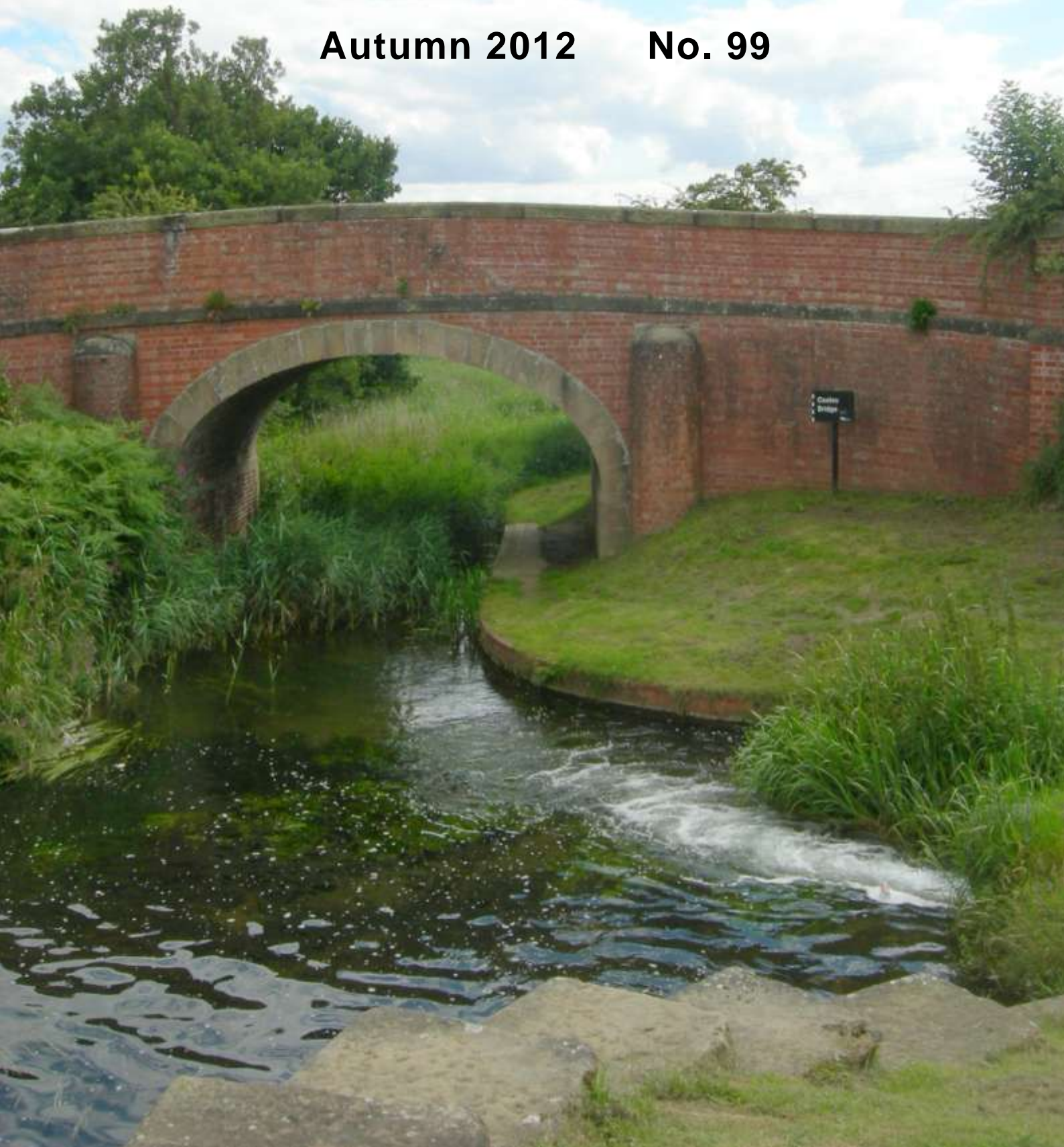


DOUBLE NINE

POCKLINGTON CANAL

AMENITY SOCIETY

Autumn 2012 No. 99



THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY

Registered Charity 500637 www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org

Patrons	The Earl of Halifax David Davis Esq MP	East Riding of Yorkshire Council Pocklington and District Civic Society
ERYC Representative	Councillor C G W Mole	
Hon Vice-President	Mrs Sheila M Nix MBE	

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Note: Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Society, unless so stated.

Editor's Notes

Double Nine number 99. More than 43 years ago in March 1969 our first issue was published. At that time the canal was all but unusable. We have some way still to go but we must also celebrate how far we have come with the help of our early and still willing volunteers.

The very first name in that inaugural edition was **Chairman: E A LOUNT Esq.** It is with great sadness we report the recent death of Eric Lount. Tributes appear elsewhere in this newsletter from those who knew him. Our Society owes so much to those pioneering committee members who set us on such an important path in saving the canal.

I again include some extracts from the archives as your feedback shows you found this interesting.

May I also thank those of you who contacted me to say they would be happy to have future newsletters by email. It really does help us keep down our printing and postage costs.

