

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

The height of summer and everything along the canal is great! Our thanks must go to the skippers and their crews of *The Three Shires* who have successfully marketed the cruises and are now reaping the rewards for their efforts. Lots of people are booking cruises which all contribute to the society's funds and we thank them for supporting us. To support navigation other volunteers have been busy too. The workboat *Centaury* has recently been operated by a Friday group of volunteers to clear some of the debris along the top pound. One of the bottom gates at Lock 18 suffered a mechanical failure but this was soon repaired by a small



but professional team. Work to repair the weed-boat *Osberton* is continuing but oh how we are missing its services as in places the canal is not looking good at the moment! Next month the devoted teams working to restore Lock 15 will be joined by WRG volunteers from the length and breadth of the UK. WRG are holding four week long camps during August to support and help move our project forward.

Those of you who went to Radcliffe Carnival or Rempstone Rally last weekend may have seen our stands at both events. If so I hope you introduced yourselves to the volunteers as they welcome your interest.



You probably will not be aware that the Society has an educational arm which has been taking the canal into schools - well nearly that - so that pupils can view our water tanks populated with insects and lava 'borrowed' from the canal in class rather than an organised visit to Woolsthorpe. (See Rosemary's report on page 5). This saves time and money for the school which enables the event to be neatly dovetailed into the school curriculum.

Recently I have met a few people who are about to retire and are wondering how they will fill their time!

Little do they know! I found that volunteering for the Society was of interest to them and I look forward to seeing them again, next time on the canal as a volunteer.

**Have you thought what you could do to add interest to your lifestyle? Why not contact us and find out.**

**Enjoy summertime whatever you are doing.**

*Mike Stone.*

**HELP NEEDED FOR OUR POORLY CANAL!**

**Problem:**

There is a large amount of Duckweed & floating reeds on the canal at present.



**GCS Comment:**

Apart from making it difficult for the skipper & crew on "The Three Shires" the action of the propeller loosens the reeds which then float in large shoals! Duckweed is also covering the surface which often happens on rural canals. The lack of our weed boat doesn't help either!

**Remedy:**

Serious dredging required allowing more flow from the reservoirs, more volunteers & loads more cash!



**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**  
**Festival of Water 26-28th August**

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



# The GRANTHAM CANAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE



Off-side letterbox starts getting the "treatment".



Removing stone block work.



Blocks ready for lifting.



Near-side letterbox about to get some TLC.



Overall view of the near-side letterbox



Off-side wing wall coming along nicely



Inside the nearside letterbox after some pointing



Iona's mark

Our grateful thanks to John Clark for this months photos & captions showing some of the work carried out by one team of GCS volunteers a few days ago.

## 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

- 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
- Sun 16<sup>th</sup> July Knipton Country Fayre & duck Race Hickling Church Fete
- Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> July 10am - 4pm
- 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 Pierrepont
- 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
- Sun 10<sup>th</sup> Sept Grantham Fire Station
- 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



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Have you looked at our "Grantham Canal Society" Facebook page?  
[https://www.facebook.com/granthamcanalsociety/?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/granthamcanalsociety/?ref=br_tf)



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)



## THE WAY IT WAS

We became well known for being a travelling group of Navvies, it wasn't a case of neglecting the Grantham, but more of keeping a team together until BW allowed us to start serious restoration work. One such job came our way when Nottm. City Council decided to convert part of the old Fellows, Morton & Clayton warehouse on Canal St.

Nottingham. into a waterway's museum. John Cockcroft was the curator and John Baylis was our leader. The buildings and yard had been used by the city engineers dept.

By the time we got the request to help, most of the internal work in the large building had been done, floors had been varnished, walls decorated and banister rails erected around the internal boat dock. The reason we were asked to help was that a short arm came off the Nottm. Canal main line and carried through to the inside of the main building so that two full length narrowboats could unload under cover and this arm was full of silt and debris. We were asked not to cause any damage internally so all the woodwork and floors had to be covered over etc, luckily a large quantity of cloth sacks were found in an out building. The usual problem arose, namely shortage of cash so could we improvise to keep costs down. We could only work at weekends with a group of community volunteers working the other days. The site comprised of one large multi-storey building with a steel transshipment shed alongside the arm, a wharf crane on the bank of the main line and many outbuildings. The road surface was cobble sets and the main entrance off Canal Street. All originally used as a canal / road transshipment building with adequate storage for perishable goods.

