

# BRIDGE



**AUGUST**

**2020**

The monthly newsletter  
published by the

The  
**Grantham Canal**  
Society

CHARITY NO: 507337



Near the "Dirty Duck" Pub  
Photographed by  
Tony Osbond

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

*Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, It's back to work we go  
All dressed in our own PPE with CRT life vest.  
The grass grows even higher, the locks are leaking too.  
Weeds stopped the trip-boat moving; we didn't know what to do  
Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho  
We dig up stuff on Fridays we lift out branches too,  
We're getting a new weed boat soon but drivers needed too  
As volunteers on this canal there's so much work to do  
Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, It's back to work we go ....  
Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho!*

Don't just sing alone – come and join us - Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho! (No height restriction!)

**Thanks to you, our supporters, we have achieved our target to raise £20,000** to enable the restoration of the slipway at the Depot. This is a brilliant result in four months and the Society says a big **THANK YOU** to all who contributed. Restoration work will commence early in October – Heigh-ho!

Within the coming week we look forward to the delivery of a new, to us, weed-boat from The Rothen Group. ***Which, by the way, hasn't been named yet - see p10.*** This will enable us to remove the extensive weed growth from the navigation and, I hope, permit *The Three Shires* charter cruises to re-commence operation. Our Maintenance team will be looking for volunteer drivers (shouldn't that be skippers?) to train on this craft and then to clear the length to Denton winding hole as soon as possible. Have you an aptitude for such work? If so please contact our General Manager Tony Osbond.

I should also mention our new on-line canal map (see page 14); the Lincolnshire Heritage open day on 20<sup>th</sup> September at Woolsthorpe (see page 16); that construction of the seat at Lock 15 incorporating named bricks is underway (Photos on page 6); and our need to increase our membership numbers. **Your support for all these topics is encouraged.**

Lastly some large chunks of timber have been delivered to Lock 14. I think the gates will be installed very soon **and another lock in the Woolsthorpe flight will have been rebuilt largely by GCS volunteers.**

Thanks Guys and Gals.

Now we move onto Lock 13!

*Mike Stone.*



# VACANCIES

The Grantham Canal Society are probably one of the most active restoration society's working on the UK canals today, (there are few others), and our many talented volunteers are delivering sustainable and high quality results.

**HOWEVER THEIR PROGRESSIVE LEADERS ARE FINDING IT HARD TO  
KEEP UP WITH THE ACTIVITY.**

Some help in organisation and leadership would be very much welcomed.

Do you have skills or assistance you could offer in such areas as leadership, decision-making, planning applications, project planning, recruitment, finance, etc?

Time commitment for all volunteers is not too demanding and is flexible.

Please send an email to the Chairman at  
[chairman@granthamcanal.org](mailto:chairman@granthamcanal.org)

He would really like to hear from you.

Go on ... contact him now  
and really make his day!

## Boat and Machinery Maintenance

I am pleased to announce that Jim Gaut is taking on the responsibility of looking after, with the support of like minded volunteers, the Boat and Machinery Maintenance for the Society.

Jim is a local, living just north of Grantham at Hougham, and whilst walking the canal some four years ago by Lock 15 he thought "I would like to get involved in what the society are doing here!"

Working at Aveling Barford in Grantham for 22yrs on the development of Dump Trucks, he then went on to Ruston Bucyrus in Lincoln for 13 years as a Development Engineer working on their 50 tonne Crawler Crane.

Latterly he was self employed working on hydraulic systems with a three year contract with Balfour Beatty on their Stent Piling System and latterly with BAE Systems on their Terrier project - a very sophisticated tank/excavator machine.

*Tony Osbond - General Manager*

## My diary from the Isles of Scilly by James Faulconbridge August 2020

In common with most of the rest of the country, a sense of normality appears to have returned to the Isles of Scilly in the last month. When we moved to St Martin's in February, we expected to be doing our first guided tours in a little under 6 weeks, but due to COVID, we weren't able to welcome our first visitors until mid-July. We have had over 300 visitors for tours and wine tastings in the last three weeks. The self-guided tour takes you around the vineyard and introduces the grape varieties, the viticulture, the wildlife, the

site's history and the wine-making process. At the end of the tour, we serve samples of four different wines al fresco with tasting notes to help people explore the flavours. These wines have never left the vineyard gate - everything from growing the grapes through to fermentation, bottling and labelling is done on site and there is something nice about being able to pour the wine outside the very winery in which it was created. Our friend from the Vale made us some beautiful tasting boards from recycled wood - take a look at her Instagram at @blossom\_farm\_creations to see more!

