

THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR

The Newsletter of Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No. 1156662

Issue No. 101

Autumn 2019



Featuring:

- We're Finally Pouring Concrete at Bridge No.1
- Bourton Meadow is Alive with Bird Song
- It's Not Just Our Festival Where We Raise Funds



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Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn 2019 edition of The Buckingham Navigator!

Well, here we are, at the beginning of the next 100 newsletters! And what a way to start by bringing you the news and pictures from the first two of the three planned concrete pours at Bridge No.1, albeit against the elements. Well done to all involved! We have had some amazing contributions from external groups too, and have also made plenty of progress with the towpath.



Since Cosgrove has taken up much of our time, we are also addressing others sites, including Hyde Lane and Bourton Meadow for some general maintenance. The Nature Reserve at Hyde Lane is being re-watered after around eighty years, and Bourton Meadow is more awash than ever with wildlife. Many of the birds seen will now be migrating south once again for the winter. And as for the abundance of flora and other wildlife... what a site indeed! Please keep the records coming! Of course, without the successful funding the Society has been attracting, none of this would be possible!

Thank you to all the contributors. Cover photo of Athina Beckett receiving a donation from Braunston Marina for £200, presented by IWA Chairman Ivor Caplan and Joan Caplan, alongside Tim Coghlan © Victoria Jane Photography. Full article on page 19. **Why not drop me an email about what you enjoyed in this issue, and furthermore, why not contribute ideas or articles for future editions (see page 31). Please visit our website at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk. While you are online, why not also follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/buckinghamcanalsociety and please "Like" us. Furthermore, see page 11 for details on how you can now find us on Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.** Thank you.

Ian Matson
Editor

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Restoration Site Update



©Alan Mynard

Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) London worked hard over the weekend of 11th & 12th May at Bridge No.1 bricklaying (opposite middle), and installing steel reinforcing bars or rebar (above & opposite top) ready for first concrete pour which was on 13th June (Page 6, middle). They also assisted us in laying MOT1 stone along the towpath (page 6, top left), which was continued with a team from McAfee on 6th June (page 6, top right). We had further corporate assistance from Santander on 27th June (Page 6, bottom 3 images). The second or 'main' deck pour was completed on 4th July (Page 7).

Cosgrove's Bridge No.1 Gets the Green Light...Again!



Following on from getting the final agreement from Canal & River Trust (CRT), work has resumed on the bridge deck and approach ramps at Bridge No.1. The parapet walls have been started, and the next concrete pours for the kerbs have been completed. Here are a few comments for clarity:

Lime mortar is being used. Although this is a slower process than cement, it allows the stonework and brickwork to flex slightly and avoids long term damage to the bricks.



The sandbags are filled with cement and soil and then go hard. They form part of the structural element inside the parapet walls to support the approach ramps.

These ramps are angled for the traffic to cross the bridge.



©Alan Mynard



©Alan Mynard

The steps up to the bridge from the Cosgrove Lock side will remain whilst the ramp on the A5 side of the bridge will be removed. This will happen when the towpath under the bridge is open to foot and cycle traffic, which in turn will happen once the overhead concrete pours are completed.



©Terry Cavender



©Terry Cavender



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©Alan Mynard



©Valerie Brunton (Santander)

When removed, the wooden crash deck will be reused as hoardings for the towpath to form a safe passage tunnel - with viewing windows.

Pointing, pointing and more pointing must be done on the abutments and walls of the old structure as well as the excellent brickwork being done to replace the old towpath walls. This is to ensure it's good for the next one hundred years with minimum maintenance once we get it in water.



Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Taming the Vegetation at Hyde Lane's Nature Reserve

With Cosgrove being the most important work site this year, this has meant that the Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve has not received much attention. Even so, I was still shocked to see how overgrown the site had become when we held a work party there on Thursday 20th June. The towpath had become so overgrown in places that we had to stoop to get under the tree branches, and it had become almost impossible to walk the stretch between the lock and the towpath. The information box was almost impossible to reach too, as the vegetation had grown so much. Luckily we had a large group from Santander to help!

By the end of the day we had trimmed the whole hedge area, strimmed the bank of the canal bed and repainted most of the fence. Volunteers also started the work of repainting the lock gates as well. The other main task was to build a pump chamber so that solar panels which had been installed a while ago could begin to do their intended work. Our thanks go once again to a great group of volunteers from Santander who helped with this task, and as such, they did a great job alongside our own volunteers.

We returned again to the Hyde Lane site on Sunday 14th July to complete the work on the solar panels and trim the rest of the overgrown areas. Once again the site is looking great!

Our nature reserve site is very special to me as I used to be the site warden for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) before Buckingham Canal Society (BCS) took over the lease. Because of this I have decided along with a few other volunteers to run extra work parties here to keep this area looking good. **Anyone who is interested in this type of work, please get in touch using my contact details on page 30.**

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

First Water in the Nature Reserve's Canal Bed for 80 Years

"And a wonderful gurgling noise could be heard!" Yes, we are WATER ON via our solar pump installation which was funded by the Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) New Homes Bonus Micro Grant Scheme as well as Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation.

So now the solar panel at Hyde Lane is connected to the pump and is fully operational. Well...it's as fully operational as it can be when there is enough sun AND enough water! It seems to be a not so common combination but the resultant flow of water into the canal channel at Hyde Lane has been observed on several occasions.

The pump is pushing approximately 20 cubic metres of water per day or at least whatever percentage of the day that the sun shines. A little tree pruning over the winter will allow more hours of operation, although it is always necessary to take the re-watering of clay slowly to allow it to recover from, in this case, around 80 years of not being underwater - a process called re-hydration.

Yes the channel will leak back into the ditch, into the stream and back into the River Great Ouse. But this water flow alongside all the approvals, the agreement from BBOWT and the slow re-filling will enable the non-human residents to adapt as it re-hydrates the clay. The leaks will be gradually patched with clay as they are found. This will not only protect the canal structure but will help support the roots of the trees and prevent the risk of so many cracks in the reservoir side of the canal forming. Yet another half a mile coming into water!

