

BRIDGE



JANUARY

2020

The monthly newsletter
published by the

The
Grantham Canal
Society

CHARITY NO: 507337



Congratulations go to our volunteers who have
been voted Towpath Talk's
"Top Team for 2019"

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See page 14

Towpath Talk's Top Teams for 2019 are revealed

• Continued from page 1

Thanks go to our judges Haley Hadley, sales and marketing director of award sponsor ABC Leisure Group, John Dodwell, who started volunteering in 1962 and continues to be actively involved in a number of waterways organisations and Ian McCarthy, who has been active in the Waterways Recovery Group North West for more than 30 years and is currently a volunteers' representative on the Canal & River Trust Council.

The Top Team nominations have proved beyond doubt that there are lots of dedicated teams of committed volunteers out there - who all deserve recognition for the hard work they are doing for the benefit of the inland waterways. Watch this space for details of the 2020 awards.



Grantham Canal Society volunteers - our Top Team for 2019.



Crusader Commemorative award. PHOTOS SUPPLIED

Voting set to start in CRT Council elections

David said: "I've made progress on a variety of issues such as...



This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

**First let me wish you a Happy, prosperous
and peaceful New Year.**

I hope that you enjoyed the unseasonal weather over the holiday period.

The year has already made its mark on the Society by affecting the health of both our Chief Executive and your Chairman. OK the issues that affected both of us occurred last year before the festive season but resulted in similar health issues. I am sorry if our absence from the canal is a disappointment but we have to do what the medics recommend. I would like to acknowledge the willingness shown by Tony Osbond and others in expanding their sphere or activity to cover outstanding work. This is much appreciated. I should add that there will be some of our intended plans for 2020 which may get delayed to a later year.

It might be the appropriate place to ask if anybody has any spare time to assume some of the largely desk based responsibilities that are necessary to ensure the seamless operation of the Society.

I will also apologise on behalf of the Society for one matter of interest to many donors that of **The Memorial Bench at Lock 15**. This has been delayed partly by the need to complete and restore the site before erecting the Bench and partly by the need to obtain the required planning permissions from Local Authorities. The submission documents to achieve the latter are in hand. We will keep you informed of progress.

On a more timely and positive subject just prior to Christmas we were informed that the Society's work in the field was rewarded by being voted as Towpath Talk's Top Team.



If you don't know or haven't seen it this is the national monthly newspaper of the canal industry. This is a great achievement and recognises the contribution of all GCS volunteers. The presentation date will be advised later this month.

Mike Stone.



**This is what our lock rebuilding teams have
struggled with over the past month!**



**Notts & Derby
Branch meetings
take place at the
Clock Warehouse,
Shardlow, DE72 2GL**

Next meeting Wednesday 15th January 2020 at 7.30pm. The speaker will be George Rogers, Chairman of the Strategic Restoration Committee, Friends of the Cromford Canal. George will present a talk on the progress of restoration on the Cromford Canal.

COMMUNITY & EVENTS DIARY FOR 2020

<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Event & Venue</u>
Mon 13 th Jan 6.30	Rangers' Meeting, The Plough, Stathern
Thurs 23 rd Jan 10.00	Events Team Meeting
Thurs 6 th Feb 7.15	Talk: Rauceby WI, Village Hall
Thurs 13 th Feb 1.30 for 2.15	Edwalton Gamston U3A, Gamston Community Hall, NG2 6PS, nr Morrisons
Wed 26 th Feb 1.30 for 2.00	Grantham Breathe Easy Christian Centre NG31 9JE 21a Belton Avenue,
Thurs 5 th March 2.00	Radcliffe on Trent U3A, Grange Hall
Wed 11 th March 10.30	Vale of Belvoir Coffee – Bingham Bowls
Sun 22 nd March	Mothers' Day Boat Trips, Depot Open
Mon 23 rd March 7.15	West Bridgford WI, St Paul's Church Hall, Boundary Road
Mon 6 th Apr 2.00	Cranwell WI
Sun & Mon 12 th & 13 th Apr	Easter Bank Holiday Trips, Depot Open
Wed 22 nd Apr	Grantham Probus 88
Sun 26 th Apr	Craft and Produce Fair, Woolsthorpe Depot
Sun & Mon 24 th & 25 th May	Bank Holiday Boat Trips, Depot Open
Mon 1 st June 12.30	Southwell Ladies Probus
Tues 7 th July 7.15	RAFA Cranwell
Wed 8 th July 8.30	Hawton WI, Hawtonville Methodist Church Hall
Wed 29 th July	Joint CRT/GCS Event at Depot
Fri 14 th Aug	Joint CRT/GCS Event at Depot
Wed 19 th Aug	Grantham Ladies Probus
Sun 11 th Oct 10.00 – 4.00	DISCOVERY DAY
Mon 19 th Oct 7.30	Bourne Civic Society, Wake House
Wed 21 st Oct 7.30	Barrowby WI

