

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

Have you got your copy of the new canal guide yet? It has been highly praised by professionals in the print industry! You will see an article on the very successful launch of the guide elsewhere in this issue.



Those of you who contributed to the restoration of the weed-boat *Osberton* will be delighted to know that work has been completed. The craft has been licensed and we hope it will be lifted into the water very soon. Training of operators will commence very soon thereafter and I hope we can commence a structured programme of weed removal from Lock 15 to the A1.

Though we may not like it, administration is a most important part of our voluntary activity. Yes, I know this is a dull topic but I cannot stress how important it is as efficient record-keeping actually enables volunteers to undertake tasks within an approved framework. Some of you will be

aware that one of the principle suppliers of steam locomotive crews, and engines, for Steam excursions on the main line has had their operating licence withdrawn by Network Rail. The reason given is that they have failed to meet the administrative standards required under their agreement with Network Rail. It is equally important that the Canal Society adhere to the standards required by the owners of the Grantham Canal, the Canal & River Trust. Securely holding information about our active members ensures that we meet required standards; the carrying, completing and recording of data in volunteers' log books confirms that we are meeting that objective. If you are an active volunteer, whatever your role, please ensure that you carry and complete your logbook at all times.

One recent problem has been the movement of silt at the A1 end of the canal which is preventing access to the landing stage by *The Three Shires*. Recent work undertaken by CRT to tidy the area appears to have created a flow of silt from the Mow Beck feeder. CRT management is looking to see how this problem might be overcome. These cruises by *The Three Shires* are very important to the society as they represent its only regular source of income.

Once again the support from volunteers delivered successful Bank Holiday mini-cruises on both occasions during May. The society is most appreciative of their efforts and the support from visitors several of whom came long distances (did anybody travel further than from Texas USA?) to cruise on the Grantham.



A busy day for The Three Shires

Enjoy June wherever you are!

*Mike Stone*

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:

## Tell us a story...

Rebecca Simmons was a boat girl on the Grantham Canal in the early 1900s, up until she was 14 years old, when she probably went into service. One of her memories which she related to her son in later years was of attending Hose School – only very occasionally – for this was the nature of life on the boats.

The purpose of their journeys along our canal was to carry roadstone from the quarries at Mountsorrel. It must have been with some relief on joining the canal, for this would have been a perilous journey with their loaded horse drawn boat along the rivers Soar and Trent, both noted for their flooding and strong currents. Not to mention negotiating the treacherous Thrumpton Weir at the confluence of these two rivers, lying in wait to sweep the unwary to their watery fete – this at the very spot where the horse needed to be ferried across the river too!

Raymond, Rebecca's son, remembers his mother telling him, that to travel along the Grantham Canal, was like going into another world – in contrast with other canals in the area, which tended to be more industrial.

This story is very precious to us – it's the oldest we have by far.

We've always collected snippets people have told us at shows, and we're so appreciative of these. No matter how insignificant they may seem to you – they're important to us - we want to hear them!

If you played on the canal, worked on the canal, or knew someone who did? Did you get up to mischief? (we won't tell). Maybe you went a courtin'? Perhaps you have photographs – no, not of the courting! gawd! Brick humpback bridges which have since been flattened; locks; wooden swing bridges long gone; names of Lockkeepers and other canal workers?

When you read about the Grantham Canal, it'll tell you that trade stopped in 1929. We suspect boats traded after this – some of you have told us so - let's hear your boat movement memories.

If you do have a story to share – second or third hand, it doesn't matter – could you send us your contact details via 'Contact Us' on our website?

...and if you're insistent on sending us your courting photos – undercover of a plain brown package please...



## Events round up for MAY

We started the month as it was to carry on – busy! We kicked off on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, with the long planned visit by the Railway & Canal Historical Society. Around 60 visitors in all, this was part of their AGM, which took part over several days and included a number of visits to interesting sites throughout their stay in Grantham.

Normally at shows I say: ‘if you have any questions – please ask’ – however when you’re addressing some of the most knowledgeable people on the subject in the country - lamb to the slaughter comes to mind...

They went easy on me....by and large! I even learned that we may have the very first skew bridges to be built in the country. Bridges 60 & 62 if you’re interested.

