

OCTOBER

# BRIDGE

2019



The 'Official' opening of lock 15  
The ribbon being cut by Cllr. Jacky Smith with the help of Richard Parry



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

Last month the significant milestones achieved by the Society's construction teams were listed in Bridge culminating in the opening, and return of navigable water to Lock 15.

This month it is appropriate to comment on the unsung heroes who have supported all Society actions to date.

Of course I refer to the Community both local and national that has, in a range of methods, funded our activities and supported our volunteers in their endeavours.

***We thank those of you who;***

***- sign up as Society Members – we now have over 700***

***- enjoy tea and cakes at our weekend openings***

***- participate in a family or group cruise along the waterway***

***- volunteer to maintain their local non-navigable canal and towpath***

***- support our efforts and have reached into their purse and donated to our various projects which enables restoration to proceed***

***- have walked, ridden, or run along our towpaths and told their friends how much they have enjoyed the experience – even in the rain!***

This coming weekend is our major annual event - **Discovery Day**. These events are well supported by a wide range of other societies, individuals and groups who join with us to provide our visitors with a wide range of entertainment, learning, fun and a jolly good day out! There are lots to do! And good food to enjoy!

***Remember to buy your duck in our famous and unique canal Duck Race!***



### Please come and support our annual event.

Entry is FREE though we do ask that you contribute to some of the enjoyment. I know that you will have an great time and your presence will be much appreciated.

*'On a personal note I regret that my current health precludes my attendance on Sunday and I hope that Discovery Day can manage without me this year'*

*Mike Stone.*

PS - I've just been told that there's a drilling rig doing exploratory work at lock 13 - exciting times!



## COMMUNITY & EVENTS DIARY FOR 2019

<u>Date &amp; Time</u>	<u>Event &amp; Venue</u>
<b>Sun 13<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>DISCOVERY DAY</b>
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 7.30	Talk: Corby Glen History Soc. Church St Rooms
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 12.00	Talk: Breath Easy Nottingham, Edwalton Golf Club
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2.30	Talk: Marlborough Court, West Bridgford (moved from May)
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov	DLB Talk: Vale of Belvoir Probus
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	Dirty Duck Christmas Market
Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2.00	Sleaford U3A Local History Group, Winchelsea Centre



The next IWA Notts & Derbys Branch meeting will be at  
**The Clock Warehouse, Shardlow DE72 2GL**  
**on 16 October 2019 at 7.30pm.**

The speaker will be a local **IWA Water Recovery Group (WRG)** volunteer who will be coming along to describe the work of this arm of IWA. These are exciting times for canal and river restoration with many projects gaining significant new funding and development initiatives. **The Grantham Canal, (within the N & D branch area), has received significant Heritage Lottery funding in recent years and it will be good to learn about current progress on the Grantham** and also other local restoration projects that WRG is actively supporting, e.g. Derby & Sandiacre Canal, Cromford Canal.

The Clock Warehouse is an exciting new venue for future Branch social meetings. This iconic heritage building is at the heart of the canal network, and the waterway heritage setting, with great views of Shardlow Heritage Centre and the canal basin, will certainly set the mood with waterway ambience in abundance. Shardlow is also an excellent centre geographically, being conveniently situated pretty much as central as possible to the Branch area, and with good road connections in all directions.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in the month has been earmarked for future meetings at "The Clock". This is based on the views of members who responded to the questionnaire sent out in the Spring 2019.



## Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative at Lock 14



Richard and Rod adding coping stones to offside wing wall 17th Sept



Coping stones for main chamber - ready for fitting 20th Sept & currently being completed.



A "Master Brickie" at work!?

Many thanks to John  
Clark, Dave Cross &  
Jim Freeman for these  
lock 14 photos  
*Ed*

## **Community and Education** **Update October 2019**

'If there were worlds enough and time ...' but much of our energies are focused at the moment on the coming weekend and **Discovery Day**. Grateful thanks to all those who have been putting time, energy and skills towards this, booking stalls and entertainments, preparing the site and equipment, offering to bake and volunteer towards preparation and running the day. We couldn't do it all without the help of the priceless volunteers. We sometimes wonder, but extra events this year have boosted funds and membership numbers considerably. Every little helps.

**Do come and join us on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October to help or support us by enjoying the day and off loading your pockets with your generous donations.**

*Rosemary*

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



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



### **SLOES**

A walk along the towpath in early October can be like strolling down the fresh fruit aisle – the hawthorn and holly with their red berries, the roses with their round red hips, the bramble scrambling through and presenting blackberries at every turn, and the sloes borne between the spikes of the blackthorn.

