

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

I am delighted to announce that your Committee have appointed David Lyneham-Brown as CEO/General Manager of the Society. David's willingness to undertake the overall management of the Society has enabled me to reduce my involvement and become a non-Executive chairman. Does this mean I get more time to myself? I doubt it!

We all wish David success in his endeavours to organise our developing business activities. The recent depot open days and short-trip cruises have proved very successful and were well supported by members of the public. Over £1,000 was raised on each weekend and thanks are due to all those who volunteered. If you, dear reader, haven't been to see us lately why not come along to the next event held on the late May Bank Holiday.

**After considerable effort had been expended our weed-boat, *Osberton*, has been re-floated.**



Photos courtesy Allan Brown

***Osberton* will again require the attention of the GCS engineers before it can resume duties.**

**Well done to those who were strong or got very wet in the process!**

The regular (52 weeks per year) GCS teams at Lock 15 were joined by WRG volunteers for a weeks camp in April. Noticeable progress was achieved and we thank them for coming to assist with the restoration.

Those living in the Nottingham/West Bridgford area will have an opportunity, thanks to the market organisers, to visit the GCS stand at the West Bridgford Farmers Market on Central Avenue on **Saturday morning 13<sup>th</sup> May**. Why not call in and introduce yourself!

Some of you may have noticed that there are gaps in our management structure. If you know someone who could take responsibility for fund raising or for public relations / publicity we would love to hear from them. These are two much needed vacancies in the society.

Enjoy the spring sunshine and our beautiful canal! (Now reconsidering this statement as we have a very cold east wind today!)

*Mike Stone*



**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**

**Friday 12th May** guided tour of Attenborough Nature Reserve, starting at 7.30pm. Gather in the car park at the end of Barton Lane. The postcode is **NG9 6DY**

Further information from:  
[nottsandderbys@waterways.org.uk](mailto:nottsandderbys@waterways.org.uk)

# The GRANTHAM CANAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE



**Further progress being made at Lock 15**

Photos courtesy John Clark

## Talks and Events Diary

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

2017 Bookings

- Sat 13<sup>th</sup> May 8.30-1.30 West Bridgford Farmers' Market
- Sat 13<sup>th</sup> May Barnstone Coffee Morning
- Sun & Mon 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> May Bank Holiday Boat Trips – volunteers needed for crew, refreshments, trip sales, etc.
- Mon 15<sup>th</sup> May School Visit: St John's Grantham
- Sat & Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> June Grantham Steam and County Show
- Sat 10<sup>th</sup> June Bingham Town Fair
- Sat 17<sup>th</sup> June 11.00 – 4.00 Cotgrave Festival
- Sat 24<sup>th</sup> June 11.00 – 5.00 East Bridgford Village Show
- Sun 25<sup>th</sup> June 10.30 – 4.00 Short Boat Trip Sunday
- Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> July Dysart Park Family Fun Day, Grantham
- Sat 8<sup>th</sup> July Radcliffe Carnival
- Sun 9<sup>th</sup> – Wed 12<sup>th</sup> July U3A Summer School at Harlaxton Manor
- Sat 15<sup>th</sup> July 7.00 Talk in Bottesford Church arranged by Friends of St Mary's
- Sat 29<sup>th</sup> July 9.00 – 1.00 Information Stand at Morrisons, Gamston
- Sun 30<sup>th</sup> July 10.30 – 4.00 Short Boat Trip Sunday
- Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 12.00 – 6.00 Skylarks Festival, Holme Pierpont
- Sun & Mon 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Aug Bank Holiday Boat Trips – volunteers needed for crew, refreshments, trip sales, etc.
- Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 7.30 Talk: Waltham WI
- Sat & Sun 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Sept Harby Country Show
- Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Sept 7.30 Talk: Manthorpe WI
- Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2.00 Talk: Burton Lazars Village Hall
- Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 10.30 – 4.00 Short Boat Trip Sunday
- Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Oct Talk: Nubourne WI
- Sun 8<sup>th</sup> October Discovery Day
- Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 2.30 Talk: Bottesford Friendship Group
- Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 7.30 Talk: Hough on the Hill History Society
- Tues 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2.00 Talk: Ascension Ladies Fellowship
- Wed 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2.00 Talk: East Leake Local History Society
- Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov Talk: Springwells Heritage Group, Horbling

**waterway recovery group**



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

[bridge@granthamcanal.org](mailto:bridge@granthamcanal.org)



## Community & Education Update

**Events:** This year seems to be racing like rapids, rather than canal pace. We have been very busy and Easter and Bank Holiday trips have been very successful. Lots of people have turned up to help setting up, but the stalwart few are still left with a lot to do before they can go home, securing gazebos threatening to blow away in the wind, etc. and of course the more productive task of counting money before it can be safely banked.