Boat trips, guided walks, displays and refreshments were all put on for their visit – and some generous donations were received, for which we thank them!

The following day found us setting up a display in Denton Church as part of their annual street market. Canal dipping was also carried out in readiness for the boat trips on Bank Holiday Monday – which went really well.



Next day – are you you’re keeping up – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>, was the new Guidebook Launch at The Plough, Hickling, where we were required to put the information boards up etc., and generally impart some of our knowledge, enthusiasm and optimism on the great and the good, the movers and the shakers.

The Saturday and Sunday following, found us at the Nottinghamshire County Show, which was a bit quiet on the Saturday, but busier on Sunday – some interesting and useful conversations were had and a bit more money in the kitty to help further our cause, along with the all important networking.

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>, we had a presence at the Grantham ‘Business Improvement District’ meeting – simply to fly our flag and raise awareness.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> we were at Hickling to coincide with the lunch stop of the Vale of Belvoir Machinery Group’s Annual Vintage Tractor Road Run. You know the sort of thing – ‘children’s storybook’ tractors – little grey Fergies – and there was one that always makes Rosemary weak at the knees – a Nuffield! What have tractors got to do with us....rather a lot, as the group magnanimously donate the proceeds each year to the society! Thank you to them and more power to their power take offs! (hope I’ve said that right)



*Continued ....*



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)

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## Events round up for MAY... Continued

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> found me venturing new territory - having done my boat crewing course – I had a go at putting it into practice. We were a ‘new’ team, as they were struggling to find crew and skipper for this trip – we hadn’t worked together before. Chairman Mike; Terry, our ethnic minority representative and myself on our own voyage of discovery - I think we managed pretty well. There is a rumour that I was found buffing the Chairman’s shoes, and yes, while he was occupying them too. I want to put an end to this rumour – by confirming it. I *could* try to explain...but is there any point?



Following preparation on Saturday, we were half ready for the late May Bank Holiday boat trips at Woolthorpe. Sunday was a bit quiet – sadly not all volunteers were gainfully employed. Monday proved much busier - we gained some new members too – welcome if you’re reading this!

We couldn’t do it without people’s support – thank you to the cake bakers, servers, washer uppers, table arrangers, boat crews/skippers, ticket sellers/runners, sign putter uppers, purveyors of mirth & merriment and to those who did all the little important unseen things.

We rely on goodwill, we couldn’t function without it – home made cakes/scones etc. often account for over half our takings. Ingredients are donated and as we ask for donations for refreshments – many people give generously in recognition and appreciation of the work we do.

Talking of takings – over £1,300 has been raised from these events during May! It’s not just about the money as we know – but we’d be in a fix without it!

Tony Jackson

## MEMBERSHIP CARD PRIVILEGES

Please note that a current membership card must be produced to qualify for a discount



**MIDLAND CHANDLERS - Willington**

**DISCOUNT 5%**

<http://midlandchangers.co.uk>

*Gurkha Square*



**GURKHA SQUARE NEPALESE & INDIAN RESTAURANT**

**20% discount will apply from Sunday to Thursday inclusive**

**10% discount will apply on Fridays & Saturdays**

**There will be no discount during December**

<http://gurkhasquarerestaurant.co.uk>



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# The Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative

The Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative was born in 2011 from the Grantham Canal Partnership which is a group of stakeholders made up from representatives of local authorities, the Inland Waterways Association, Natural England, the Grantham Canal Society and the Canal & River Trust. The primary purpose of this project is to upskill existing volunteers and build stronger interest and value for the Grantham Canal within the communities it passes through. We aim to provide the organisational structure, processes and people that can go onto to tackle further restoration but also sustain volunteering. Our actual work will start with the restoration of 4 locks between Woolsthorpe and Muston together with new signage along the canal. This construction work will be expensive and is able to proceed thanks to a generous grant from the East Midlands Heritage Lottery Fund. By joining our cause you will help to transform this important part of the East Midlands Landscape and enrich lives.

