

**DOUBLE NINE**  
THE  
POCKLINGTON CANAL  
AMENITY SOCIETY



**MAGAZINE**

NOVEMBER 1988

No. 56

# THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY



Registered Charity 500617

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Note: Opinions expressed by contributors to this magazine are not necessarily those of the Society unless so stated.

# ***EDITORIAL COMMENT***

## RESTORATION PROGRESSES WELL

All in all it has been a good summer - apart from the weather that is! - with steady progress by our volunteers at Top Lock. The MSC schemes have now finished but their good work on restoring Thornton Lock chamber looks set to continue under the new Employment Training scheme. At Canal Head the access road and the car park have both had a fresh spread of gravel which has reduced the potholes and improved appearance generally. The Borough Council continue to cut the grass there, a most valuable contribution to this popular area.

## THE PCAS INFORMATION CENTRE

This year we have managed to staff the Information Centre at Canal Head virtually every Sunday from May to October and we have had a constant stream of visitors. Information is available on all the local waterways, on wild life, fishing and boating etc, also a range of inexpensive books and items for children, canal gifts etc. Canned drinks and chocolate bars have been popular and, next season, we expect to stock British Waterways fishing permits. In between customers the Centre helpers have planted more bulbs, flowers such as foxgloves and suitable small shrubs. They also empty the public litter bins each week!

## FUND-RAISING RESPONSE

The last issue of 'Double Nine' had much to say about the urgent need to raise funds - for Top Lock bricks and for new gates in due course for Thornton Lock. The response has been generous, both in donations and in items for sale. The more items that are given the less we have to rely on buying in stock and this has enabled the Sales Stall to make some really good profits recently. More details on this appear later in the magazine. But we must stress that the need is as great as ever! And, when seeking for grants, we are likely to do better if the Society is seen to be raising funds actively itself.

BRINGING IN MORE MEMBERS

The Canal Society has a loyal and generous body of members, both locally and all around the country and a number overseas. But, if we are to forge ahead with all the exciting plans for further restoration and improvement on the canal, we ought to be bringing in far more new members to share in all our activities. New houses are mushrooming in Pocklington, Melbourne and the nearby villages. We need to attract many more of their occupants to discover the canal and to give it their active support.

CAR PARKING

There are moves on the part of the Board and the Local Authority to increase car parking near the canal. The Society committee, discussing this, felt strongly that any extension of the parking space at Canal Head would be intrusive and spoil the attraction of the area it is intended to serve. Many visitors we have spoken to about this have agreed. We have written to the Board to put our view. There are other popular access points to the canal where limited parking provision might well be appropriate. But we feel strongly that great care is needed to preserve the relative peace and quiet which is what most of us value when we visit the canal.

LET US HAVE YOUR VIEWS!

It is a long time since we received any 'Letters to the Editor'! Have YOU any views on these matters, or on anything else to do with the canal or the Amenity Society? We really would welcome your comments. It's your Society as much as ours. We need your ideas!



COPIES OF 'DOUBLE NINE' NO. 54 WANTED!

'99' issue No. 54, with bright golden yellow cover, November '87. If you have a copy you no longer want please could you let us have it. We seem to have used all the spare copies and have none left for the records. Thank you in anticipation.

## FUTURE PLANS FOR THE CANAL

### Mostly Engineering -

The Society has recently met representatives of British Waterways, the MSC and East Yorkshire Borough Council to discuss the change-over from MSC to Employment Training, particularly at Thornton Lock. Peter Barnes said he was not too worried about a completion date for Top Lock but he was concerned that it should look good when finished. Obviously we want to complete it as quickly as possible. Mr. Barnes also voiced his hopes of finding means to copy the original (unique) wheel paddle gear for use on the rebuilt locks. We need to find the best way to mould copies. Alex Thomson and PRW are investigating but suggestions are welcome. Mr. Thomson is also checking prices etc for Thornton gates. Parking, refuse disposal, fouling by dogs were other topics discussed.

## SITE MEETING WITH THE NCC

### Regular Management

During September the Board and the Society also met three top officials of the Nature Conservancy Council. After assembling at Canal Head and discussing the restoration in general we walked down as far as the third lock. It was encouraging to hear the view of the NCC officials that



PICNICKERS AT CANAL HEAD

a certain amount of regular management was essential if the canal was not to deteriorate and become permanently choked. They agreed with the Board and ourselves that controlled dredging was the only practical method of reducing the vast growth of reed sweet-grass and similar invasive species so as to provide more open water and encourage a better variety of plants. These in turn would support more fish and other aquatic creatures large and small.

