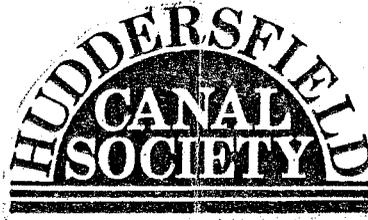
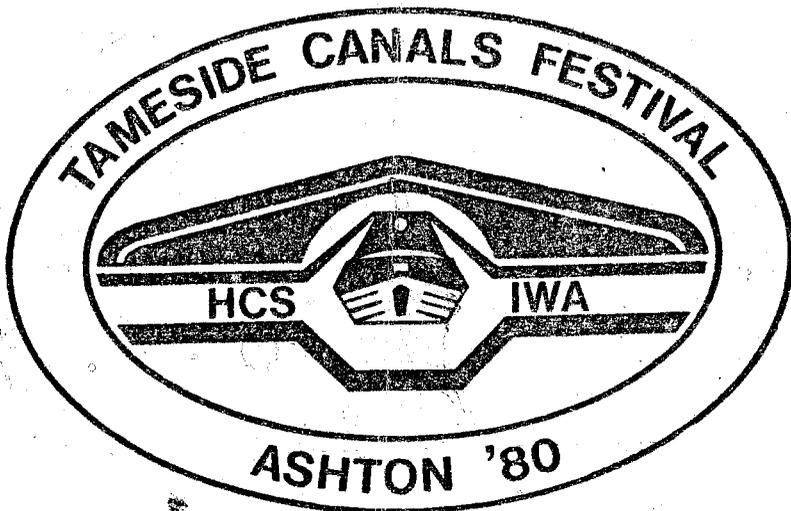


NUMBER 35

JULY 1980.



# PENNINE LINK



HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY

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Treasurer (E) David L. Finnis, 99 Scar Lane, Milnsbridge.  
Secretary (E) Robert Dewey, 28, Cinderhills Road,  
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West Side Chairman Glossop 64031.  
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Trevor Ellis (E) 20, Batley Ave., Marsh, Hudds.  
Huddersfield 34666.  
John Fryer (E) 14, Town End, Golcar, Hudds.  
Huddersfield 45311 (Work & Home)  
Graham Maskell (W) 19, Quick View, Mossley, Lancs.  
Mossley 3992  
John Maynard (E) 29, Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham  
Huddersfield 850575  
David Milsom (E) 194, Huddersfield Road, Meltham  
Huddersfield 850032  
David Sumner (W) 36, Fold Crescent, Carrbrook,  
Stalybridge. Mossley 2860  
Les Winnard (W) 3, Fearnlea Ave., Chadderton,  
Publicity Officer Oldham. 061-633-2690

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West Side Secretary Phil Ritchie, 19 Delamere Avenue,  
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East Side Chairman Brian Badminton, 16, Spinkfield  
Road, Birkby Hudds. 45779

---

E = East

W = West

PENNINE LINK.

THE JOURNAL OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL SOCIETY.

NO. 35

JULY 1980.

Editor

Mrs. Diane Charlesworth

Typing

Mrs. Sue Gibson

Collating and distributing

East & West Side Members

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CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS.

Although we are now well into the sixth year of the Society's existence this period represents something of transition between Society and Limited Company, and something of a holding period between the dissolution of Parliament and the next general election. To clarify this statement, I should remind you that a resolution was passed at the last A.G.M. requiring an extraordinary general meeting of the Huddersfield Canal Society Limited within three months of the Company formation, so that a new Council (Committee) could be elected. The Huddersfield Canal Society Limited has now been formally incorporated and an E.G.M. has been arranged for early September. With this copy of Pennine Link you will find a list of nominations for the new Council and I would ask you all to make every effort to attend the E.G.M. or to arrange for a proxy vote. It is important that the new Council, which must be as strong and active as possible, is elected by as wide a representation of the membership, in order that it can reflect the interests of the membership and so put forward ideas and projects which will gain popular support and enthusiasm.

Once elected, the Council will then in turn from within itself elect the officers of the Society: Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, etc. etc. and will also have the power to co-opt on to the Council any member of the Society who it feels can make a worthwhile contribution. The Council is, and must continue to be an active body, it must have regular injections of new blood, new talents, new ideas, if the Society is to continue to flourish. Those on the Council must be prepared to commit themselves to co-operative hard work and at the same time to accept specific responsibilities. It is your responsibility as the membership of the Society to make sure that the new Council satisfies these requirements.