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer



©Alan Mynard

Do You Dig Canals?...We Do!



©Fallarino/Photo

Work parties are held most Thursdays and the second Sunday of each month and are always friendly, welcoming and very rewarding. Additional work parties are also held on most weeks.

If you would like to become involved, please contact me using my contact details on page 30.

In addition, work party dates can be found on page 29, and more detailed information about these and extra curricular dates can be found by visiting our work parties web page at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/work-parties/

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

The Summer Statement

Welcome to another Navigator. There has been much activity since the last edition was sent out, as we have now got a bridge, in that you can walk across it, with kerbs too. Just the concrete wear deck, parapets and ramps to finish. Hopefully by Christmas we will have completed most of this, and then we can look toward getting a boat under the bridge as far as the stop planks, whilst we remove the farm crossing and repair the banks in readiness to open that entire section. Exciting times!

Lee Whiting, our Plant & Equipment Manager, has been working hard along with the Society's Structural Engineer Keith Rawlings, and we now have a running (well, mostly) Argocat amphibious vehicle. We should be set up now for the arrival of bad weather, giving us improved accessibility along the farm track and canal (well it is amphibious). We look forward to taking delivery of our new workboat, with exciting tales of its move to Cosgrove to follow in the next issue. This workboat will allow us the opportunity to work on the offside as well as carry out dredging operations. We are in the process of purchasing a small tipper truck, which should help to drastically reduce materials costs as it will remove the need for delivery charges. Also, it will allow us the opportunity to collect donated materials and move them to site if Terry and the trailer are not available.

July saw us hold another Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair, and despite the chilly weather and forecast, the event enjoyed many visitors on both days with some attending for the first time alongside our more seasoned regulars. Informal discussions have opened up the possibility of extending or moving the festival to take advantage of the public moorings above the lock stretching back to Cosgrove's very own Bridge No.65. Incidentally, this is a Grade II Listed Monument, and somewhat curiously it has been variously known as the Ornamental Bridge, Samson's Bridge or Solman's Bridge. **Please visit www.cosgrovehistory.co.uk for further details.**

Our regular work parties continue apace, and we have some new volunteers coming along. We are always welcoming of more, and the Society continues to enjoy support from regular corporate groups who are of great assistance, bringing a diverse mix of skills and abilities, whilst always happy and engaging.

Finally, we now have a YouTube channel as well as several social media accounts. If you do not already follow us via social media, then please visit any of our pages to like and subscribe. Together we can get the word of BCS spread far and wide. **We are still very keen to find someone to help with this, so if you know a social media star who would like to assist with some volunteering then please point them in our direction, using my contact details on page 30. For further information on our social media ventures, please see page 11 where Alan Mynard, our Website Administrator and Archivist, explains in more detail.**

Rob Morris
Trustee and Chairman

The Wildlife is Simply Flourishing at Bourton Meadow

Local walkers Michael & Diane Hunt have sent us a wildlife sightings report for the end of May, which follows another they submitted a year ago for Issue 97. This illustrates the growing importance of Bourton Meadow as a key habitat for a number of important species of birds and insects. As with last year's report, the Dragonflies (order Odonata, which contains the sub-orders Zygoptera (Damselflies) and Anisoptera (Dragonflies)) are broadly represented in this report, some especially in good numbers.

Michael said that "Having been away looking at wildlife in Cumbria, I thought it was about time my wife and I gave the canal a visit, and wow it looks superb with the Yellow Flag Irises and Ragged Robin in flower".

He also noted that his record showed "what a critically important site you [BCS] have created and proves that if you have the habitat, the wildlife will return and thrive". He also went on to give thanks to all of the team involved in getting it to where it is today.

In the space of 45 minutes, they recorded:

Birds: 1 Swift (*drinking*); 2 Barn Swallows (*drinking*); 10 House Martins; 1 Blackcap (*singing*); 2 Whitethroats (*singing*); 1 Sedge Warbler (*singing*); 4 Starlings (*carrying food*); 1 Goldfinch (*singing*); 1 Reed Bunting (*singing*)

Michael stated that two Barn Swallows and one Swift were seen skimming the water surface to drink, making this a very important place for them indeed. Of course, this makes an ideal body of water to catch insects too.

Butterflies: 1 Brimstone; 1 Green-veined White; 2 Orange-tips; 1 Small Copper; 1 Holly Blue

Dragonflies: 1 Southern Hawker; 17 Four-spotted Chasers (*many of which we flushed whilst noting they were newly emerged, some probably the previous night*)

Damselflies: 2 Large Red Damselflies; 100 Azure Damselflies; 12 Red Eyed Damselflies

Well, it is great to see that some of our key species of Warblers are now regularly seen at Bourton Meadow. However, being so diminutive, they are more often given up by their songs and calls. Perhaps with the amount of singing heard, they are possibly here to breed! The hedgerows and surrounding vegetation no doubt provide the ideal breeding habitat, but they also provide an ample supply of insects and berries to sustain them, thus encouraging them to raise their young here year after year.

Unlike the Whitethroat and Sedge Warblers, which are summer visitors from south of the Sahara, the similarly migratory Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) is becoming more of a year round resident in the south of England. It is found predominantly in woodland habitats. Often called the 'Northern Nightingale', it has a very distinctive and multisyllabic song.

Also belonging to the same genus as the Blackcap, the Whitethroat (*S. communis*) is somewhat different in preferences as well as appearance, usually preferring farmland, hedgerows and woodland edges, where it can be found flitting rather shyly, darting for cover. However, although it does not normally favour urban areas, its territories have gradually spread into such built up habitats over recent years.

The Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*), as you can see, belongs to another genus entirely. The heavily vegetated canal and green corridor we have created is perfect for such a species to breed, which is usually low down in tall dense vegetation such as reeds and rushes at the water's edge. It is a diminutive bird, like many warblers, but with a surprisingly loud song and alarm call.