We are sorry to be losing our Treasurer and committee member Gordon Harrower who has done a great job for us over the last few years. We wish him well on his relocation and we are pleased he has converted to a life member in order to keep in touch with what is happening within PCAS. This will leave a vacancy on the committee and with the AGM not too many months away we would welcome new blood to the committee. Is this something YOU might be able to offer? Please let the Chairman or Secretary know if you are interested.

Waterways World. We are grateful for their permission to reproduce the article shown in this issue.

One of our Life Members, Michael Handford, has written a book called *The Cotswold Canals Towpath Guide: The Stroudwater Navigation*. It is available from good bookshops and direct from www.amberley-books.com or other online sellers. It is paperback and has a recommended price of £12.99.

Front cover. Coates Bridge

Back cover. nb Charlotte following *New Horizons* below Gardham Lock

Eric Lount

My first contact with Eric was in 1956, when having completed my National Service in the Royal Navy, I took up employment with a firm of Chartered Accountants in Bridlington. Eric and Doreen lived on North Marine Road in Flamborough Eric working on his Father's Farm and I was their lodger.

After some eighteen months my firm moved me on to an office in Beverley and my direct contact obviously ceased. In 1960 I came to Selby, and about that time Eric purchased Village Farm, Thornton and asked me to look after his accountancy and taxation affairs.

Some of the land Eric farmed adjoined the Pocklington Canal and he was more than upset when there was a proposal to fill in the canal with industrial waste. Not only would an irreplaceable historical unit be destroyed, but Eric was rightly concerned what effect this waste would have on the neighbouring land and in particular his. A small group of canal enthusiasts determined to block the proposal and Eric headed up the team, working enthusiastically to halt the proposed vandalism and then to restore the canal to full navigation. When PCAS was formed Eric became the founder Chairman of the society.

I have a feeling that in the light of his experiences with holiday makers on the East Coast he could see a potential source of income from those using the canal with his bank side property.

However family matters interposed and due to the declining health of his parents he decided to return to Flamborough. He settled at Westfield Farm where he led a full and active life in the village. Obviously distance from the canal precluded further active participation but I visited him regularly, still looking after his tax affairs and his interest in the Canal never abated.

His soulmate, Doreen died some thirteen years ago, and the bottom dropped out of Eric's life. His health began to fail and he really was unable to manage on his own. He eventually was admitted to a Care Home in Bridlington where he spent his final years, then to a spell in hospital eventually dying on July 31st.

The Society was well represented at the funeral at St. Oswald's, Parish Church, Flamborough on Thursday 9th August.

David Simpson

Chairman's Column

In the last edition of Double Nine, I reported that British Waterways (now Canal & River Trust) was about to submit the preliminary application for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This was duly done, and the response was favourable, giving advice on moving to the next stage, which is a Stage I application. This describes the scheme in more detail, and seeks authorisation to undertake preparatory investigations. In our case this involves commissioning consultants to prepare a more detailed plans and provide more accurate costings. The Stage I application was submitted in September, and a response is expected in November or December.

The total cost of the scheme is now estimated at £1,988,000, of which £1,645,000 or 82% is being sought as grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The society is committed to contributing £30,000. Included in the scheme are the following elements:-

- Restoration works between Melbourne and Bielby,
- Nature conservation works,
- Improvements for visitor access and interpretation,
- Heritage skills training scheme and
- Provision of education facility.

If Stage I approval is given, an estimated £167,000 will be spent on engaging consultants to produce a number of reports including:-

- a conservation management plan,
- a water resources study,
- a restoration feasibility study,
- a heritage skills accreditation scheme and
- designs for a building.

Once these are complete, the information that they contain will be used to determine the final form of the scheme, upon which the Stage II application will be based.

Concern has been expressed at the amount of money which is to be spent on commissioning surveys etc. Many, myself included, would much rather that this money should be spent on actual works. However, it seems that this is the way that grant making bodies, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, are used to working; and it is better to do things their way.

If the bid is successful, it will, of course provide a great boost for the Pocklington Canal and the work of this society. It will also mark a major change in the way that the restoration of the canal is managed. For the last 42 years, the driving force has been the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society, which has steadfastly conducted its campaign, often in a climate of opposition or indifference on the part of the actual owners of the canal. Now, the Canal & River Trust is determined to take the leading role. This is a positive development and is real progress. It will inevitably mean a changed role for the society, but we can look back and justifiably claim some credit for much of what has been achieved up to now.

New Horizons

The end of another season is fast approaching. Thanks to poor weather we got off to a bad start this year, but there have been hot sunny days and pleasant evenings too.

Our short trips on Sundays and Bank Holidays provide a good opportunity to promote longer trips and most of those who book a trip have been on the boat before. Boat trips are an important source of new members and it has been helpful to include a membership form in our leaflet about the canal. Members running the PCAS Information Centre at Canal Head tell visitors about boat trips and direct them to Melbourne. Those who have been on the boat before are doing a grand job promoting boat trips too. It is all working rather well.

