

SEPTEMBER

BRIDGE

2019



The progress at lock 14 - March to August
Aerial photography by Sea Lane Media Ltd



This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

50 Years On!

Yes, the body that is now the Grantham Canal Society originated in 1969.

That makes us one of the longest running canal society's in England.

A few well meaning but hurtful folks say that it has taken a long time to do not a lot! **Untrue** I reply with some understanding of the point they are making as, for very good reasons, progress has been fragmented and has not commenced from an existing navigation.

Can you recall the key steps made over the years?

- Stopped the canal being used as a linear rubbish tip.
- Constructed the Bridle Bridge.
- Persuaded Lincolnshire CC to construct Casthorpe Bridge.
- Removed the railway embankment at Woolsthorpe.
- Constructed three swing bridges and restored 2.5 miles to navigation at Hickling.
- Restored three locks at Woolsthorpe.
- Ensured that the canal remained when Cotgrave Colliery closed and two locks were restored.
- Restored the canal to navigation from the A1 to Woolsthorpe.
- Arranged with Leicestershire CC that reconstructed Harby Bridge enabling it to be raised for navigation in the future.
- Ensured that the new A46 dual carriageway did not obstruct future navigation – OK so we failed at Mann's Bridge on that occasion!
- Restored one further lock with another largely completed on the Woolsthorpe flight.

I think that is a pretty good record for a Society that doesn't formally own the canal and has not always found support from officialdom.

The Society has always been a progressive body driven by the desire of those who started it to restore the Grantham Canal and that is still the target today.

Given the high level of support we receive, both locally and nationally, we will continue to make progress. Those currently at the helm will gradually hand over the baton to more recent recruits whom I know will continue to drive restoration forward.

So where do we go in the next 50 years? Forward I hope and build on what has already been achieved.

My personal thoughts include further activity happening in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire; completion of the Woolsthorpe lock flight; private craft being based on the canal; re-opening of the length between Hickling and Hose; navigating to Redmile and, longer timescale, to a time when those disconnected lengths of restored canal can be joined up and offer a new cruise-way to their communities. Could we achieve all that within the next 50 years or even in a shorter period? With support we can!

The Society is proud to be a voluntary body and continues to be reliant on the generosity of a wide range of volunteers who freely give of their time and skills.

They are priceless!

Thank you all.

Mike Stone.



COMMUNITY & EVENTS DIARY FOR 2019

<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Event & Venue</u>
Sat 14 th Sept 10.00 – 4.00	Heritage Open Day: Learning about our Canal + Boat Trips, Depot
Wed 18 th Sept	First Aid Training at the Depot
Thurs 19 th Sept 6.00	Visit from Upper Broughton History Group to Depot (new date)
Thurs 26 th Sept 10.30-3.00	Archive Training Day
Sun 29 th Sep 10.00 – 4.00	Summer Sunday Boat Trips
Sun 13th October	DISCOVERY DAY
Fri 25 th Oct 7.30	Talk: Corby Glen History Soc. Church St Rooms
Wed 6 th Nov 12.00	Talk: Breath Easy Nottingham, Edwalton Golf Club
Wed 13 th Nov 2.30	Talk: Marlborough Court, West Bridgford (moved from May)
Wed 27 th Nov	DLB Talk: Vale of Belvoir Probus
Sun 1 st Dec	Dirty Duck Christmas Market
Mon 9 th Dec 2.00	Sleaford U3A Local History Group, Winchelsea Centre

Hedgehog Welfare

A sniffer dog is being trained to find hedgehogs to help stop their rapidly falling numbers. The three-year-old Springer Spaniel sniffs out the mammals before builders move in to develop land. Henry can find a hedgehog hidden more than 250 yards away. His sense of smell is 100,000 times more acute than a human's. When Henry locates a hedgehog, he sits next to it and waits for his trainer Linda Wilson to have a look. Linda said: "He doesn't actually like the odour of the hedgehog, so he doesn't go near the nest." Henry works with the Conservation K9 Consultancy in Wrexham, North Wales. They train sniffer dogs for both the detection of wildlife and for conservation purposes. The project is being overseen by staff at Hartpury University in Gloucester. If successful, it is hoped other dogs can be trained to aid conservation. Over the last sixty years Britain's hedgehog numbers have dropped from 30 million to little more than a million. Much of its natural habitat has been lost through land development.