A meeting to finalise boat trips/depot open days is still pending.

Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative at Lock 14



CUT



SHAPED



CONCRETED



TRIAL FIT



Top Left: The stank channel is cut, concreted, the support beam shaped and a trial fitting carried out.

Below left: CRT engineers measure up for the top gates.

Above: Dry stone walling in progress and being finished off.

Many thanks to John Clark & Jim Freeman for these photos

Hedgehog Welfare update

I have been really busy with hedgehogs that have been coming in since the beginning of October. Many are small, in very poor condition and full of internal parasites. Two drugs to treat parasites have been discontinued and the replacements do not work as well. We have been struggling and, at one point, felt helpless. But with care things have improved and we are still releasing hedgehogs. If they are fit, weigh enough and have a “soft release” – water and food is left out – it is better to have them back in the wild rather than in cages over winter.

Lots of calls still come in, but we don't take in hedgehogs just to protect them and to keep them over the winter. If we did we would not have the carers or the space to look after the sick and injured hedgehogs.

Our wants and needs: Because we have lots of events we're always on the look-out for raffle prizes which are new and balls of wool for knitting hogs. One of our biggest costs – apart from the vet bills and food – is equipment. We're always on the lookout for unwanted one-storey rabbit hutches in good condition. So, if you have one tucked away in the garage then please consider donating it to us.

Training : In the last few months we have run several starter training courses for people who have asked if they could become carers with Hedgehog Welfare. We cover the basics. The courses are a couple of hours long. Some people have already had their first hedgehog and are on to their second. If anyone is interested let me know. I am hoping to run another course towards the end of January. And, there's a hot drink and homemade cake.

Janet Peto - Hedgehog Welfare
07940 714830

Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal by James Faulconbridge



January – Wild Clematis

In the hedgerows and trees along the canal in winter time, you might be lucky enough to spot the silken seedheads of wild clematis, also known as 'travellers joy' or 'old man's beard'. The small dark seeds are clustered in the centre whilst the white fluff which surrounds them are feathery wings which allow the seeds to catch the breeze and reach a new location. Many seeds will inevitably fall in unsuitable places, but through probability and strength in numbers, some will find a suitable place to germinate and develop a new plant. Wild clematis is a liana - a long-stemmed, woody vine - alongside other familiar species such as honeysuckle and grape vines. It can persist scrambling through herbaceous vegetation, but is most at home clambering up supports such as trees and shrubs where it twines around its unfortunate host.

Wild clematis has the latin name *Clematis vitalba* and is actually a member of the buttercup family. At this time of year, the seedheads provide a good source of food for wild birds such as goldfinches, whilst the flowers which preceded them sustained bees, butterflies and moths. Several species of moth are completely dependent on this species as a larval food plant, including the Small Emerald, the Small Waved Umber and Haworth's Pug.

The native clematis is related to the garden varieties which people may be more familiar with – the flowers from July to September are less exuberant than their ornamental cousins but they share the same vanilla scent.

THE WAY IT WAS

By Mike Atherley



This month Mike recalls having an “interesting” start to a Broads holiday ...