It is said that you shouldn't eat blackberries after Michaelmas as the devil gets into them. Whilst I'm not sure if this has been empirically proved in the field, it is certainly true that the berries lose their ripeness and freshness as we move into October. Sloes on the other hand are reaching their prime right now - some hold that it is best to await the first frosts which will break down the skins, though you can easily replicate this with a quick blast in the freezer. Amongst many good uses for foraged sloes, sloe gin has to be the winner – the Woodland Trust (based in Grantham) have some excellent hedgerow recipes on their website.

Sloes are the fruit of blackthorn which goes by the latin *Prunus spinosa*. This identifies it as a member of the cherry family with relatives including damsons, plums, wild cherries and cherry plum, all of which you might also find in the hedgerows. Blackthorn is ubiquitous in the countryside around the canal, and is superb for wildlife, providing an abundance of flowers for the pollinators in the spring as well as fruits for birds and small mammals through the autumn and winter.

## THE WAY IT WAS

### By Mike Atherley



This month Mike comments on our Chairman's update in September's edition ...

When the Society was first formed the few volunteers were keen to start restoration and improve the state of the Grantham Canal. But, with limited funds and tools, only small jobs could be tackled. After trying to repair the culvert at Fish Pond Cottages British Waterway's stated they would only grant an agricultural permit to allow us to work anywhere on the canal, all work had to concentrate on towpath clearing. They did allow the painting of mileposts and bridge plates and limited dredging around Hickling Basin to allow for the first trip boat. Bit by bit they allowed more work like fallen tree removal along Harlaxton Cutting and cutting back of small trees etc in the dry section. The engineering section had to be content with building sheds, etc., at Cropwell Wharf, etc., to allow waste paper collection to be stored for necessary fund raising and maintaining the plant, tools and equipment that we were acquiring. The B.W.B. Area Engineer based at Nottingham was in my opinion, very obstructive in allowing any further varieties of work to be undertaken by our volunteers so after lengthy negotiations he did suggest we could construct picnic sites on parcels of land close by the canal that they owned.

Jobs such as this and all the towpath clearance work kept us very busy until we heard that British Coal were planning to mine the Vale of Belvoir then B.W.B. stopped us doing any further projects and would only allow very basic towpath work to be done until a decision had been made regarding the coal mining. In fact for the whole time of the planning enquiry B.W.B had a National ban on voluntary work on canals they owned. This is one of the reasons that we had to go away to other canal worksites just to keep our team together.

Several years passed by and only limited work had been done to improve the navigable sections of the canal but all the 30 odd miles had been cleared for walkers. Money was the major issue.

In the late 80's B.W. changed their whole attitude to the use of voluntary labour, two of their employees based at Harby joined our committee which improved relationship between both parties, B.W. changed the Area Engineers to Regional Managers and they then allowed us to start any projects we could fund ourselves.

The first one being Denton Wharf Slipway, for which we won a National Award. After that we started the clearance and de-silting of Woolsthorpe top lock No.18 so B.W. could inspect it and decide on the rebuild. By this time almost 20 years had passed and we were given the chance to apply for a Derelict Land Grant which after several attempts we succeeded and that allowed us to start on restoration of locks 16, 17, and a bit of 18.



*Continued page 7*



*Continued from page 6*

**Now work was coming fast and furious!**

British Rail allowed the removal of the in filled bridge between locks 18 and 17.



B.W. allowed the rebuild of Bridge 63, Casthorpe Bridle, and Kesteven were going to rebuild Bridge 64, Casthorpe.

More work than we could manage so Trainline were employed to rebuild locks 17 and 16, Waterways Recovery Group and an overseas group helped with the other projects. B.W. helped throughout all of the above.

Many other jobs were done by agency's under the direction of B.W. over that first 20 years but since 1989 the G.C.S. volunteers have been kept very busy as Mike Stone mentioned in his piece last month, with present work including the rebuild of further locks in the Woolsthorpe flight.

Over the 50 years, lack of money was the key problem, inexperience and poor cooperation from B.W.B. played a part.

**But now the Canal and River Trust has replaced B.W. - so we can only hope that restoration will speed up.**



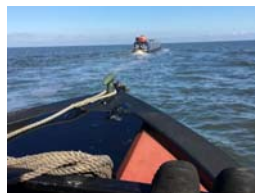
**#Trending**



Scrolling back through the month's Facebook posts, you liked your bridges! Harby lift bridge and pictures of Casthorpe road and bridle bridges before and after rebuilding, received plenty of views, over 1,000 in some cases.

I was tempted to use the picture of Percy Collishaw milking a cow on the towpath circa 1930s. This picture was shared from Hickling Notts Local History Group, who also tell us work has resumed on the restoration of the lengthsman's hut near the village.

Instead, I've gone for one of Polly's photographs. A follower for some time, Polly has recently crossed The Wash in her narrowboat – that's adventurous! The canal system is going to feel so claustrophobic after that!