Chris Cobb has been working hard taking event bookings and as well as those who have been building up relationships with supermarkets, Brian Rogers has arranged to take information and guide books to Barnstone coffee morning.

**Please** commit to help with events where you can, so the task does not become too onerous. Contact:

[c\\_j\\_cobb@msn.com](mailto:c_j_cobb@msn.com)

**Education update:** There has been an encouraging increase in requests from schools and a couple more people have agreed to be checked for suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults. Activities have ranged from why the restoration needs bricks to the ever popular mini-beast identification activities. We need to inspire the young. They have more chance of using the restored canal than some of our valued volunteers.

### Oral History and Research Group:

Encouraging responses and turnout for the meeting at Grantham Museum. A number of people left to undertake homework.

### Don't Forget:

**Discovery Day Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>:**  
planning team meet regularly.

**Contact:** [iansimmons@icloud.com](mailto:iansimmons@icloud.com)  
with ideas and offers of help with planning and commitments to help on the day.

Rosemary

[communityandevents@granthamcanal.org](mailto:communityandevents@granthamcanal.org)

07971 173069  
or 01476 978896

## EVENTS TEAM

The events team have made a start this year.

Our first event was a Meet and Greet day at Cotgrave Country Park (towards the Nottingham end of the canal).

This was held jointly with the of Friends of Cotgrave Country Park on Sunday 23rd April.

This was followed by a Meet the Public at Morrisons Store in Gamston, Nottingham. on Saturday 6th May.

A very good response at both events and plenty of interest in what's happening along the canal.

*However, we still require help at events.*

*I am unable to book certain events and shows due to lack of volunteers.*  
If you would like to be part of our team please contact me on 07926 414652 after 2.00pm to discuss details.

**I AM IN URGENT NEED OF 3 VOLUNTEERS FOR THE GRANTHAM STEAM SHOW ON SATURDAY 3RD AND SUNDAY 4TH JUNE.**

No help could mean us having to cancel our participation at this event.

Chris Cobb

**A very BIG thank you to all our volunteers and bakers who gave up their time to help over the Easter and May Bank Holidays to raise money for the restoration of our lovely Grantham Canal.**

**A total of £2020.00 was achieved.**

**If you can help at the next Bank Holiday 28th and 29th May, please let me know on 01476 566578. Thank you Mary N.**



## Greetings Earthlings

*from that parallel universe – the World Wide Web!*

Some stats as of 6<sup>th</sup> May:

Our **Twitter** feed received 39,400 views over the last 28 days.

Our **Facebook** page, which we're beginning to use more, reached 1,852 people in the last five days.

Our **website** has received 21,814 views so far this year.

There are those, whom, when I mention Twitter; cross themselves and reach for their rosary beads. Clearly, looking at the stats, there are many who do not.

Social media and the website are important to the society in many ways. The Heritage Lottery Fund follows us, as do the Canal and River Trust and national waterways publications. Councillors, MPs, radio stations, local newspapers – they're all there.

This will come as a big surprise – but, being the custodian of our social media, I don't receive a daily bulletin to tell me what's happening within the society. The website diary is useful source – but, being a gregarious species, we like to see people – we want to see something happening.

If you're in the Boat Team, Workparty, Events Team, Oral History & Research Team, Rangers Team, Management Team – send me a picture or two of the daily grind:

[anthonykjackson@btopenworld.com](mailto:anthonykjackson@btopenworld.com)

If any team members wish to have direct input into our social media – email me.

Tony Jackson



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

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## THE WAY IT WAS

During the late 80's a problem came to a head regarding access and passage along the towpath by the Hickling Basin from the road and up to the first swingbridge no.31.

The local farmer had an agreement with British Waterways to allow his dairy cows to access the towpath and drink from the canal, this created problems for walkers both on the towpath and the shared access gate onto the street. The dairy herd had to be walked up to the farm twice a day. An agreement was met that the farmer would provide a concrete water trough and we would run a water pipe from the main street to the trough, approx. 400 metres to a field. Also erect a dividing fence between the towpath and the farm track.