EDITORIAL

At the A.G.M. I was thanked by the Chairman for my work as Editor. In reply to this I would like to mention and thank several people who work 'behind the scenes' of Pennine Link without whom these publications would not be possible. Sue Gibson does the typing for each issue, as well as numerous other typing jobs for the Society which frequently occur. Before Sue took over the typing this was done by Ivy Lodge who had to effectively type each issue twice, first a fair copy and second on to stencils. Fortunately David Finnis now takes over and has Pennine Link copied professionally directly from Sue's typing which means a substantial reduction in working hours for the team, for as well as less typing there is no duplicating involved. David also sets out the adverts for me, and my husband Roy addresses all the envelopes; this is more efficiently done and legible (we hope) due to our new addressing system, and Roy also helps me with the inserts that accompany each Pennine Link. On collate night several members from East Side come to lend a hand to collate and insert Pennine Link into envelopes. Finally, John Maynard has the unenviable task of taking all those bulging envelopes to post.

---

HARD TIMES

An elderly resident of Ashton-under-Lyne told us that around the 1920's work in the mills was hard to get and wages poor. People committed suicide by jumping into the canal at Dukinfield Junction.

Apparently the water was warmer on one side of a bridge (presumably being used by canalside mills), and persons who pulled out the bodies were paid more if they were from the cold water. It was 6d ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ p) from the 'warm' side of the bridge, and 9d (4p) from the 'cold' side. It was said that sometimes bodies were pushed under the bridge so that the rescuer was paid at the higher rate. The unfortunate victims were taken in a tarpaulin covered cart.

---

Resume of Committee Meeting held on 13th May, 1980 at  
The Junction, Marsden

- Matters arising: I.W.A. National: volunteers from membership to take stand there and back.
- Formation of Company Nothing yet from Company Registrar. Sept. 5th date for E.G.M. Nominations for council to Secretary by 1st July, voting list to go in Pennine Link.
- Boats : Wooden: further examination shows expensive repairs needed. Agreed to write off, money recouped in stern gear - to be stored.
- Steel : painted throughout. To be decorated. Free batteries obtained from Chloride Ltd. After Mayor's Parade boat to be returned to chapel. Launch arrangements need careful planning. Agreed name 'Stan' (short for Standedge).
- Uppermill Project No significant progress. BWB support the project.
- Treasurer's Report balance reported. No grant for towpath guide from West Yorkshire. Common Good Trust - no money for our projects - to ask why. Insurance: stock and stand covered. Boat to be insured. Oldham Tinkers Concert - some profit.
- Publicity Stand - meeting to prepare brief held. Brief sent to colleges. Needs supervising. Who?
- Shirts - cheaper source discovered. Agreed to aim for 10 - 15% minimum profit.
- Talks - agreed to buy projector - to cost.
- Mikron - need to record 'Where's our Cut?' (vision) to discuss postcards: report required on production costs, video and film. Costings required on Christmas Cards.
- Sub-committees: East: arrangements going ahead for Mayor's Parade Visit to Basingstoke Canal being organised. New East Side Chairman Brian Badminton.
- West: minutes of last meeting circulated.
- Huddersfield Festival Festival cancelled due to continued uncertainty about availability of site. Small boat rally substituted. Booking for Mikron Theatre continued, venue to be found.
- Tunnel End Cottages BWB estates wish to know what uses we envisage for buildings: HQ, Clubhouse, Museum, Warden's accomodation, interpretation centre. D. Ellis's students may do study of refurbishment for us.

STOP PRESS....

At the instigation of HCS, Richard Wainwright M.P., has tabled the following Parliamentary Question:

Secretary of State for the Environment

Whether he intends to require all counties to include in their Structure Plans, where relevant, clear evidence of a policy to prevent actions or omissions contrary to the ultimate restoration of canals for navigation.

Letter received from L. Simpson, 28, Ewell Close, Chorley.

I read with interest the proposal in Pennine Link to renovate the canal in Uppermill. Has the possibility of lowering the canal level by 3 feet between locks 23W and 24W been considered? If it is possible Woolroad, which is the one major obstruction (and a low pipe at Sparth Reservoir) between Uppermill and Slaithwaite, would not have to be raised to provide navigational headroom.

Reply to L. Simpson's letter by Peter Freeman.

Although it might be possible to lower the water level slightly this is not desirable because it would reduce the depth. It is not feasible to lower the canal bed because of Saddleworth aqueduct (which incorporates Lock 23W)..

Elsewhere, we have suggested lowering the canal - in Huddersfield and Dukinfield for example. This is one reason why we have not given priority to restoration between Ashton and Bayley Street, Stalybridge. Until the line of the canal (probably via the river) up to Northend is definite, the level and route of the first section cannot be confirmed.

WHERE'S OUR CUT?

We were most surprised and somewhat annoyed to see that the Huddersfield Narrow Canal had been missed off the map in IWA booklet Waterways Survival.

Also our near neighbour the Rochdale Canal was missed off.