Hopefully we will see more and more wildlife records for Bourton Meadow now that it has been fully restored, and who knows, something rare or unexpected too! The Society wishes to thank Michael & Diane Hunt for their contribution, which was forwarded to Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).

Please let us know of any wildlife sightings along any stretch along the entirety of the Buckingham Canal, be it restored or not. You can send your records to myself or any of the trustees using our contact details on pages 30 and 31.

For further details about BBOWT, please visit: www.bbowl.org.uk.

Ian Matson
Editor

Don't be Anti-Social...There's No Escaping Us Now!

As part of our strategy for community engagement, to further promote the Society and to reach out for new members and volunteers, we have been creating a number of social media accounts. Over the coming months we hope to make more active use of these, so please follow and subscribe for regular updates and photos of what we are doing.

As you may know, we have had a Facebook page for some time now, largely thanks to the efforts of Terry Cavender. **If you haven't seen our Facebook page, then please visit: www.facebook.com/buckinghamcanalsociety.**

In addition to this, we now have Twitter and Instagram accounts. **For either of these accounts, please visit us at the following sites: www.twitter.com/bcsocietyuk or www.instagram.com/buckinghamcanalsociety respectively.** Our social media team, comprising of Terry, Colin and myself, will be attempting to make regular updates to all of these platforms.

In addition, we now also have a YouTube channel! **You can find this at the rather obscure URL of: www.youtube.com/channel/UCUslmDM1ExlXiH2iW9zAJhg.** It's probably easier to find us using the "search" facility in YouTube by looking for "Buckingham Canal Society", and then scrolling down the resulting list until you find our logo! However,

along the way you will scroll past many videos relating to our namesake canal in India, which you learnt about in the talk by Ed Grimsdale at our 2018 AGM. If we can get the number of subscribers to our channel up to 100 then we can apply for a much simpler named web address. So please tell all your family and friends about us and get them to subscribe.

Finally, we would welcome a few extra hands to help with the social media publishing , so if you feel you can help us, then please contact any of the trustees using our contact details on page 30 and 31.

Alan Mynard

Trustee, Website Administrator and Archivist

Remember our Restored Johnson Mud Pump?

As some of you may recall, in Issue 90 Summer 2016, Alan Mynard reported on the purchase of a 1959 C H Johnson 3 inch Mud Pump with a Lister LD1 single cylinder diesel engine from a WRG auction. You may also recall he followed this up with a full restoration report in Issue 92 Winter 2016.

Well, earlier this year, it was decided to advertise the pump on eBay. Alan stated that “after deciding that the pump would not meet current Health & Safety regulations, we decided to dispose of it. It was sold on eBay for an amount that covered the restoration cost”. The pump sold in early April, with the intended use being to pump out a farm pond. When told that the proceeds would go to BCS, the buyer even donated another £10.00! **For the full story of the pump’s restoration, please see Issues 90 and 92.**



Ian Matson

Editor

Excellent Boats on a Beautiful Canal

Our base at Linslade is within weekend reach of the Waterways Museum at Stoke Bruerne, or the Chiltern Hills and Aylesbury. Choice of exciting one or two week cruises including the Thames. 35 luxury boats - 2 to 8 berth.

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Members of: IWA, APCO, BMF, B&MK Waterway Trust, Wendover Arm Trust, Buckingham Canal Society, Aylesbury Canal Society.



Projects Update

Making Some Inroads...Well...Hopefully One Anyway

For those paying attention, we recently withdrew our planning application for a road access following guidance from the planning team at South Northamptonshire Council. An amended application has now been submitted which will hopefully answer the previous guidance from Highways. This will result in our being able to always access the Cosgrove section for maintenance and restoration as per the proposed lease that we intend to undertake with CRT.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

BCS Look to Acquire Workboat for Work Along the “Wet Bit”

Last winter saw a successful CRT project using volunteers to help remove significant offside (non-towpath side) vegetation along sections of the canal to the north and south of Stoke Bruerne. This coming winter, some of the BCS volunteers hope to join in with this project. It will also enable them to address the offside vegetation along the Buckingham Arm where existing boats are moored. We are also acquiring our very own workboat called “Louise” which should arrive at Cosgrove late October. This will enable access to the vegetation, and has a crane to move other materials as well as helping with the wider offside vegetation management project. **If you would like to be involved, please contact any of the trustees using our contact details on pages 30 & 31.**

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair

The View From the Deep End with a Festival Newbie

In my first year as a trustee of BCS, I attended our 26th annual festival on the weekend of the 20th & 21st July as part of the team that was putting on this ever popular event. Last year, I came along simply as a humble visitor.

The set up on Thursday and Friday went well, apart from the occasional dunking from the rain which came and went. In the true spirit of BCS, rain does not stop play. It doesn't stop the construction team, and it certainly didn't stop the festival team! Most of my time on Thursday and Friday was spent setting out the boat positions, getting the traders into trading positions and shifting festival equipment around the site.

The committee, in their infinite wisdom, asked me to perform the role of event manager. I accepted, but didn't really know what the job entailed. I spent the weekend walking the towpath, speaking at length with the trade boaters and the general public who were interested in what we were doing along the Buckingham Arm and what our aims are. I was really on the lookout for problems, and fortunately we didn't really have any. The weather was kind to us and we had a dry weekend.



Everyone at the festival appeared to be in a really good mood. The boaters were happy, the general public were happy and our team were, dare I say happy, after two days hard slog to get the festival up and running, and that's not forgetting the fact that it all had to be taken down again from the end of Sunday!