It has been difficult to organise crew training this year, but Maggie West, Graham Ball and Ernie Darrell have recently completed their NCBA Complete Crew Course. Our trainer, Jess Fussey, who is based at the Waterways Museum in Goole, will offer advanced training over winter. We have a group of crew members who would like to obtain their Certificate in Community Boat Management, allowing them to take charge of boat trips.

This winter, there is no need to take the boat to Goole for major work, and routine maintenance can be done at Melbourne when weather permits. Bob Ellis will be sending all crew and invitation to come along and spruce up the boat before the start of next season. This has worked very well for the past two years.

The replacement of the visitors' mooring at Melbourne Arm, from which we run boat trips, has been delayed. So has installation of landing stages at the Storwood swing-bridges. Hopefully both jobs will be done by the Canal & River Trust over winter.

Sunday trips will restart on the first Sunday in April. If you would like to get together a group to celebrate a birthday next year you can book the trip now. If you normally go out for a meal or a drink with colleagues from work, why not do something different and arrange a boat trip and a picnic on the Pocklington Canal?

Alistair Anderson

Visit of IWA Chiltern Branch

Members of IWA Chiltern Branch, led by Colin Bird, visited the Pocklington Canal on Saturday 22 September. The Branch organises working parties on the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal and also arranges outings to canals and other venues.

Roger Bromley, who is Chairman of the IWA East Yorkshire Branch, had organised the visit but was unable to come along, so it was up to me and Graham Ball to act as hosts for the seventeen visitors. After a couple of walks on the canal we had lunch in the Melbourne Arms and then a boat trip to Gardham Lock, with some walking because we can carry only twelve passengers at a time.

After the trip we were presented with a cheque and received a round of applause.

Becoming a volunteer crew for *New Horizons*

I am a 'canal addict', having holidayed on narrow boats for over 30 years – for the last 20 or so on British canal hotel boats. I have also been visiting Pocklington Canal Head ever since it has been a picnic site. However in spite of this I did not know a trip boat cruised on Pocklington Canal until I saw a poster for the trips on a notice board in Cottingham. This was in June 2012.

With interest I looked on the website and saw volunteer crew were required, for New Horizons, and that an open trip was on the next day (a Saturday). Not having time to contact bookings, I went to Melbourne on the off chance the boat might not be fully booked. On arriving I found New Horizons on her mooring, not on the visitor mooring. Seeing someone on the boat I went on board and introduced myself. Alistair was on board and informed me the trip had been cancelled, due to lack of bookings, and he was doing initial induction with another new crew. Explaining my interest in crewing he invited me to stay, to see what went on.

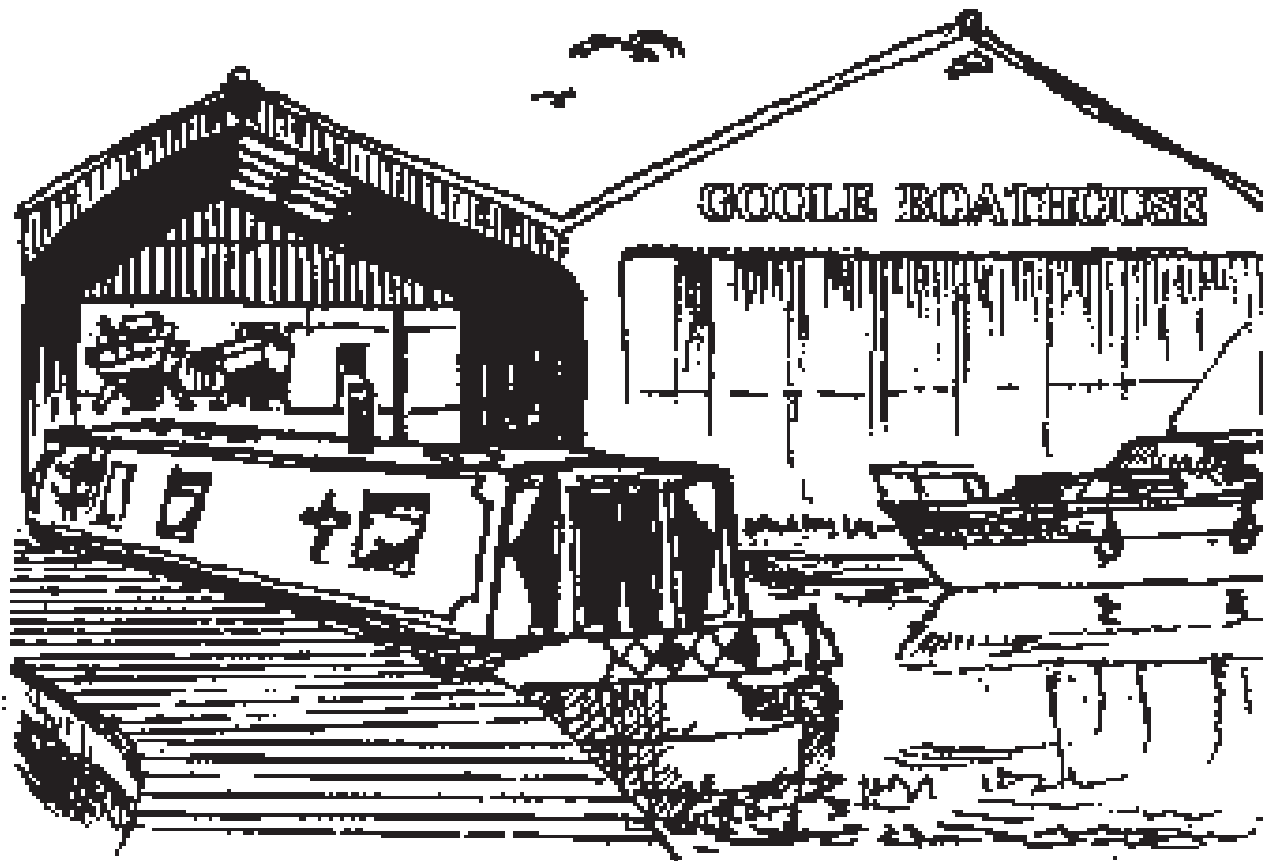
Although experienced in boat handling, locks etc and other aspects of cruising on canals, I soon realised there are many other things I would have to learn when helping operate a boat that takes the public on trips. After having a session steering the boat, and helping with mooring it up, Alistair invited me to have some induction sessions building up to, hopefully, being invited to join the list of volunteer crew. It is only when you start these induction sessions that you realise what is involved in the running of trips – opening up the boat, preparing it (checking fuel, oil, water, turning on the gas etc.), checking and putting in place the safety equipment, filling in the paper work, preparing the cabin for the passengers and, of course, knowing how to make drinks for the crew and passengers on the longer trips. Equally important being able to give the passengers the safety talk and have a knowledge of the canal, in order to answer any passenger's questions. On top of this is the operation of the swing bridges and Gardham Lock. There are many small details, so I am sure I will have missed some.

