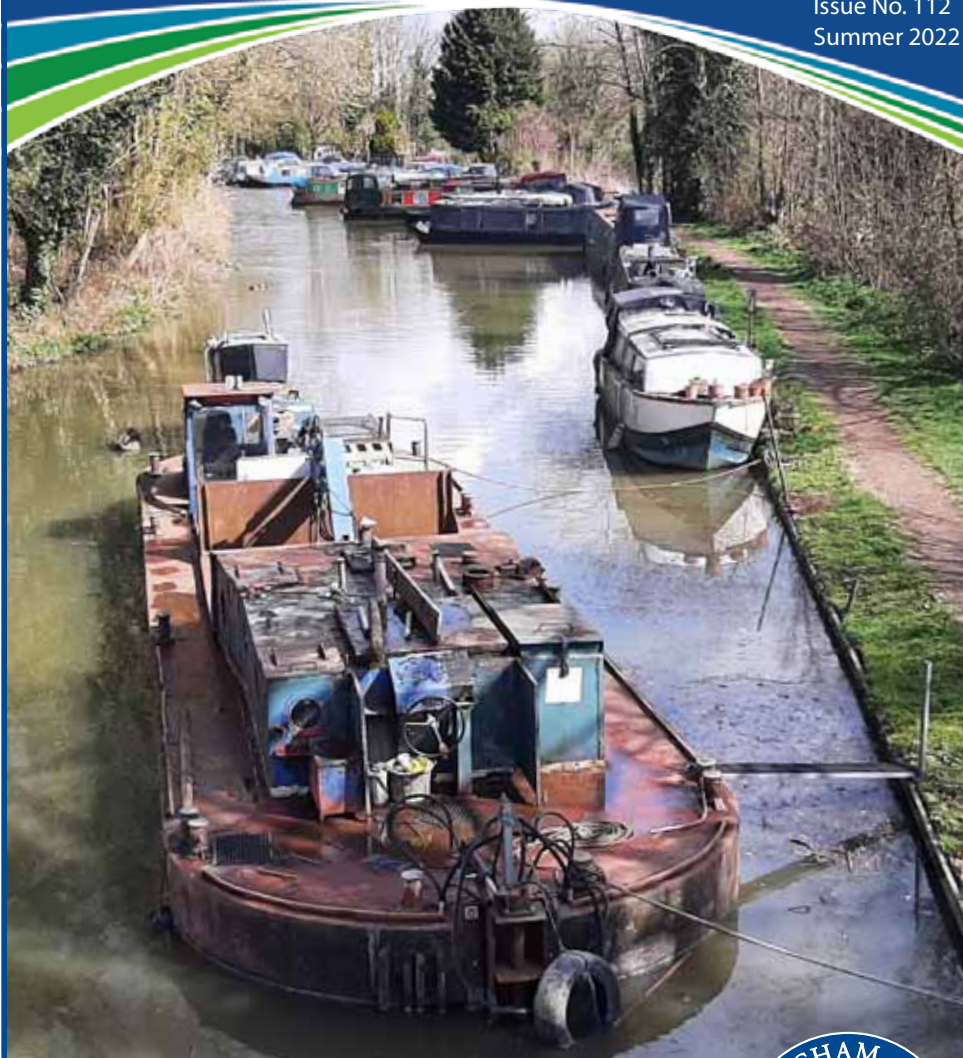


THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR

The Newsletter of Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No. 1156662

Issue No. 112
Summer 2022



Featuring:

- Another Winter, Another Storm...or Two
- Our Canal Festival & Craft Fair is Back!
- Painted Pebbles, Planting Flowers & Poetry



Cosgrove Marina

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Contact us for short, medium and long term moorings.



Mick and Shirley are pleased to support the restoration of the Buckingham Canal.

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Keith Rawlings MISE is proud to support
Buckingham Canal Society's work to restore the waterway to Buckingham

Please re-use this publication which incorporates a variety of information about some of our activities, to promote the work of the Buckingham Canal Society to a friend / neighbour / colleague / relative or other interested people.

Editorial

Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of The Buckingham Navigator.

After one of the worst storms ever to hit our shores, we had a fair amount of destruction to clear up across our sites, especially at the Hyde Lane location. However, we must once again look forward to the positives, and the one big ticket for the summer is back in the shape of our annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair. Taking place on 23rd & 24th July, it promises to be bigger and better than ever before. It will give you all a chance to meet us and show us your support by finding out more about our latest developments whilst enjoying a leisurely and fun time by the water's edge. A well deserved breather for us all I would say! We look forward to welcoming you all back!