### Controlled Dredging

Dredging will be from the towpath side and a margin of growth at the far side will be left untouched. The NCC were keen that dredging spoil should not be put on the towpath. The Board are to look into possible alternatives. The NCC may be able to help with this. Back at Canal Head it was agreed that where there are picnic seats etc we should clear the canal margin so that there is a view of the water. This summer the whole of the margins have been left uncut with the result that, unless you stand very tall, you cannot see the canal at all in this area!

### EYE Award Application

Since the meeting the society have had official approval from the NCC for their application for an EYE award. This is an award from the 'European Year of the Environment', and NCC approval is the first step.



TOP LOCK - REBUILDING THE WING WALL

## RESTORATION

Work to restore the canal is taking place at two locations. At Thornton Lock, an Employment Training Scheme has taken over from the Community Programme. The lock chamber is being rebuilt in new engineering brick to match as nearly as possible to the old brickwork. The vertical rubbing timbers, which are a feature of the locks on the Pocklington Canal, are being reinstated and these will do much to preserve the character of the canal. Work is progressing at a faster pace now and the lock is expected to be completed by the Spring of 1989.

At the same time, the Society's own efforts are concentrated at Top Lock. Since the chamber was cleared last year during the W.R.G. canal camp, regular monthly working parties have taken place repairing wing walls and gate recesses. The top wing walls and gate recesses were sound below the water level and only rebuilding above this level was necessary. This work was completed quite quickly. At the lower end, one of the wing walls was fairly sound and only requires patchwork repairs. The other wing wall was in a bad state and required complete reconstruction. Approximately half the work on this wing wall has been done and the remainder should be completed by the end of the year.

So far, all work at Top Lock has been done using sound bricks which were recovered from the lock chamber. However, these will soon be exhausted and new engineering bricks will be used in the main part of the chamber. This means that we shall shortly have to lay out some money - something that we have been able to avoid for the last year.

Working parties take place on the second Sunday of each month starting at 10.00 a.m. In recent months, we have had help from Northumbria I.W.A. and Leeds University Canals Society as well as David Higgins Youth Group from Leeds. All these people travel considerable distances and the Society is grateful to them. At the same time, the number of local members at working parties has been small with the same few people turning up each month. If you are young, fit or able bodied, your help would be much appreciated. If you have any experience of laying bricks, that would be particularly useful. Whatever your skills, do think about coming along. The next dates are:-

November 13th, December 11th, January 8th, February 12th, March 12th.

If there is a large amount of support, we will arrange some extra dates. If you have any doubts or queries, do not hesitate to contact Paul Waddington (Tel: 0472 352936).

## POCKLINGTON AND DISTRICT ARTS FESTIVAL 1989

### - THE CANAL SOCIETY HOPE TO TAKE PART

There are plans for another Arts Festival in Pocklington next year, to run from 20th May to 10th June and it is hoped to involve as many groups and individuals as possible throughout the western part of the Borough. East Yorkshire Borough Council is giving its full support and encouragement.

As well as various artistic and craft initiatives the Festival also aims 'to encourage an awareness of our heritage and natural history in an area of great natural beauty' and 'to explore the potential of future development from social (i.e. community) and economic (i.e. tourism) angles'.

PCAS plan to enter a large model narrowboat in the Festival Parade and we have already been offered expert help in constructing this. We hope it will be made so that it can be stored and used again at other events. Still at the discussion stage are plans to include our usual May or June Barbecue at Canal Head as part of the Festival programme. We have thoughts of a Canal Open Day and have suggested to the Festival Committee that the Canal Head area might be used as a venue for other Festival events. All this is still very much at the planning stage and any bright ideas would be welcome.

No doubt the Festival organisers would also welcome fresh ideas and suggestions and offers of help for the Festival generally. The Festival Chairman is Mark Rowe, 61 London Street, Pocklington, telephone: Pocklington 302384. Mrs Doreen Morgan of the Civic Society is dealing with 'General and Fringe items' and can be contacted on Pocklington 303148.



### THE LAST OF THE SUMMER WINE - POCKLINGTON VINTAGE!

Mr. Charles Ross, Mr Joe Shaw and Mr Dick Ward are famous in Pocklington for their resemblance to 'Last of the Summer Wine' characters Compo, Foggy and Clegg. Dick, aged 81, ex-sailor Joe, 82 and retired bus driver Charles meet each morning and go walking. All the time they are walking they are picking up rings off drink cans for PCAS. Mr Dick Ward has a special interest in the Canal restoration because he lived as a lad at the Cross Keys at Melbourne and remembers coal being off-loaded from barges there.



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

I am pleased that I am able to report an almost paid-up membership for the year, in fact only ten memberships are now outstanding which means I've only got ten cardboard letters to write!

Also very pleasing is that we have had more people joining the Society and more life-members; all this is happening after twenty years of the Society's existence which means that people DO want to see the Canal in use and not left as a weed-ridden ditch.

To members who have Bankers' Orders, please remember to upgrade them to £2 as from January.

Thank you ALL for prompt payment and donations and I look forward to receiving your letters, etc., with your membership fees, in January.

R. O'Kelly  
Membership Secretary

P.S. An extract from one of our latest new members' letters:-  
"I had not seen the Canal since 1925 and I was really sad to see how choked it was with weed."



LIVE SHOW: 'Sommer Wine' characters Mr Joe Shaw, left, Mr Dick Ward, centre, and Mr Charlie Ross share a joke.



CANAL BELOW TOP LOCK by Mary Credland

DONATIONS FOR TALKS

Our thanks once again to York member John Peck for several donations to funds resulting from his slide/talks on the canal. We have also received donations from Everingham Countrywomen's Association and Brough Social Club after talks by SMN.

BRICKS

Following our appeal for bricks we have had welcome contributions from Miss F. Waight and from Mr Norman Dean, also from Mr J. Atkinson, Managing Director of 'Selecthaven' Builders of Pocklington, who also gave us a generous cash donation. The Society is most grateful.

## THE SOCIETY SALES STALL THIS SEASON

We have taken the Society Sales Stall to a number of new events this summer as well as to several popular 'regulars'. Most have proved very successful, not least because of the magnificent response to our appeal to readers of '99' to give us lots of things to sell! You really did come up with a wonderful variety of items, for which our grateful thanks.

### Rallies

The first proper outing was to the Kyme Eau Rally over the May Bank Holiday weekend, organised by the Sleaford Navigation Society and the Lincs and South Humberside Branch of the IWA at South Kyme. Then came the big IWA/Chesterfield Canal Society's Workshop Water Festival at the end of June. Over the two days there, with the Stall and the Tombola, we took a total of £175.50. Nearer home DNAA invited us again to their Gala at Driffield River Head where we had an enjoyable and successful afternoon. This was followed by Barmby Feast and Melbourne Sports, also Shiptonthorpe Sports, all the same weekend! All very good. They were July 16th and 17th.

### Charity Stalls

Not much let-up now, for on July 19th we had the Charity Stall at Pocklington Market. We had made a special appeal for goods for this new venture and members and friends turned up all through the morning with contributions. Some were too good to sell there and then so we took these home to price properly and sell to better advantage later. The day's takings came to £172, virtually all profit. Bishop Wilton Show was as enjoyable as usual but financially disappointing. Perhaps the trade stalls are sited too far from the main events.

7.30 a.m. on July 27th saw us setting out our goods on the Charity Stall at Bridlington Market which we have attended for several years now. Again our £182 takings were almost entirely profit, this time mostly from clothes and other second-hand items, plus jam and chutney and some bric-a-brac (we do try to keep them separate!).

### Best British Weather

Most of our outings are outside stands with our tent as wet-weather backup. But we spent what must have been the hottest, sunniest weekend of the year well and truly inside a large marquee at the Hull Regatta! The £175 proceeds made it well worth while and all the helpers managed to escape now and then to see the huge variety of craft, many with sails, on

the Humber. In contrast we ended the season with a trip to the Kirklees Water Festival at Huddersfield in September. The rain began as we approached Leeds and became steadily heavier all the way. It never let up at all. Very disappointing for the organisers for, understandably, very few public came. We had about £8 in the kitty after paying our site rent, plus £29 from the Tombola. We gather they had a better day on the Sunday but we spent our Sunday at our Information Centre. (More about this on another page.) We also had a good afternoon at Burnby Hall Gardens Rotary Garden Party.

### Next Season

Taking the Stall out and about is well worth while and very enjoyable, but it is also hard work and quite time-consuming! We would welcome some more helpers! In the confident belief that some of you will volunteer to swell the team, we are already booking up for 1989. So do please give it some thought. And meanwhile a very big THANK YOU to all the many of you who have made the whole enterprise possible by your gifts. Please keep them coming!

SMN



### JUNE 4th BARBECUE AT CANAL HEAD

Probably our best yet, with fair weather and plenty of 'customers'. It was good to see some newcomers mingling with the 'regulars'. Our thanks to Mr and Mrs Price for allowing us to use their garden once again, also to them and to Mrs Herd for backup from their kitchens. The raffle made £25 and profits on the evening finally amounted to £72. We even took £28 on an impromptu sales stall.

### MELBOURNE ARM BARBECUE JULY 29th

a joint event with the IWA and everyone brought their own main course to cook while the organisers provided salads, rolls, drinks etc. Again a very successful evening. The moorings made an excellent site - our thanks to BWB. The canal looked beautiful as some of us ended the evening drinking coffee on one of the boats with the afterglow reflected in the still water.

OTHER MONEY-SPINNERS - PLEASE GO ON HELPING!

Taking the Sales Stall to rallies and similar events is obviously an important way of raising sizeable sums of money. But all through the year the aluminium foil, second-hand books, bric-a-brac etc. which various members collect for us bring in a steady income which tots up to a useful total. THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH!

Drink cans (as well as pull-rings) are saleable if they are aluminium. Jewellery, gold, silver, brass (and diamonds of course!) are always in demand. Old tins, especially if they are decorated with pictures or slogans, are valuable. We recently got £10 for a 1930's Silver Jubilee one. So have a rout round and see what you can find!

Paperbacks, especially the fat ones, and hardbacks with coloured illustrations sell well. The older Dinky toys, Meccano, Hornby, lead soldiers etc. are in demand, also old medals, badges etc, especially service ones. And we can always use jumble or nearly new clothes.

All these and much more can be sold through the year as we receive them. so, if YOU don't want them any more, please consider letting US have them to make some more money for the canal restoration!

P.S. Anything suitable for gifts would also be welcome for the Sales Stall at the November 20th Lunch, also jams, chutney, cakes etc.

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## THE INFORMATION CENTRE AT CANAL HEAD

In 1987 we managed to open the Society's Information Centre on seven or eight weekends. This year it has been open regularly every Sunday from the beginning of May until the middle of October, except for two occasions when no help was available.

### Information

Originally the Society planned to provide guides, booklets and leaflets in addition to the general display of pictures etc. This year, in addition to these items, the Centre has also stocked small toys, gifts and tea towels for sale. We have also greatly increased our selection of books, catering for adults and for children. All these have proved very popular.

### Refreshments

When the Centre was first opened the Society were asked by British Waterways not to sell teas, so as not to cut across the trade of the Granary Restaurant run by Mr. Latus at the Lock House nearby. The Granary is a private venture and contributes nothing, as far as we are aware, to Canal Society funds. So far we have not sold teas. But the Granary appears to have ceased trading at present and - following public demand - this season we have begun to stock canned drinks and chocolate bars.

### Income

Including Canal Guides, toys and refreshments etc, the Centre has brought in a useful income this year amounting in all to almost £300. Not all profit, of course, but very useful all the same.

### Meeting Members and Visitors

Perhaps more important than the sales, however, is the opportunity provided by the Centre to meet and talk to so many members and visitors about the Canal and the work being done to restore and maintain it.

## Staffing the Centre

If we had more helpers we could open oftener and relieve the burden on the few. That the Information Centre has been open each Sunday this season is due almost entirely to one member, Sylvia Fawcett. Sylvia has come over from Pocklington each Sunday early, set out the stock and stayed till teatime, then cleared it all up again ready to take back home till next time. This is necessary as, even in the summer (when there is any!) anything left in the shed soon gets damp - or sought after by the local mice! Mr and Mrs Fielding from Walkington have come to help several Sundays and others of us come out as often as possible. But we DO need more help for next season. Clearly it isn't fair to expect any one person to give up every Sunday without a break! So please let one of us know if you could help occasionally next season.



OUTSIDE THE INFORMATION CENTRE

## THE CANAL IS NOW THE RIGHT WAY ROUND!

The free standing information panel map of the canal at Canal Head which puzzled many visitors because it appeared to have the canal running the wrong way has now been relocated on the opposite side of the path. So now the route can be traced the way it actually goes! Thanks to the MSC.