Hedgehog Help: By nature, they are inquisitive creatures and can quickly find themselves in trouble from everyday things lying around the garden. So, if you have a pond, make sure a hedgehog can find its way out after a swim. Put a ramp, stones, a pot of water plants, or even a bit of old carpet draped over the edge to provide an escape route. As well as garden netting also tidy away wire fencing and the plastic rings that hold together four-six packs of drink. And, pick up those elastic bands the postie is prone to drop. Hedgehogs love to nestle in the undergrowth and warm cosy places. So, check before you strim the garden, dig out the compost heap, or light a bonfire.

Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative at Lock 14

Some photos of GCS Volunteers who are rebuilding lock 14



Martin (L) & Lou (R)
(Inset: Martin's Mug Shot!)



Jim



John T.



John R.



Ralph working on the letterbox



Philip grouting between bricks & blocks



Richard & Martin Bricklaying



Paul & John N. laying blocks

**Many thanks to
John Clark & Jim
Freeman for these
lock 14 photos**

***Not sure where the
other team's
photos are!
Ed***



#Trending



Adam was training for his marathon races along the towpath when he snapped this picture of The Three Shires out on a cruise – and, as Barbara commented – with Royal escort!



You liked this picture, with 1,763 giving it the thumbs up on Facebook. Our August Bank Holiday Boat Trips poster received 4,365 likes – now, as much as we love to see you on these occasions – we're pleased you didn't all turn up!

It was difficult to choose which of Jacqueline's pictures to use from our Twitter feed this month – I've gone for her Red Admiral butterfly. The weather becoming more autumnal by the day, we need to treasure these sightings, for soon they'll be gone for another year – let's hope for an Indian Summer!



Tony Jackson

Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal by James Faulconbridge



August – Painted Lady

As late summer shifts into early autumn, we're moving once more into mushroom season. This is the time of year when a wide array of bizarre forms and structures appear in the habitats around the canal; from field mushrooms and puffballs in the grassland, to bracket fungi on the trees and saprophytic (decay-eating) fungi on deadwood and leaf litter. Many have fantastic and macabre names such as destroying angel, dead man's fingers and the amethyst deceiver. From casual observation, you might assume that these are organisms which appear and grow in the autumn, but in fact what you are seeing is merely the fruiting body (the equivalent of the flowering) of an organism which generally lives throughout the year, sometimes as a vast network of interconnecting hyphae in the ground or on their food substrate. Autumn is the peak time for the fruiting bodies to emerge as the warm, humid conditions are ideal for the release of the spores to colonise new sites.

Some of these fungi, known collectively as the mycorrhizal fungi, are vital to the health and longevity of flowering plants and trees. The fungi connect in with the roots of the plants and use their extensive hyphal networks to source a range of nutrients which they provide to the plants in exchange for carbon in the form of sugars.

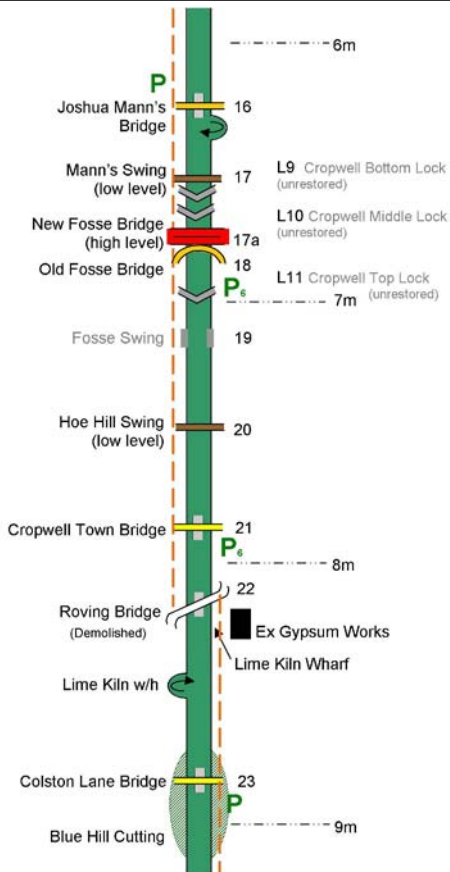
It hopefully doesn't need repeating, but of course many mushrooms and fungi are toxic. As the old adage goes: 'All mushrooms are edible, but some only once!'