One of our rangers took the picture of a vole at Lock 15, moments before it scurried under the turf. Opinions were divided on our Twitter feed. Bank Vole or Field Vole? The latter seemed to be favourite – which put me on the losing side. Then someone else waded in, with an emphatic 'Bank Vole, can't understand the problem!'



With our event's season drawing to a close, we tend to look at the history of the canal during the winter months. I know some of our readers, who ran with the baton before us, have photographs of the goings on in previous years. It would be really good to be able to share these with our many followers on social media? Our fledgling Archive Team would also like to copy and catalogue them for posterity. Could I encourage those with photographs to get in touch:

***socialmedia@granthamcanal***

# The Official opening of



John Trigg - proud skipper of the Three Shires



The assembled group of volunteers & dignitaries

On Friday 13th September the official opening of lock 15 commenced with our trip boat, 'The Three Shires', being the first boat for 90 years to lock through. The boat carried invited representatives from the project partnership and our funders into the lock including Richard Parry (CEO, Canal & River Trust), Mike Stone (Chairman, The Grantham Canal Society), Cllr Jim Harker (Deputy Chair for England, Midlands & East, National Lottery Heritage Fund) and Cllr Jacky Smith (Chairman, South Kesteven District Council).





## Lock 15 - Bottom of Half Mile Pond lock



The assembly was addressed by Mike Stone, (top left), Richard Parry, (top right), and Jim Harker, (above left), who all complemented the hard work put in by volunteers, fund raisers and the Canal & River Trust.

Michael Rowen, (above right) Chairman of the Grantham Canal Partnership, presents a cheque to Richard Parry as part of the GCP's contribution.



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



## Some birds eye views of lock 14

Photographed by  
Sea Lane Media Ltd





## 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

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Neil White

GCS Fundraiser

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## The Three Shires Update – October 2019

As the nights begin to draw in, and the weather turns cooler and wetter, so our 2019 season begins to come to a close. September still saw us deliver 6 more private cruises, which were all well enjoyed by our passengers.

The Three Shires played a key role in the Lock 15 Grand Opening event on 13<sup>th</sup> October, taking the assembled dignitaries on short trips through the newly opened lock. The boat was out again on 14<sup>th</sup> as part of Heritage Open Day, where we had a steady stream of 62 passengers joining us for our short trips. Visitors were asked to imagine what the canal would have been like in the days when barges were horse drawn and where the cargoes were mainly coal, agricultural produce and 'night soil'.



**The Three Shires in Lock 15**

Our last Summer Sunday short trips on 29<sup>th</sup> sadly succumbed to the poor British weather, but 29 passengers still managed a short boat trip.

The Three Shires season ends on 31<sup>st</sup> October, but we still have 3 more private cruises to deliver plus our last turn up and ride short trips of the year as part of Discovery Day.

Next month we will provide a summary of our 2019 activities as well as the dates of our trips for the 2020 season. We will be offering more cruise and dine opportunities, and watch out for a number of other special trips next year!

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**

## Letters to the Editor

*Dear Steve and Bridge team*

*Could I say, thank you for the helpful article (Sept 2019) by Mike Atherley on the historical challenges associated with the Cropwell dry section. Mike identified the problem sections and, as suggested, we can hopefully build on this background knowledge and progress towards re-watering with the help of the enthusiastic volunteer workforce using modern lining materials and construction techniques.*

*Thank you for your good work.*

*Cllr John Greenwood, Cropwell Bishop*

*Just over a week ago we held our Hedgehog Welfare Annual Fund Raiser and Information Day. Although the weather was more than a little wet, the Grand Prix was on and the rugby world cup was playing, we had a wonderful turn out and raised an impressive £1479.31.*

*Thank you to all our supporters - Janet Peto*

### **Talk about a coincidence!**

The following is an extract from an email sent to Martin, one of our volunteers, from a friend in Australia.

*He will be amazed about the photo in a magazine - I just picked up a magazine on the ship to read. I saw an article about us retired folk doing volunteer work. Several photos of different projects, in fact I nearly did not see the photo, it was just I was taking more interest as I like things like volunteer work. Suddenly I read the notes and mention of Grantham Canal and looking closer saw Martin with a Barrow and some people around him. I wished now I had taken the magazine, it was I think some travel magazine for us older folk, just an amazing coincidence.*

*Pleased he loves working on the canal. He is a person who needs to be occupied and he would be great with a gang of people, he is a people person.*





## **TLC for your PC iOS version 13**

The latest iPhone and iPad update is available for iPhone 6s or newer, iPad 5th generation and iPad Air 2 or newer. Generally any apple device in the last 3 years.

This update introduces dark mode which allows you invert the light and dark colours so makes it white text on black background. Personally I prefer it as it is, you can set it to automaticity change to dark mode at night.