In between opening to the public, the vines have been keeping us very busy. The fruit set this year is looking to be quite poor - the strong winds at flowering meant that some areas lost most of the flowers whilst others have very variable sizes of grape within the developing bunches, known as 'Hens and Chicks'. We are however doing everything we can to give them the best chance which means thinning out the fruiting zone to allow the sunshine through. This is a slow and steady job which we do by hand, removing lower leaves from around the bunches across nearly 2000 vines. Luckily my brother has come all the way from Whatton to stay with us the last few weeks and he has been a valuable additional pair of hands!



The next big job will be netting the vines to keep the birds from the berries - we have fantastic numbers of thrushes, blackbirds and starlings here on the island which are great for pest control throughout the year (judging from the number of cracked snail shells alone!) but they are rather fond of a ripening grape and we definitely don't have enough to spare this year!

[www.stmartinsvineyard.co.uk](http://www.stmartinsvineyard.co.uk)

# IT'S ALL HAPPENING! At Lock 14



**The byewash nears completion with just inspection covers now to be fitted**



**Some serious 'weeding' being carried out and one of the quadrants nears completion**



**The coping stones arrive - more heavy work!**

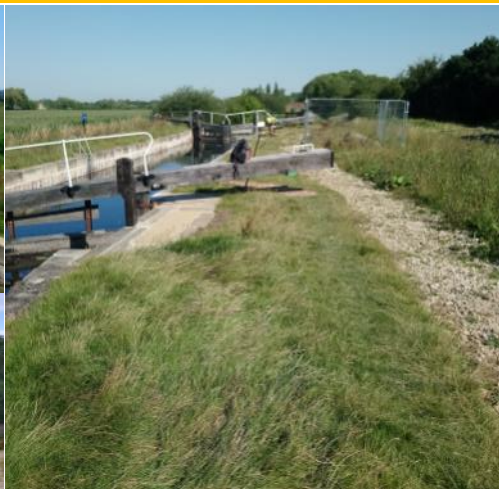


**Pointing the lower walls**

**The gates arrive and are off loaded**

**Many thanks to John Clark, Martin Duignan, Bob Terry, John Robinson & Dave Cross for these photos**

# IT'S ALL HAPPENING! At Lock 15



**This photo of the “cage” prompted interesting comments from some Facebook followers! It is of course the start of build of the long awaited bench which will display the engraved bricks purchased as part of the ‘Buy a Brick’ campaign launched in 2016.** *Ed*



**Richard & Martin lay the bench foundations**  
**Photos by Tony Osbond & Dave Cross**

# IT'S ALL HAPPENING! On the cut



***Mudlark in action clearing reeds in the top pound near the A1 and by the Dirty Duck Pub.***

**A motley crew returns from a strimming session!**

**Photos by Tony Osbond**

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



### August – Grey Heron

Heron is perhaps second only to swans as the most characteristic birds you will find along Grantham Canal. Whilst there are a host of warblers and other Little Brown Jobs (LBJ's in the official parlance) in the hedgerows and trees which could easily confuse the casual wildlife lover, most will confidently identify a grey heron stalking the margins. @IAMMrsWild posted some lovely shots on Twitter this month which inspired this piece!

Grey herons' long legs allow them to gain a high vantage point to spot prey in the water and to wade stealthily through the margins, and spear-like beaks for catching small fish. They can deploy these weapons in a range of habitats – they are common along the canal but I have also seen along the shoreline on a Scottish island hunting by the light of the streetlights. Along with fish, their diet includes amphibians, small mammals and ducklings, and in common with owls and birds of prey, herons regurgitate pellets of indigestible fur, bones and feathers after a meal.

Heron nest communally and there are a number of 'heronries' close to the route of the canal as it meanders through the Vale. They usually choose trees such as willows close to water and return to the same locations each year, building their nests high with materials such as sticks and other plant matter to make impressive albeit ungainly structures. This might look precarious but despite their size at up to 1m tall, herons are surprisingly light, weighing in at just 1-2kg!

