fund, you'll oversee the volunteer-led restoration of the canal, including two semi-derelict locks and the channel itself. As well as upholding the Trust's exacting health and safety standards, this will involve working closely with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that the right group of people are on hand for each part of the challenge. You'll also be responsible for helping volunteers to deliver the construction work and ensure the whole thing is brought in safely, on time and on budget.

You'll also use your knowledge on site to improve people's training competencies.

### **About you**

To meet the challenge, you'll need to be a skilled construction professional yourself, with experience of managing sites and supervising teams, preferably with experience and qualifications in Heritage Construction. Along with a relevant building or engineering qualification, you'll need a comprehensive knowledge of Construction Design and Management procedures. Just as important as your practical experience, however, will be the inspirational leadership skills that enable you to motivate and bring out the best in everyone around you.

### **About us**

One of the UK's biggest charities, we maintain 2,000 miles of historic canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs, along with museums, archives and the country's third largest collection of protected historic buildings – preserving them for future generations. Our mission is to have by 2020 a thriving, sustainable waterway network cherished by a public that shares a deep sense of responsibility for its wellbeing. Achieving this will be a fascinating challenge. Come and be part of it.

### **To apply**

To find out more and apply, visit

<https://careers-canalrivertrust.icims.com/jobs/1741/site-supervisor/job>

Please quote reference number 2015-1741 when applying.

Closing date for applications: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015.



*This project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund*

*We aim to reflect the diversity of the communities in which we operate. We welcome applications from all sections of the population.*



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

To contact us please send your email to:

[bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk](mailto:bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk)



## RANGERS UPDATE

As the days begin to warm up you will hopefully see our Rangers out and about in their new GCS polo shirts.

Those thoughtless individuals who do not clear up after their dogs continue to be our biggest challenge, particularly those who 'bag it and leave it'! Our approach to spraying the 'deposits' on the towpath does however seem to have had an impact, at least in some areas. Assistant Head Ranger Tony Jackson recently met with South Kesteven District Council's Executive for the Environment, Ian Yates, to discuss the dog fouling issue at the Grantham end. Whilst discussions are still ongoing, it seems likely that SKDC will support a partnership approach to dealing with the issue by increasing the number of potential collection points on the canal.

We continue to improve our reporting systems, enabling Rangers to report urgent issues direct to relevant GCS teams and also, where necessary, to CRT. Sadly we are not always able to resolve the problems identified as quickly as we would like, but we are working on it.

Work commitments keep me away from the canal and overseas at present, but from the reports I receive, our Rangers continue to do fantastic work promoting the canal and the society through the encounters they have with our diverse mix of canal users. We could probably write a book on them in the fullness of time!

*Paul Dadford, Head Ranger*

### LOCALS IMPROVE THEIR ¾ MILE STRETCH OF CANAL



Before



During

When the canal in your area becomes over-run with reeds & weed it may look attractive for a time but it doesn't take long before it becomes invasive and the canal looks neglected. Oxygenating plants are stifled, the canal bed silts up and fish stocks are reduced. So what can you do?

Maybe take a leaf out of Chris, Lin, Dean & Kevin's book by tackling the task yourself, which is exactly what they did on this ¾ mile stretch of canal at Hickling. Well done we say!



After



The Spoil Heap



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome  
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[bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk](mailto:bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk)

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We are grateful to The Village Link Magazine, with a distribution to over 16,000 homes around Grantham each month, for offering Tony Jackson a full page of this A5 publication - to talk about the Grantham Canal! This will continue until Tony either runs out of things to say, he ceases to be remotely interesting, or the Village Link want the space for a fee paying customer.

The following is Tony's article from the April edition:

## Promises, promises

Far be it from me to reignite a rumour. Especially one which has lain dormant for over 200 years...

Finding the water to float his boats on the Grantham Canal was William Jessop's undoing – sadly, not his only one.

Hindrance also came from a rival group who wanted the canal to go to Newark, rather than Nottingham. Chuck in the pot a few merchants, millers and landowners who weren't keen on the idea either – and you feel one of your headaches coming on. This was his first attempt at getting the Act through Parliament.

The canal climbs 140 feet from its junction with the Trent. Every time you operate a lock, thousands of gallons of water sally fourth along their circuitous journey towards this river – requiring every precious drop to be replenished at the Grantham end. It was proposed to take water from one of the tributaries of the Witham – this didn't go down at all well with the Witham's Commissioners.