THE WAY IT WAS

By Mike Atherley



This month Mike describes the efforts the GCRS made in trying to re-water the dry section



Even when the canal was opened in 1797, leakage problems were found in the Cropwell Bishop section, in fact the canal was closed several times while clay could be brought in and spread along the bed in that section. While the canal was busy and making profits the problem was kept under control. Whether it was poor engineering, shoddy work by the Navvies or lack of input money from the Canal shareholders I don't know but its strange that there was so much clay in that area. When the canal was bought by the railway company little or no maintenance was done and boatowners were having to transport lighter loads to stop running aground until it became virtually dry and the canal closed in the 1930's. The water authority that took over found the lock gates rotted and leaking, shallow reservoirs and swing bridges beyond repair so the locks had concrete weirs built in place of top gates to help keep a minimum of water in the canal, the swing bridges were replaced by fixed concrete decks making the canal un-navigable. A small income was still incoming from the sale of water for farm and agricultural use. The canal soon ran dry in the Cropwell section and people in Hickling and

Kinoulton were complaining about the smell and shallow levels so BWB installed a temporary weir at bridge 24, Spencer's, but allowed the rest up to the Hollygate feeder to run dry. During wet periods water would be found in that area. Eventually as the Canal Society was being formed it was found that BWB were intending to sell off any sections that were proved difficult to maintain. Fortunately the canal society managed stop this action.

When I joined in 1971 a small team known as the engineering team had been investigating the dry section and found a brick culvert crossing under the canal near fishpond cottages between bridge No.23 and 24. Any water coming over the weir was leaking through the bed into the culvert. So during a dry spell they dug down to reveal the brickwork and covered as much as they could with a concrete



The test trench checking for leaks

overcoat. When the next wet period arrived some water was still leaking through but that section started to refill but only retained water for a short time.. We borrowed a Smalley excavator from a WRG worksite at Marple and the team leader spent a lot of time digging a shallow trench along the bed of the canal between Bridge No.22 and the under culvert which they used to test for leakage by blocking off small sections and filling with water. Some retained water others didn't so it was obvious that more serious work would be needed to ensure a permanent repair. Another thing we tried was to block off the culvert pipes under bridge no.23 to see if that section would refill. It didn't, so that dam was removed. BWB did dredge that section and it revealed large areas of Gypsum strata all along the canal bed, proving it required relining. We also found British Gypsum were pumping water from a new quarry into the canal near bridge No.21 so we got permission to build a temporary dam behind the infill pipes to check the bed between bridge No.21 and Lock 11. This quickly refilled and after the sluice in the concrete weir had been repaired, near normal water depth was achieved.

We decided then to try and re-water the section down to Lock 9 where we found the old top gates lying on the canal bed. With the help of Smalley Excavators who wanted to test a new machine the gates were lifted and re-hung successfully. Unfortunately a few weeks afterwards the gates were set on fire and destroyed so we never saw water in that section. The pumping eventually stopped and a pond had started to form in a field near Lock 11 so the water slowly drained away, proving only that small leaks were present in that section.



Refitting the old gates with help of the Smalley excavator



The 'dry' section with near normal water level

What do I think is required to repair the dry section up to Lock 11?

First a new culvert pipe near Fishpond cottages, then some kind of relining possibly with modern material between Bridge No.24 and 22 . Possibly small repairs near lock 11. I don't think the Canal Society members could have done any more during those early years and when large projects like the railway embankment removal and following lock and bridge rebuilds took place at Woolsthorpe then all labour and finances have been used to the maximum.

Community and Education Update September 2019

Despite torrential rain, Rob Cook led a well-attended walk from Gamston for an interested and interesting group. I hope they didn't get as soaked as I did. My waterproof wasn't. The weather didn't look promising for the WRG family camp either, so it was cancelled. The sun then came out for a glorious bank holiday, so the weekend's event boosted the coffers by over £1200. Much appreciation to all the volunteers who continue to help and especial mention to Carole's army of bakers who donate time, cost of ingredients and expertise to stock our refreshment area with such a scrumptious array of real treats!

David travelled to London to give a talk at the Canal Museum which he said went down well.

The 60s night at Duck Hall was enthusiastically received. I haven't danced so much for a very long time and am so grateful to Andy Antony for bringing together friends from Grantham Am Dram circles who brought in other friends with musical talents to rock the joint. Gary Cadwallader, Nick Croft and the irrepressible John Shephard will be acting on stage at Grantham Guildhall in November. I can't thank them enough for giving of their time and talent to help us celebrate our 50th Anniversary and hope they get some paid gigs from their efforts. For the Canal Society, the evening was meant for fun rather than fundraising, but Mary and Jane raised over £80 on the raffle. JF's themed buffet was just delicious.