My own special interests at the show were the historic narrowboats, especially Raymond (a butty), Nutfield and Roger (both motorboats). Raymond had been paired with both of the motorboats at sometime in their long lives, and all three were a real credit to their owners and operators. The cost of maintaining these boats must be colossal to keep them in the beautiful condition that they were presented in. **Please be sure to read the next issue as there will be a fascinating illustrated article providing an insight into the history of Roger, including her working life, rescue and reconstruction.**

With the festival becoming more and more popular, enlarging the event's footprint to take advantage of this fact can be accomplished by having the festival moorings run to/from the Cosgrove horse tunnel which is close to the village hall. This would mean that there would not be such a large gap between the hall and the towpath areas of the event. I'm sure we could make the festival much larger and therefor invite more boaters and traders. I for one will certainly be mooring up my boat at the festival next year and promoting BCS as much as possible.



Anyway, enough of my ramblings. With the festival over, we now need to get back to basics and complete the bridge deck and the restoration of the stonework, then lay a HUGE quantity of bricks and get the bridge finished. This will enable us to continue our work further down the cut and bring the canal back to life. What an ambition!!

I would like to put a call out now for any member of Buckingham Canal Society to come and help us next year, as I am all for increasing the size of the festival by utilising more of the towpath and moorings. If you are interested in helping out, please get in touch with the Cosgrove Festival Team using the contact details on Page 31.

Gerry Millard

Trustee and Construction Manager

The Constructive Chatter in Our Tent

I spent the festival weekend at the BCS information tent talking to lots and lots of people. So I didn't actually get to see any of the festival other than when clearing up! It felt like we had a much higher number of people who were aware of what BCS are doing, with several who had come along to see and/or find out more - WHICH IS EXCELLENT! There was also a lot of interest from Cosgrove and Old Stratford visitors (based on a simple response to "do you live locally"). There was



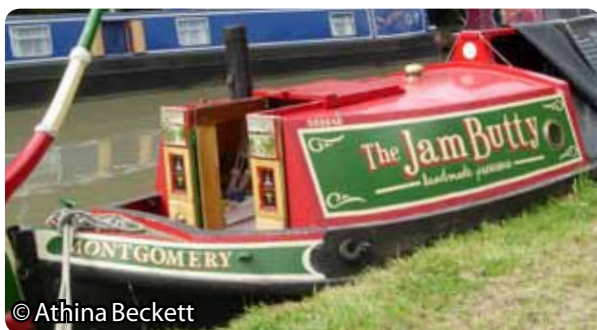
only one negative comment this year which was a concern that the boater's licence fees were "being wasted on restoration". Having explained that it was all grant funded and that no direct funding came from CRT, the person told me that was irrelevant! Maybe one day I will understand. Everyone [else] was very positive and complementary about the section of the canal arm which is in water, as well as the progress on Bridge No.1 and the towpath work. And who knows, perhaps they even liked our all bright and colourful new sail flags (above) too!

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

The Buoyant Scene Along the Towpath

Nearly all the traders attending this year's festival were traders who had attended last year's and had booked as far back as January. The Cheese Boat has been attending for many years, but this year we were very concerned as Geraldine and her husband who run the boat had both been ill and were not sure if they would make it, so it was with great relief when they arrived on site!



© Athina Beckett

Also attending this year was a very special trading boat in the shape of Miss Ellie - The Beer Boat Company's 'Beer Boat'. This is always particularly popular in hot weather! We also had 'Anything Spanish' who sell ice creams and coffees at the front of the boat and delicious crepes at the rear. I must also mention the delightful looking 'Jam Butty' boat (above), selling home made jams and chutneys. A newcomer this year was the 'Glass Boat' which sold wonderful jewellery. Many others who sold home made crafts, traditional boat paintings and a variety of clothes were also well represented. A total of 30 boats attended the festival, including 20 traders, 3 charity and 7 private vessels.



©Athina Beckett

Our usual Saturday night fish & chip supper went very well as we had a lovely summer's evening with around 50 people present. We were lucky enough to be entertained with music by the very talented duo called Innocent Hare (left), who entertained visitors throughout the weekend.

Unfortunately, the Lock Ransom drew in less funds than usual due to a boat that had got caught on a lock cill at the Three Locks at Soulbury. This in turn had blocked the way through to Cosgrove, not only to the private boaters, but to the usual hire boats that we see each year which went south instead. So whilst lock operations were quiet, two of our

volunteers did a little vegetation control around it instead. When all was said and done, we had a very good festival, and the funds raised for BCS made it all worthwhile.

Myself and all at BCS wish to thank all those involved in organising, setting up and attending this year's festival. Without your invaluable help and support, this event would not have been possible.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

The Feast for All the Senses in the Village Hall

The village hall was again the setting for the craft fair, run in conjunction with the canal festival, and was the place to come for a cuppa, a slice of home-made cake and a chat. Having to enforce an admission charge this year in order to comply with previously unenforced regulations did not deter visitors, and many were very generous with their fee payment, so we give a big thank you indeed to those who attended. The craft fair managed to fill all available spaces this year, including that which was previously used for our bric-a-brac, such is its popularity, with a number of new stalls.

The kitchen was staffed with the usual volunteers, who did a sterling job producing teas, coffees and rolls, with the home-made cakes and scones proving as popular as ever. The cakes almost sold out, but rolls and soft drinks were far less popular this year, such are the vagaries of the great British public. It did mean takings were down on last year, but it was far less stressful for those of us trying to keep up with demand. A trial using recyclable paper cups for the first time also helped to reduce the workload, with far less washing-up to do and no-one continually searching for more chinaware when we got busy.

All in all, we had another very friendly and very tiring weekend, which I hope everyone enjoyed. **If you feel able to help out next year by donating cakes or volunteering**

in the kitchen for a few hours, then please get in touch with the Cosgrove Festival Team using the contact details on Page 31.



Richard Dwight
Trustee and Treasurer

Publicity & Bric-a-Brac Stall Update

The Publicity and Bric-a-Brac stall has been out and about visiting several local events and canal festivals. On Saturday 8th June we were due to run a stall at the Stony Stratford Riverside Fair, but upon waking up Saturday morning it looked like the riverside was outside of my window with the rain pouring down. With a little reluctance we loaded up and prepared to go to the festival, not expecting to have a particularly fantastic day, but on arrival at the site the weather had slightly improved. By lunch time it had stopped raining and people began to arrive. So in spite of the early rain we had a good day. We also met up with a group from Old Stratford who want to promote part of the original canal that still exists in their town.