I was delighted, early in August, after several induction sessions, to be approved, by the committee, to become a competent crew. My thanks go to Alistair and the other skippers who have helped me through my induction.

The subsequent crewing, I have done, has been fully up to my expectations and I look forward to my future involvement with *New Horizons*.

Ivor Nicholson

GOOLE BOATHOUSE



MOORINGS CHANDLERY

DRY DOCK SLIPWAY

CALOR GAS DIESEL

The Timber Pond
Dutch Riverside
Goole DN14 5TB

Tel/Fax 01405 763985
www.gooleboathouse.co.uk
info@gooleboathouse.co.uk

Working Party Report

The small but loyal group of volunteers have continued to help Canal & River Trust improve the canal. The summer (what there was of it) brought out the paintbrushes to smarten up numbers 1, 2 & 7 swingbridges as well as the Thornton Lock feed.

Canal Head also has regular tidying up days although we are now seeing less litter since the provisions of the wheelie bins. Most people are now using the bins and we thank the Council for regularly emptying them.

The spoil, mostly sand and gravel which was removed from the feeder tunnel at Canal Head, has been taken to Melbourne and spread down the track to the canal. As always we could do with more volunteers. There is still so much more which can be done to further improve the canal and its surroundings. Please see if you can spend a few hours and contact Dick Watson on 01759 305025.

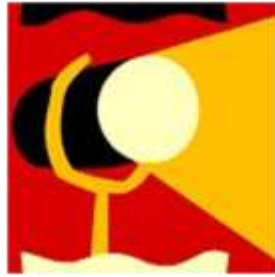
Canal Head Information Centre

Visitors to the Information Centre have varied greatly this year. Warm sunny days bring good numbers whilst the cold wet weather see very few venturing out. Sales from the 'shop' have been very slow but with the installation of a second collection box we have seen a small increase in donations. Manning the centre has fallen on the shoulders of mainly two people all the season and if we wish to keep the centre open at weekends we MUST have further help. Don't just leave it to someone else, do try to give a hand. Dick Watson is the contact.

Annual Lunch

The PCAS Annual Lunch this year is on Sunday November 25th at "THE OAKS GOLF CLUB", AUGHTON COMMON, AUGHTON, YORK, YO42 4PW at 12.30 for 1.00pm. We have received good reports about this venue where we will have a private room. Please find the enclosed menu in this issue , indicate your choices and send it to Dick Watson, 33 Browning Road, Pocklington, York YO42 2GN together with your payment. We look forward to seeing as many members as possible. We shall be holding a raffle, proceeds of which will go the Society funds. If you wish to donate a raffle prize it would be most welcome.

We hope to plan more fund raising/social events for 2013. If you have any suggestions or ideas about the type of event we can hold, please forward them to Dick or Debbie or any other Committee Member.



SPOTLIGHT ON:

Graham Ball

I was born a few weeks before the start of the 2nd World War. Living in suburban London some of my earliest memories are of the sound of anti-aircraft guns and the unmistakable sound of V1 rockets. My Father was overseas in the Army and we did not really meet up until I was 6 years old.