The Committee would like to thank David Pearson for the splendid car stickers he produced for the Society.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

With this issue of Pennine Link you will have received formal notice of the EGM of Huddersfield Canal Society Limited together with a ballot paper for the new council of management. Below are brief details of the nominees to assist you in making your choice and we would be grateful if you would return completed ballot forms as soon as possible to R.A. Dewey.

Nominations (proposed and seconded) for council members.

E = East      W = West

- E Brian Badminton. HCS member since 1979, Chairman of East Meetings. Assisted HCS boat working parties
- W Jean Buckley. ✓ HCS member since 1977. HCS Sales Officer. Committee Member Tameside Canals Festival. Active attender HCS Sales/Exhibition Stand.
- W Ron Buckley. HCS Member since 1977. Committee member Tameside Canals Festival. Active attender of HCS Sales/Exhibition Stand.
- W Colin Chadwick. ✓ HCS member since 1977. HCS Committee member Chairman West Meetings. Deputy Chairman Tameside Canals Festival, member Uppermill Restoration Group. HCS Representative at IWA meetings. Tow Path Guide contributor.
- E Diane Charlesworth. HCS member since 1975. HCS Committee member. Editor of Pennine Link, Editor Tow Path Guide. Compiler Huddersfield Narrow Canal History. Boat Lane Investigator.
- W Alexander Crippa. HCS member since 1979. Publicity Officer Tameside Canals Festival. Deputy Chairman West Meetings.
- E Robert Dewey. ✓ Founder member of HCS in 1974. Secretary of HCS. Heavily engaged in many HCS activities including giving talks to various bodies and writing articles for magazines, newspapers etc.
- E Trevor Ellis. ✓ HCS member since 1976. HCS Committee member. Huddersfield Boat Rally Committee member. HCS Boat co-ordinator. Tow Path Guide contributor. Pennine Link collator and contributor.

- E Chris Farrar ✓ HCS member since 1977. Present Chairman of HCS. Heavily engaged in many HCS activities including attending conferences and meetings with various bodies.
- E David Finnis ✓ HCS member since 1975. HCS Treasurer, co-ordinator Huddersfield Boat Rally. Pennine Link collator. Tow Path Guide contributor. Assisted boat working parties. Member of HCS Ltd./Charity Subgroup. Pennine Link contributor. HCS Representative at Colne Valley Society.
- W Peter Freeman HCS member since 1976. HCS Vice Chairman Former Chairman West meetings. Chairman of Uppermill Restoration Group. Chairman of first Tameside Canals Festival. Pennine Link contributor.
- E John Fryer HCS member since 1979. HCS Committee member. HCS Legal Advisor. Member of HCS Ltd./Charity Subgroup.
- W Graham Maskell ✓ HCS member since 1978. HCS Committee member. Rota and Site Officer for Tameside Canals Festival. Chairman of HCS report on canal at Mossley. Member Uppermill Restoration Group. Former West Deputy Chairman.
- E John Maynard ✓ HCS Founder member since 1974. HCS Committee member. Former chairman HCS. Pennine Link contributor and collator.
- E David Milsom HCS member since 1977. HCS committee member. Past Chairman East Meetings. Pennine Link contributor and collator. Member Huddersfield Boat Rally Committee. Assisted at HCS boat working parties.
- W Des Phillips HCS member since 1979. Active member Tameside Canals Festival Committees.
- W Alan Pollitt HCS member since 1978. Tameside Canals Festival Site Services Officer. Member Uppermill Restoration Group.
- W Phil Ritchie HCS member since 1979. Secretary West Meetings. Member Uppermill Restoration Group.
- W Laurence Sullivan HCS member since 1979. Tameside Canals Site Officer. HCS representative at Stalybridge Civic Society.

- W David Sumner ✓ HCS member since 1977. HCS Committee member. Chairman Tameside Canals Festival 1979.
- W Les Winnard ✓ HCS member since 1976. HCS Committee member Publicity Officer for HCS. Member of HCS Ltd/Charity Subgroup.
- W Jean Wrigley HCS member since 1978. Tameside Canals Festival Entertainments Officer. Actively attends HCS Sales/Exhibition stand.

### WATERWAYS PAINTING COMPETITION.

The British Waterways in association with the Artists' Book Club have organised a waterways painting competition, the theme is the interpretation of the environmental, recreational or commercial aspects of the inland waterways and associated reservoirs controlled by the Board.

The first prize is the use of a BWB hire cruiser for one week, second and third prizes are books from the Artists' Book Club valued at £50.00 and £25.00 respectively. Additionally there will be six individual merit awards.

Winning entries will be exhibited at the Inland Waterways National Rally organised by the Inland Waterways Association at Walthamstow, alongside the River Lee Navigation in London on the 16th/17th August, 1980.

