



**This months update from Mike Stone
(Chairman)**

A New Year bringing new opportunities for all including a chance to participate in a project that will result in a visitor attraction through to the next century. Well why not? The canal is already over 200 years old and, thanks to the work of GCS volunteers, is expected to last for at least the next 150 years.

OK so what about 2016? We have to ensure that the restoration process adopted by the GCS is seen to be a model for other organisations to replicate. So we need to adopt sound working and management practises that deliver a thriving and well managed waterway to the community. By December 2016 we will probably have added an extra half-mile of navigable waterway and a new working lock to the four miles from the A1. The GCS has undertaken to maintain all of this so we need to showcase that we have the skills to make it a visual pleasure by keeping weeds down, trees pointing upwards and craft cruising. During the year, and to meet the expectations of HLF, we need to encourage greater involvement by communities along the whole 33 miles of the canal either directly through meetings or by holding events, such as Discovery Day, at different locations. We will continue to rebuild Lock 15 and start work on the restoration of Lock 14. The GCS teams at Lock 15 have made great progress over recent months and, if weather permits, will commence foundation works in the coming weeks.

To achieve these tasks we need to recruit more members which, ideally, will bring more volunteers to the party. We also need to raise funds to support all activity and progress. Looking further forward the GCP and CRT wish to move ahead with a development plan for the whole canal.

Continued ...

Initial steps (assessment, planning, etc.) will happen soon so we may possibly see a restoration management plan completed by the year end. This could result in greater commitment to restoration by several bodies including the four Local Authorities in whose areas the canal has seen little development since the 1970's. Keep watching *Bridge* for further information!

As I write the weather has stopped soaking the land and the sun is shining. Cold weather is forecast so I hope this enables our teams to continue the excellent work they were doing prior to Christmas – a lot of which involve recovering timber from the canal. If you have a wood-burning stove perhaps we can help keep you warm – but you will have to collect it from Woolsthorpe! Just contact the team leader.

Best wishes for 2016.

Mike Stone.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Grantham Economic Development Draft Plan has been produced and makes no reference to the Grantham Canal. The closing date for consultation is 31st January 2016.

Please download the document using the link below and highlight the value of the Grantham Canal to achieve their aims:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=8447>

RANGERS REPORT

As I'm sure you will have noticed, November and December have been unusually mild and I certainly didn't expect to be cutting my lawn the week before Christmas in a t-shirt! The warmer temperatures have however brought the UK more than its normal share of significant storms which have rather too "friendly" names in my opinion for the damage that they cause. Thankfully the impact across the East Midlands has been largely limited to high winds, but these have inevitably brought down a number of trees along the canal and deposited a lot of debris in the water.



CRT contractors have been maintaining the towpaths, but with the recent rain, these are currently waterlogged in a number of places. Motorcycles have been using the towpath near Dove Cottage and have been churning up the surface. CRT responded quickly to our Ranger's report and have installed new fencing to help stop the problem. We will be monitoring the problem over the coming weeks.

In addition to the canal, we are also now patrolling and litter picking at the Denton Reservoir. This is well used as a fishing location and is not immune from our old friends, dog fouling and littering, which continue to be the main issues for our Rangers.