A few weeks earlier this group had contacted me and explained that they were installing a planter close to one of the original canal bridges near to the cross roads in Old Stratford, and would like to have a lock gate feature next to the planters. At the Riverside Fair we

discussed further ways the two groups could work together and run joint work parties in the future, with the idea of making a feature part of the canal that is still in water near the Community Centre in Old Stratford.

The next festival the stall attended was the Milton Keynes Festival of History held in Campbell Park over the weekend of 15th & 16th June. This is a festival which attracts a variety of re-enactment groups that range from Vikings to First World War groups, so



there's quite a contrast! This festival also required us to dress up in costume, so giving me a chance to get out my Victorian boat women's costume again! Yet again the weather wasn't wonderful, with it trying to rain over the weekend, but the stall looked great with our boat float and all new banner present. The children at the festival were happy to join in with our lock and bridge building games, and we had a very successful weekend.



The bridge game works well with adults as well as children because once adults have completed the bridge building part of the game we then ask if they would like to build the real thing and join our group of volunteers at Cosgrove re-building Bridge No.1. My thanks go to Richard, Liz, Tony and Jonathan for helping over the weekend.

Following the History Festival, and before our own, we attended the annual Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally over the weekend of 29th & 30th June. There were 71 working boats in attendance this year. This time the weather did the opposite with Saturday being the hottest day of the year so far. Tim Coghlan is a supporter of BCS and organises this festival each year, giving every canal society a donation of £200 for attending, so this festival is always very well supported! This year the cheques were present by IWA Chairman Ivor Caplan, who posed by our new banner, as shown in the cover photograph.

As well as telling the public about the progress being made at Cosgrove, this festival proved to be a great success for our Craft Group with five rag rugs being sold and a commission for further items was also taken. This means that the craft group is now looking for more donations of old T-shirts to continue making the rag rugs. **Please contact me if you can help in anyway using my contact details on page 30.**

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally

Sunshine and Stars Brought Out the Crowds for the 17th Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally



©Tim Coghlan

The very successful 2019 Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally was held over the warmest June weekend for several years, with Saturday's temperature into the eighties. It was almost too hot for some, but great for the real ale sales at the Dry Dock Inn - the quayside beer tent, a meeting point for boaters old and new, and offering fine views of the parades of former working narrowboats.

But at the beginning of June, things did not look so good. There were threats of water shortages, before the surprising rain from Spain arrived. There were also emergency lock closures, especially on the Rochdale Canal, where a number of historic narrowboats had gone for an earlier event, before coming down to Braunston. All but one managed a Colditz escape, before encountering another emergency closure on the Coventry Canal which Canal & River Trust (CRT) put all their energies into repairing. Then a historic wooden narrowboat got stuck in a lock on the Napton Flight, which CRT again sorted. So it all came right in the end.

Despite increasing competition from similar canal events going head-to-head, a total of 71 historic narrowboats attended this, the 17th Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally, coming from all corners of the waterways. The annual Braunston rallies remain by far and away the largest rally of historic narrowboats anywhere on the inland waterways. As David Daines - owner of the 1935 Yarwoods narrowboat *Cyprus* - said, "Braunston remains the premier event, and it is the first we put in our diary, every year." He and his wife Sue have never missed one of them.

The rally was formally opened by Ivor Caplan (right), Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), steering the former *Fellows, Morton & Clayton (FMC)* narrowboat *Panther*, into the marina from the Grand Union Canal and declaring the Rally open. The *Panther* is now



©Tim Coghlan

owned and operated by the Coventry Canal Society. Ivor was assisted by his wife Joan - both wearing traditional boatmen costume - she steering the Chesterfield Canal Trust's former FMC narrowboat Python.

These narrowboats have led similar lives. They were both built in 1929 for FMC by Yarwoods of Northwich, and so are now celebrating their 90th birthdays. They were also built in the 'P' batch of that year - boats were built in batches of up to four at a time, and each was given a sequential letter, with the boats named accordingly - hence Panther and Python. In time they became canal maintenance boats for British Waterways and were shortened to their present length. Both are now owned by active canal societies, and are used for educational purposes, and volunteer canal maintenance and restoration. Before the official opening, each canal society was presented by their respective steerers, Ivor and Joan, with a cheque for £1,000 from the Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally - part of over £6,000 donated to canal and local causes.



A number of celebrity guests joined in the opening, which this year included Timothy West (above left) and Prunella Scales (above right). They steered respectively the 1936 pair of former Grand Union Canal Carrying Company's narrowboats, the Nuneaton and Brighton. These are owned and operated by the Narrow Boat Trust, with the primary objective of continuing canal carrying with a pair of working narrowboats. Other guests included Richard Parry, CEO of the Canal & River Trust, and Tony Hales OBE, retired Chairman of Canal & River Trust. Tony still continues his passion for the waterways and has attended every Rally since 2009 - always attired in traditional boatman costume. This year he was joined by his wife Linda, likewise attired, and both adding to the colour of the occasion.

Prior to the Rally opening, a plaque was unveiled on the 'Braunston Wall of Fame' in memory of the Aubrey Berriman, the shipwright to the wooden butty Raymond, which was built by Samuel Barlows in 1958 at what is today Braunston Marina. Aubrey died earlier this year aged 93. The plaque was unveiled jointly by his daughter Julie and son David. Timothy West and Prunella Scales attended the ceremony, and each gave readings, including an extract from David Blagrove's classic book *Bread Upon The Waters*, in which Aubrey received a mention, working as foreman in the large dock in 1962. A video of the plaque unveiling and the Rally as a whole is now on the Braunston Marina website homepage.