## Editors Comment

I have been editing Bridge for just over 6 years, (yes sometimes it does seem longer!), and have read or heard numerous comments about the canal from all angles and age groups. **Some feel it's a lost cause, some revel in the nostalgia of it all whilst others have a deep seated belief that their efforts will pay off in the end.**

Me, well I wouldn't be doing this if I didn't feel that it was all worth while. My culture has always been that if a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well. **No, we don't live near the canal, but neither do many other volunteers who commit their time and effort to improving the waterway.** Our passion, apart from dogs, has always been boating. We've boated since 1979, partly on the canals but mostly at sea, where we took our safety as a priority with both gaining RYA qualifications, my wife a Day Skipper and I an MCA accredited Coastal Yachtmaster. So we both took our love of boating seriously.

Recently, there was a letter in the paper from Richard Parry who claimed that the towpaths were an excellent area for exercise. This drew criticism from a boater who claimed that it was the boaters license fees that were funding this!

**Not so on the Grantham!** However Tony Jackson recently unearthed a British Waterways "Permit to cycle the Towpath" - so how much did that cost?

No - the towpath of the Grantham Canal is free to both walk or cycle. It passes some real beauty spots and others not so good. Some areas have 2 metre high reeds whilst others have sweet clear water. **But what of the future?**

**Basically that's in your hands!** If you've read this far & if you're a member - then thank you for supporting us - if you are not then please enrol now. The cost is modest - but the more members we have the greater our chance to get things done and lobby the Canal & River Trust, local councils and respective MP's **so that it hasn't all been a great big waste of time!**

Thank you.

Steve S (Bridge Editor)

# THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL

By Polly  
in Meadow Pipit

The Chesterfield Canal (locally known as “The Chessie”) has many similarities to the Grantham Canal. It is an out and back canal, with its terminus in a town – Chesterfield. Unlike Grantham, Chesterfield has recognised the benefits of having a canal terminus and it has been restored with flats being built around it; however, similar to the Grantham Canal, the Chesterfield Canal is not navigable as far as Chesterfield. There are 30 miles of navigable canal from the Trent to Kiveton, then a gap of 9 miles from there to Staveley followed by a further 5 navigable miles from Staveley to Chesterfield on which the Chesterfield Canal Society run a couple of trip boats. The Society have achieved great things; in the last 30 years they have restored 12 miles of the canal along with 37 locks and 11 bridges – you see; it CAN be done. They have set a target of 2027 to complete the restoration of the last 9 miles and things are moving on apace; I really hope they achieve their target.

The Chesterfield Canal is also known as “The Cuckoo Canal”; this is after the old wooden working boats they used. Probably because it was set apart from the rest of the canal system, the boats on the Chesterfield were very different in style to the usual working boats found on the canals, and so they became known as “cuckoo boats”. Sadly none of the originals survive, but an exact replica has been made to the precise measurements of the last one that was in existence using the traditional building methods. It is called Dawn Rose and is used for fundraising, boat exhibitions, etc.

We spent a happy couple of weeks moored in Ranby; when we first arrived there we stopped on the pub moorings where we had our own private orchard, and our own front gate – how good is that? Not wanting to overstay our welcome there we moved about ¼ mile further on and moored next to the A1 where we could see and hear the A1 traffic from the boat. I know most people would hate



**Dawn Rose** Photo Courtesy of Rod Auton

this, but for me I take great pleasure in (selfishly) seeing others rushing about in their normal daily lives while we chill in the luxury of our beautiful boat and watch the wildlife (coots, swans, ducks, dab chicks and goosanders). The only other place I know as good as this is Sandiacre where the canal is right beside a major road and you can lie in bed and hear heavy lorries thunder along all night long with the occasional stop at traffic lights (heaven!).



# THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL

Continued

It is now August and we have survived lockdown, spending most of it in West Stockwith Basin, and are at last on the move again. We are heading slowly towards Shireoaks and then will probably spend some time right at the very end of this navigable part of the canal as far as we can go – at the entrance to the now blocked up Norwood Tunnel in Kiveton. The exciting news for this canal is that a planning application has just been submitted by the Chesterfield Canal Trust to restore a further 2.6km of the canal from Staveley to the edge of Renishaw – this is the remainder of the unrestored length that falls within the Chesterfield Borough. It won't add to the navigable part that we are on, as it is at the other end which is not yet joined to the rest of the canal, but nevertheless it will be a significant inroad into the restoration of the 9 mile gap. I wish them every success with the application.



**Drakeholes Tunnel**



**Moorings near Drakeholes Tunnel**



*Many thanks to Polly Browne on Meadow Pipit for her interesting articles on the Chesterfield Canal. We look forward to the next edition from our constant cruiser. Ed*

**In May's edition we mentioned that the Rothen Group had part exchanged Osberton for a more suitable weed cutter boat which is due to arrive on the 14th August.**

**The only problem is that it doesn't have a name - ANY SUGGESTIONS?**

**Send me an email to [bridge@granthamcanal.org](mailto:bridge@granthamcanal.org)**





I hadn't realised that both the Lady Bay and original Grantham Wharf ends of the canal were so similar - (apart from the football pitch!) My apologies for the error and many thanks to those of you who pointed this out. Ed



These two splendid photos were taken by James Martin using a camera trap at Cotgrave Country Park. It's well worth a visit!



Ruth, in Australia, recently wrote: I thought you might be interested in this little Echidna I recently met on my walk in the bush. An Aussie marsupial that has strong claws to rip open dead wood and hoovers up all the ants. They are quite rare and this is the only one I've ever seen.



Hedgehog Rescue are getting dozens of calls regarding sick and injured hedgehogs, mostly due to the lack of food and water. Please ensure that there are plant pot saucers of water out at ground level before you go to bed and scatter a few (about one tablespoon) of dried chicken or rabbit based kitten biscuits this may be enough to really save a hedgehog's life. Can you also tell your neighbours and friends.



# COMPUTER TECH TIPS

BY GILES ([giles@jigster.com](mailto:giles@jigster.com))

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



## Cyber security concerns

I was going to talk about email this month, but recent events have made me mindful again about cyber security.

Some of the things to highlight are the recent hacking of twitter which has been highly publicised but there are also concerns over the withdrawal of Huawei's 5G equipment in the UK upon pressure from the US over security concerns from China. Retaliation in the form of Cyber-attacks from China could potentially be expected and sanctions from other countries on usage of Huawei telecoms equipment can be expected too.

In addition to this move there could be a ban on the social video platform TikTok which is a China based company, India has already issued a ban and the UK and US may also follow suit.

It is a little concerning and I would think the government and social media platforms will be most likely targets if any retaliation is to follow. Australia has already been targeted and are investing heavily to bolster cyber defence and while they haven't officially named China as the cause of increased Cyber-attacks it's generally accepted as being so.

The 5G network hasn't received the best welcome here in the UK with some claiming that it's the cause of the Corona Virus or gives you cancer or other illnesses and there have been attacks on the transmitters. The truth is they're completely safe and no more harmful than any other radio-based telecoms equipment that have been in operation for years.

We could be looking towards Japan to help with supplying our 5G equipment instead which probably won't help diplomatic relations with China.

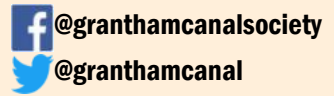
In addition, there have also been reports of attacks from a group of Russian hackers attempting to steal Corona Virus research from a UK lab.

We will have to see how events unfold but I wouldn't be surprised to hear of many further cyber security breaches or disruptions in the future. If you're interested in finding out more then there's plenty of information and news stories on various websites related to this including the BBC and major news outlets.

Stay safe and well...

# #Trending

By *Tony Jackson*



Thank you so much to our Press Officer, Michelle, for doing a great job in looking after Facebook while I took some time off. I did have a peep from time to time, it was a little weird to see the page chugging along without being at the controls – I rather enjoyed the experience of not knowing what was going to happen next!

When it comes to choosing something to mention in this piece, often there's something which stands out from the crowd. Having scrolled through the posts over the last month, there were so many worthwhile contenders – I couldn't choose one!



Then Julie goes and sends in a couple of snow scenes in the middle of a heatwave – the surrealist takes the biscuit!