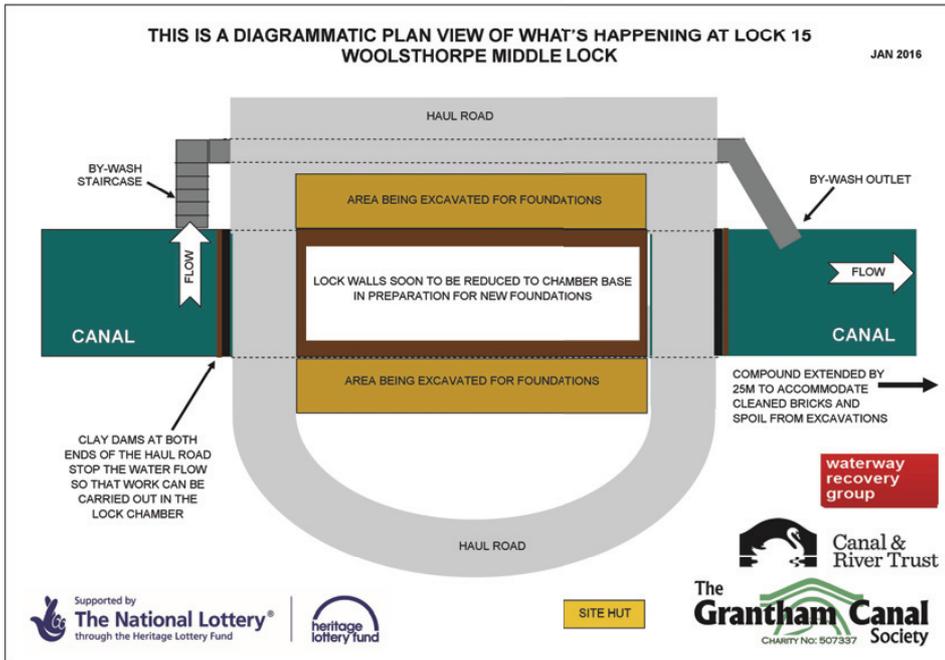
Paul Dadford (Head Ranger)



This photo from Tony Jackson shows a typical "haul" of litter from one of his recent visits.



The GRANTHAM CANAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE



Who mentioned MUD!



During the recent wet weather it's hard not to notice, or indeed mention, the extensive mud that oozes from every corner of the site! *And still our valiant volunteers keep working hard.* The new brick cleaner works well but makes so much noise that it kills the joy of passing any social comment. However, during a refreshment break, they noticed that nearly all the pictures in media presentations on work at the lock seemed to feature people from other groups. They would like the record corrected so that everyone knows it is the **GCS** volunteers who, in addition to the much publicised brick cleaning task, also drive the dumper trucks & mini diggers and they are the ones working the site!

Ed



Many thanks to John Clark, Dave Cross & Ian Wakefield for updates & photos

Community and Events Diary

For further details, offers of help and dates of events near you, please contact Rosemary
communityandevents@granthamcanal.org

or phone **07971 173069**

- Tues 12th Jan 7.30** Talk: Hougham and Marston Local History Society
- Thurs 14th July 10.30** Canal Heritage Workshop, Grantham Museum
- Sun 24th Jan 10.30 – 2.30** Grantham Museum, 'Do Something New' event for local societies
- Wed 27th Jan 10.30** Harlaxton Wharf management meeting– views to Rosemary please.
- Wed 10th Feb 7.30** Talk: Lenton Local History Society, Dunkirk Community Centre, University Blvd
- Wed 17th February** Iron Age talk for Harlaxton WI. Open meeting
- Sat Feb 20th** Training for oral and video recording of Canal Reminiscences at Grantham Museum.
- Volunteers needed to train**
- Wed 2nd March 7.00pm** Launch of Canal and Railway Exhibition - Grantham Museum
- Thurs 3rd March 10.00 – 4.00** Canal and Railway Exhibition Opens - Grantham Museum, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays until September.
- Mon 7th March 8.00** Talk: Trent Valley Preservation Society, Collingham Memorial Hall
- Sat 12th March 11.00 – 3.30** Public Reminiscence Day at Grantham Museum, **volunteers needed**
- Mon 14th March** Talk: Melton Mowbray branch Leics & Rutland Wildlife Trust
- Thurs 24th March 12.15** Talk: Stamford Burghley Probus Club
- Sun/Mon 27/28th March 10.30-4.00** Easter Bank Holiday Boat Trips – **volunteers needed**
- Tues 29th March** Talk: National Women's Register, Balderton
- Sun/Mon 1st/2nd May 10.00-4.00** May Bank Holiday Boat Trips – volunteers needed
- Tues 10th May 7.30** Talk: Stubton & District WI, Dry Doddington Village Hall
- Wed 11th May** Waltham WI visit including boat trip.
- Wed 18th May 2.00** Talk: Bingham U3A, Parish Church
- Tues 24th May 8.00** Talk: Derby and Sandiacre Canal Soc.

9th Oct DISCOVERY DAY
 Make a note in your diary



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome
 To contact us please send your email to:

bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk



Did you know?