The winning historic narrowboat for this year's 'Nurser Award Buckby Can for the Best in Show as voted by the historic narrowboat owners', was the beautifully turned-out Princess Anne, belonging to Sarah Malcolm. She also received £250 in Midland Changers vouchers, generously sponsored by them. Both owner and boat were attending the Rally for the first time. It was also the first time that a female-owner has won the award since it began six years ago. But what is more remarkable is that Sarah has only owned the Princess Anne for just under a year.

Sarah was quick to acknowledge the enormous restoration works carried out by the two previous owners. They had restored the boatman's cabin to its original look, removing the full length cabin conversion, which had been added to the boat in 1968, when it ceased being a working boat, and was converted to a house boat, and the length reduced to 57'6". But in her short period of ownership, Sarah has taken the project forward. She wrote to me modestly after winning the award, saying "I have got a lot of routine maintenance done, as well as some steel work on the foredeck, gunwales and in and on the engine room. I am going to have a lot more jobs done by the Brinklow lads". The original elm bottom is to be replaced with sapele hardwood, so maintaining the boat's composite bottom. Work will also be undertaken to the gunwales and diesel tank, and more. "But the ball park figure to take the boat back to its original length is about £35 / 40K, so that's quite out of the question!" she continued.

The story of the Princess Anne is an interesting one - like that of so many other old working narrowboats attending the rallies. It was built by Harland & Wolff in 1935 at Woolwich to the GUCCC Star Class design, with iron sides and a composite bottom of elm and iron, which somewhat rarely it still retains. The boat was named Plato, and worked for the GUCCC until 1941, when it was sold to E. Probert & Sons. It was sold again in 1946 to T & S Elements of Birmingham, and became a tug on the Birmingham Canal Navigation, being reduced in length to 60', and renamed Annie Eliza. In 1948 the engine room was extended to house a 2L2 Gardner engine and gearbox, which are still in use. Around 1950, following the birth of Princess Anne in August of that year, the boat's name was changed in honour of her. In the recent restoration of the boatman's cabin, the livery was changed to back to that of T & S Elements - a livery now rarely seen. Sarah says she will be definitely coming to next year's rally, when she hopes to have the boat's hold back under cloths. "That will really put the cat amongst the pigeons!" she said with glee.

The Rally seeks to be both a rally of historic narrowboats, and a waterways festival, with a variety of entertainments reflecting this theme. Sue Day gave a display of horse boating with two of her horses in the Stop House garden. The Guild of Waterways Artists were again provided with their own marquee, sponsored by the Rally, and eleven of



its members had their works on display, making this the largest ever exhibition by their members since these rallies began. There was also a trade marquee shared with a number of canal societies. These societies were also outside, as were a number of good causes like the RNLI and the local Air Ambulance, who were given free space.

Other entertainments included the canal-travelling Alarum Theatre, with their new play, Acts of Abandon which received its 'world premier'. Also giving live performances were Theatre in the Dock and The Boat Doctors with their show They Built Boats in Banbury. For the second year, children were entertained by Professor Diamond's Punch & Judy Show. There was a new villain for this year - Boris Johnson - who because of his wickedness, is eaten by the crocodile and disgorged as ETON MESS. There was also a group of Morris Dancers - Mortimer's Morris. Music was provided in the famous beer tent - the Dry Dock - by a number of groups. On the Sunday evening, to close the event, the Rally sponsored a candle-lit choral concert by the Elizabethan composers Byrd and Tallis, across the meadows at the ancient church of Wolfamcote to raise awareness and funds for the preservation of this redundant church. Tim and Pru attended.

Tim Coghlan of Braunston Marina said, "For me what was most pleasing was the number of boats that came which had never been before, and the comments from so many owners stating that it is events like the Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally which inspire them to restore and maintain their boats which are such an important living and moving part of our canal heritage. Each year I hear the same gratifying story, which makes organizing the Rally so worthwhile. The Rally has come a long way since the first one in 2003, when 29 boats attended -- which seemed a lot at the time".

The Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally is sponsored by Braunston Marina and Towpath Talk, and is supported by Canal & River Trust. Braunston Marina will be hosting the event again next year on the same last weekend in June on the 27th & 28th.

Tim Coghlan

Managing Director, Braunston Marina



A Recipe for Building a Bridge...

...That Serves Four Times as Much Traffic as You Ever Thought it Would!

"The restoration to Buckingham has two major obstacles", or so it was stated when I first joined BCS. Turns out there are a few more, but certainly the A5 crossing, the water and of course the steel piled dam at Cosgrove's Bridge No.1 were high in the list. SO...how do you go about building a bridge? Hmm it's a bit like making a curry! This recipe is easy in a five minute conversation with local councillors. A little harder on the ground!

Ingredients

- 2 years of preparation and concept meetings.
- 1 year of digging out the old remains.
- 1 year of meetings to discuss why the remains are too good and need preserving.
- 1 subsequent planning permission which wasn't required but now is.
- 5 nine metre long steel beams.
- 22,000 Bricks.
- 15 Cubic metres of concrete RC3240
- 20mm aggregate which weighs about 38 tonnes.
- 50 Concrete T beams.
- 2,000 Concrete blocks.
- Approximately 9,999 man-hours of volunteer time.

Method

1. Spend ages discussing the concept.
2. Excavate the bridge site and measure the remains.
3. Spend ages more discussing the design.
4. Find a grant and get it awarded.
5. Spend ages discussing approvals and changes in the design.
6. Build the bridge Padstone.
7. Spend even more time discussing approvals and changes in the design.
8. Put the steel beams in place and fit the block and beam deck.
9. Sprinkle on a little CRT re-organisation, meet lots of new people and discuss approvals and changes in the design yet again.
10. Plead your case to the rural payments agency that the underclaim of item F32 on schedule 2 by 10p really was a

genuine mistake. Re-format the claim as guided by several different advisors.