When we began poking about in the arm with kebs and grapple hooks it was apparent a lot of ex trolleybus pole electrical equipment had been dumped together with items carried in from the main line. We tried to remove the silt using old lorry fuel tanks made up by Les Reid in the style of dragline buckets. The City provided a large skip for us to fill. This was very heavy work and it soon came apparent that most of the silt flowed back in from the main canal and also with the opening date imminent a new idea was called for. The City agreed for a contractor to erect a coffer dam, made out of scaffolding poles and waterproof sheeting. I think this was a new idea, across the entrance arm then a sludge pump to remove the water. John Baylis agreed to bring a tracked excavator from Langley Mill and we had to collect railway sleepers from Wollaton Park to protect the cobble sets, we also had to modify the outdoor building to allow access for the excavator. All this was successful and only the inside part needed to be cleared by hand. The main reason for this clearance was to enable two working 70ft narrowboats full access inside the building and the electrical portcullis could be closed behind them.

The whole job was done on a very constrained budget and a full opening ceremony carried out with many ex working narrowboats attending. The museum was set up and we provided many display items all about the history of the Grantham Canal. Unfortunately the museum closed after a few years and the site is now a successful pub.

Mike Atherley

Regrettably the pub closed in April 2017 after trading for 8 years.

Ed

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

### Dragonflies

Walk along the towpath in high summer and you are likely to be accompanied by the whirring wings of dragonflies as they hawk the hedgerows and skim over the water's surface. Despite their often-impressive size, and their fearsome presence, they neither bite nor otherwise interact with us, unless you're lucky enough that one takes a fancy to your shoulder as a temporary perch.

Perhaps the most impressive are the hawkers such as the southern hawker - *Aeshna cyanea*. These have long bodies, flecked with blue and lime-green and can grow up to 7 cm long. They are impressive aerial acrobats - flying forwards and backwards as well as being able to hover and take their prey on the wing.

Chasers have broad, flattened abdomens which are much shorter than the hawkers - these species will spend much of their time resting on vegetation waiting for their prey to pass by. After hunting their insect prey on the wing, they will often return to the same perch to await the next. The four-spotted chaser is one of the more distinctive dragonflies you might see along the canal, with a dark spot, midway on the leading edge of each wing.

Finally, the darters are the smallest you are likely to find along the canal - the males have thin red bodies whilst the females are brown. They dart quickly from a hovering position to catch their prey, returning to a favoured perch to eat it.



By Duncan Harris - originally posted to Flickr as Nottingham Canalside Uploaded using F2ComButton, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=8650677>



## Media Cruise

It was a pleasure to welcome representatives on our specially arranged Media Cruise on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

The ever busy Rod Whiting of BBC Radio Lincolnshire joined us for part of the trip, and gave us excellent coverage on his Sunday morning show – we were mentioned in news bulletins too for much of the day. Those lucky enough to own a copy of the fabulous ‘Romantic Canal’, may be familiar with the name Hugh Marrows. Hugh penned this excellent publication – stocks of which are very low now. Hugh is working on a couple of features about the canal. One for the Boston Standard, and one for county magazine Lincolnshire Today. The latter will be published next March/April – so will kick start next year’s cruising season.

Grantham Journal reporter, Tracey Davies is no stranger to the canal, following her excellent feature about the restoration of Lock 15 recently. So we invited her back for a boat ride – in exchange for another feature in the journal of course – like lunches - there’s no such thing as a free boat ride! She was hoping to feature us in the Stamford Mercury too!

Janet Richardson, editor of Towpath Talk enjoyed her cruise, before continuing her journey onwards to the Historic Boat Rally at Braunston – we look forward to the day when you could have completed your journey by boat Janet! Towpath Talk is the number one read in national waterways’ publications and very

supportive of the restoration movement.

Those living in the Grantham area will be familiar with the Village Link magazine, delivered free to over 16,000 homes in villages around the town. Editor Wendy and her team love what they do, and it shows – it’s always a good read – and handy too when you need a tradesperson in an emergency! Of course, the next edition will be well worth its cover price – it’ll have a feature about cruises on the canal!

CEO of the Grantham Canal Society, David Lyneham-Brown was on board to answer questions about important stuff – which saved our crew from having to spin anyone a yarn – because, as we know, once it’s in print – it’s gospel!

Senior Skipper John Trigg did an excellent job in steering us to Denton winding hole and back in around two hours. Crew, Mary Noble and Graham Dickson kept us fed and watered when not assisting the skipper with ropes and things.

A family of swans, Kingfisher and a Grass Snake all added to the enjoyment of those on board, which was organised to raise awareness and to emphasise the importance of cruises as an income stream for the society. Be under no illusion – no Grantham Canal Society – no restored canal. That is the stark reality.

Book your cruise and support the restoration: [www.granthamcanal.org](http://www.granthamcanal.org)

*Tony Jackson*



From Left to Right:  
Mary Noble  
Graham Dickson  
John Trigg  
David Lyneham-Brown  
Tony Jackson (organiser)

## EVENTS TEAM REPORT

Once again a big thank you to everyone who helped at events over the last four weeks.

Events attended have been:

Bingham Town Fair  
Cotgrave Festival  
East Bridgford Show  
Brownstone and Langar Festival  
Dysart Park Fun Day  
Radcliffe on Trent Carnival  
Redstone Steam and Country Show

**We are in urgent need of good quality books and jigsaw puzzles for sale at events.**

**If you can help please contact me on**

**07926 414652**

*Chris Cobb*

**Nearly there.....!**

**By the end of June membership of the Grantham Canal Society had reached 393 - a gentle push and 400 will be ours!**

**Membership has grown steadily in the last few years, the restoration of Lock 15 having provided visible proof of our progress and “The Three Shires” trip boat successfully spreading the message.**

**You, our members, are a powerful source of new recruits to our cause. Keep working on friends, family and work colleagues. We will soon be announcing a competition to encourage you in your efforts.**

## DREDGING!

But how Much Silt do we have to shift?

The Grantham Canal heritage project is approaching an interesting phase!

Dredging the canal between the bottom of Lock 15 at The Dirty Duck and Lock 14 is a big item on the agenda for this coming winter. In July/ August members of the GCS and the Waterways Recovery Group will be surveying that length with the objective of calculating how much silt we will have to remove to bring that canal stretch to navigable condition. A key signal that the current project is complete will be our ability to take a boat from the A1 to the bottom of Lock 14.

So using our own flat bottomed craft with its electric motor we will be gauging the current depth and estimating the amount of silt to be removed. This will directly impact on the timescale and cost of the dredging operation, planned to start later in the year. So if you have the calculation skills and the yen for the fresh air why not volunteer for the survey team. We will be trained by Kate in the Canal and River Trust Hydrology Department and once this project is complete we can use those skills to survey Lock 18 to the A1 to assist us in focusing on the most shallow sections in our future dredging programme.

DL-B

**Help is needed with erecting and dismantling the Gazebo at Knipton Country Fayre and Duck Race on Sunday 16th July and at Hickling Church Fete on 22nd July.**

**Also - can you spare a couple of hours to help give out leaflets at these events? Please contact Chris Cobb on 07926 414652.**

**I have enjoyed being part of the team for E. Bridgford, Dysart Park and Radcliffe Carnivals. Meeting and talking to lots of people about our beautiful canal. We still need volunteers for other events which have been booked. Please ring me, Mary N on 01476 566578 or email [thermalist@gmail.com](mailto:thermalist@gmail.com).**

Mary N.

## GCHI Non-Construction Elements

I don't know how conspicuous Tony and I have been by our absence at events this summer, but we have been far from idle.

**EDUCATION** – We have had a Canal Society Learning Team since 2012 building up relationships with schools and groups such as scouts and guides. Most popular is the observation and identification of canal mini-beasts and some schools which have their own pond have compared the wildlife in them with that in the canal.