Rules, details and entry forms for the competition, which is open to all artists over the age of eighteen years, are available from the Artists' Book Club, 39, Parker St., London WC2B 5PB Tel. 01-242-1655. Early applications desirable as date for entries is 24th July, 1980. Please send SAE at least 6½" x 9".

With 2,000 miles of canals, as well as the open spaces of the reservoirs, in England, Scotland and Wales, there is an inexhaustible supply of subjects which are certain to offer much inspiration.

TAMESIDE CANALS FESTIVAL. ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE. 26/27th JULY, 1980

The Third Tameside Canals Festival will be held at Portland Basin in Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire on the weekend of July 26th and 27th. Sir George and Lady Kenyon have once again graciously agreed to be the Presidents.

The Second Festival, last August, attracted 20,000 people and raised a worthwhile amount for waterways restoration. Sixty-five canal craft joined in the boat rally and prizes were awarded for the best dressed and the most safety conscious craft.

The Portland Basin site, provided by Tameside council is at the junction of the Ashton and Peak Forest canals and close to the Lancashire end of the Huddersfield Narrow.

In addition to the boat rally - where prizes will again be awarded - there will be trip boats, displays of the skills of canoeists and a water-based slalom.

Entertainment will include jazz and folk concerts, The Burnage brass band and morris dancing teams, Punch and Judy shows, a magician and many other activities. Refreshments will be available throughout the day, with a traditional beer tent run by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) and a barbecue on Saturday night.

Other attractions will include vintage vehicles, the largest model railway in the world, and a craft fair displaying the traditional techniques of craftsmen at work - potters cloggers, canal painters, etc. Local voluntary organisations are being invited to provide stalls and side shows.

Volunteers are needed to help with site preparation and site clearing on Friday 25th July and Monday 28th July. Also required are persons to man the gates on the days of the festival. Will anyone wishing to help please contact Graham Maskell, 19, Quick View, Mossley. Mossley 3992.

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CHRISTMAS CARDS

A few months ago IWA ran a photographic competition with a view to using the winning photographs as their Christmas Cards for 1980. One of the photographs to be used is a winter scene on the Hudds. Narrow just below Marsden. IWA have advised that the retail cost of the cards will be 12p each and orders should be sent to David Finnis as soon as possible.

---

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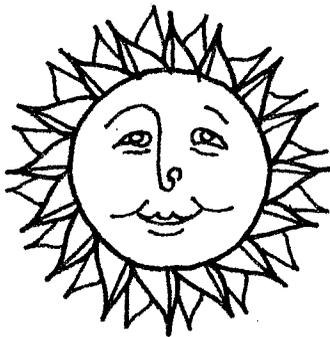
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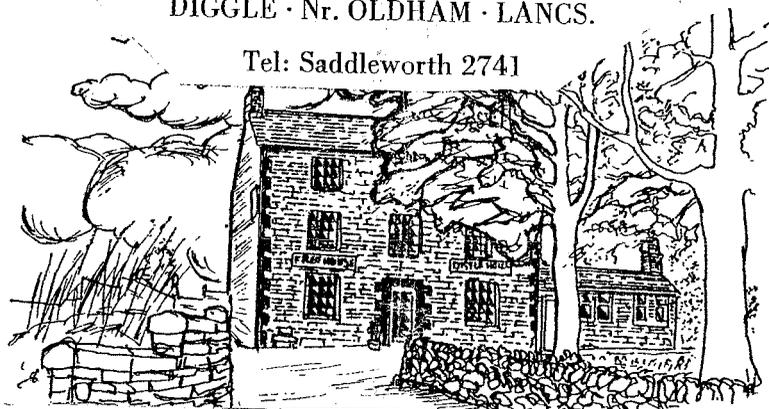
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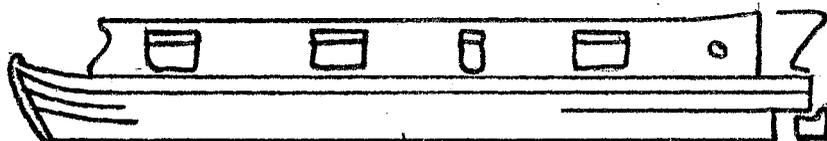
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BASINGSTOKE OR BUST!by DAVID MILSOM

On Saturday 14th June, 1980 HCS members Bob Dewey, David Finnis and Dave Milsom set out to pay a visit to the Basingstoke Canal as guests of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society.

The 32 mile Basingstoke Canal fell derelict about 20 years ago, having had a chequered career, being originally planned as carrier for agricultural goods, it later carried materials for the London and South Western Railway and also the bricks and timber for the military camp at Aldershot. By the middle of the 1960's however, the canal was quickly deteriorating.