ODE TO POCKLINGTON CANAL

by Katherine Wilson

The situation is getting stranger,  
They are putting the Canal in danger,  
Talking, coaxing, planning too,  
All the things they mean to do.  
Threatening compulsory powers  
But they forget the land is ours,  
Held in trust throughout the years,  
Neglected, loved, inspite of fears,  
That progress in the guise of man  
Would come up with a splendid plan,  
To fence it off, and then, the shame,  
To use it as an open drain!  
To put this sore upon the land,  
Is vandalism out of hand!  
How could they know, that think this right  
Its beauty on a summer night.  
Along the water, swans glide by  
The stars reflected from the sky,  
The king-cups in the reedy grass,  
Swaying as the curlews pass.  
Men can fish and children swim  
And people stroll there, at a whim  
Such peace you'll not find in a city,  
That's why I think it's such a pity  
Men should war, yet could contrive  
To keep the Waterways alive.  
To serve again as in the past,  
Useful, tranquil, safe at last.

Miss KATHERINE WILSON lived at Home Farm, Melbourne, and her land extended down to the Canal. In 1959/60 she took an active part in opposing the threatened use of the Canal by Sheffield Corporation as a linear dump for treated sewage sludge. Only the strenuous efforts of a number of such local people, and waterway groups alerted by them, saved the Canal. Miss Wilson was an enthusiastic founder member of PCAS when it was formed in 1968/69. She died in 1986.





#### CANAL SEAT IN MEMORY OF MARK ROBINSON

Mark Robinson was killed in a road accident whilst returning home from Yorkshire Water's Open Fun Day at their Elvington plant in the summer. His friends asked if they could provide a seat in his memory beside the Melbourne Arm where he used to fish with them. A handsome bench seat has now been installed near the swing bridge at the end of the Arm looking up the canal towards Church Bridge.

#### DEATH OF NIGEL JOHNSON

We are sad to record the death in an accident at work of Nigel Johnson. Nigel, who lived in Shrewsbury and was Working Party Organiser for the Shropshire Union Canal Society, joined PCAS in 1979. He had always been interested in the Pocklington Canal. His Mother has sent us a donation of £60 in his memory for which we are most grateful.

## CANAL COUNTRY HOLIDAY

In June we spent a week at Lavendon Grange, a mile from the village of Olney, famous for its Pancake Race. In this area we were truly in 'Canal Country' and a visit to Stoke Bruerne was a 'must'. Locking through was the narrowboat 'Tarpoley', carrying a community group. The boat was manned by a young couple who lived on it with their small child. Also locking through who should we see but 'Brahms', a narrowboat that was at our Melbourne Rally in 1987! We had a word with its skipper, Mr Bleasdale. We also saw another narrowboat which rejoiced in the name of 'Bumble-Chugger'! - also the Micron Theatre boat. We caught part of their performance that evening at a canalside pub garden near Milton Keynes. They were performing their new play 'Rise and Fall', which tells the story behind the building of the first canal boatlifts in the world, in England, France, Belgium and Canada.

The friends we were staying with kindly motored us round to different spots on the Grand Union Canal. They also took us to see the Iron Trunk Aqueduct at Wolverton, built in 1909, which carries the Grand Union Canal eighty feet above the Great Ouse river in the north of Milton Keynes.

'Non-canal' places we visited included Woburn Abbey, Cricheley Hall (an early Georgian house with fine panelling, naval pictures and mementos of Admiral Lord Beatty who bought the house for his son), also the lovely and interesting village of Sharnbrook with its beautiful old-world gardens and a gift shop whose owner knew Pocklington! We also went to Buckingham and Banbury, to see the Cross, but of course not the original one sadly.

We had been told to watch out for some concrete cows but they had wandered off and could not be found. But we did manage to buy a postcard of them!

We tried to visit Bradwell Windmill (in Milton Keynes) but couldn't find a way to it. It looked very fine after being restored. Built in 1816 it had become dilapidated but the building and the machinery have been restored recently.

We think you will agree we managed to pack quite a lot into one short week, and there was much we hadn't time to see. But it was a truly fascinating and interesting week and - wait for it - we happened to pick the only fine week. Not a drop of rain fell!

M. O'Kelly, July 1988

## CANAL RECOLLECTIONS REVIVED

Margaret and Raymond O'Kelly report :

"In mid-August we were pleased to receive a letter from Mr G. WILF CAINS of Market Weighton, saying he wished to join membership of the Society. He went on to say:

"The first twenty years of my life were spent at Prospect House, Canal Head, where my parents lived. After that I came into the Market Weighton area and married. Many happy times were spent along the canal and down the green lane close by. Many young people came at the weekends to swim at the second lock. Until last year I had not seen the canal since 1925 and I was really sad to see how choked it was with weed. I was pleased to see the old flax mill now a dwelling place and the old farm yard etc looking so nice. Mr. Walsh and Miss Fenny Walsh had the farm when I knew it so well."

Upon receiving this letter Ray and Margaret O'Kelly and Sheila Nix arranged to visit Mr Cains and spent a very pleasant and interesting afternoon with him in his lovely bungalow and garden. He recalled many memories of the old days and of how his grandfather had the Devonshire Mill which was then in full working order, of course. He recalled how, in hard winters, it was possible to skate on the frozen canal. The only activity as regards boats that he can remember is Mr Hutchinson from the Lock House once using a horse to draw a small boat up.

He and Margaret were also able to relive a few memories as their respective families knew each other well all those years ago. So there was a lot of reminiscing and catching up to do, as you can imagine. So, thank you, Mr Cains. And we hope you will be able to visit other parts of the canal in the near future with friends or relatives who can provide the transport, and that you will see the new moorings and improvements at Melbourne which we told you about. Thank you again, Wilf, for your interest and for giving us the pleasure of meeting you.

M. and R. O'K.

## OLD ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS WANTED

Have you any of the older Ordnance Survey Maps that you no longer want? If so, please let us have them. They are required for tracing the tracks of old railways - and canals. Any part of the country, not just local ones, are required.

BOATS CRUISE UP THE RIVER WYE - SPRING BANK HOLIDAY - MAY 1988

At 1600 hours on Friday 27th May 1988 the motor yacht 'Sea Mist', skipper Howard Jones, and narrowboat 'Buccaneer', skipper and PCAS member Bernard Jessop, left Sharpness Marina to cruise across the Severn Estuary and on up the River Wye. The intention was to navigate as far upstream as possible, Llandogo at least being the aim.

The idea had been taking shape for several years and a great deal of research had been done and contacts made locally. A 10 ft dinghy was used to reconnoitre from Chepstow to Hereford. In 1986, in July, the 40 ft 'Buccaneer' made an epic voyage from its home waters in the North-East to explore the Severn Estuary and go on up the Wye a few miles. It was believed to be the first canal narrowboat ever to navigate the River Wye.

There is a centuries-old right to navigate on the lower parts of the River Wye but a number of acts have taken place there to render unusable some of the public landing places for boats. An attempt to close Brockweir Quay, instigated through the courts, was withdrawn in 1985 in the face of opposition from Jim Simpson, a Tintern boatman, with the backing of local people. The 1986 cruise by 'Buccaneer' brought the offer from 'Sea Mist' to accompany the next cruise as one practical way to bring back boating (other than canoes) to one of England's loveliest rivers.

Emerging from Sharpness Sea Lock on 27th May 1988, the two boats made for the vast expanse of water ahead. It was a neap tide, with about one hour to high water so progress was slow. But the two craft reached the mouth of the Wye before the ebb proved too strong. A further hour took them up river to Chepstow where 'Buccaneer' moored to a buoy above the bridge. This mooring was more than 'exciting' according to Bernard and he advises anchoring above the Castle in Longhope Reach as did 'Sea Mist'.

Saturday 28th May, 5 am

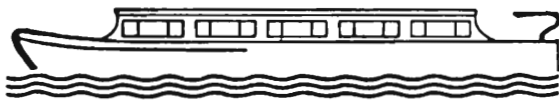
Bernard's log recalls: "Up anchor and cast off from buoy. The true beauty of the Wye Valley unfolding before us makes that early rise so worthwhile ... rounding the first of many hairpin bends Chepstow Castle lit up with the early morning sun; quietly passing 'Sea Mist' still snug at her moorings (she was to wait till the evening tide) in the deep gorge of Longhope Reach, at its head the 300 ft high cliffs of Wintour's Leap, a favourite haunt of climbers; passed Lovers' Leap and Prior's Reach; over Hook Weir where, two years previously 'Buccaneer' had spent the night high and dry having missed the

gap! Continuing on the last bend before Tintern past a quarry in full operation at the time, an amazing sight - a heronry with some twenty or thirty nests clustered together, the great birds craned their necks towards 'Buccaneer' as she passed quietly and swiftly by. Not a single bird took flight."