There are enhancements to photo editing, face recognition, battery life and the camera app. The reminders app has had a makeover and is now a lot more usable ( I've started using it myself now) I quite like a new feature where you can press and hold on a web link and it pops up a preview of the destination page and options to open in a new tab, copy the link, share it or add to your reading list.

You get more editing options in mail and notes as well as all the usual formatting options like font, bullet lists, colour, highlight etc you can also draw and create checklists that you can check on and off.

The photos app has also had a makeover and shows what Apple call a diary of your life where your best photos are previewed larger in a timeline list. The app introduces a welcome feature where you can change the aspect ratio to make them appear square or convert landscape to portrait, they've also enhanced the editing options with more filters and an auto adjustment option.

Chat apps allow you to create your own animated avatar called a Memoji, a bit of a gimmick but the option is there.

There are many other welcome features which I'm still discovering, I do really like what they've done with iOS 13 and if your device supports it then it's well worth updating.

**TV licensing scam for over 75's - please be aware of an email scam targeting over 75's for payment of the TV licensing fee, this is a scam that is doing the rounds at the moment.**



## **A Grand Idea Finalist Grantham Canal Society**

### **About Grantham Canal Society**

Grantham Canal Society is celebrating its 50th Birthday, a significant achievement for a 100% volunteer organisation. Our long-term objective to reinstate the canal will turn dereliction into treasure; creating jobs, housing and a visitor attraction of regional merit. We hope through this to add significant long-term value to the community.

### **How would £1000 benefit Grantham Canal Society?**

We have around 80 active volunteers working across several teams; lock restoration, canal maintenance, trip boats, events and rangers. Each of these teams require Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the form of Hi-Viz vests, gloves, hardhats, ear defenders. These need regular replacement.

### **Why do you think it is A Grand Idea?**

A 'grand' would ensure the safety of our volunteers, allowing for 1000s of volunteer workhours. Our volunteers work hard and deserve PPE worthy of the time and commitment they provide. Without the volunteers there is no chance of fulfilling a dream with Biodiversity, Carbon Impact, Leisure, Economic, Education, and Health and Well-being benefits. Dreams that secure the immeasurable ecology, environment and heritage the canal provides for 1000s of young people.

Details of the projects and the voting can be found at:

<https://www.ringroselaw.co.uk/grand-idea/grand-idea-finalists/>

The voting will remain open until Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October.



On the murky and wet morning of Sunday 22nd of September a group of around a dozen hardy volunteers turned out fully prepared for a couple of hours work on our canal. They included individuals and whole families and despite a weather forecast promised nothing but thunder, lightning and heavy showers but they all came with their waterproofs and wellies etc.

As usual, the work was supervised by Gareth Carter of the Canal & River Trust (CRT). The main task for the morning was to prepare and paint the timber fence on the towpath side of Lock 2, however, the fence timbers were too damp to apply any preservative to them so other tasks were found. One team started cutting back vegetation which had overgrown onto the pathway from Eltham Road and around the gate onto the towpath. The large numbers of people who use this path would really appreciate this.

Another team went off along the towpath towards Morrisons clearing up litter. They came back with a couple of bags of litter even though it initially had looked quite clean. The remaining volunteers set to work on the fence, preparing it for painting with preservative on a future occasion. The vegetation around the foot of the fence posts was cut back to the concrete. It was noted that a strimmer would have been very useful for this and any future similar work.

After a hard session of work by all concerned in light drizzly conditions, the heavy showers that the weather forecasters promised made it's appearance. So, we shared out some ginger biscuits, chatted a little and decided it would be best to carry on the good work at a later date.

Another Task Day has been arranged for Sunday 17th November. Hopefully the weather will be kind enough to allow us to get the preservative applied to the fence timber. It would be really good if all who took part on this occasion were able to meet up then to complete what was started. In any event, there's always lots more to do along our canal throughout the year.

Many thanks to the volunteers for their hard work. They did a great job and I'm sure they had an enjoyable time doing it. Thanks also to Gareth of the CRT for his efforts, for keeping us all in line within the all important H&S guidance and for providing the equipment.

I'm looking forward to the next Task Day and I hope to meet the same volunteers again and perhaps a few more. Anyway, if not the next Task Day, perhaps on some future event.



## 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](http://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](mailto:volunteer@granthamcanal.org)  
or [ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.org](mailto:ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.org)

### ENGRAVED BRICKS

Those of you who purchased an engraved  
brick for display at lock 15 should have  
received a letter from the Chief Executive  
explaining the current situation.

You are invited to visit the completed  
construction of a seat by lock 15 on  
Sunday 26th April 2020

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

Rosemary Gibson, Tony Osbond &  
Angela Hewson