Thankfully in 1966 salvation came with the formation of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society. We found that they had achieved a great deal. In their work they have been helped by the fact that the canal was bought by the Surrey and Hampshire County Councils.

During our visit we were shown the Deepcut flight of locks, these being 14 in number, of barge dimensions and formerly in deplorable condition. As we walked up the flight, Mike Fellows, working party organiser, Frank Jones, Job Creation Co-ordinator and Robin Higgs, Society Chairman, showed us the very high standard of workmanship resulting from the combination of a really efficient training programme for voluntary workers with skilled professionals. The expenses of restoring lock chambers and new gates were met by Surrey Council.

We saw the steam dredger 'Perseverance' bought by the Society from the Kennet and Avon Society. A very apt name as she works steadily along all year round come rain or shine. The other boat we saw on the canal was the trip boat 'John Pinkerton' launched in 1978 she (he) is 67 feet long with an approx. 8'6" beam. When we saw her she had a works party on board, one of the many, which with normal loads enabled her to earn the Society about £6,000 profit last year. They are hoping for an improvement on that this year.

Robin Higgs the Chairman discussed with us the problems and successes they have encountered, and gave us advice on their experiences. Although there are differences, some quite substantial, between our two organisations and canals many things are still common to both.

On the Sunday a number of other southern canal societies joined us to look at the progress of the Basingstoke Canal. The Southern Canal Federation meet twice a year on one or another of the canals, to exchange ideas and give mutual support. It was particularly impressive for us to see the lockgate workshop. Surrey Council provide the wood from the extensive forests in the area. What for most canal societies is a massive expenditure dwindles to a very small amount when the price of timber is removed.

Our small HCS contingent was most impressed with what we saw and came back feeling more certain that we WILL succeed in our efforts in future. We knew that for the first 10 years no physical restoration had taken place on the Basingstoke but now completion of the project is expected within the next 3 or 4 years.

Our thanks go to the members and committee of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society for making our short stay so pleasant and informative and hope that they will be able to pay a reciprocal visit to see what we have to offer.

'NORTHWICH' GOES TO STOKE BRUERNE.

Peter Freeman.

Northwich, the former Fellows, Morton & Clayton butty has been missing from its position outside the waterways museum at Stoke Bruerne. It has been undergoing restoration at Malcolm Braines boatyard at Norton Cranes. In May fellow HCS members Ron Buckley and I joined the crew taking Northwich back to the museum. This was a notable journey as the butty was towed by the restored steamer 'President'. Accompanying these boats was Nicholas Bostock's narrowboat 'Unicorn'.

A few last minute touches to the boats and we left the boatyard. After a few hundred yards the top mast of Northwich had to be dropped to get under the first bridge. Shortly we turned on to the Wyrley and Easington. Anticipating shallow water and rubbish Unicorn towed the other two boats - a fascinating sight. We went aground and caught mattresses and rubbish so many times we lost count. By the early evening we reached Tipton, but as Factory locks were shown on the stoppage list as closed, we diverted onto the old line. Another low bridge caused considerable difficulty, but with everyone sitting on

the butty we squeezed through. It was getting dark so we decided to stop at the bottom of Brades Hall locks. Then our lowest bridge yet - 6'6" headroom with Northwich and President needing over 7'0". So we had to drop the level praying that we would not run aground. Safely through but President got stuck below the bottom lock. It was 11pm. by the time we managed to moor up.

Next morning some BWB men appeared. They told us that our struggles had been unnecessary. Despite the stoppage list, work had not started on Factory Locks and we could have kept to the Main Line.

Most of the fuel for the steamer was canal driftwood. There's plenty of it on the BCN!

Approaching Farmers Bridge, President jammed solid in a bridge hole. Only after using Unicorn on full power several times did we snatch the boat free.

In Birmingham we met a former boatman, Arthur Young who told us he used to work for Fellows, Morton and Clayton. We invited him to steer Unicorn, whilst his dog Judy anxiously followed along the towpath.

The next few days took us along the Grand Union with an ever growing number of spectators and photographers. Two T.V. crews appeared and a young man with a microphone and headphones kept appearing at Bridge Holes. At Warwick over a hundred schoolchildren turned out.

BWB were marvellous, helping the steamer and butty through locks. Unfortunately if you were following behind on Unicorn every rotten lock was against you - and there are a lot of wide locks on the Grand Union.

Not a bridge hole was scraped and Northwich was almost as immaculate as when we left the boatyard, 5 days earlier.

At Blisworth Tunnel a BWB tug towed the boats through whilst we, dirty with coal dust and oil - travelled over the top in a clean minibus. We winced as the towed boats crashed into the tunnel. After all our care!