Schooling was basic but enjoyable although I did not excel in any respect. I failed my 11+, not once but twice, as I was young enough to take it again during my first year at secondary modern school. However, a year later I scraped through an entry exam to a secondary technical school in Acton where I spent three happy years. By the end of this time I had managed to learn how to pass exams and I spent a further two years at Acton Technical college gaining an Ordinary National Diploma in mechanical engineering.

Having been generously supported by my parents up until this point, employment was now necessary. I became a student apprentice (one of 400 apprentices of various types out of a workforce of 4000 people – how times change) with an aero engine manufacturing company, undertaking what was known as a sandwich degree course involving six months academic study at Brunel University and six months industrial training each year. After four years I graduated with a 1st class honours degree in mechanical engineering and was named student apprentice of the year.

I joined the company's research department but the work was boring, the aircraft industry had started a steep decline and the prospects did not look very encouraging. By pure chance I was introduced to the M.D. of a small medical equipment company which designed and manufactured incubators and other associated equipment for treating premature infants. Although I knew nothing about the subject, it appeared interesting and I joined the company as one of a small team of engineers. The company prospered and grew and in due course I became the Technical Manager. An additional bonus was meeting my future wife when she came to work at the company while on a 'gap' year visiting Europe from South Africa. I also had the opportunity to gain a research degree, when seconded to UCL to research potential new product areas and also to become a chartered engineer.

The majority of my career was to be spent in the medical equipment industry working for a number major companies although I also spent four years running a design consultancy and five years as a senior lecturer at a university. For the last fifteen

years I ran my own business manufacturing alternating pressure mattresses for preventing and/or treating pressure sores.

Having sold the business and moved to Pocklington in 2010 for family reasons, I looked around for local leisure opportunities. PCAS seemed an obvious choice. I had joined the Society some years before, having met Sheila Nix while on a Sunday afternoon towpath walk. I had even attended two AGMs while holidaying in the area but otherwise made no active contribution. My knowledge and experience of canals was limited. As a child I had fished, illegally, in the Grand Union and Basingstoke canals using homemade rods and much later had spent a very enjoyable family holiday on part of the Cheshire Ring canals. Other than some experience of dingy sailing and crewing on friends yachts in the Solent that formed the sum total of my practical knowledge. However, I had always had a general fascination with canals and their part in our industrial heritage.

Attending the 2011 AGM I was very pleased to respond to the appeal for new trainee crew for New Horizon and have been an enthusiastic crew member ever since. During the winter I assisted in the boat maintenance programme at Goole and in addition joined the PCAS Working Party trimming trees and other vegetation along the towpath, painting bridges and helping to improve the canal environment. Just as satisfying and important as crewing the boat. Being co-opted onto the PCAS committee last year gave me a greater insight to the problems and opportunities open to the Society. Now, with the CRT bid for new funding we have the prospect of a new chapter opening up for the canal. I look forward to participating in what could be a very exiting period in the canals history.

PCAS Clothing

Following the closure of our previous supplier of PCAS branded clothing, we have secured supplies from Linela Embroidery Ltd, Unit 1 Tomorosa, Awkley Lane, Olveston, Bristol BS35 4EW or email elaine@linelaembroidery.com

Delivered prices are as follows.

T shirts	£7.50
Polos	£10.00
Sweatshirts	£15.00
Fleeces	£18.00
Caps	£6.00

Please state your colour requirement with your order.

Membership renewals

A number of memberships will be due for renewal on January 1st 2013. If yours is due why not set up a standing order to make it easier to renew? It also helps us keep down costs and workload.

From the Archives

From September 1972 issue.

DIFFICULTIES FOR RALLY

The Society first arranged a Rally at Cottingwith to comply with the authorities' request to us to encourage widespread interest and use of the Canal, and on the expectation that dredging and other work would have begun. In July we went ahead with our Rally at Cottingwith, as planned, after undertaking some emergency clearing at our own expense. But the deplorable conditions for navigation resulting from the delay caused many boats to stay away.

This issue also contained a small article welcoming a new publication called *Waterways World*. This was available at 75 pence for three issues!

Thirty years ago in September 1982 edition we reported that the Canal Head Warehouse had been 'sympathetically restored and converted into a dwelling house' by Mr Garland and had been sold by Hepper Watsons Estate Agents.

Only (!) twenty years ago we reported about Proposals For Baldwins Bridge. When it was rebuilt as a fixed bridge in 1981 (due to lack of funds to make it a swingbridge) it was built by using timber beams to span the canal. These had become unsafe and BW had closed the bridge to vehicles. The proposal was to rebuild the bridge and raise it to give more headroom to boats.

As we know, five extra courses of bricks were added to give us the bridge we see nowadays.

Inland Waterways Association East Yorkshire Branch Forthcoming Events

All meetings held at the Methodist Church Hall, Cottingham HU16 4BD 8.00pm

Friday November 16th. The Story of the River Foss Society.