George Bishop moved to Redmile in 1762 he had a wife Mary and over the following years they had seven children. These events are recorded in documents preserved at the Leicestershire Records Office. He died in 1805 and was buried in an unmarked grave in Redmile churchyard. George lived in Redmile during the enclosure of the open fields, divided and hedged this dramatically changed the landscape to what we still see today. He also witnessed the construction of the Grantham canal which touches Redmile closer than many of the other Vale villages it is said to serve. We can only speculate what he thought of these immense changes which must have been the 18th century equivalent of building a motorway or HS2. Unfortunately George left no diary or personal records of his life, he even failed to leave a will. We do know where he lived in 1797 because his tiny village plot is identified on the Redmile Enclosure Map to the left of the Windmill Inn.

So why do we remember this man? It was back in the mid 1990s a visitor came to Redmile seeking his grave. At home they had a longcase or grandfather clock and on the dial was engraved George Bishop REDMILE. Since that time over forty clocks have been discovered, made in Redmile by George and his son John between 1762 and 1809.

What nicely ties this story back to the Grantham canal is that discovery number three was in the home of a past Chairman of the Grantham Canal Society and is pictured below.

Ken Brockway
Redmile Archive

<http://www.redmilearchive.freeuk.com/bishop.html>



Your money or your wife!

The romanticism has always been there – dormant, lying in wait for someone to articulate it. Hugh Marrows did just this, with his authorship of that fabulous book 'The Romantic Canal'.

Maybe it was the folk tale of the Hickling Whale; which, legend assures us, swam along the canal to turn around at the canal basin in the village? Or our waterway's passionate clinging to the gentle curves of its contour; so as not to spill its precious liquid over the landscape? Could it have been the tenuous link with that rascal highwayman Dick Turpin in Cropwell Bishop? Bathed in autumnal sunshine in all its golden splendour; Belvoir Castle; presiding over an enchanted silvery, dew laden vale atop its lofty viewpoint – could this, or any of these have given Hugh his inspiration?

The canal was built in the Age of Romanticism; of idealistic poets; Browning, Shelley, Wordsworth and their contemporaries; not to mention Lord Byron – he who could loosen a girl's stays with a flash of his flirtatious eyes. I'd like also to think the book's title acknowledges those, intoxicated with the spirit of love and wanton desire who, for generations, have sought the remotest parts of the towpath... When not preoccupied with amorous intentions, you may have noticed the sorry, unloved condition of the present information boards.

There's more to the Heritage Lottery funded Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative (GCHI) than bricks and mortar - although these items do figure quite highly!

The community element of the project involves the provision of new interpretive installations. The nature of these is currently being worked on, but it's likely to include a mix of sculptures, story plaques and perhaps 'talking posts'.

Our aim is to have these installations relevant to their locations. In pursuit of this, we will be holding a number of reminiscent gathering events, at various locations in villages and towns along the canal corridor.

Please look out for these – come and share your snippets of information with us. What may seem trivial and insignificant to you – is of great importance to us - don't assume we know it all!

Tony Jackson

With thanks to Village Link for publishing Tony's articles about the Grantham Canal.

Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal by James Faulconbridge

Fieldfares and Redwings are two thrush species which arrive in the UK for the winter each year, having spent the summer in their breeding grounds in Central Europe. The UK, as well as Europe, has had unusually mild conditions this year which has led to lower numbers than usual, but October and November still saw a good influx. The Grantham Canal is always a reliable place to find chattering flocks of fieldfares which work their way along the hedgerows in search of the dogrose hips, hawthorn haws and blackthorn sloes, as well as the less obvious ivy berries. Their diet also includes insects, fruits and grains.

They are often quite cautious of human presence and their distinctive flight-call - a harsh "tsak tsak tsuk" - will often signal them moving ahead of you along the towpath.

Fieldfares and redwings often fly in mixed flocks but are easily told apart. Redwings are a rich warm brown with rusty-red underwings – similar in size to a song thrush – with a bold white line across the eyebrow. Fieldfares have more white/grey colour about their bodies and are slightly larger – similar in size to a blackbird. They lack the bold red underwing and the black supercilium which distinguish the redwing.