The Imagineer Bridge project in Earlesfield by the Canal drew lots of children to the Canal Society stand to try out our learning activities. We look forward to presenting more of this kind of thing when we hold our Heritage Open Day on Saturday 14th September. Thanks in anticipation to all of our priceless volunteers and the supporters who come along to join us and learn more about the canal. We are also always happy to learn more ourselves.

We look forward to learning more about how to handle the information we collect on the Archive Training Day on September 26th. Let Sue, our archivist or me know if you would like to join us on the day.

Plans for Discovery Day are hotting up. You can watch developments on the website. Let us know if you can help.

Top of the list this week is our contribution to Lincolnshire Heritage Open Days on Saturday 14th September 10.00 - 4.00 when our usual Open Day format will be enhanced by extra emphasis on Learning about the Canal.

All offers of help, support and ideas for future events welcome

Rosemary communityandevents@granthamcanal.org or 07971 173069

Shopping Online this Xmas?

I feel rather ashamed to be advertising Christmas related fundraising ideas in the September Edition, but as many of the national stores are now on the Christmas Warpath it would seem that Christmas has come earlier again and many of you may be already planning those purchases for friends and family. **Did you know that you could be supporting The Grantham Canal Society with every purchase you make?**



Debenhams



LAKELAND

Currys PC World



Go to <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/the-grantham-canal-society> and create an account – it is that easy! And furthermore, you can get a handy reminder on your browser which reminds you to donate to GCS every time you make an online purchase.

The Giveasyoulive platform supports all major retailers; Amazon, John Lewis, eBay etc. The retailers will give us a small percentage of the amount you spend.

Look out for the special offers – last year I bought my son a new phone and CarphoneWarehouse donated £20 to GSC as a Black Friday Special!!

So far we have raised nearly £800, so please sign up and don't forget to tell your friends and family to sign up and support us.



red letter
DAYS

Etsy



HOTEL
Chocolat.
BRITISH
CHOCOLATE MAKERS & BAKERS ASSOCIATION



Neil White

GCS Fundraiser

07934 025435

Swifts in the Church Tower Alan Wilkins – Kinoulton Village

By mid-September the final breeding adults and young fledglings will have left the tower of St Luke's church and be heading back to southern Africa. After leaving the shelter of the colony boxes they will stay on the wing, sleeping and feeding, till the irrepressible urge to fly north again forces them to follow the millennial migration routes.

Each May we wait for them to arrive back in the village; to prove, as Tom Hughes poetically captured the rapture of the swifts return, 'They've made it again, which means the globe is still working ..'

In the winter of 2010 the last house in the village with swifts was reroofed. Carol Collins noticed this and wondered if we could collaborate on building swift boxes in the tower as part of the churchyard conservation project she established with support from Notts. Wildlife Trust.



This gives a sense of the beauty and conservation importance of the canal and surrounds. The church is over to the left behind the trees.

It's unusual for swifts to occupy a newly sited swift box immediately. Watching from the churchyard on the 7th May we noticed a pair circling the tower, investigating the sounds then two days later entering the top compartment, number two. Were they the pair ousted from their previous home? That was the beginning. Another pair also took up residence. Each year more swifts have become interested in the location. Another box of 10 compartments was added to the east side in 2012, the first camera fitted to box 2 and a TV screen placed at the back of the church. The final two sets of compartments were fitted to the south and west during spring 2014, making 40 nest compartments in total.

We were encouraged by the location, the proximity to the canal, a wildlife corridor, rough pasture and abundant hedges and gardens within the locality. In February 2011 after travelling to Ely to inspect boxes installed in St Mary's church and receiving authorisation from the church wardens, we designed the first box with 10 nesting compartments, built it and placed in the northern louvered opening during spring. With loudspeakers installed to play an amplified recording of swift vocal calls, we were ready.