11. Erect lots of timber crash deck and formwork.
12. Pour the concrete.
13. Add steel reinforcement bars and mesh, then more bars and more mesh, and even more, and still more...
14. Pour more concrete.
15. Adjust the formwork.
16. Pour yet more concrete.
17. Build more formwork for the final pour.
18. Pour even more concrete.
19. Build an access ramp with sandbags and concrete and stone and other stuff.
20. Smile at all the passer by folk.
21. Finish the bridge with brickwork, handrails and signs, as per approval requirements.
22. Invite your friendly structural engineer to confirm all the above was done as per his recipe.
23. Bake in the sun and let soak in the rain for several months, and thank everyone who came and helped.
24. Plan a day around Christmas when you're just going to drive back and forth over that bridge, just because you can!!!!
25. Oh, and whilst doing that lot, fix the towpath walls, the towpath itself, the stop planks, the stone pointing, the brick pointing and everything else to do with the 200-year-old ruin.
26. Finally, sit down and reflect on the Navvies 220 years ago and re-enact the beer and beef supper.

Terry Cavender
Trustee and Executive Officer

Meet the Trustee

Paul Sayer Joins as Construction Engineer



I'm a chartered civil engineer that has been involved in a number of construction projects, including dams and canals in South Africa, and chimneys, cooling towers and tall structures in the UK and abroad. Starting a career as a site engineer and finishing as construction director of an international company, I have the experience of the practical difficulties encountered in the contracting industry. I have lived with my family in Buckingham for over twenty years. The canal has always interested me as a historical transport system. Having retired, I now have the time to get involved in this restoration project. My desire to "build things" remains undiminished, and I view the canal project as an extremely worthwhile local endeavour.

Paul Sayer

Trustee and Construction Engineer

Vacancies

Back Seat Room Drivers Wanted

As our projects progress, we continue to grow our team - so call me Oliver, because WE WANT MORE! **If you or someone you know can spare some time to help, then please chat to one of the trustees using our contact details on page 30.** I do indeed bite, but mostly on cheese sandwiches. From a few hours a month, to as much as you can drink from the fire hose, we need help to make it happen. Not all effort is holes, concrete and digging; much discussion, admin and thought goes on. From proof reading to reconciling invoices. We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Quarterly Grants Update



Supported by
Co-op Members

We are now into the final round of the Co-op Local Community Fund. Co-op members can choose our cause to give their 1% to when they spend on selected own-brand products and services. We have

so far raised £753. The funding period is for twelve months and runs until 26th October 2019, so please carry on spending!

We have also received the second grant payment of £2,500 from The National Lottery Community Fund, and will be in receipt of this amount every six months for the next five years. As previously reported, this money will be used to engage with the local community, to publicise our work more widely, to evidence community support and to encourage active engagement. We will also be trying to increase our core group of volunteers who regularly turn out to help restore our canal.



Throughout May and June we were one of the featured charities at Tesco Stores in Buckingham with their Bags of Help scheme. This will have raised a minimum amount of £1,000. If we got sufficient votes it could be as much as £4,000! We anxiously await the result!



**South
Northamptonshire
Council**

South Northamptonshire Council Community Event Fund has donated £1,000 towards our Cosgrove Canal Festival and Craft Fair, which was held near the end of July. This money helped to pay for local advertising as well as the hire of the village hall and our entertainers.

At the time of writing, we have received a grant offer from The Foyle Foundation for £5,000 towards a new excavator, and another offer from The Radcliffe Trust worth £2,500 to support the development of various heritage skills, such as dry stone walling.



FOYLE FOUNDATION

We have submitted further grant applications to The Screwfix Foundation, The Rank Foundation and Highways England, and we now await their response with our fingers crossed.

As always, we are extremely grateful, to our grant funders without whom the restoration would remain a dream instead of a reality.

A complete list of our most recent funders can be found on page 26.

Colin Levett
Trustee and Grants Officer

Funders

We are very grateful for the financial support from all of our funders. In chronological order, below is a list of our most recent funders.

- The Radcliffe Trust
- The Foyle Foundation
- South Northamptonshire Council Community Event Fund
- Milton Keynes Heritage Association (MKHA)
- Tesco - Bags of Help (Buckingham)
- The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- MJ Camp Charitable Foundation
- Buckingham Town Council
- Alpkit Foundation
- DHL UK Foundation - Match It!
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Co-op - Local Community Fund
- Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust (VAHT) - Thriving Communities Fund
- Rectory Homes
- Postcode Local Trust
- Northamptonshire Community Foundation - David Laing Family Fund
- Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC)
- Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation

Patrons, Partners & Supporters

We are very grateful for the continued support of our patrons:

- Rt. Hon. John Bercow MP
- Lord Boswell of Aynho

We have formal partnerships with the following:

- Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC)
- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)
- Buckingham Town Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)
- Canal & River Trust (CRT)
- Deanshanger Parish Council
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Inland Waterways Association (IWA) Corporate Member
- Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)
- South Northamptonshire District Council

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of:

- Inland Waterways Association (IWA) Milton Keynes Branch
- Inland Waterways Association (IWA) Northampton Branch
- Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) and their regional volunteers

We have been recognised by the following:

- Cosgrove Parish Council
- Foscote Parish Meeting
- Maids Moreton Parish Council
- Old Stratford Parish Council
- Thornborough Parish Council
- Thornton Parish Meeting

Corporate Members

Braunston Marina



**Inland Waterways Association
Northampton Branch**



Lionhearts Cruising Club



Nikon Optical UK Ltd



Taverners Boat Club



The Wyvern Shipping Co Ltd



Corporate & External Volunteer Groups

We are very grateful to all of the organisations that have ever assisted us with their volunteer groups. In chronological order, below is a list of our most recent attendees.