From the end of the tunnel, President then steamed triumphantly with Northwich in tow, into Stoke Bruerne, whistle blowing. A marvellous experience!

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UPPERMILL REPORT ..Cont..CONCLUSIONS.

The canal is a great asset if treated properly. It provides the community with a recreational facility on the doorstep - walking, boating, fishing and just watching are all available on an informal basis. The quiet attraction of water, especially water flowing or moving with boats, or through locks, has always attracted people and will continue to do so as the pace of life speeds up - it is a most desirable contrast.

The derelict Huddersfield Narrow Canal has survived much better than some canals which in a very short space of time have become 'stinking ditches' - rubbish strewn, shallow and environmentally a disaster.

Make no mistake though, the Huddersfield Narrow is slowly getting worse. The owners, British Waterways Board, acting on our behalf as the nation, have little money to spend on the canals which are still in use. There are times when even those waterways are threatened for lack of money and government interest. What chance then has the derelict Huddersfield Narrow?

There is every chance that the silting will get worse and worse, the walls will fall into the canal, maybe even the historic aqueduct will sag beyond the limit and collapse - it could certainly have to be replaced by an unsightly pipe as was Store Street Aqueduct when the Ashton canal fell derelict.

The alternative is to spend a comparatively small sum and put the canal back into proper repair, bringing income to the owners and pleasure to the public. The choice is YOURS. Which is it to be?

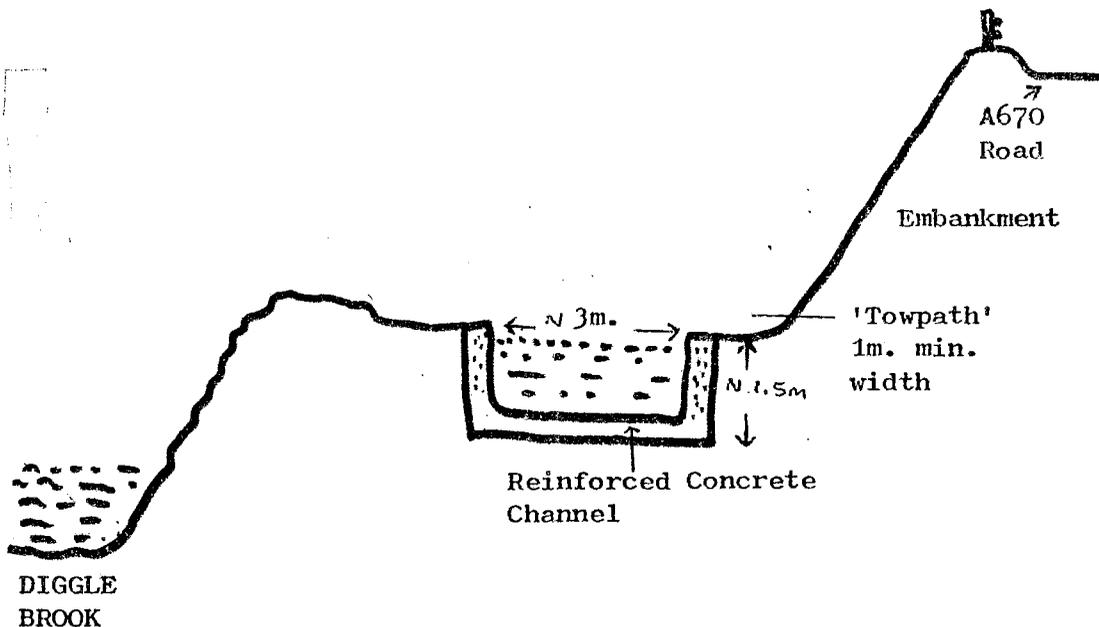
LOCK RESTORATION

As far as can be established the lock chambers for both locks are in sound condition. At some stage in the early 60's the chambers were filled with hardcore and limestone chippings and topped with 4" (100mm) of reinforced concrete. This concrete was not keyed into the lock walls and over a period of time settlement occurred. Aqueduct Lock was recapped in 1978 to include a V-Notch weir for flow measurement, but the concrete is still apparently a

single slab on top of infill.

Initial investigation would involve piping or by-passing the lock to maintain water flow and breaking out the concrete capping followed by removal of the infill. The top ground paddles have also been concreted and this would have to be removed in order to establish whether these could be restored or should be replaced by alternative mechanisms.

Typical Cross Section of 'Infilled' Section Showing Reinforced Concrete Channel in Relation to R. Tame and A.670.  
Gen. Arr. Only. NOT TO SCALE.