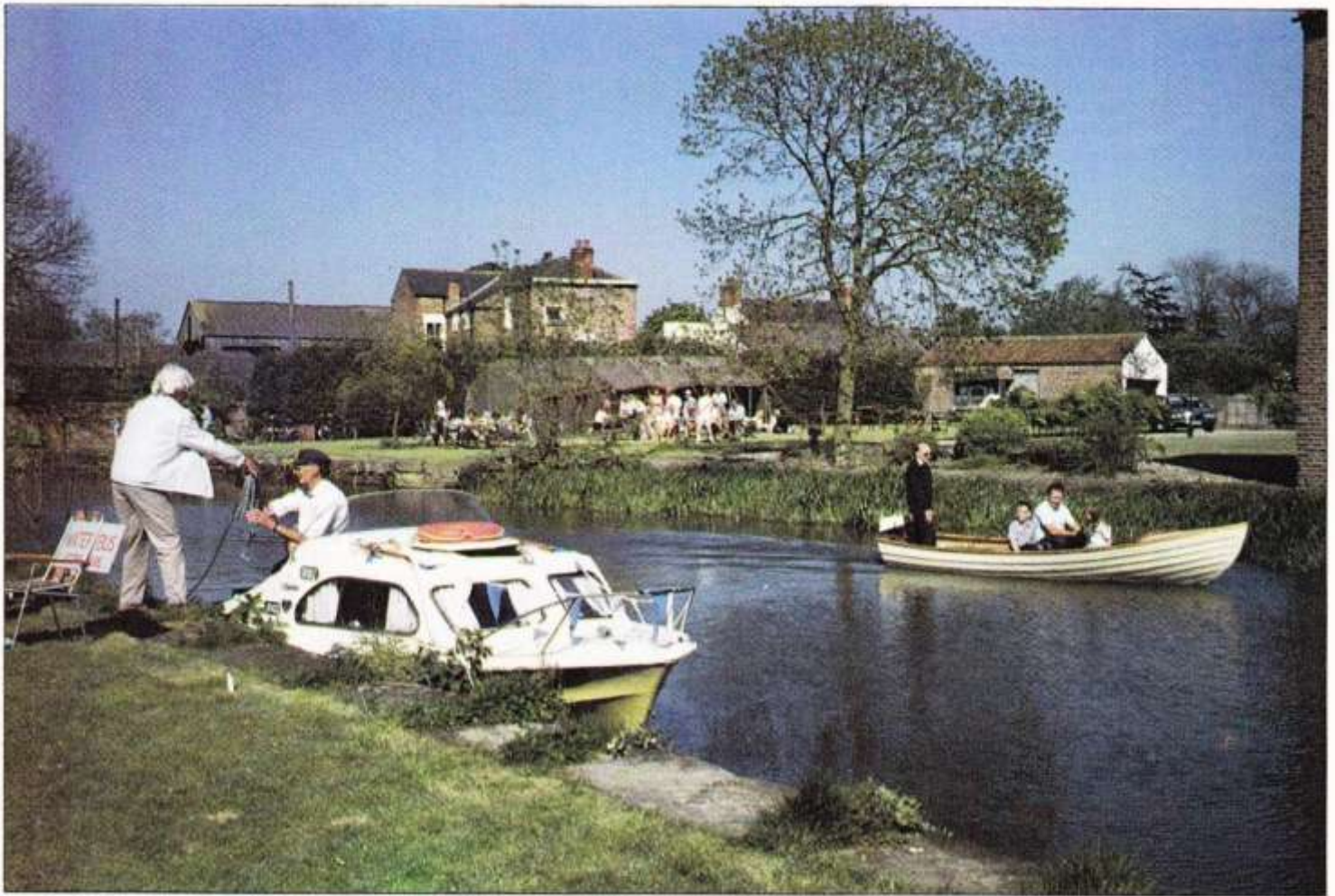
Presented by John Millet and Peter Hopwood

Friday January 18th All You Need To Know About Locks

Presented by Paul Waddington

The IWA Annual Lunch will be at the Cottingham Parks Golf Club HU16 5SW on Sunday 2nd December at 12.00 for 12.30. Non members welcome, please contact Chris Stones on 01482 875894 for details

Two Nines are Twenty-one



The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society celebrates its 21st Birthday this month

One Autumn day in 1968, Eric Lount was pursuing his farming career on land that he owned alongside the derelict Pocklington Canal in the East Riding of Yorkshire. He noticed that an unfamiliar car was parked near the severely humped and very elegant bridge that crossed the canal. On closer examination he noticed that there was a sticker in the back window of the car advertising Operation Ashton. The car belonged to a canal enthusiast named Malcolm Harrington who had travelled from the Midlands to explore a little known remainder waterway. Eric and Malcolm got talking and it was out of this conversation which took place on Church Bridge that the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society was formed.