After a pause near Tintern abbey 'Buccaneer' was joined by 'Sea Mist' and the convoy proceeded upstream, navigating Lynn, Brock and Coed-Ithel Weirs and passing through magnificent scenery. Llandogo was then reached, reminiscent of Little Switzerland. 'Buccaneer' moored directly below Ridingsstream Weir for Saturday night and the crew and friends spent a jolly evening at the home of Jim and Mary Simpson, now IWA members, who live at Catbrook, Tintern, and have a wealth of knowledge about the river.

Further adventures saw 'Buccaneer' clearing Ridingsstream Weir and later Bigsweir, to moor above the bridge. This was the tidal limit, fifteen miles up river. After an interlude for filming by BBC Wales the crew headed on upstream and, after several attempts, finally negotiated New Weir and thence to Redbrook Rapids. The upstream voyage ended, appropriately, with an evening spent in the Boat Inn, a favourite haunt of the oldtime boatmen. A truly epic journey!

Editor's Note: Lack of space has obliged us to shorten Bernard's account of this pioneering voyage very considerably. But we would be happy to put anyone wishing for further navigation details in touch with him. It is hoped to make a trip up the Wye an annual event so as better to safeguard the navigation right. The information in our account has been provided by Bernard Jessop and by Kay Jennings who is now living in the West Country.



### MONEY FOR OLD DRINK CANS!

Plenty of these can be found lying around, enough to fill a sack in no time at all! If you can jump on them and reduce the bulk so much the better, but never mind if you can't. They are well worth the trouble of collecting. It's money for rubbish for us and anyway it's a good thing to re-cycle the metal! Phone us if transport is a problem.

## DIARY DATES

### REGULAR PCAS WORK PARTIES

SUNDAYS: 13 November, 11 December, 8 January,  
12 February, 12 March.

(There may be others in between; please enquire)

SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER

PCAS Sunday Lunch

IWA N. Humberside Branch Meetings 8 pm at Derby and Joan Club

Cottingham (near Civic Hall) - All Welcome

16 November Talk on Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canal  
20 January Members' Slides etc  
31 March The Ribble Link Roadshow  
21 April Talk on the Work of the NCC

### THE SOCIETY MARQUEES

#### Usually Available

The newer of our two marquees measures 36' x 14', a useful shape for stalls, a bar etc. The old one (now feeling its age!) is 20' x 40'. Both are khaki. Both are available on request in return for a modest sum to Society funds. Though hardly of posh wedding standard they still provide an excellent insurance against bad weather! Please ring the Society Secretary for further information.

#### Frequently in use this summer

The marquees have been out quite often this year and we are grateful for the resulting 'donations'. We are also grateful to George Parkes for transporting them around the country and overseeing operations generally. Normally the transport has to be done by the hirers or whoever is available with a trailer or a pickup.

P.S.! Anyone fancy taking over the job done this summer by GP?? A permanent 'overseer' would be a great help. It is a matter of checking parts and helping to load and unload at Canal Head. If that person could sometimes help with some of the transport too that would be even better.

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SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20th - PCAS SUNDAY LUNCH

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At the WELLINGTON OAK at CANAL HEAD

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12.30 for 1 p.m.

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An informal social get together for members and friends.  
£6 per head, £3 for children. Fuller details inside.  
Pay on the day but we must have bookings as soon as possible!  
Please ring York (0904) 623338 or  
Pock (0759) 304157

Raffle prizes welcome. Buy your Christmas gifts from  
the Stall.

#### THE RIDDLE OF THE CANNON BALLS

Does anyone know why cannon balls should have been found  
at Top Lock?

The local Press made quite a splash of this item, taken  
from the last Canal Society Magazine (well, they WOULD  
make a splash if they were thrown into the canal, wouldn't  
they?)

Ask any Canal Society Founder Member, including Phred who  
used to appear on the back page of '99'; they will tell you  
where they came from. But meantime I'll let you into a  
little secret - when the Canal was opened for boat traffic  
in 1818 the Captains of the vessels were not sure of their  
reception by the local inhabitants, so they decided that  
the first boat up the Canal would be a 10-cannongunned  
sloop. As it turned out, however, the natives were  
friendly so they dumped their cannon-fodder into the  
Canal and proceeded to load up with wool and corn before  
making their return trip.

Anonymous  
(Name & Address supplied)