CANAL CONFERENCE.Robert Dewey

Chris Farrar, David Finnis and I attended a conference in County Hall, Wakefield on June 7th. This was organised by West Yorkshire County Council and Calder Navigation Society and was attended by some high powered guests. We took Councillors Mrs. Swift and Colin Anderson from the Colne Valley, Councillor Speight Chairman of Kirklees Development and Technical Services (i.e. Planning) Committee was also there. Outside guests included BWB's two Area Engineers, Principal Engineer North, Principal Amenity Officer, two Area Amenity Officers and a host of other BWB officers (including from London).

The speakers were Illyd Harrington (member of BW Board), Marcus Fox M.P. (Under Secretary at D of E) John Heap (IWA) M. Masterman (West Yorkshire C.C. Planner). Papers were also presented by Rochdale Canal Society; Calder Navigation Society; I.W.A. (Inland Shipping Group) and Huddersfield Canal Society.

Differing points of view clearly came over, but it is certain that many more who we are trying to influence now realise that restoration is a realistic option.

Tunnel End CottagesRobert Dewey

I have now provisionally agreed with British Waterways Estates that the Society will take a ten year lease of Tunnel End Cottages at Marsden. The Society has looked at these cottages for a long time and has been concerned at their continued deterioration. Now, subject to detailed terms being agreed (these will have to include promises not to remove the shoring timbers at the rear!) we will have our own premises, but there is work to be done before we can move in.

The major works are:

- 1 Install damp proof course
- 2 Repairs to roof, ?woodworm treatment etc.
- 3 Checking services - electricity, was it overhead or underground cable in the past?  
Drainage - where?

Volunteers are needed to help plan the works. Can anyone provide us with estimates? All offers to Secretary please.

'THERE'S TREASURE IN THEM THERE HILLS' (Robert Dewey)

Recently the Peak District National Park Study Centre at Losehill Hall, Castleton organised a course about canals in the area and I was invited to give a talk about our canal and give a guided tour.

The party disembarked at Woolroad to walk along the stretch of canal to Uppermill (the piece we hope to restore soon).

We stopped again at Scout Tunnel and were mistified to see a lady fishing in the canal with a garden rake! She pulled out a silver fork and we thinking she had recovered what she had lost gave a round of applause. She shrugged it off and showed the contents of a canvas hold-all - cups, candlesticks, more cutlery, plates - all silver (well EPNS) but fairly heavily tarnished.

\*This treasure had been found in and around Scout Tunnel, obviously stolen goods - but the police claimed not to know from where they had come. They had searched the canal with frogmen but had only found a small part of the haul. Working Party Organisers please note, digging the Narrow Canal may have more to offer than meets the eye!

\* Three Year old Stephen Darraugh found some silver plate in the canal in the same place earlier this year, it was following this that the police were notified.

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APPEAL TO CONVERT SALT WAREHOUSE.

An appeal is to be launched to convert the historic and derelict Salt Warehouse at Sowerby Bridge into a heritage centre. The Warehouse spans the width of the town's wharf with one gable end at the Calder and Hebble Navigation and the other at the Rochdale Canal.

The appeal will be launched on September 6th, when Mikron Theatre will be playing there, and this will coincide with the Sowerby Bridge Rush Bearing Ceremony.

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The Sir John Ramsden Broad Canal.

Two hundred years ago, the Cooper Canal was completed in 1780 after six years of building work, and became known as the Sir John Ramsden Canal because of the Baronet's involvement with its construction. It has nine locks 15ft. wide with an overall rise of 56ft. 10ins: four are single, then a flight of four and another single. Maximum vessel length permitted on the canal is 58ft, width 14ft 2ins, draught 4ft 6ins and headroom 9ft. 2ins. A towpath leads throughout from Cooper Bridge to just beyond Aspley Basin in Huddersfield and does not extend to the King's Mill as stipulated in the Act. The length of the canal is  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles long proceeding southwest from Cooper Bridge.

The first petition to build the canal was made to Parliament in 1768 in the reign of King George III. Several petitions followed until the 13th January, 1774, when an Act was drawn up and passed through Parliament. It was made law by His Majesty's signature on the 9th March, 1774. Sir John Ramsden having inherited the Baronetcy from his father in 1769 at 13 years of age was therefore still a minor when his mother Dame Margaret Ramsden, and his uncle, Thomas Ramsden, successfully petitioned Parliament for permission to make the navigable cut, linking the River Calder and the mouth of the River Coln at Cooper Bridge, to the King's Mill in Huddersfield, using water from the River Coln and fed by the old mill goit, a medieval channel for the overflow of water from the river.