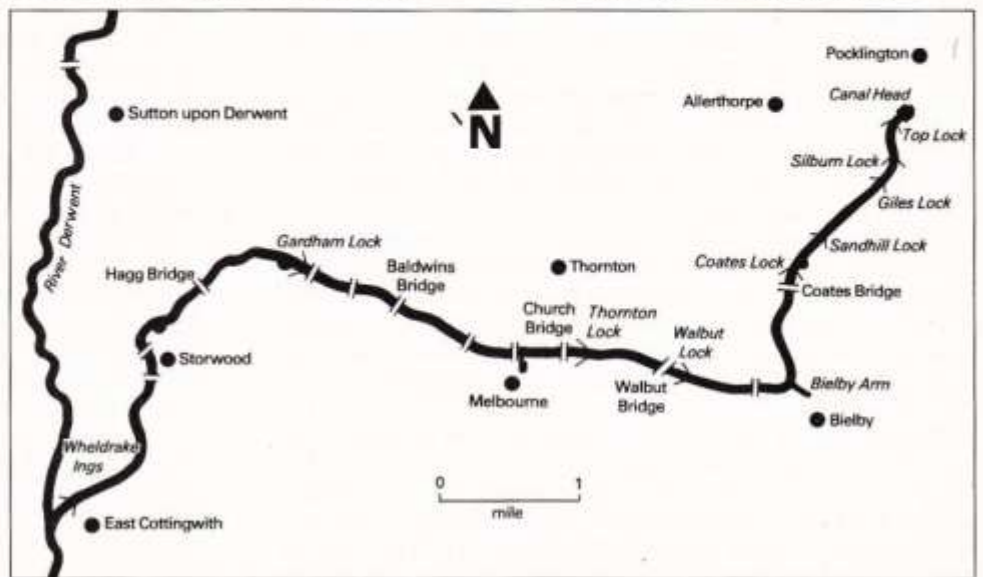
Eric Lount owned land on either side of the canal which at that time was

almost dry and choked with reeds. Although he did not know a great deal about canals he did know that some were being restored and had often wondered whether the Pocklington Canal would be returned to its former glory.

Malcolm Harrington knew a good deal about canals and was a keen supporter of restoration. He suggested that David

Tomlinson, who had been busy restoring the sixteen locks of the Stourbridge Canal, was the person to advise on what could be done. Malcolm also introduced Eric to the Inland Waterways Association who came up with the name of Sheila Nix as someone who might help to get things moving.

A meeting was convened at Eric



Lount's home and later a public meeting was held in Pocklington. The decision was taken to form a society and Eric Lount became Chairman. Sheila Nix was elected Joint Secretary, Malcolm Harrington took the job of Magazine Editor and David Tomlinson became the Working Party Organiser. Twenty-one years later Sheila Nix is still the Secretary and David Tomlinson is the Treasurer.

Since the formation of the Society, much has been achieved. The threat of the canal being abandoned and being used as a tip no longer exists. Two of the nine locks have been fully restored and seven of the eight swingbridges have been rebuilt. Half the canal is now navigable and a further mile will be opened in 1990 when new gates are installed at Thornton Lock. Work is progressing on further locks and there is every confidence that restoration will be complete by the year 2000.

Working parties have always featured prominently in the Society. In the early years there was considerable support from local farmers and they used to turn up in numbers with their tractors to grub up tree stumps and pull other obstructions from the canal bed. One farmer had the idea that a slurry pump was the best tool to clear silt from lock chambers and this technique was successfully used at two locks. Later work shifted to the slightly more skilled area of repairing and repointing the brickwork of bridges and lock structures.

Also during the early years funds were attracted from the then East Riding County Council and this enabled two locks and four swingbridges to be reopened and by 1975 more than three miles of canal had been reopened. However, this source of funding dried up and it was necessary to revert again to volunteers. Number five swingbridge was the task in hand and it was decided to replace it with a high level bridge which was done during the winter of 1981. In later years Community Programme Workers were able to do some of the work and the Society directed its attention to fund raising so that the necessary materials could be purchased.

In the last three years, there has been a shift back to volunteer labour. A Waterway Recovery Group Canal Camp took place in 1987 which cleared out the chamber of Top Lock. Working parties now take place twice a month and are mostly concerned with the rebuilding or repairing of locks.

One of the first actions of the Society was to publish a magazine called *Double Nine* which took its name from the nine locks and nine miles of the canal. In 21 years, there have been 60 editions of the



Left – Boat trips were offered to the public at the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society's Open Day at Canal Head in May 1989.

Above – The unique Pocklington Canal gate paddle gear seen at Walbut Lock in June 1978.

Below – Volunteers carry out repairs to the upper gate recess at Top Lock on the Pocklington Canal.