One of the foremost engineers of his time; William Jessop came up with the idea of providing two reservoirs to feed the canal – importantly; flood water reservoirs. These could only be topped up when the water in their respective feeder streams was above a pre-determined height - innovative thinking at that time. This was the first canal in the country to be fed, primarily, in this way.

Having got the Witham's Commissioners off his back, he turned his attention to the troublesome Newark contingent. Jessop proposed to allow for a junction at Stenwith, near Woolsthorpe, for a branch to Newark, and for good measure, a spur to Bingham. I'd imagine, as is usual on these occasions, copious amounts of artful persuasion were employed behind the scenes – and his objectors appeased.

With the Act signed sealed and delivered however, and the main line finished - neither of these branches were built. Cartographer C. Smith, was so sure of the Bingham branch coming to fruition, he included it in his map of 1801.

A blend of literary licence and playful supposition – for we'll probably never know who outwitted who; if anyone was hoodwinked; or, quite likely, in the cold light of day, it all came down to that all too familiar killjoy - financial reality...



The Misses Camerons' penny boats Grantham Canal Basin C1920

## Events Round up - April

The Easter weather was kind to us for our 'Turn up and Ride' boat trips – unlike the previous, 'Discover Lincolnshire' weekend, where waves lapped the bows of The Three Shires trip boat and the wind threatened to sweep the items off the roof, causing us to abandon on Sunday afternoon.

Easter was good, just the right number of visitors for boat trips. Refreshments were served in the Carpenter's Shop, where there were photographic displays and a chance to observe the fruit of the previous day's 'canal dipping'.

Thank you to those who baked cakes; those who gave up part or all of their weekend – and to those saviours who responded to our 11<sup>th</sup> hour call for help, when it became apparent that we had no one to help with refreshments on the Monday.

Now that we tend to run boat trips from Woolsthorpe, and utilize the Carpenter's Shop, we need to get to grips with the refreshments issue. If you feel like a little job to 'make your own', it needs someone to compile and manage an email list of volunteers who would like to help with refreshments – be it baking, serving or both. If this is something you might like to help us with, please email Tony: [anthonyk.jackson@btopenworld.com](mailto:anthonyk.jackson@btopenworld.com) or telephone 01476 567477

I think we're getting to grips with running trips at Woolsthorpe – having the two locations, i.e. the trips departing from Lock 18 and the Carpenter's shop at least ¼ mile away, makes the logistics tricky – and no mobile phone signal!

Everyone meshed together to make the weekend a success - Boat Crews, Workparty members, Rangers, home bakers and the Events Team – even the Caddis Fly Larvae and Damsel Fly Nymphs seemed to sense something special was expected of them.

....and the society has a much need £700 in the kitty!

Monday April 13<sup>th</sup> was a busy day for Rosemary. Having attended part of the Exec meeting in the morning; she dashed to Cotgrave to talk to their U3A history group in the afternoon. Her subject was the Iron Age this time – but proceeds will go to the society. They must have enjoyed it, as she's been invited back to talk on one of her other subjects 'Cooking & Food in Pre-history' – they've already had the canal talk!

Now then, what's your worst nightmare? Mine is standing before a hall full of people to give a talk! So when Rosemary rang in sick for our talk to St. Johns Ladies in Grantham the following evening – I had one of those oh, (unprintable word) moments...

I tend to act as the roadie at talks – the oil rag if you like – whilst Rosemary sets up her laptop and the projector – notice – this is the technical bit. I do the screen, tables, guidebooks, leaflets etc.

I'm not familiar with laptops, I didn't even know how to switch the thing on, let alone work it and find files for the PowerPoint presentation. Armed with notepad filled with the phrases, click this, click that, double click the other – I got to the church hall early to give myself more time to set up – there followed a long sweaty palms wait of half an hour because the organiser had forgotten about the event – this didn't bode well.

I got through it – it was fine – a titter went around the room a few times; the ladies were gentle with me. In fact they were surprised it was my first time, they said how experienced I seemed, and couldn't believe how someone had reached such maturity never having done it before.

Tony Jackson



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# WORKPARTY UPDATE

## Osberton

Thanks to Dave Booth, Dave Cross, Steve Tow, Geoff Earl and several other volunteers, Osberton, our weed harvester is almost ready for action. Last week, Chris Williams of Ovation Boat Services Ltd examined Osberton and we now have a Boat Safety Certificate for the craft. Chris pointed out a few minor issues, most of which were addressed on the same day. We now apply for a licence from CRT and will, hopefully, soon have her in the water doing the job for which she was designed. Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped in our appeal for funds to purchase such a valuable asset which will be so useful in our quest to keep the navigable section of the canal weed free. Given sufficient funding, maybe Osberton will be put to use in other sections of the canal. We shall have to wait and see!