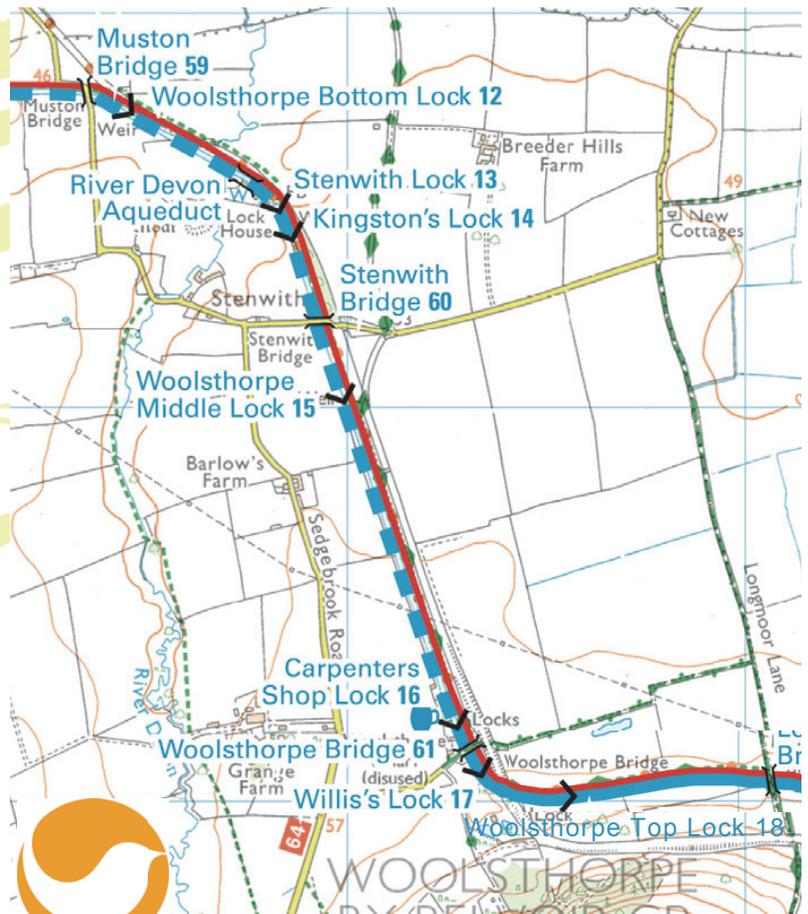


## THESE ARE THE LOCK NAMES IN THE WOOLSTHORPE FLIGHT

- | Lock No | Name   |
|---------|--|
| 18      | Woolsthorpe Top Lock                           |
| 17      | Willis's Lock<br>(Not Woolsthorpe Middle Lock) |
| 16      | Carpenter's Lock                               |

## These locks are to be restored during the GCHI project

- |    |                         |
|----|-------------------------|
| 15 | Woolsthorpe Middle Lock |
| 14 | Kingston's Lock         |
| 13 | Stenwith Lock           |
| 12 | Woolsthorpe Bottom Lock |



WREN have offered £75k towards materials for Lock 15 restoration subject to contract.



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome  
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Waterways Heritage Day  
Staythorpe Electricity Sports & Social Club  
King's Road, Newark NG24 1EW  
Saturday 27 June 2015

invite you to a

# Waterways Heritage Day

## Enrolment

If you would like to come to the Heritage Day, please either fill in and return this form to Philip Riden, Dept of History, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD, or email him with the same information (philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk).

There is no charge for the event, but we need to know many people are coming to arrange catering, and we need to have names to comply with the Staythorpe Club's rules as a private members' licensed club. If you are coming as part of a group, all the names can go on one form.

Name(s): .....

Address (or email): .....

I/we will be representing the following organisation and would like a table for a display of my/our work/publications etc.:

.....

Waterways Heritage Day, Saturday 27 June 2015

## Programme

- 9.30 Assemble: tea and coffee will be available
- 10.00 Illustrated lecture:  
**Inland Waterways in the East Midlands before 1600**  
Philip Riden (University of Nottingham)
- 11.00 Three short illustrated talks:  
**Trade on the Fossdyke Navigation in the eighteenth century:**  
Rob Wheeler (Lincoln Record Society)  
**Dawn Rose: recreating a Chesterfield Canal cuckoo narrow boat:**  
Robin Stonebridge (Chair, Chesterfield Canal Trust)  
**A Student Project: Trent's floating heritage centre:**  
Rosemarie Fitton and Nicky Harding (De Montfort University, Leicester)
- 12.00 Lunch (baked potato, choice of fillings, salad; the club has a licensed bar) and a chance to look at bookstalls and displays by waterways groups from around the region.
- 2.00 A guided walk through Newark's riverside heritage, following the Newark Heritage Barge's new trail, ending at the wharf where the *Leicester Trader* is currently under restoration, where **Les Reid, NHB Project Manager**, will talk about progress to date.