Geoffrey, one of our Australian contingent, commented they were currently experiencing an icy Antarctic blast!

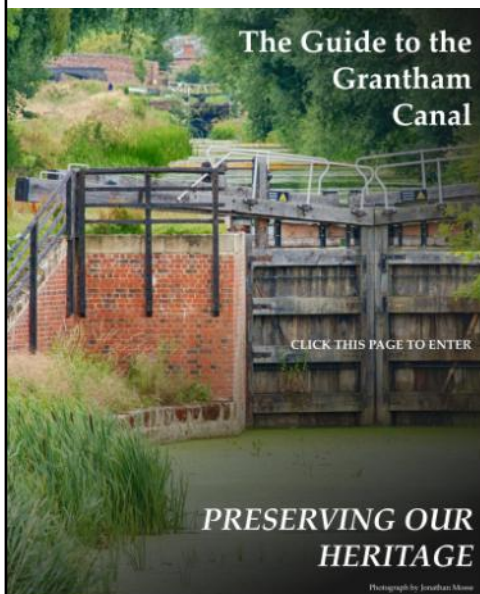
Grantham Civic Society posted this 1957 picture of the canal basin on Twitter. The fabulous straddle warehouse long gone – what a gem – what an act of corporate vandalism!



# This is our new on-line guide to the Grantham Canal.

After entering the guide there are interactive maps which, when clicked, enable both past & present photos to be viewed together with a whole host of interesting detail.

Give it a try: <http://www.gcsguide.org>



## The Grantham Canal

As the Canal is 33 miles long we have divided it up into five sections below.



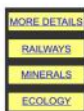
Click on the section of map above that you wish to view and it will open a straight line representation of the canal. There you will find photos of present day views and some from our archive.

Click any photo for a larger view - sometimes shown

Those with a rounded edge, when clicked, provide a lot more detail.



Click the portrait of William Jessop to view a time line of the canal's rise, fall and restoration.



Click the above for other topics about the canal



Click the above for acknowledgements and feedback



Click the above to view a Google Map for the area of the canal

The Grantham Canal 2020

Hosted by AMAR Ltd

A CognusWeb Design

The Grantham Canal 2020

A CognusWeb Design

## WORK PARTY REPORT

### AUG 1993

I asked Mike and Colin if I could have a work party report for this issue whilst we were travelling on one of our famous 'Amazonian' style expeditions aboard 'The Tamar Belle' up the River Trent as a thank you to the W.R.G. team who were doing such a great job. They said "Have you got a pen? If so here it is". As darkness was falling at this time floodlights on each side of the boat were switched on for us to see the Wildlife. What really happened was that the lights gave a sign to all the insects that 'The Take Away' was open. We were engulfed in insects and had to take cover. Whilst trying to take notes my piece of paper doubled as a fly swatter but not being able to write at the same time as swatting my notes were, to put it mildly, a bit dis-jointed.

Anyway I will try to make the best of it so here goes:-

The Derelict Land Grant is £129,000 of which we have to find half of the value as labour so as I stated earlier we now fill in time sheets (sorry no overtime) irrespective of the type of work we do. There are 12,000 manhours needed to be used by August 7th 1994 or we lose what has not been used.

G.C.R.S. regulars have completely rebuilt the wing walls of 17 ready for the bywash that didn't occur but all was not lost because we have installed two wooden stop planks and a steel girder with three pipe unions welded to it. Two runs of pipe have been placed in the lock to act as a by-wash and they are working a treat. Sellwood pumps of Rotherham hired us a compressor, a dumper, a large pump and two loads of these flexible 6" rubber pipes. We must thank Sellwood because they are now on our Sponsor Board because the pipes are on long term loan. Thanks chaps we really appreciate that. The pound between 16 and 17 was de-watered and the fish removed by the N.R.A. and put into the 16 - 15 pound. The old brick bridge of which you can read more about was demolished in the first week of the W.R.G. Workcamp and our dear friend, and now member, John Molisher dragged the three 20m concrete beams out of the way so preparations for the new bridge could proceed. Thanks John it certainly saved a lot of struggling. An Atlas excavator was promised for the fortnight but it

had broken down with hydraulic problems so John's help was really welcome.