Dave Booth, Chief Engineer, hard at work



## Azolla

There is a considerable amount of Azolla on the upper sections of the canal which is difficult to eradicate. We hope that we can use Osberton to remove as much as possible.



BiTM & GCS at Cropwell Bishop

waterway  
recovery  
group

## BiTM

We were delighted to once again host WRG's Bit in the Middle team at Cropwell Bishop from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22 March. The Group are 'old friends' who come to us each year to do battle with the trees and undergrowth. This year's visit, which coincided with the Plant training weekend, allowed continued clearing of the area that Loughborough University Students and GCS had previously prepared south of Cropwell Town Bridge. Sincere thanks to all involved. Hope to see you all again next year.

## Culverts

CRT's Graham Mitchell and the Construction Team have recently replaced the head walls of two culverts that run under the canal at Denton. We were not aware that there were problems there but are pleased that this work has been completed.



Culvert under the canal at Denton

## Boat Training Refresher Courses.

John Trigg has run two Boat training refresher courses for skippers and crews of Three Shires which were well received. The Trip Boat has been moved to just above Lock 17, which is considerably safer for the Crews to access but now means that the boat has to be taken through lock 18 before picking up passengers. Ian Wakefield explained the method of working through the lock and both groups then had a practical session on the lock which everyone seemed to enjoy and collected some fascinated passers by.



John Trigg captivating his audience

## Talks and Events Diary 2015

If you can help out with any events, please contact Rosemary on  
[communityandevents@granthamcanal.org](mailto:communityandevents@granthamcanal.org) or 07971173069

### Date & Time

#### 2015 bookings

Sat 2nd May

Mon 4th May

Sat & Sun 9th & 10th May

Friday 15th May

Saturday 16th May

Hickling Warehouse will be open for display and canal dipping 10.00-4.00

Sun 24<sup>th</sup> May

Mon 25th May

**Tony and Rosemary are away in June if you can represent the society with the information stand at any of the following events, please contact Rosemary on the above email or telephone.**

Saturday 13th June

Sat & Sun 20th & 21st June

Tuesday 7th July

Saturday 11th July

Tuesday 14th July 7.30

Tuesday 21st July 2.00

Tuesday 28th July 7.30

Wednesday 12th August

Sunday 16th August

**Sun August 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Mon August 31<sup>st</sup>**

Sat & Sun 12th & 13th Sept

**Wednesday 16th September**

**Sunday 11th October**

Monday 7th December

Monday 14th December

#### 2016 bookings

Tuesday 12th January

Wednesday 17th February

particularly welcome – proceeds for GCS Funds

- there are also several other talks on the Iron Age booked in for 2015 – let me know if you are interested.
- Monday 14th March Talk: Melton Mowbray branch Leics & Rutland Wildlife Trust.

### Event & Venue

Railway and Canal History Society AGM in Grantham to include a visit to Woolsthorpe with displays and boat trips to be arranged

**May Bank Holiday Short Boat Trips at Woolsthorpe**

Nottinghamshire County Show, Newark Showground.

evening Visit to Woolsthorpe Locks and Carpenter's Shop by Notts / Derbys Branch of IWA to include light refreshments.

Vale of Belvoir Machinery Group Tractor Run calling at Hickling Basin –

Hickling Warehouse will be open for display and canal dipping 10.00-4.00

**Bank Holiday Short Boat Trips at Woolsthorpe**

**Bank Holiday Short Boat Trips at Woolsthorpe**

**Discovery Day 2015**

Talk: Collingham Memorial Hall

Talk: Ashby Canal Association

Talk: Hougham and Marston Local History Society

Iron Age talk for Harlaxton WI. Open meeting – canal society members

particularly welcome – proceeds for GCS Funds

A walk along part of the Grantham Canal starting from and finishing at the Dirty Duck pub, Woolsthorpe

by Belvoir, near Grantham. ( Postcode NG32 1NY )

## **NOTTS & DERBY BRANCH** Next Meeting Friday 15th May 7.30 pm



**The Inland Waterways Association**



**Don't forget to follow us on Twitter for all the latest news!**

Please visit our Facebook page "**The Three Shires**" where you can find dates for short trips and items of general interest.

"**Grantham Canal Society** "now also have a Facebook page!



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

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