

BRIDGE

November 2010



Grantham Canal News Sheet

This latest issue of the Electronic News Sheet is for **anyone** who would like to be updated on GCS activities and progress. If this is the first issue you have received and you would like future monthly issues, please send an email to: Membership@granthamcanal.com stating your name, confirming your e-mail address and indicating that you wish to receive the News Sheet. Future copies will not be sent without your permission. You do not have to be a member but please consider joining. Details on the "Contact Us" page on our website: www.granthamcanal.com

1. Battle for Mann's Bridge

As mentioned last month, supporters of the Partnership and Society felt it worthwhile to seek legal advice as to whether the Minister's ruling could realistically be challenged. A QC was consulted and in the light of his advice the decision was made, not to proceed. The considerable cost of hiring the QC was generously funded by two GCS members, both of whom wish to remain anonymous.

2. The A46 Road Improvements

The new £2.2m bridge for the A46 is taking shape and there are some interesting aerial pictures of the road works including the site of the new Canal Bridge to be found at <http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/27606.aspx>



Photos.
Colin Bryan

3. The Trip-boat:

There have been a couple of mechanical problems, one of which we thought had been resolved at the end of the summer. However an engineer from Oxfordshire Narrowboats has returned to complete that work and will make a further visit shortly. The boat is still under guarantee so there is no cost to GCS. We are very pleased with The Three Shires. She has performed well and all our visitors seem to have enjoyed their trips. Between June 1st and December 5th we will have carried an amazing **375** passengers on board the boat. A **big** thank you to everyone who has helped. Please telephone **01949 850 999** to book.

4. BW's. *John Nuttall* has been a long standing friend of GCS. He worked with us in the early 1990's when the top section at Woolsthorpe was first restored and although based in Leeds, was always on hand to give us advice and assistance. His enthusiasm and patience never waned. Although in recent years, unfortunately for us, John's has not been directly involved with GCS I know that if we needed help he would be there, at the end of the phone. John will be a hard act to follow and we wish him well in his retirement. If you are lost for things to do John, just call me! Ed



John Nuttall

Photograph (right) and text below from LWP Newsletter Courtesy of Lincolnshire County Council

John Nuttall - "THE SAFEST OF HANDS"

I'm sure John is very much looking forward to his forthcoming retirement and spending probably just as much time on the river bank, but in future with a fishing rod in hand!
But I hate change, despite it apparently being good for us. John has been a member of the LWP since almost the very beginning and I soon realised that his involvement in a project would mean steady progress, good consultation, on time and on budget and no detail forgotten – the safest of hands in fact. Reliability isn't particularly glam, but goodness me, it's reassuring and John just exudes reliability at all times.
John joined BW in Feb 1983 as a Project Manager based in Yorkshire. It wasn't until 2003 that John came to work at Newark as the Economic and Social Development Manager, since 2009 he has held the role of Regeneration Manager. Over the past 27 years, John has made an unparalleled contribution to the regeneration of waterways within the East Midlands. John has coordinated some enormous projects that have transformed previously unusable canals and towpaths. He has brought the same thorough approach to all his projects, from the multi-million pound restoration of the Chesterfield Canal to regeneration works in the centre of Nottingham and new moorings and disabled angling facilities in rural Lincolnshire. His projects have received recognition through BURA, CEEQUAL, Green Apple and Regeneration & Renewal awards.

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John has the same reluctance to embrace new technology as I do and I recall a colleague saying that her first text from him appeared to be in code, in the form of a stream of incomprehensible letters - as he hadn't realised that there was a space bar!

Due to retire in February, everyone at LWP wishes him all the very best for his retirement and that we will miss him enormously.

Mary Powell (Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership)

5. Grantham Canal Partnership (GCP) Chairman

At the close of the autumn meeting of the Grantham Canal Partnership Executive, Chairman Tony Wilkinson handed over the tiller to Michael Rowen.

It's nearly 7 years since **Tony Wilkinson** was persuaded to join us and it wasn't long before all involved came to appreciate this lover of the English countryside, trees, rivers, cricket, books, hats and Chianti. On his Chairman's Walks, which he led like the Pied Piper, Tony could name every bird and dragonfly we met and didn't miss a thing – especially litter! This is an appropriate time to recall just what has been achieved on his watch:

- The introduction and funding of professional project management
- The acquisition of our aluminium workboat 'Restorer 2'
- The emda-funded clearing of the 2 miles from the A1 to Denton, which temporarily opened-up the 4 miles to Woolsthorpe in time for ...
- 'Grantham on Water 2007'
- Increased recognition of the canal by British Waterways management
- The Ecological Impact Study 2006/07, leading to unprecedented cooperation between environmentalists and 'restorationists'
- The River Trent to Cotgrave Green Infrastructure / 'Trent Link' Study
- The restoration of Lock 18
- The construction of landing stages at the A1 and above Lock 18
- The restoration of Harlaxton Wharf
- The re-opening of the 4 miles from the A1 to Woolsthorpe
- The acquisition of 'Corvus', 'Centauri' and 'The Three Shires'



Tony leading the walkers from the A1 embankment to Redmile. April 2006

Tony – all those committed to saving the Grantham Canal for future generations thank you for your leadership, wisdom, humour, generosity and company and hope to see you and your wife Chris on the trip boat and towpath for many years to come.