Both of these winter thrushes tend to stay with us through until April or early May when they head back to their breeding territories in warmer climes



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
NEPALESE & INDIAN
RESTAURANT in
Grantham

20% discount from Sunday to Thursday inclusive

10% discount on Fridays & Saturdays

There will be no discount during December

<http://gurkhasquarerestaurant.co.uk>



10% Discount to
GCS Members

who purchase one of their Artificial Grass products & have it installed by them.

Phone 0115 8450340

or 07463 890665

SELL - & DONATE

The following new HP Inks are available

2 no. HP 940XL yellow
2 no. HP 940XL magenta
1 no. HP 940XL Cyan [Blue]
1 no. 4907 suitable for 940XL Blue
2 no. Replacement series suitable for office jet pro 8000/ 8500 blue. replaces 940CXL
1 no. Replacement "Think" cartridge TR-C 4907 [940XL] Cyan [Blue]

Any reasonable offer considered. If you are interested please email *Bridge* with your offer & it will be forwarded on.

All payment must be made out to "The Grantham Canal Society"

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR NEW LOOK WEBSITE:

www.granthamcanal.org



The Inland
Waterways
Association

NOTTS & DERBY BRANCH

Public meetings. Non IWA members will be very welcome to attend.

Meetings 7.45 pm at the Poppy & Pint, Pierrepoint Road, West Bridgford, NG2-5DX Thursday, January 14th 2016

An illustrated talk by Les Reid of the Newark Heritage Barge project about the latest restoration activities on Trent barge "Leicester Trader".

Further information from:

nottsandderbys@waterways.org.uk



WRG & GCS Volunteers made a splendid job clearing scrub in Mid December at Cropwell Bishop

Our grateful thanks to the following who have recently made a donation to the Society:

Mr.J.A.King Mr K.Laing Mr.R.Terry
Grantham Lions Club
Wm Peters Masonic Lodge
Society For Lincs History & Archaeology.

Coming months Saturday Work Parties: (weather dependent of course), activities may change, check GCS website and Facebook for updates.

Dates for Lock 16 to A1 Winter Maint boat & towpath	Meet at	Time
16 Jan	Depot	9 -4 pm
30 Jan	Depot	9 -4 pm
6 Feb	Depot	9 -4 pm
13 Feb	Depot	9 -4 pm

NOTE: 23 Jan at Cropwell Bishop with the RAF, Meet Mem. Hall 9.30 -4 pm

Bring your lunch and a flask; wear work gear and steel toecaps. Bring your lifejacket if you own one please.

Any questions and to tell us you are coming please.

Contact Details: volunteer@granthamcanal.org / ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.org or send a text to Julie on 07762647874 or Ian on 07789 383266

Have a look at the article on volunteering at:

<http://www.canalboatingtimes.net>

An update, with thanks to our great volunteers:

The 'Maintenance Fleet Team' is now established, reporting to Ian Wakefield. Named boat skippers, joining Dave Booth, our Fleet Engineer, are Nb Centauri-Bob Terry; Osberton-Cliff Butterworth; Mudlark-Bob Crew. Nb Centauri has been out twice over the holiday period, well done Bob and all crew. Fancy joining them? Sign up for crew training, 2 day GCS certificated course.

Volunteer Communications

A GCS forum is now possible, thanks to Mark our volunteer webmaster! I need some trial users to test and comment along with volunteers willing to take on moderator duties for a few hours each week. Email Julie.

Volunteer Call for 'Trip Boat Bookings Administrator'

A key volunteer is still required to step forward and be part of the 'Trip Boat Team'. This is the important public face, and income generating activity of providing public access to boat trips on the Grantham - the purpose of a canal? Are you at home and wanting to give more support? Taking the Three Shires bookings is one of the key roles for GCS as it is the primary income source to support our activities. Please contact me for a discussion of the role and commitment involved if you think you, or you could recommend someone to this vital role, call 07762 647874

Oral History Project - Interested in finding out about peoples memories and history of the canal? Information on the website and training day on 20th February 2016 as part of the HLF project funding for Locks 15-14.

Coming months Work Parties: (weather dependent of course), activities may change, check GCS website, Facebook &



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

To contact us please send your email to:

bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk

