



PUBLISHED BY

The
Grantham Canal
Society
CHARITY No: 507337

**MARCH
2016**

This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

Our volunteers have now successfully removed almost all of Lock 15 and I thought the plan was to restore it!

Ah well - not everything goes the way you want it to!

We have a very well preserved invert (floor to the lock chamber); have discovered wooden bottom gate sills and more surprisingly a wooden floor beyond the bottom gates; the few sound areas of brickwork that used to be the four quoins and that's about all! Now rebuilding can start in earnest adding modern materials to create a basic structure and facing the walls with bricks to maintain the visual appeal.



Soon work will commence on the construction of the new foundations and scaffolding will be erected as walls are rebuilt. Lock 14 site will be cleared of vegetation but unfortunately further progress is being delayed as we are still awaiting final approval from The Castle to install the access track.

Work on the top length has continued with the main task being the removal of fallen trees and branches. Work parties have been mobilised every weekend and we are gradually getting ahead of the results of the wind! This task needs completing before Easter when *The Three Shires* commences operation – **Have you booked a cruise yet?**

CRT engineers have given their approval to GCS volunteers searching (not easy) for the leak at Lock 17. Seeing the water flowing into the cottage garden is the easy bit; finding out where it leaves the canal is an altogether more difficult task!

Let's look more closely at the findings at Lock 15. I am told by a person of some experience that 'the timber fourbay including thrust baulk is the best example he has ever seen in over fifty lock stoppages'. We (CRT and GCS) were awarded a *heritage* grant and it looks as though we may have a more valuable heritage element to the project than we first thought.

Reconstruction may need to be preceded by more archaeological work and research to ensure that we retain and in some appropriate way preserve this for future generations. For now our priority is to ensure that it remains undisturbed and covered in water at all times so it does not dry out.



There has been increased awareness of the canal by the residents of West Bridgford. This is excellent news and the society will plan to raise its profile in the area.

Mike Stone.



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,
Pierrepont Road, West Bridgford, NG2-5DX**

Thursday 14th APRIL

John Lower, of the Chesterfield Canal Trust, talking about developments between Staveley Basin and the eastern navigable canal. He will also talk about the progress made on the building of a completely new wooden hulled 'Cuckoo' boat.

Further information from:
nottsandderbys@waterways.org.uk



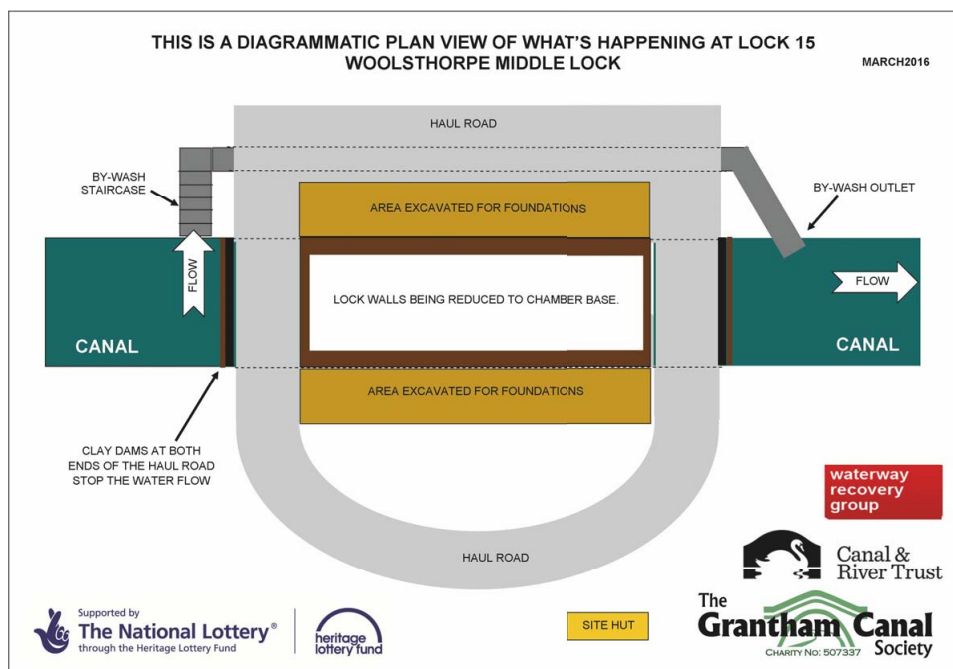
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The National Lottery[®]
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The GRANTHAM CANAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE



The lock walls are being reduced down to the chamber base so that work can start on preparing the adjacent areas for foundations. The long reach digger used was much larger than those our volunteers had been trained on so expert contractors were used.



There doesn't appear to be much foundation below the lock walls so it's not surprising that they've moved. Despite that they were still standing after 200+ years!



A satisfying day for one of the teams!

AND so on to Lock 14!

Work has started on clearing access to the lock to enable a similar compound to be erected to that at lock 15. Just a reminder - this lock is called "Kingston's Lock".



This is the lock before any rebuilding work commenced. The offside wall collapsed several year's ago.



The area adjacent to the lock has now been cleared which will enable further surveying and logistic operations to be planned.

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**

- Sat 12th Mar** 11.00 – 3.30 Public Reminiscence Day, Grantham Museum
- Mon 14th Mar** 7.30 Talk: Melton Mowbray branch Leics & Rutland Wildlife Trust
- Wed 16th Mar** 10.00 Canal Dipping Workshop at Woolsthorpe. **Volunteers needed.**
- Sat 19th Mar** 10.00 Harlaxton Wharf Community Group at Wharf
- Thur 24th Mar** 12.15 Talk: Stamford Burghley Probus Club
- Sat 26th Mar** Carpenter's Shop preparation: clean up, displays and canal dipping **Volunteers needed**
- Sun/Mon 27/28th Mar** 10.30-4.00 Easter Bank Holiday Boat Trips – **volunteers needed**
- Tues 29th March** Talk: National Women's Register, Balderton
- Sat 16th Apr** 10.00 Harlaxton Wharf Community Group at Wharf
- Sat 30th Apr** Carpenter's Shop preparation: clean up, displays and canal dipping **Volunteers needed**
- Sun/Mon 1st/2nd May** 10.00-4.00 May Bank Holiday Boat Trips – **volunteers needed**
- Mon 2nd May** Denton Street Market **Volunteers needed to take and man prepared display**
- Sat 7th May** 11.00 – 12.30 Grantham Museum: Family Canal Craft Activities
- 2.30 – 3.30 Talk: Grantham Canal – another world
- Tues 10th May** 7.30 Talk: Stubton & District WI, Dry Doddington Village Hall
- Wed 11th May** Waltham WI visit including boat trip.
- Sat 14th & Sun 15th May** Nottinghamshire County Show, Newark Showground.
- Volunteer names to Rosemary asap to book wristbands**
- Wed 18th May** 2.00 Bingham U3A, Parish Church
- Sat 21st May** 10.00 Harlaxton Wharf Community Group at wharf
- Tues 24th May** 8.00 Talk: Derby and Sandiacre Canal Soc.
- Fri 27th May** Carpenter's Shop preparation: **clean up, displays and canal dipping Volunteers needed**
- Sun 29th & Mon 30th May** Late May Bank Holiday Boat Trips – **volunteers needed CAKES WELCOME**
- Sat 28th & Sun 29th May** Chesterfield Canal Festival and IWA Trailboat Festival.
- Can anyone represent the society with the gazebo?**

Fri 9th Sep 10.30 – 4.00 Lincolnshire Heritage Open Day – Short boat trips

Sun 9th October - DISCOVERY DAY



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

To contact us please send your email to:

bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk



Talks and Events update

A bit tight getting this to the editor this month as we have been so busy.

'Getting Grantham Moving' exhibition is now up and running at Grantham Museum, open on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00 – 4.00 until September. The Canal has a substantial part to play in this. Give it a visit and see if you recognise who I dressed up as a boatwoman.

Grantham Museum is the venue for our first **Reminiscence Day** Saturday 12th March. Volunteers have been trained in the collecting of **oral histories**. If you know of anyone with a story, please get in touch and we will arrange to meet them. These stories and memorabilia, photos etc. are vital to our interpretation of the canal and will inform the new boards which will be going along the whole length. All this material needs archiving. If you can offer any help, please get in touch. There will also be monthly activity days and talks (see the diary) and again help will be welcome.

Talks provide opportunities to spread the word and collect people's stories. Great to meet a man at Trent Valley Preservation Society on Monday, who visited Woolsthorpe brick yards as a child and knew Oliver Willis. He has some wonderful stories for us to capture. (Talks on Iron Age Life and Prehistoric Food and Cooking also bring in a bit of income for the society.)

More help needed: The diary is pretty full and during the summer, we have clashing events. It would be good to have some representation at Chesterfield Canal / IWA Trailboat Festival, Late May Bank Holiday, Cotgrave Festival, Sat 18th June and Radcliffe Carnival, Sat 9th July. Kate Darcey has agreed to cover Denton Street Market on May Day Bank Holiday Monday, but will need help.

Booking for events has to be done soon. Tony and I are also likely to be unavailable for both May Bank Holiday Boat Trips so more help will be needed there for refreshments, manning the information stands and payment system. **Baking contributions most welcome for all the Short Boat Trip sessions at Woolsthorpe.**

On Saturday 26th March, we will be setting up displays at Woolsthorpe Depot for Easter Bank Holiday trips. We have moved the Canal Dipping Training

session to this date and can make it a familiarisation session for helping with outside events. We'll be there from 10.00.

Don't forget Discovery Day – already thinking about booking participants and collecting ideas for activities. We've had some great entertainments in the past, but like to ring the changes. Ideas welcome.

Please get in touch soon if you can help in any way.

Rosemary

communityandevents@granthamcanal.org
(or volunteer@granthamcanal.org when we are away in April.)

RANGERS' REPORT

January and February have seen Gertrude, Henry and Imogen batter the country and these have felled a number of

large branches and debris into the canal.

If you want to know the name of the next storm then visit:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/uk-storm-centre> !

Our problem with motorcycles using the towpath near Dove Cottage continued, but sterling efforts by Ranger Steve Ball, together with the local police and CRT, seem to have managed to move them on at last. Fingers crossed that they stay away!

Irresponsible dog owners and litter louts continue to be our main problem.



Tony Jackson has now taken delivery of 6 new dog waste bins for the Grantham end, so let's hope there

will be some improvement when these are installed. We had some fly tipping at Fosse Bridge but this was quickly dealt with. The high winds also caused us a problem at Gamston with litter blowing off the Morrisons car park into the canal. Our Ranger Colin Fox has discussed with the Store Manager.

We still have a vacancy for a Ranger in the Redmile / Bottesford area. If you are interested, let me know at

pdadford@yahoo.co.uk

Paul Dadford (Head Ranger)



Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal

by James Faulconbridge

March – Brimstone Butterfly

Brimstones are typically the first butterflies to appear each year, taking to the wing on warm spring days in March. These impressive, softly-yellow butterflies are not freshly hatched, but are in fact those same individuals which flew in the late summer last year. The adult butterflies emerge in August and are on the wing, feeding and building up fat reserves, until they go into hibernation at the end of autumn. The butterflies, also called imago, emerge early in the spring to mate and begin their life cycle once more.



The brimstone butterflies feed on a range of nectar sources – as they emerge so early they rely initially upon long-season species such as dandelion, or early-flowering species such as bluebell, cowslip and primrose. Blackthorn flowers, which grow abundantly in the towpath hedgerows, are a particular favourite along the canal. The key food plant in the autumn is thistles with a range of other species also used. The larval food plant on the other hand is surprisingly specific and not abundantly common – they require the shrub buckthorn, or alder buckthorn.

The female is much paler than the male and both sexes have distinctive veined wings which look very much like a leaf and give them excellent camouflage when basking or at rest.

Did you know?

During the night of 8th / 9th May 1941 the Vale of Belvoir suffered a bombardment of major proportions. Some believe this was a failed attack on the cities of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, if this was so then perhaps many lives were saved.

Below is a contemporary report by the A.R.P. Warden for Bottesford.



An intense bombing attack developed over the area on the night of 8/9th May 1941. The attack commenced shortly after mid-night when bombs were heard in the middle distance. Soon after 00.30 hrs. an arc of exhaust smoke extended from distant south over the villages to distant north.

At approx. 00.45 hrs. a blaze of incendiary light was observed in the direction of Barkestone. Contact was immediately made with Barkestone Post Office (acting as Barkestone Wardens). It was reported from there that large number of incendiaries had fallen between Barkestone village and Belvoir Woods. These were promptly dealt with. H.E. bombs then began to fall. A second fall of incendiaries out at Plungar shortly afterward burst into full light.

From that time on for nearly an hour, H.E. bomb explosions were almost continuous in all quarters of the compass, around Bottesford. Aircraft were continually over-head, streaks of exhaust smoke caused patterns in the sky like huge nets. An extensive red glow in the west spread to large proportions. Overhead activity seemed to increase, suggesting that enemy aircraft attempting to get through to the distant fire were meeting opposition.

From that point bombs crashed in all directions. Frequent contacts were

made with Barkestone, Redmile and all Bottesford points.

The first damage report came from Bottesford West signal box that near-by railway line had been damaged. Following quickly came the report of bombs and of an un-exploded bomb in Barkestone village. This was immediately followed by a report that the Bottesford-Harby main road was blocked between Redmile Cross Roads and Barkestone Cross Roads. Contact with Sargt. Bestwick was made and an arrangement to meet at Plungar where another un-exploded bomb had been reported, was made. Red lights were affixed by Mr Littlejohn and steps were taken to man road at diversion points. At Barkestone Village several craters and an un-exploded bomb crater were inspected. Local house-holders were warned and advised to remain on side of house farthest from bomb.

At Plungar more craters were visited. An unexploded bomb near Council Houses rendered it necessary to advise temporary evacuation to Village Institute. Exploded bomb craters in fields within a few yards of Council Houses caused no damage to life or property.

A railway employee reported at Plungar that the Railway Line was damaged near Granby Road bridge, and that steps had been taken to close the line to traffic. Inspection confirmed the damage. Several additional H.E. craters were in the field near railway.

As dawn broke, we were able to see scores of H.E. craters and traces of hundreds of burnt out incendiaries. At Redmile, bomb craters were also scattered in fields surrounding the village. Several windows in Redmile village including two shops and Methodist Church were damaged.

An unexploded bomb in unfrequented open country at Muston exploded on the morning of 10th May, and one at Plungar during the night.

In spite of this terrific bombardment I am pleased to be able to report that no casualties and no serious damage to property resulted in this Group.

A final survey shows that the main attack covered an oblong area approx. 7 miles long by 3 miles wide. This included all the villages and hamlets from Normanton (Bottesford) to Plungar.

Among the articles recovered were several incendiary bomb carrying rods, Fig.1 in handbook "Objects dropped from the air". These have been deposited at the police station. The survey reveals an extensive use of incendiary bombs. In addition to ordinary H.E. bombs, there were about 12 U.X.B. Roads at Barkestone and Plungar have been closed, military guards posted, and notices placed on gates etc.; in addition to evacuations.

Before ending this report I should like to pay a tribute to the work of the Wardens and Messengers in the villages. These kept up constant patrols and observation duties throughout the period of attack. Frequently pieces of shrapnel and the whine of falling bombs caused Wardens to 'hug the road' but nowhere was there the slightest sign of fear or unsteadiness. Having regard to the small establishment and the magnitude of the incident, the situation was splendidly dealt with, and evidences were that had the damage been more personal to life and property the same coolness would, I am sure, have been shown. As it was the general public seemed greatly heartened by the knowledge that Wardens were near at hand.

Signed A. E. Silverwood

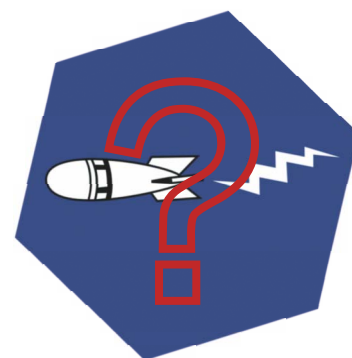
(Silverwood ran the Post Office in Redmile before taking on Bottesford - KB)

The above account is transcribed from a contemporary report, a facsimile being reproduced in "Birds Eye Wartime - Leicestershire 1939-1945" by Terence C. Cartwright. The author adds.

"Later counts of craters and U.X.B's brought this figure (171) nearer 250. One U.X.B which fell in the canal near Redmile could not be removed due to being well below the water table, in silt"

(So is it still there? KB)

Ken Brockway Redmile Archive
<http://www.redmilearchive.freeuk.com>



MEMBERSHIP CARD PRIVILEGES

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



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://gurkhasquarereastaurant.co.uk>

**If you live in or around
West Bridgford
please come and hear
about The Grantham Canal
Past, Present and Future**

April 21st 2016

Starting at 7:30pm

**West Bridgford Methodist
Church Hall,
Musters Road,
West Bridgford**

We look forward to seeing you!



A GCS Volunteers Coat Hanger
We build em big!

**A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL
OUR CONTRIBUTORS FOR
YOUR ARTICLES AND
NUMEROUS PHOTOS**
**Closing date 9th, every
month!**

Ed

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY?

We really need all the support we can get in order to carry out the restoration of this beautiful canal.

Visit www.granthamcanal.org
FOR DETAILS

EASTER HOLIDAY

NARROWBOAT TRIPS on

The Three Shires

**Sunday 27th & Monday 28th March
10.30 till 16.00**

These short trips allow you sufficient time to take in the character of this beautiful canal – whilst helping to support its upkeep and restoration

Adults £3, children £2

Where to find us:

Trips depart from **Lock 18,
Woolsthorpe by Belvoir, NG32 1NY**

Just turn up & ride- spaces subject to availability – plenty of parking - Tea & cakes available in the Depot

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

John Robinson Mr Mrs Altham
Mr Shaw Mr & Mrs Scott
Mrs V.M. Smith

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

New Volunteers: The 'GCS Volunteer Induction Session' is a half day coinciding with at least one of the Society's activities to ensure new volunteers have a chance to meet and talk to existing volunteers. The session covers required health and safety, timesheets and activity recording, the HLF project and how this links to the canal as a whole, the range and dates of activities in the coming months. Locations will be depot or HLF site office, dependent on primary interests of new volunteers. All new volunteers, whether members or not, are required to attend to ensure GCS meets its obligations for health and safety of volunteers and that new volunteers understand the importance of cake within GCS!

Recording ALL the hours you volunteer supports our funding of the HLF bid, please remember to do this. Forms in depot or email Julie. Thanks.

Training coming up, contact the named person if you'd like to join in.

Volunteer Induction Saturday 12th March 2016 9 am at Depot Workshop to be able to set up the Canal Dipping activity for visitors, Saturday 26th March. Contact Julie 07762647874. Three Shires, Season Familiarisation for existing crew and new crew member training; contact John Trigg 07721 939405

Our volunteers are also undertaking training on operating Osberton, the weedboat to keep the waterway navigable.

Volunteer Call. Warmer weather coming?

Help out at our public events, all sorts of activities to do both before and on the day. Contact Julie or Rosemary or email volunteer@granthamcanal.org. Do you have a particular interest or skill to offer? Volunteer teams at Lock 15, and now 14, need to grow too and as always the workparties to keep the canal maintained.

Please contact me for a discussion of the commitment involved or you could recommend someone to support this vital work of GCS, call 07762 647874

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

Dates for Navigation Maint. for Cruising Season

	Meet at	Time
12th March	Depot	9 - 4pm
19th March	Depot	9 - 4pm
26th March + Depot prep. for Easter Cruises	Depot	9 - 4pm
2nd April	Depot	9 - 4pm
9th April	Depot	9 - 4pm

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



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

To contact us please send your email to:

bridge@cygnusweb.co.uk