Anne Earl did sterling work getting us a grant for the dipping equipment, which is getting plenty of use.

An opportunity to enhance skills and resources through working in partnership with the Canal and River Trust Explorers scheme has been taken up by myself, Tony Jackson and Brian Rogers. We have had our first induction day and await a date for the second which will include water safety. Claire Cavendish, CRT Education coordinator for the East Midlands and North East, showed how the Build-a-Canal sand tray it can be dramatically adapted to tell the story of the building of Grantham Canal. We also need to develop on-line resources. With these and the equipment produced at the hands of Tony and Brian, we can encourage future generations of canal volunteers.

If you want to get involved with Explorers, you can enrol on the CRT

website or contact me and I'll put you in touch.

Education doesn't stop after school age and I am getting ready to pop round to Harlaxton Manor for the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A) Summer School over the next few days. A canal visit and boat trip are on the timetable as well as teaching sessions on canal history, arts and crafts and the economic and environmental benefits of restoration.

**ORAL HISTORY AND RESEARCH** – continuing to build up our knowledge a number of people are doing their homework accessing documents, maps and old photographs and collecting oral histories. I have a bank of contacts with stories to tell and we have a couple of recorders, but more people are needed to collect this information before it is no longer available to us. Look out for a date in September when we can have another meeting to share findings. Have you or anyone you know have stories to share? Please get in touch.

**INTERPRETATION** – The Heritage Lottery Activity Plan included budget to replace worn-out signs along the length of the canal. Going for quality rather than quantity, rustic benches with carved maps are being produced with family orientated leaflets to provide a greater appreciation of the canal. I am looking forward to seeing these benches installed. They look chunky and attractive. Unfortunately, the budget does not stretch to 20 benches to replace all the signs. It would be good to find further funding towards installing some more. On the subject of Funding, this flags up the desperate need to find someone to coordinate Fund Raising and grant applications. There is a danger that people think with the amount of funding we are well off. A request for copies of old photos resulted in a demand for payment because we have lottery funding. The pot isn't bottomless and we need to match the HLF grant and still pay for our normal running costs. A vital role for someone out there!

Rosemary

[communityandevents@granthamcanal.org](mailto:communityandevents@granthamcanal.org)  
**0797 117 3069**



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)

The  
**Grantham Canal**  
Society  
CHARITY No: 507337

## A DEDICATED FUND-RAISER

The Grantham Canal Society has never had a dedicated fundraiser in its team and it is crucial that we remedy this gap in our volunteer community.

The executive committee are about to unroll an initiative to find such an individual(s) and it will remain a priority item until the gap is filled.

It took nearly 5 years from the initial approach to see the Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £833,000 emerge. That has allowed us, in partnership with Canal and River Trust, to tackle the restoration of Locks 14 and 15 as currently underway. We have to start the process NOW for future fundraising, not wait until the requirement is upon us.

With the Grantham being one of the most beautiful canals in Britain big funding does not come easily, with no urban dereliction & no seriously under privileged communities along its length. This means that we must use imagination and innovation to get at funding sources. How do we attract potential candidates for the fundraising team for the whole of the GCS range of activities?

The GCS Executive will in the future hold an extraordinary meeting on fund raising schemes and the work required.

A job description has been prepared and any interested member, or who knows someone who might be, please email [chiefexecutive@granthamcanal.org](mailto:chiefexecutive@granthamcanal.org) for a copy.

*David Lyneham-Brown*



## BOAT TRIP SUNDAY JULY 30<sup>th</sup>

10-30 - 4.00pm  
Adults £3, Children £2

NG32 1NY

## Discovery Day 2017 Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>



The well renowned Duck Race at 2016 Discovery Day

## 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)

## NEW Friday Workparty

to keep the canal clear of reed and rubbish.

Meet at 9am at the Depot behind the Dirty Duck Pub Woolsthorpe by Belvoir NG32 1NY

Contact Ian Wakefield  
07789 383266  
or Mary N  
01476 566578

Gurkha Square



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>



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)

The  
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Society  
CHARITY No: 507337