Tony (right) at the opening of Harlaxton Wharf July 2010

Michael Rowen was a 'Nottingham lad' and now lives with his wife Ann within sight and sound of Mann's Bridge and the A46. He has enjoyed a successful career in the construction industry, specialising in structural steelwork, and is a keen sportsman. His hockey playing days may be over but that only releases more time for skiing and especially golf. Involvement in charitable and community projects plays an important part in his life.

Michael recently completed a year as High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, during which he particularly supported local charity Framework – which cares for the homeless and vulnerable throughout the county – and Police charity COPS (Care of Police Survivors). He is chairman of the new Nottingham University Samworth Academy – and now also the GCP!

Michael claims to know little about canals ... but is learning fast. At the time of writing, he, Ann and one or two Labradors have already walked from the River Trent to Kinoulton; Michael twice visited the GCS / WRG work parties at Stragglethorpe in mid-October and he has led the Grantham delegation at a waterways conference in London. We look forward to 'exciting times' ...



Michael Rowen and his Labrador with Peter Stone sees WRG's Bitm and GCS hard at work in the bed of the canal. Michael kindly came back with his wife the following day to check we were still working !



Michael in serious discussion with your Editor and Colin Bryan, at Stragglethorpe in October

Photo: Peter Stone

6. Workparties

Bob Terry, Ralph Poore and Yours Truly attended our third training course, this time on a power pole pruner, on a very cold and wet day at Parkhill Training at Seagrave in Leicester. A Power Pole Pruner is a small chainsaw at the end of an extendable pole which will allow us to access the bits of tree that we can't normally reach. Once again we learnt a lot and hopefully in the near future we can get some other workparty members trained up too. Training is quite expensive but worth every penny when we can use the power cutting equipment. We have all struggled for so long and some of us are not quite as strong or fit as we think we are. Our thanks to Mike and Suzanne Wells for making us so welcome and to our trainer, Adam, for all the valuable knowledge you passed on to us.



Photo. Tony Jackson

We have been told that a tree has fallen into the canal at Harlaxton so as soon as our certificates arrive from Lantra we can remove the light branches and pull the tree onto the bank for cutting up.

We also know there is a problem with water seeping out of the brickwork on Lock 16. Some missing brickwork has been spotted below the water line in the upper gate recess on the non towpath side and we think we have a solution.

NB. Next workparty dates are early in the month, on 9th & 11th December 2010.

I received a very nice email from our strimmer and hedgcutter trainer, Denis Cartmel, having sent him the October issue of Bridge. I will add your name to the mailing list Denis and when you get some free time, we would be delighted to take you up on your offer to help! Apologies for spelling your surname with a 'G' last month and it was good of you not to mention it! Ed

7. Dangers of Weil's disease

Many of you will have learnt that sadly, Andy Holmes, a former Olympic gold medal rower has recently fallen prey to Weil's disease. Most of us know of the perils of this disease, but whilst it is in the news, albeit in tragic circumstances, we ask that you all pass the message on to friends and family to be careful.

Especially at risk Anyone with open cuts or sores is especially at risk close to the water, particularly canal water that is the habitat of infected rats and water voles that carry Weil's disease or Leptospirosis. It is contracted through contact with water carrying urine from the infected animals.

Boaters should always thoroughly wash their hands when clearing out their boat's weed hatch or handling ropes that have been in contact with the water, especially if having cuts or wounds that would add to the risk of infection.

There is no known cure for the disease once it gets hold, closing down the essential organs, with death occurring in most circumstances.

8. A mystery solved!

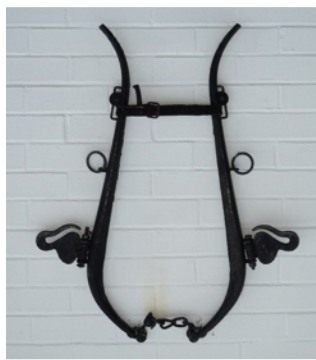
In the July issue of Bridge I showed a picture of an object pulled out of the canal at Harlaxton. We thought it might have something to do with horses, for they were obviously used on the Grantham Canal and it proved correct. It is called a hame and was attached with its matching pair, to the horse's collar. The towing rope was then attached, presumably with a ring or chain to the decorative hook. Those hames still in existence and not used for their original purpose are often hung on walls as a decorative feature. Have a look at the two web sites below for more information. As you will see, the horse pushes on the collar, so does he/she actually push or pull the boat?

<http://www.fotolibra.com/gallery/55783/suiffolk-punch/>

(not my spelling so please cut and paste or at least do spell as written! Ed.)

http://wapedia.mobi/en/Horse_collar

Object found
in the canal
at Harlaxton



Hames attached to
a house wall.
(Picture inverted as
they are actually
fixed upside down!)

9. COMPETITION. So far an *under whelming* response to **Derek Bolton's** photo competition. Closing date is 30th November so there is still time to win that £5 Boots voucher. Look at last month's issue for the photos.

Photos : Ian Wakefield unless credited otherwise

If you spot anything new or unusual on the Grantham, please contact the editor with photos if possible. Any questions and I will try to find answers.

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