Newark, Saturday 27 June 2015

Waterways Heritage Day, Saturday 27 June 2015

Thanks to a further generous award by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, under its Connected Communities Programme, to the Department of History at The University of Nottingham, the University and Newark Heritage Barge are pleased to present a Waterways Heritage Day on Saturday 27 June 2015. This will showcase some of the historical research and practical conservation currently in progress on the rivers and canals of the East Midlands.

The day school forms part of the AHRC's Connected Communities Festival, a national programme of events intended to strengthen links between universities and local communities.

After a series of talks in the morning, there will be a guided walk along the river in the afternoon. This will mark the launch of Newark Heritage Barge's new 'Trail', intended to bring out for both local people and visitors the rich waterside heritage of the town.

Alongside the talks and the walk, all the waterways heritage organisations in the East Midlands and neighbouring regions are being invited to bring along displays of their work and publications to sell, so there will be an opportunity to see what is going on over a large area of eastern England.

Anyone interested in waterways history, or the local history of Trentside or canalside communities, is very welcome to come to this event, which will be held at Staythorpe Electricity Sports & Social Club, King's Road, Newark NG24 1EW. The club is in the centre of Newark, within walking distance of the bus station, both railway stations, and the main car-parks. There is limited waiting outside the club to unload display material, but not longer-term parking.

There is no charge for the day school, but we do need to know how many people are coming. Please see over for details of how to enrol.

All enquiries to: Philip Riden (email philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk; or telephone (evenings) 01246 554026).



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## 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

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

### Event & Venue

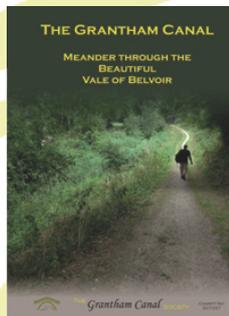
Bingham Town Fair  
Grantham Carnival  
Guided Walk: Bingham Ladies Evening Guild  
Radcliffe Carnival  
Talk: Kinoulton WI  
Talk: Burton Joyce U3A nb change of date  
Exhibition and talk at Hickling  
Talk: Lenton Local History Society  
Green Fair, Wyndham Park, Grantham  
Bank Holiday Short Boat Trips at Woolsthorpe  
Bank Holiday Short Boat Trips at Woolsthorpe  
Harby Country Show, Canal Farm, Harby  
Talk: Laxton History Group  
**Discovery Day 2015**  
Talk: Collingham Memorial Hall  
Talk: Ashby Canal Association

#### 2016 bookings

Tuesday 12th January  
Wednesday 17th February  
Talk: Hougham and Marston Local History Society  
Iron Age talk for Harlaxton WI. Open meeting – canal society members particularly welcome – proceeds for GCS Funds



This plaque was laid in memory of Gren Murden in acknowledgement of the legacy & family donation given for the benefit of the canal



### The NEW GUIDE Launch

On May 5<sup>th</sup> we launched our new guide. The event was held at the Plough Inn at Hickling and was well attended by members of the Canal & River Trust, local press & radio and those with an interest in the canal generally. Local politicians

were also there and Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke MP, gave a response to the Chairman's address. Guides are now available to purchase either at events or on-line from our website or from **W.H. Smiths** in Grantham, **The Bookshop** at Audlem Mill or the **Bookcase** in Lowdham.



FOLLOW US

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

**Also please visit our Facebook pages "The Three Shires" & "Grantham Canal Society" where you can find dates for short trips and items of general interest.**



**HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR 2, 3 or 4 HOUR CRUISE ON "THE THREE SHIRES" YET? Why not check out our website for availability [www.granthamcanal.org](http://www.granthamcanal.org)**



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