After a very enjoyable holiday in a riverside chalet on the Norfolk Broads two of us decided to take our own boats together with our families for a more adventurous holiday. My boat was a 27ft narrow beam, centre cockpit, marine ply by I think Bells of Leicester. Four adults and two children. My colleagues boat was a 23ft GRP rear cockpit, by Teal. Four adults and one child. We started from Sheetstores Marina at Long Eaton because it had a good slipway and we knew the owner, Arthur Allen. My colleague had his own trailer so recovery was easy using his own car. My boat wasn't designed for trailering and the trailer I had hired wasn't quite right for the hull shape but after a struggle we managed a recovery using my car. It took a while using various blocks of timber from the boat yard, to get my boat safe enough to tow the long distance to Norfolk. It had been difficult to find a boat yard at Norfolk that would accept us slipping ourselves, because we didn't know the area well and couldn't visit beforehand. The one we chose was at Martham on the river Thurne.

We started the journey with three cars the following weekend and made good progress using the A52, A17, and A47 with the occasional stop to check the trailers and decided a break near Swaffham for lunch would be about right. Swaffham didn't have a by pass then and the single carriageway roads made progress slow but we found a roadside pub near the town with ample parking space. Good job we stopped there, some of the timber packing had become loose and the boat would of tipped if we had gone much further. The landlord told us the pub was to close that year because it stood in way of a new by pass and he would lose his home and job. Martham boat yard was difficult to find being quite a poor route from the main road but eventually it appeared at the end of a lane with adequate room to store three cars and two trailers for the two week holiday. We slipped the boats ourselves but noticed the concrete slipway finished with a deep edge on the riverside and made a note that recovery might be difficult. Norfolk boat yards seem to prefer cranes or drag the boats on keel boards using a tractor.

We set off next day and visited as much of the northern broads and rivers as we could during the first week but all agreed we would like to visit Norwich and Lowestoft which meant crossing Breydon Water. We studied our tide tables so an arrival at Yarmouth would be at slack low water but on the journey we noticed other boats were overtaking us so we assumed we had got our timing wrong. On the approach to Yarmouth it was obvious we were travelling very fast and passage through the bridges was quite frightening and no way could we stop at the Yacht Station. I was the lead boat and the entrance to Breydon Water looked like the sea so trying to put the boat about caused me to spin sideways and the back corner collided with a moored large workboat, I can still hear the bong now. We only just made way back to the yacht station and I was worried about the engine failing and what damage the collision had caused.

The Stationmaster was waiting for us and took our ropes quickly and made fast so I rushed into the rear cabin and lifting the bunk bed found water coming through a crack. I found that if all the crew moved into the front cabin the leak stopped. I had with me my light electrical toolbox and a supply of brass 1" nails so leaning over the back deck I could nail the plywood back to the corner post. I also cut up a bean can and nailed that around the corner. Job done and leak stopped I set off into Yarmouth to try and buy a fibreglass kit to cover the inside just case, but none could be found but on the way back walking along Tar Road I saw a part full tin of pitch the electricity board used for sealing underground cable joints so back on the boat I broke up the pitch and melted it in a saucepan then pored it all in the bottom corner of the bilge. That repair lasted for the rest of the holiday, we did check for leaks on a regular basis.

To be continued.

Wishing all our social media followers a very happy and healthy New Year!

Over the Christmas and New Year period, among other stuff, we've been featuring a Grantham Canal winter scene each day. These were a mix of vintage photographs and those more recent. If we do get some proper winter weather – please get busy snapping – or we'll be featuring the same pictures again next Christmastime!

The early twentieth century wintery scene of Harlaxton Wharf being one of my favourites. The tripod on the wharf, for which to suspend weighing scales. Windows of Wharf House enabling the wharfinger to keep a beady eye on any goings on, bona fide – or otherwise! Although the canal was still operational when this picture was taken, there'd be no boat traffic until the ice melted.



The absence of menfolk in the 1917 picture, serves to remind us of troubled times. Nature's frozen gift providing a little distraction for these Kinoulton villagers.

We continue to receive some of your fabulous photographs of the canal. These are always well received by our followers, and it's a pleasure to be able to share them. Thank you!

We're always pleased to receive information about the canal for our social media, whether this is something you feel needs reporting, or something to alert others about – or a visit you've enjoyed: email: socialmedia@granthamcanal.org

Tony Jackson



The fact that one of my photos of crossing the Wash in narrowboat Meadow Pipit appeared in a recent edition of Bridge, coupled with a not-so-subtle hint from Ayup Mi Duck, has led me to think that some readers might be interested to learn more about the trip, so here goes.

Having left Newark in April and travelled through Nottingham, Leicester, Northampton, along the beautiful River Nene to Peterborough, then through the Fens to Downham Market, Cambridge and Bedford via the Great Ouse, we wanted to get back to the Midlands by a more direct route (The Wash from Wisbech to Boston).

We had heard of many people crossing the Wash from Boston to Wisbech or Kings Lynn in narrowboats, but not going our way, and by now it was getting late in the year, so we weren't sure if our crossing would be possible. We contacted Daryl (a local pilot who we were assured knows the Wash like the back of his hand) and he confirmed that it would be possible provided we got the right weather conditions. Our window of opportunity was 25 Sept to 2 October, but there had to be virtually no wind. Predictably during that week the Indian summer ended and the rain set in!

We moored in Peterborough awaiting instructions from Daryl who said Monday 30 September was looking possible but couldn't be guaranteed for the passage. We would leave from Wisbech Yacht Harbour, but as the moorings there were £25 per night he recommended we only went there the day before. We left Peterborough town centre on the Friday night (luckily for us as the river went into flood the next day) and moored at the Dog in a Doublet Lock on the way to Wisbech which allows boats through onto the tidal part of the River Nene. Our view that night was looking out at the massive sluices controlling the river levels and holding the tide back – we went to the pub for some Dutch courage!



On Sunday we were joined by another narrowboat, Olinda, making the crossing with us, and both of us locked through onto the tidal River Nene at 11.30 (30 minutes later than originally planned because, according to the Lock Keeper, it was a big tide which was being held back by the winds and a lot of water going down the river). Once on the tidal river we were carried at double quick speed by the river and ebb tide into Wisbech where we moored up at the yacht harbour and cooked Sunday lunch on board.

Then came the first excitement – an aegir (or tidal bore, depending which part of the country you come from). Low tide should have been at 2pm, but by 5pm the water level had still not started to rise. All of a sudden at 5.45pm our ropes creaked, the boat lurched, and we looked out to see a wave travelling up the river. This was the incoming tide that had been held back by the wind and the swollen river; the height of the water then rose by 15 feet in 2 hours! We were, of course, on a floating pontoon and so rose with it.

The next morning our pilot, Daryl, arrived at 7am, and at 7.30 we set off on the ebb tide; we passed some large commercial boats on



working ports (which made

Meadow Pipit feel very small). It was a spring tide, and was running fast; it was a bit unnerving to see the torrents of water gushing from flooded fields back into the river. We passed Sir Peter Scott's house, which resembled a white windmill without sails, and after a couple of hours we could see the estuary ahead; it gave us the impression we were going to sail off the edge of the earth!



To be continued next month



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Every ticket you buy before 20th March is an extra chance to win 1 of 5 special national prizes. As well as our £25,000 jackpot, you could win a fantastic Mini Bundle containing:

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or call the Lottery Team on 01476 347474



COMPUTER TECH TIPS

BY GILES (giles@jigster.com)

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



Extending your home network

The ideal location for a router is in the center of your house so that the WiFi signal radiates throughout your whole house so you get a signal in all rooms. The reality is that your phone line or cable connection is usually located at the corner of the building and therefore your router isn't ideally located.

You could get a better router with a more powerful WiFi radio signal which radiates further but these can be very expensive and if it goes wrong you'd have to replace the router yourself.

You can use a secondary router if it has an access point mode but you'd have to connect that router to your main router with a network cable. Sometimes configuring the second router to work with the main router can be a headache.

By far the easiest way to extend your network is with a powerline network extender or if you can afford it a set of mesh network devices.

A power line network extender kit will be two or more devices that plug into your mains power supply, one is plugged in near your router and is wired into one of your router's network ports, the other device is plugged in where you don't have WiFi, this remote device will radiate a secondary WiFi signal providing an internet connection where there is none.

A cheap solution is a TP-Link WiFi Powerline adapter which will help if there's a WiFi black spot in one area of your home:

TP-Link TL-WPA4220KIT 2-Port Powerline Adapter WiFi Starter Kit

The mesh network devices are quite a bit more expensive but can offer more coverage for larger homes and they fully integrate with your existing router and WiFi network so it extends your network without the need to log with another network name and password.

These are recommended mesh network products:

Linksys Velop Intelligent Whole Home Wi-Fi Mesh System

Plume Superpods

TP-Link Deco M9 Plus Mesh Wi-Fi System

ZYXEL MULTY X WHOLE HOME WI-FI MESH SYSTEM



Bob sends his greetings from Mooloolaba , a beautiful resort approx 50 miles North of Brisbane.

He's pictured here in the peak of health with his son's family. Bob mentions that there are canals locally so he's keeping his hand in!

His claim to fame! - Bodyboarding champion for the over 75's (Self appointed!)



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

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The TRUXOR swings into action again in the Lady Bay section



Arranged by “The Friends of Lady Bay Canal” with funding from various sources and working in conjunction with Canal & River Trust this initiative really does make a difference to a section of canal which was once neglected, but now looks both loved and healthy. Serco at HPP gave them great advice and a really competitive rate.

Maybe this effort will encourage other residents along the canal to take care of their respective section - every little helps - it just needs someone to show the initiative!

The Grantham Canal Society are responsible for the waterway between Woolsthorpe and the A1, approx 4 miles, but with limited resources and manpower it is not possible to maintain the full length at a standard we would all like. As the Grantham canal is a “remainder” canal the CRT are not able to fund extensive work and must prioritise their efforts in maintaining the existing cruiseways.

Ed

Community and Education Update January 2020

Happy New Year one and all.

A group of 11 from Warwickshire IWA took a walk along the canal last Sunday from Middlestile Bridge, Easthorpe Lane to Lock 18. I met them as they arrived and told them certain features to look out for and then again at Lock 15. Unfortunately, I was not able to walk with them and Tony Jackson, who was due to accompany them had succumbed to something horrid. I did, however join them at the Dirty Duck for lunch and was able to field some interesting questions. I am afraid I failed to answer the one about the gauge of the Belvoir Castle Railway. I think they enjoyed their visit despite the mud.

At the Event Planning Meeting on Thursday 23rd January at 10.00 at the Depot, we should be able to clarify some of our plans for 2020. There are so many things we could do at home and out in the Vale and beyond, but my resolution this year is to aim for what is manageable. We can manage more, or course with more help, so if you are interested by cannot get along to the meeting, please get in touch.

Rosemary communityandevents@granthamcanal.org



IAN'S POND

I added a photo of his Caraboot & young family taken in about 1980. We were moored on Tixall Wide in the days when you had a choice of mooring anywhere!

Ed

Winter warmer walk Grantham Canal

22nd December '19



Daniel Du Heume, from Canal & River Trust, organised this event which is hoped to be the first of such walks being promoted by CRT and supported by The Grantham Canal Society. These events are intended to promote interest in the canal in areas that do not see any practical activity.

GCS volunteers that attended were Tony Osbond, GCS General Manager together with Rangers Norma Varley, Tony Saward, Maggie Shirran and Steve Ball.



Below is an extract from Daniel's email to Tony Osbond

It was a brilliant walk. I saw some of the people at the pub Christmas party later that evening and everyone was talking about how much they enjoyed the walk. 2 people also told me they would be signing up for membership to the Grantham Canal society so your talk worked!

We decided that we would do a similar walk but in the summer so I will let you know the date when planned.

Daniel Du Heume

Community & youth events coordinator

M 07826 941735 E Daniel.DuHeume@canalrivertrust.org.uk

New Year Dinner

for volunteers,
supporters and partners

January 30th 2020 at
The Thatch, Bottesford
NG13 0AA

Due to limited spaces,
please contact Mary on
01476 566578
before the 21st January

ARCHIVE TRAINING UPDATE

We have just learnt that the person
who was to deliver this external
training has resigned from his post
and his replacement has yet to be
appointed.

After discussion it has been
decided that we will revisit the plan
in the Spring.

So, once again, apologies to those
of you who have registered an
interest.

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 drop in for a
chat & a cuppa around 8.30am on
any Friday or Saturday morning.

Alternatively you can always
email us

volunteer@granthamcanal.org

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

Mr J. Dodwell, Sleaford U3A
Grantham Lions