Thank you to all the contributors. Cover photo: Our latest addition to the fleet, Perseverance II (aka Percy) is seen moored at Cosgrove shortly after arriving at the end of March (see page 12 for the latest update) © Alan Mynard. **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 29). In addition to our website, we now have a wide social media presence:**

Please visit our website at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Follow/Like us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Reach us on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/bcsocietyuk

Find us on Instagram at: www.instagram.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

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Ian Matson
Editor

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Restoration Site Update



Storm Eunice hit us on February 18th, causing devastating damage throughout the UK. As these images at our Hyde Lane site show, this only compounded the destruction caused by the winter storms just a short time before Eunice's arrival.

Winter Storms Hamper Progress at Cosgrove

As Tigger says... "It's been a funny spring".

Dredging Continues While Dodging the Destructive Winds

This activity has been dominant, but lots of wind has meant that this has been unsafe to do on several dates. The days on which we have managed to make progress has allowed us to remove LOTS of gloop from the arm (**below**). One of the Canal & River Trust folk rocked up a few weeks ago and confirmed he is one of the last 'old hands' to have a dredging ticket, and was last seen dredging up the arm over thirty years ago!



© Terry Cavender

Trees Take a Battering from Storm Eunice and Her Predecessors

Well, they have been falling everywhere at Hyde Lane (**opposite**) and Cosgrove (**cover image**). It is sad to see but inevitable without the appropriate tree management. The good news is that we now have a tree works consent from the council for the whole of the arm at Cosgrove. As it happens, Waterway Recovery Group's Bit in the Middle team have forestry tickets and have cleared the arm to head height! Lots more is to be done with the more elevated and less accessible canopy in the autumn.

Just as important is the planting, and we have now received over twelve hundred trees this past winter, and they have all been planted along various parts of the canal. Some were used for hedging, and others were planted in order to flourish unrestricted so as to realise their full size.



© Terry Cavender

Hedgelaying Efforts Looking Great!

A highly skilled countryside craft, this is certainly one aspect of tree management that is such a rewarding part of what our volunteers do. Some excellent examples have been completed along the ramps at Bridge No.1 and at our Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve at Hyde Lane. There's certainly lots more to do too!

See Issue 111 'Bridge No.1 - Finishing Touches' for more on Bridge No.1's hedgelaying.

Water, Water (Not) Everywhere

It may be obvious to state, but this continues to be a key part of our objective to get to a navigable depth. Leak remediation has been ongoing, and with the additional help of Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group on the weekend of 12th & 13th March, slit trenches have been dug in place (**left**) and gravel laid

on the field track (**below**) to help dissipate any leakage whilst the clay takes hold. We have also put a pipe in at the farm crossing at Cosgrove (**opposite top**) to help move more water in to section two and along towards Bridge No.2.



© Terry Cavender



© Terry Cavender



Repairs are Now Complete On the Sluice Near Bridge No.2

A canal pound needs a flood sluice. It is a mechanism to allow the controlled discharge of the water in the event of a major breach or similar event. We have one at Cosgrove near Bridge No.2 and it has been looking incredibly sad and sorry for many years.

Well, now it is repaired and has a paddle (**below**) thanks to the monumental efforts of various people over recent months. **See Issue 110 'Restoration Site Update' for the story of the sluice restoration project that led to its completion.**



With Restrictions Behind Us, We Need Your Help More Than Ever!

As ever we need more help. Members, volunteers, work party leaders, project team members and even trustees are just some examples. **If you fancy joining us as the restoration continues to get more and more real, please contact any of the trustees using their details on page 30.** All are welcome!

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Smile, and Watch the Birdie at Bourton Meadow!



Having done a lot of work at Bourton Meadow last summer, the site now looks good, but we have had problems with vandalism and our fairly new leaflet box was also stolen. We do have a new box made by Men in Sheds Buckingham which will be installed shortly. To prevent this happening again, a wildlife & security camera is also being installed on site **(left, preparing the pole).**

The plan is to return in the summer to control the growth of the reeds and prevent them from blocking the whole of the canal as they did last year. We will also be cutting back the hedges before they spread to the towpath again and stop people walking along it.

Future plans at this site will include installing a seating area with tables and chairs on the grassy area before the water's edge at the top of the canal. Again, we hope to carry out this task shortly.

At Hyde Lane, if You Want a Job Doing...