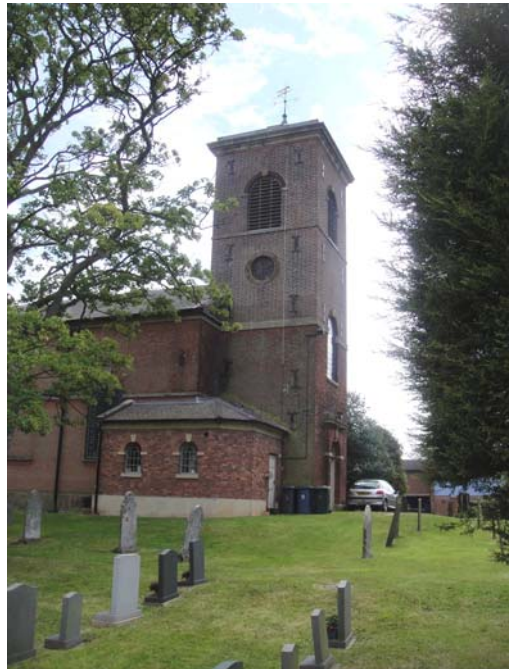
The nest boxes, pictured with Alan's son Joe.

This year 32 were occupied, 21 breeding pairs produced 43 young. In total 142 young swifts have taken to the air from that colony since 2011.

Helping others understand these amazing birds and the wonder of migration was key to our plan. We have added more cameras and placed a flat screen in the church showing simultaneously four nests. St Luke's has a progressive approach to the use of the church as a community resource; coffee mornings, a post office service on Wednesdays, playgroup, musical events and local groups all use the modified nave space. The developmental drama of the four nests are watched by the local primary school pupils, youth groups, villagers and visitors. Everyone is encouraged to record the dates of key stages development of each breeding pair, egg laying, hatching, young developing and preparing for take-off. That young bird after launching into the air will not land again till it breeds in four years' time!

The canal is an integral part of this project. Water is important for insect life. Currently the numbers of insects across the country are in serious decline, the canal and the vegetation along its length are significant for conservation of species and biodiversity. Swallows and house martins fly to feed at lower levels whilst swifts zoom at a height catching insects wafted up by wind and thermals. Using published research, we have calculated that the young alone from this year have consumed 27 kilograms of insects. These birds have an economic importance too – 76% of their prey is the removal of agricultural pests! Being almost adjacent to the canal and all the landscape features associated with it - the fields and byways, woods and copses are significant factors in the breeding success for swifts and many other creatures.

If when you are walking the canal path near Kinoulton consider taking a brief diversion to the churchyard. You are welcome to enter the church switch on the screen and sit for a while immersed in the world of the swift.



View of the tower from the north; the first side we put boxes in.

Alan is part of the Kinoulton Swift Group. We are recording the colony's development over each year, experimenting with camera technology, participating in the national Action for Swifts network, advising on box types for fitting to houses and are assisting others in nearby communities to set up their own swift project. Alan can be contacted on akwilkins1@outlook.com

The Three Shires Update – September 2019

August was another busy month for The Three Shires and its volunteer crew who ran another 11 private cruises. That brings the total so far this season to 32. The heatwave over the Bank Holiday weekend of 24th and 25th August coincided nicely with our Summer Sunday and Bank Holiday short trips. We carried 244 passengers over the two days, raising over £650 for the Society in fares. September will see The Three Shires play her part in the Lock 15 Grand Opening taking place on 13th. On the 14th we will be running short trips as part of Heritage Open Day. Fingers crossed that we will once again have good weather for the last of our Summer Sunday short trips on 29th.

As the end of the season approaches, we are turning our attention to the maintenance work which will be needed over the winter. We have plans to replace the anti-slip matting to the bow deck, deep clean the boat, and give her a much needed re-paint.

As it's seemingly never too early to think about Christmas, don't forget that our gift vouchers are available in any denomination to put towards the cost of a private cruise.



The Grantham Canal Society
CHARITY NO: 507337

Gift Voucher

£xx

To book your cruise, telephone 07486 955775
or email bookings@granthamcanal.org

May be redeemed towards the cost of any private cruise on The Three Shires narrowboat for up to 10 people.
Valid until xx/xx/xxxx.
Subject to availability and terms and conditions of booking.

To book a private cruise, purchase a gift voucher, or to find out more about The Three Shires, please contact our booking team on 07486 955775 or email

bookings@granthamcanal.org



📍 The Basin, Main St, Hickling
Melton Mowbray, LE14 3AH

☎ 01664 820448

✉ relax@theoldwharf.co.uk

🖱 www.theoldwharf.co.uk

Time to relax and unwind

TEAROOM OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK FROM 9.00 AM - 4.00PM



Find us on Facebook

Letters to the Editor

Steve - just a quick note to congratulate the GCS on achieving fifty years of restoration and also to say thank you for "mentioning me in dispatches" in the latest edition of the Bridge regarding my involvement in the Hickling project!