Once again we were lucky that B.W. agreed to dig and backfill the trench using their 360 tracked digger with Dave Smith in charge. The plastic pipe was in 100 metre lengths so during the week Dave would bury it etc and leave access holes for us to join up the sections. He buried a 3 inch plastic conduit under the Smite Brook to protect the pipe and left projecting pipe at the field end and main road for final connection.

We started by digging a rectangle footing about 3m x 2m in the field using timber shuttering and mixing concrete on site to form a stable base for the trough. A stop tap with special plastic chamber, made out of a yogurt pot, was installed as the concrete was laid and all left to harden. John the farmer helped considerably during the construction and then installed the heavy trough using his tractor loader.

All we then had to do was connect the ball cock valve to the stop tap and tidy up the site. The water authority had to connect the other end to the main and install a meter. It all must have worked ok when connected apart from a contractor installing fibre optics cut through the water pipe crossing the pavement, this bit buried by the water authority.

It was then time to install or fit a fence and separate gate from the main street to a point where the towpath divided from the farm track. Timber was sourced from Belvoir timber yard with circular posts and square hand rails and infill rails much as you see it today. A gate was fitted at the dividing point to allow B.W. access onto the towpath, the path between the fence and canal being too narrow. The street end was incorporated into a small seating area. B.W. filled in the gaps between the field and towpath and the whole job resolved many inherited problems.

Some years later the whole Basin was reformed and slight alterations to our work was made. An unusual job for canal navvies.

*Mike Atherley*



## PLANT OPERATOR TRAINING 2017



Roger, Dave, Richard and Jim undergoing their training

## 'The way it was' Spring 2007

In last month's article, I showed the state of the Harlaxton Cutting early in 2006 and what a joint GCS / Waterway Recovery Group weekend did to cut back overhanging vegetation – especially on the 'off-side' bank. In crisp February weather, it proved to be a very successful working party – but it could only ever hope to 'scratch the surface' of the problem. Many of the canal-side trees were only appropriate for professional forestry ... and, in any case, the greater part of the blockage consisted of accumulated silt and fallen timber hidden *beneath* the water line. If the Grantham Canal was to be restored to navigation, a bolder solution had to be found.

At this stage, two key decisions were taken by the Grantham Canal Partnership and the Society, supported by the Inland Waterways Association – to apply to host the IWA's *National Trailboat Festival 2007* and, to facilitate that, to seek financial support from EMDA, the then East Midlands Development Agency. More about the Festival – which we re-named '*Grantham on Water*' (but which those present on the Spring Bank Holiday Monday called '*Grantham Under Water*!') – in a future '*Bridge*' but here's a reminder of EMDA's contribution to the canal and what was happening in February - May 2007 ...

To cut a long story short:

- EMDA was persuaded – by Kevin Mann, Grantham Canal Restoration Manager – to award a Derelict Land Grant to clear most of the canal between the A1 and Denton Winding Hole, in preparation for the Festival.
- The principal contract was awarded by British Waterways to Land & Water, whose plant was delivered to Denton Wharf and included dredgers, tugs and pans, which shuttled up and down the Harlaxton Cutting for weeks,

Continued ...



'The way it was', January 2007, pre-EMDA



Site of Harlaxton Wharf



Four pieces of plant struggle to move one submerged tree trunk!



Off loading arrangements at the Denton end (from r to l) off-loading sieving spreading



Off-loading at the A1 end - where the Landing Stage now is.



Bank-side pruning: feeding the shredder.



Harlaxton Wharf, looking west



You could see where they'd been

manned by some very capable operators, who lived in canal-side caravans.

- The 'modus operandi' was to commence at the A1 end of the canal and for a dredger to work its way west, filling (to the brim!) pans, which were then pushed or pulled by tugs to one of two off-loading points. At these, a digger was used to swing the silt over the bank and into a giant sieve, which extracted any timber or other unwanted solids. The sieved silt was then spread over agreed adjacent fields, as a soil improver, using a bulldozer.
- At the same time, the forestry team worked its way along the banks, felling or crowning dangerous trees and shredding off-cuts. A massive amount of timber had to be removed and anything that fell into the water (supposedly) had to be recovered.
- Some 3kms [2 miles] of that section was dredged and an estimated 30,000 tonnes of material was removed from the canal. Of this, roughly a quarter was tree trunks etc. and three-quarters silt – which was spread over 11 hectares of canal side farmland. In terms of forestry, 8 mature trees were removed and 24 'crown reduced'. 2.5kms of scrub vegetation was cleared from the canal edge.
- In total, the dredging and forestry project lasted a full 3 months, from mid-February to mid-May – as sharp-eyed readers may have deduced from the growing canal-side vegetation.