There was a great deal of competition by private companies at the time, for the building of a network of waterways from northern towns such as Halifax, Bradford and Sheffield to link up with the main Leeds/Wakefield navigation line of the Aire and Calder, which runs eastwards to Hull and Goole on the coast, and which sent its tentacles down into the midlands for the carrying of goods such as raw wool and corn. As the Ramsdens owned most of Huddersfield and the land through which the canal would pass, it was of tremendous advantage to themselves as an expanding textile community, to build and maintain a navigable waterway. For it would give Huddersfield a link with the Midlands from where much of the raw wool was bought for textiles; it meant goods could be carried quickly and cheaply, a direct link with the ports,

and development of overseas trade. There was fierce opposition and rivalry from the overland private turnpike road companies who envisaged their trade and profits being whittled away by a more easily accessible and cheaper method of transport.

Of the 104 commissioners appointed by King George III's Government in the Act of 1774, eleven were appointed to act as clerks. Many of the commissioners were important business men and landed gentry - indeed they had to have a certain income or own land to qualify - nine were Baronets which included Sir George Armitage, Sir Lionel Pilkington, Sir George Savile and Sir Thomas Wentworth, names well known in this area. An affidavit was signed by several of the commissioners swearing on oath to accept the responsibility 'without fear or favour' of performing their duty to enable Sir John Ramsden to make and maintain a navigable canal. The signatures on the affidavit were: John Crosland, Joseph Armitage, Jno. Atkinson, Jonathon Nicholls, William Horsfall, R. Thornton, William Walker, Willm. Hague, Ben North, John Haigh, and James I. Milnes.

The commissioners had arbitrary powers to settle differences on purchase of land; to pay recompense for damages to land and property; to ascertain yearly rentals, rates and dues. But if any person were dissatisfied with the assessment, it was lawful to appeal to the Judge of Assises in York within six months of the assessment. The commissioners were also empowered to examine the books and accounts of expenses incurred in the building and maintaining of the canal, and if profits from navigation exceeded the 6% limit set by the Act, toll cuts of  $\frac{1}{8}$ th (2/6d) in the pound were imposed. Sir John was given the right by law to levy rates of 8d a ton on coal, lime and stone, and 1/6d ( $7\frac{1}{2}$ p) a ton on other goods, and to raise or lower the rates as seemed necessary which would be sufficient to pay a reasonable interest, without monopoly of the free trade of the canal - provided the traders paid their taxes. A group of not less than three commissioners presided at hearings. Penalties were imposed for default: a penalty of £20 on Sheriffs or Coroners if juries were not summoned when required; refusal of evidence by witnesses, or lack of appearance in court without reasonable excuse invoked a penalty of up to £5. A complainant requesting a jury before the commissioners had first to enter into a bond of £50 with Sr. John Ramsden to cover costs. If costs were not met by either complainant or defendant, rates of interest were charged by the commissioners on their assessment of costs and damages.

## D I A R Y

- July 3rd 8.00pm. East Side Meeting. Slide Show on recent happenings @ Commercial, Slaithwaite.
- July 5th Slaithwaite Carnival. HCS Stand.
- July 9th 8.00pm. West Side Meeting. Fox Tavern, Ridge Hill Lane, Stalybridge.
- July 19th Denton Carnival. HCS Exhibition & Stand.
- July 26/27th Tameside Canals Festival.
- Aug 2nd - 14th Sept. Liverpool Road Railway Exposition, Manchester.
- Aug. 7th 8.00pm. East Side Meeting. Four Horseshoes, Milnsbridge. Meeting at 7.00pm. for walk.
- ✓ Aug. 13th 8.00pm. ✓ West Side Meeting. Old Hunters Tavern, Acres Lane, Stalybridge.
- Aug. 16/17th Oldham Show. HCS Stand on the Saturday
- " " IWA National Festival at Lee Valley Park
- " " London. HCS Stand & Exhibition.
- " " 'Holidays at Home' event at Greenhead Park
- Aug. 17th Huddersfield. HCS Stand & Exhibition
- Aug. 30th Diggle Fete. " " "
- Sept. 4th 8.00pm Marsden Festival. " " "
- Sept. 5th 8.00pm East Side Meeting at the Wharf Aspley
- Sept. 6th 8.00pm meet at 7.15pm for a short walk.
- Sept. 6th HCS Ltd E G M at Slaithwaite Town Hall
- Salt Warehouse Appeal, Sowerby Bridge
- (Event includes Mikron, Tel Ripponden 3364 for more details)
- ✓ Sept. 10th 8.00pm ✓ West Side Meeting, Tollemache Arms, Mossley
- Sept. 20th/21st Huddersfield Boat Rally at Aspley. (Mikron performance on 20th at the Zetland Hotel)
- Oct. 2nd East Side Meeting at the Albion, Longroyd Bridge, Huddersfield

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Editor: The Editor holds the right to edit or withhold articles and letters, or to retain them for publication at a later date.

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