Having been shown round the Lock 14 project by David recently, it is exciting to see how works are progressing in such a professional and timely manner.

I look forward to seeing water being restored to the Cropwell section and in due course creating the link to the Trent.

Pity Harrogate is too far away for me to be actively involved in the project.

Best wishes for the future. Regards Ian

Hi Steve,
Great copy of the BRIDGE. Well done again
Angela

*Dear Steve, As ever ... an enjoyable tread ... Best Wishes for progress
Gerry*



COMPUTER TECH TIPS

BY GILES

Here are some useful tips from Giles, who is a well regarded Web Designer and qualified Support Technician



Common Fraud Scams

I've covered scams before but it's such an important and prevalent topic it's worth revisiting. Technology has made it easier and cheaper for scammers to attempt to scam you relentlessly and your best defence is to always be suspicious until proven otherwise. Some scams aren't that easy to spot but hopefully this article will help.

Common phone call scams:

- Being told that your computer has a virus or that your internet connection is running slow.
- Claiming that you're due a refund or compensation for poor service, such as for your internet connection.
- Anyone claiming to be from a bank or processing a Visa payment telling you there's a problem with your card or your account. They may report that an amount is being debited from your account that you may want stopped. (I've had two or three of these calls claiming that £599 or £600 will be taken from my account) all bogus.
- Pension or investment scams are quite common, claiming to unlock your pension or an investment opportunity that sounds too good to be true.
- Any claims that you owe money to the HMRC or calls claiming to be from the police are scams especially if it's a recorded message.

If it's an automated phone message it's a scam 99.99% of the time. Any cold calls should be viewed with suspicion or ignored completely, even when they claim to be from your own bank, internet provider or any other services you actually use it may not be so. If in doubt hang up the phone. Always wait 5 minutes or so to make sure the line is cleared before making another call. Scammers will often try and enforce a time limit or urgency to try and make you act without thinking it through.

Common text (smishing) and email (phishing) scams:

- Any text message claiming suspicious activity on your bank account, often with an internet link or number to call.
- Messages urging you to call a phone line, often the number will be premium rate.
- Any text or email offering a tax rebate or unexpected windfall.
- Any message about accident or insurance claims.
- Be wary of any unsolicited messages via text or email period, even if they appear to be from a service you use, make sure it's legit.

Never follow an internet link on a text message or email unless you're positive it's not malicious. Where possible use Google to find anything rather than following any message links. Keep software up to date on all smart devices and computers and never allow anyone you don't know to gain remote access to your computer.

Fraudulent activity is rife throughout the UK and the criminals have no problem targeting the elderly or vulnerable. Your best defence is to be suspicious and question any communications from anyone you don't know. Take control of any situation by hanging up the phone or deleting the message and if in any doubt contact your bank or related service provider directly to confirm validity and never pass on any personal information during unsolicited communication.

Learning about Grantham Canal

Saturday 14th September 2019

Canal Depot behind Dirty Duck Pub

Duck Lane, Woolsthorpe by Belvoir NG32 1NY




Why a canal for Grantham? Displays,
family activities, refreshments and boat trips




www.heritageopendays.org.uk

 @heritageopenday

#HODs

 /heritageopendays

 @heritageopendays



DISCOVERY DAY

**Sunday 13th October
10am - 4pm**

The event will be hosted by
"Suzle Sparkles" and features

Boat trips

Stalls

Barbeque

Live Music

Canoes

Refreshments

**and the Infamous
Dirty Duck Race**

For full details visit

www.granthamcanal.org

**The Depot, (Next to the 'Dirty Duck' Pub)
Woolsthorpe-by-Belvoir
NG32 1NY**

Ample parking Free Admission

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES



**WEEKDAYS AT LOCK 14
or**



**FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS
WITH ONE OF OUR
WORKPARTIES**

If you can spare some time to join
one of our teams then please
email volunteer@granthamcanal.org
or ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.org

Archive News

An Archive Training Day has been
arranged for September 26th from
10.30am to 3pm, it will take place
at Woolsthorpe Depot.

Sue Taylor archivist@granthamcanal.org

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

Rosemary Gibson, Mrs J C Snowden
Worth Waynflete Foundation