- Network Rail
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)
- Santander
- McAfee
- Vinci Technology Centre UK
- London Waterway Recovery Group (LWRG)
- Computacentre
- Stowe House
- Stowe School
- Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) - Bit In The Middle (BITM)
- Trees for Cities
- Milton Keynes College
- Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group (KESCRG)
- Argos
- Network Rail - Bletchley Maintenance
- Virgin Money UK
- Mayflex UK
- Community Payback - Buckingham
- Waitrose
- The MacIntyre Charity - Green Genies
- The Parks Trust Young Explorers
- NHBC
- G4S Secure Training Centre - Milton Keynes
- Tech Mahindra
- The Woburn Hotel
- Hewitson Moorhead
- Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) - Forestry
- Tearle & Carver - Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors
- Mace

Future Events

Tuesday 8th October 8pm

IWA Northampton

Talk: World War One - Tim Coghlan

The Walnut Tree Inn, 21 Station Road,
Blisworth, Northants, NN7 3DS.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Friday 11th - Saturday 12th October

IWA Milton Keynes

Canal Clean Up

Meet: Friday 9.30am Fenny Stratford Lock,
Fenny Stratford, Milton Keynes, Bucks,
MK1 1BY

Meet: Saturday 9.30am The Gifford Park,
Broadway Avenue, Gifford Park, Milton
Keynes, Bucks, MK14 5QN

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Thursday 17th October 7.30pm

IWA Milton Keynes

Talk: Boston's Waterways - Simon Judge

Royal British Legion Hall, off Melrose Ave,
West Bletchley, Bucks, MK3 6PU.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Thursday 31st October 7.30pm

BCS - Craft Group Meeting

2 Staters Pound, Pennyland,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK18 8AX
or Stony Stratford. Details: 01908-661217
athina.beckett@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Tuesday 12th November 8pm

IWA Northampton

Talk: Canal & River Trust - Phil Mulligan

The Walnut Tree Inn, 21 Station Road,
Blisworth, Northants, NN7 3DS.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Thursday 21st November 7.30pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Talk: The Thames River Police Force -
David Wells**

Royal British Legion Hall, off Melrose Ave,
West Bletchley, Bucks, MK3 6PU.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Thursday 28th November 7.30pm

BCS - Craft Group Meeting

2 Staters Pound, Pennyland,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK18 8AX
or Stony Stratford. Details: 01908-661217
athina.beckett@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Thursday 5th December 7.30pm

IWA Milton Keynes

Christmas Social

Pre-booked ticket event

Royal British Legion Hall, off Melrose Ave,
West Bletchley, Bucks, MK3 6PU.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Tuesday 10th December 8pm

IWA Northampton

Christmas Social

The Walnut Tree Inn, 21 Station Road,
Blisworth, Northants, NN7 3DS.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/northampton



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Work Party Dates 2019/2020

October

Thursday 3rd
Sunday 13th
Thursday 17th
Thursday 31st

November

Sunday 10th
Thursday 14th
Thursday 28th

December

Sunday 8th
Thursday 12th
Thursday 26th

January

Thursday 9th
Sunday 12th
Thursday 23rd

February

Thursday 6th
Sunday 9th
Thursday 20th

March

Thursday 5th
Sunday 8th
Thursday 19th

April

Thursday 2nd
Sunday 12th
Thursday 16th
Thursday 30th

May

Sunday 10th
Thursday 14th
Thursday 28th

June

Thursday 11th
Sunday 14th
Thursday 25th

July

Thursday 9th
Sunday 12th
Thursday 23rd

August

Thursday 6th
Sunday 9th
Thursday 20th

September

Thursday 3rd
Sunday 13th
Thursday 17th

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Finance Manager

This position is currently vacant

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info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

The cost to call 0300 numbers is the same as calling a normal local or national land line. If your tariff or call package offers free or inclusive calls to landlines, numbers starting with 03 will be included in the exact same way.

Next Navigator

So we are nearing the end of another issue of the Navigator and I am sure many of you are eager for more. You can be part of what appears in the next issue. There are regular items from the committee but there is space assigned to YOU, our valued members, for your submissions. I am also always very interested to hear what you think of the newsletter and comments are most welcome!

Please submit all contributions for Issue 102 (Winter 2019) by the 1st November 2019 via email, CD, or typed/handwritten letter (in that order of preference) to:

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk or

Ian Matson, 63 Almnors Road, Lyne, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0BH

Advertising with us

We welcome advertisements in the Navigator to assist funding. Rates are as below. Payment is required before copy date. Cheques made payable to "Buckingham Canal Society". 33% reduction for 3 issues.

Whole Page: £16

Quarter Page: £6

Back Page: £22

Half Page: £10

Inserts: £7.50

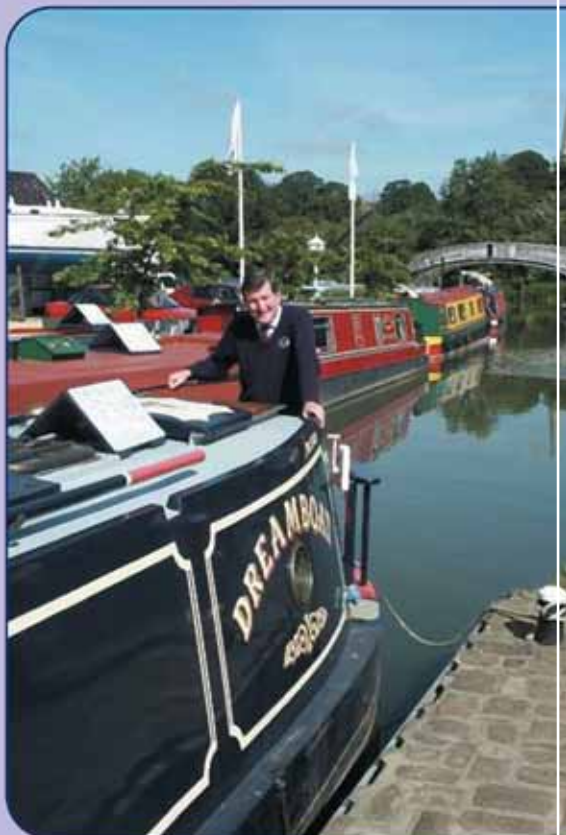
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