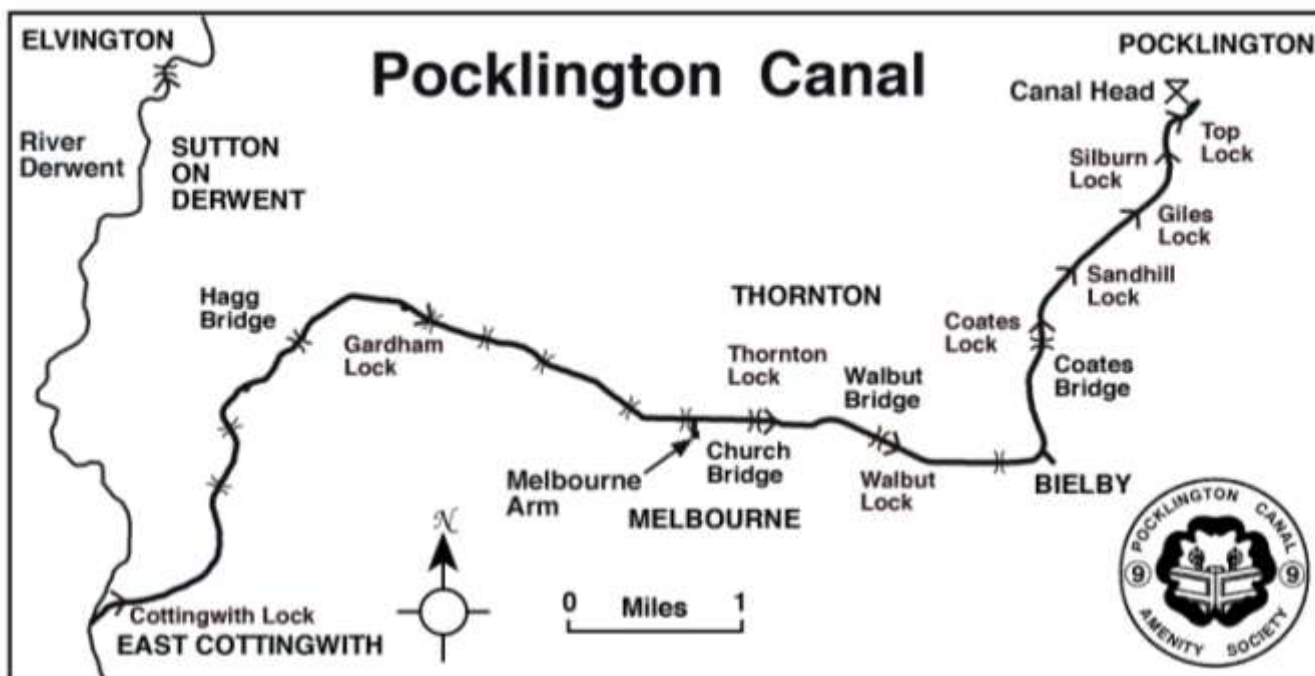
magazine. Another early move was to establish a sales stall which has been taken to waterway rallies as well as local fêtes and galas. The amount of money raised by this method now exceeds £10,000. Numerous social events have been organised over the years, most notably barbeques, open days, parades, lunches and public meetings. Membership has generally been around 300 with support coming both from local residents and supporters living further afield.

The Twenty First Birthday is being

celebrated with a dinner on 23rd June. At the same time a recruitment drive is being pursued with the object of increasing the membership to 600. Also a Twenty First Birthday Appeal has been launched with a view to raising £50,000 for the restoration of Walbut Lock.

The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society has been very active for the last 21 years. It is set to become even more vigorous now that it has come of age.

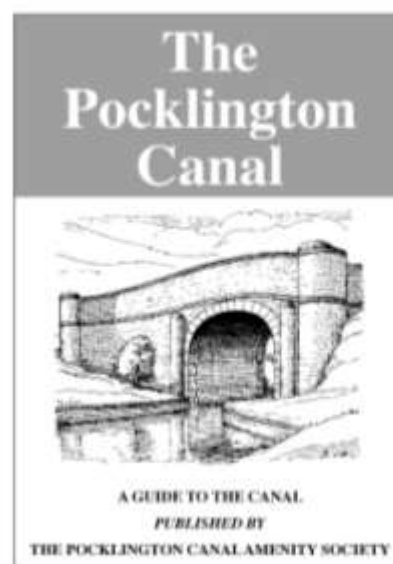
Information about PCAS is available from the Honorary Secretary, 74 Westminster Road, York YO3 6LY. 🐾



GUIDE TO THE POCKLINGTON CANAL – £3.50

This PCAS guide was revised in 2008 and includes a wealth of information about the canal and surrounding area, its history, geography, restoration and wildlife, with general maps of the area and strip maps of the canal from the Derwent to Canal Head. The guide also contains attractive line drawings and an up-to-date list of useful telephone numbers and addresses.

The Guide is available from W & C Forth, Printers and Stationers, 13 Waterloo Lane, Pocklington. Please contact the PCAS Secretary to order a copy by post (cost £4 including postage). The Guide is also available from the PCAS Information Centre and from our tripboat.



MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership subscriptions now run for 12 months from the date of joining PCAS. Please pay your subscription if it is due. If you pay by Standing Order, please update your payment as shown below.

Membership subscriptions – from 2012

	Annual	Life
Junior (up to 18)	£5	-
Individual	£10	£100
Individual – over 60	£10	£60
Family	£15	£150
Family Concession	-	£90