The outcome of the project transformed the length of the canal through to Denton Winding Hole, showing the public that we were in business and clearing the way for installation of the A1 Landing Stage and 're-discovery' and restoration of the historic Harlaxton Wharf ... and for all the navigation that has since taken place. Watching the project unfold – with all its tugs, pans, diggers, bulldozers and mud – was also the greatest fun since *Dinky Toys* were invented! Thank you, EMDA!

**Peter Stone (Secretary, Grantham Canal Partnership 2004-12)**



No wonder it hadn't been navigable ...



Chairman of the Grantham Canal Partnership, Tony Wilkinson, makes an early morning inspection.



'Dinosaurs at dawn'.



A birds-eye view at Vincent's Bridge



Harlaxton Wharf - 'rediscovered'.



The circus moves on - Land & Water load up at Denton Wharf



11th May - The circus moves on



Leaving local farm land to benefit from a 'sea of mud'!



"Monkey business - definitely NOT to be attempted by GCS Members!"

Photograph by Kevin Mann



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



**Flora & Fauna along the  
Grantham Canal  
by James Faulconbridge**

**May – Cowslips**

May sees the wildflowers really begin to take hold of the verges and meadows. One of the first prominent species is the cowslip which form colonies of nodding yellow flowers. These pop up along beneath the hedgerows along the canal and grow in profusion alongside the green-winged orchids in Muston Meadows, just a short walk off the towpath. But beware, not all of these flowers are quite what they seem!

Cowslips are a member of the primrose family and often grow in close proximity to their relative, the wild primrose. These two species can, and do, hybridise quite readily to create a flower known as the 'false oxlip' because the resultant flowers look rather like a third, much rarer species, the true oxlip. Here are a few things to look out for:

The flowers of cowslip form a nodding head facing in a single direction. They can be long-stemmed – up to 25cm tall, but are often shorter where the nutrient levels are lower. The flowers are deep yellow with orange flecks in the centre. You can find anything up to 30 flowers in a flower head. Remember to take a sniff – the apricot aroma is quite distinctive in a fresh flower! The flowers of the false oxlip are generally larger, more open and spreading but you can still see the tell-tale orange flecks which indicate the cowslip parentage. Rather than nodding in a single direction, as a pure oxlip or cowslip would do, these flowers face in all directions.



**Cowslip - photographed by James in Muston Meadows**



**BOAT TRIPS**

**MAY 28th & 29th**

10-30 - 4.00pm

Adults £3, Children £2

Displays in the Carpenter's Shop, next to the Dirty Duck where Tea, Coffee & Cakes will be served.

NG32 1NY

**Discovery Day 2017**

**Sunday October 8th**



**A photo from our 2015 Discovery Day**

On Sunday May 7th, Arthur and Margaret Ambrose, of the Grantham Kesteven Rotary Club, organised a car treasure hunt through the Vale of Belvoir ending with afternoon tea in the Carpenters' Shop, Woolsthorpe. Christina and Mary of GCS laid the tables for 40 guests and served the teas and coffees. A donation of £100. was given towards the restoration of the Grantham Canal. Mary N.

**VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES**



**WEEKDAYS AT LOCK 15  
or**



**SATURDAYS WITH ONE OF OUR WORKPARTIES**

If you can spare some time to join one of our teams then please email

[volunteer@granthamcanal.org](mailto:volunteer@granthamcanal.org)  
or  
[lan.wakefield@granthamcanal.org](mailto:lan.wakefield@granthamcanal.org)

**To All Society Members**

Part of our agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund is that we help them assess the effectiveness of our Lock 14/15 project and to this purpose they have asked us to complete a short survey.

This includes the volunteer programme and how it has worked. At this stage in the project they wish to collect baseline information from the GCS membership.

Given the generosity of the HLF could I ask you all to complete the survey – it is only 4 questions and our help/ co-operation will stand us in good stead when we seek funding for future projects.

To access the survey click on:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/THMGQ5H>  
then complete and send. Any problem you encounter please let me know on [david.lyneham-brown@ntlworld.com](mailto:david.lyneham-brown@ntlworld.com)

I hope not to hear from you!

Thanks for your efforts

David Lyneham-Brown

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

Nigel Lee, J.Crowther & A.J.Robinson



Your comments, news items or photos are always very welcome

To contact us please send your email to:

[bridge@granthamcanal.org](mailto:bridge@granthamcanal.org)