A special thanks to Alan Barnes and his wife who came down almost every day of the Workcamp and supplied us with chocolate. Alan cannot do a lot of physical work but the two of them made up for it in other ways.

The pound between 16 and 17 will be partially rewatered so that water is present outside 'The Dirty Duck' to stop it becoming an eyecore. Lock 17 is to be scaffolded ready for Trainline to carry on working on it. They want to work on it exclusively so we have now taken this opportunity of returning to 18 and completing the Copping stones before the bad weather comes. We are now waiting for the quoins for the lower gates to be fitted and another carpenter to come and help us rebuild the bottom gates waiting in the Carpenter's shop yard.

Our friend Barry who is the S.W. Carpenter is unfortunately ill at the present and we all wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him down at 18 when we lift his rebuilt gates into position.

Martin Day.

Our thanks to Colin Bryan who found this interesting report on a Derelict Land Grant



## Meet the Rangers – Part 5 Jul 2020

**Hedley Davies**, a part time financial services professional, covers the Denton Reservoir section of the canal but in the absence of a ranger on section 15 (Earlsfield Grantham) he has been covering that too.

Hedley has been a member of and volunteer with the

Grantham Canal Society when he moved back into the area approximately 18 months ago having picked up a GCS leaflet at the local fire station.

Hedley walks the Reservoir and Earlsfield sections at least monthly, he says that since lockdown things have changed at the reservoir where previously he met very few people on his walk around, that litter was less of an issue as locals and the fisherman were very conscientious removing litter etc. More recently groups of young people and families had been meeting up at the reservoir and in some cases this has increased the litter being left at the site. I was lucky to be able to meet up with Hedley and we also walked the Denton reservoir and the Earlsfield section together as both were unfamiliar to me.



Denton Reservoir is a beautiful peaceful location. A path goes all the way round the reservoir and numerous in & out of the area. The area is popular with walkers and cyclists, we also met a couple of local policemen who regularly patrol the area at the request of Denton Parish Council as young people had been gathering at the water's edge, and were given advice about litter and social distancing. The paths around the reservoir were largely litter free.

Hedley is interested in observing the large selection of birds on the reservoir with Pochards often seen in the mornings when it's quiet.



The area is generally well maintained however broken tree branches profound and Hedley would like some volunteer help in clearing some of them. A fallen tree was to be reported to CRT.



**Earlsfield section of the canal** – Hedley and I went onto walk the 0.5 mile section of the canal at Earlsfield which is in water and quite pretty in places. There are lots of wild flowers, birds and the paths are clearly well walked. Unfortunately near the A1 where there was quite large pile of rubbish which was sad to see. Notably there was more dog mess at Earlsfield than at the reservoir.



**Well done to Hedley for covering both sections which is quite a task on his own, so if you are local, have some free time and would like to become a volunteer ranger for the Grantham Canal Society please contact us [volunteer@granthamcanal.org](mailto:volunteer@granthamcanal.org) or message us via our Facebook page or visit our website [www.granthamcanal.org](http://www.granthamcanal.org)**



*Michelle Storer*

### Jim's Story - how we rebuilt Lock 15

My thanks to Jim Freeman for the time & trouble he took sorting out and sending me his photos of lock 15 build. A splendid job.

*Ed.*

### Mike Atherley



Mike will be resuming his stories as soon as he can get his internet connection properly sorted.

# HERITAGE OPEN DAY

## PAST & PASTIMES



## MEET THE TEAMS



Featuring the un-missable Dirty Duck Race

Refreshments ★ Barbecue  
★ Tombola ★ Books  
★ Heritage Displays ★

### SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20th 10am till 4pm

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

**FREE PARKING**

**At Woolsthorpe Depot**  
**Woolsthorpe by Belvoir**

**Next to the Dirty Duck Pub NG32 1NY**

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

Alec & Lisa Hampson, Belinda Curtis, Anonymous, John Dodwell, Robert Sharman  
J Carnell, Margaret Leighton, Kevin Weston, Tony Osbond, Mary Noble, Tony Binch  
Anonymous, R A & H J Smith, Jeremy Lee, John Sentence, Jo & Tim Altham  
Roger & Elaine Osbond, John Clark