The recent storms have given us major problems, mainly at the Hyde Lane site. After several requests to Buckinghamshire Council Rights of Way officers went unanswered, our own volunteers managed to clear the towpath and remove the tree blocking it. There then followed Storm Eunice on 18th February which brought down another tree in exactly the same place as the first tree! This time however, there were also many more trees uprooted along most of the route of the Ouse Valley Way **(opposite)**, and the



council had no choice but to take action. They have recently cleared the whole area of these fallen trees so that people are now able to walk along the towpath once again.

Our work at Hyde Lane continues. Here at our nature reserve, volunteers have replaced all the old stakes and binders along the whole length of the hedgerow which was laid several years ago. Wildflower planting has continued along the offside bank, and we are hoping to see the results of this work soon when the bank comes into bloom.

Even without our help, plenty of wildflowers have again appeared along the towpath side, and a large patch of Bluebells have bloomed on the offside. These Bluebells are the native English species which should make Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust happy. There are some white Bluebells amongst the blue ones, which although they are not the native ones, they are very pretty to look at.

Plans are also in place to install a bridge over the stream that descends from the Hyde Lane lakes, and the next step will be to install the footings for this bridge and the bridge itself in a few weeks time.

As things start to grow, there will be plenty of strimming to do along the towpath to keep everybody busy. Unfortunately, in certain places the Stinging Nettles have taken over and surrounded the recently planted saplings. One of the main tasks has been to clear the areas around these saplings to give them a chance to grow.

As well as the aforementioned bridge project, we also plan to start lock gate painting now that the warmer weather is here. So plenty of rubbing down and painting will be required.

If you or your friends are interested in the work being carried at these two sites, we are always looking for more volunteers to help us out at these sites on alternate Thursdays. Please continue reading overleaf to find out more.

Do You Dig Canals?...We Do!



© Livia Fallarino

Work parties are now held every Tuesday, Thursday and the second & last Sunday of each month and are always friendly, welcoming and very rewarding. Most Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as the second and last Sunday of each month will take place at Cosgrove. Some of the other dates will be at Bourton Meadow or Hyde Lane.

Further information 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/

If you would like to become involved, please contact either myself or Terry using our contact details on page 30.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Health & Safety Refresher

Buckingham Canal Society has a duty of care to its members, volunteers and the public to comply with the Health & Safety legislations in place.

Buckingham Canal Society operates work parties under terms of Insurance provided through the Inland Waterways Association. As a part of this, we work within many of the principles and methods of Waterway Recovery Group.

You will always be given a Health & Safety briefing for any work party. All work parties involving construction machinery, often referred to as plant, will require that you confirm you have watched the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety video (via the link below) within the past twelve months.

Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety video contains important Health & Safety information that all new volunteers need to know. All volunteers are required to watch the Waterway Recovery Group Health & Safety video before they go on site. Please watch the video to find out about Waterway Recovery Group's on site Health & Safety.

This video is only an introduction to site safety, and does not remove the need for a volunteer to have a full briefing about a specific site/project.

For full details of the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety policy along with additional documentation and other important videos, please visit:

www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/wrg-health-safety-video/

For more information about Waterway Recovery Group, please visit:

www.waterways.org.uk/wrg

Buckingham Canal Society News

Our First In-Person AGM in Three Years is a Huge Success



© Terry Cavender

Our first post-pandemic in-person Annual General Meeting & Social Evening took place on Friday 25th March at the Buckingham Community Centre. It was lovely to see so many faces after a couple of years of much smaller events. We did wonder how many would turn up after being forced to change the day from Saturday to Friday, which was due to COVID-19 block-bookings of the hall. In the end we had a near normal turnout, with a total of forty-eight people signed in. We did consider changing venues, but decided to stay put, as it is easy to get to and has plenty of parking. **It would be helpful to receive feedback on the change of day, to find out if there is a preference for a permanent change.**

It wasn't long after starting to set up the displays that the first few people began to arrive, with old acquaintances being renewed. By 19.30 most people had arrived and we were able to make a start on the formal proceedings.

Rob Morris, our Chairman, took the opportunity to introduce Lord and Lady Scott of Foscote to the audience (he of the Iraq war WMD enquiry) as our new patrons. This was their first attendance at one of our events.

The primary business of the evening - presenting the trustee's Annual Report, presenting & adopting the accounts and re-electing trustees - proceeded smoothly. There were no resolutions to put to the meeting this year and there were no questions from the floor. The meeting ended at 20.40.

That made way for what others may see as the main event, the chance to have a chat with old friends whilst having a drink and helping themselves to a few tasty morsels from the buffet table. The socialising over, this year's guest speaker, Alison Leighton, gave an interesting talk on boats built between the 1860s and 1920s at Hayes Boatyard in Stony Stratford (**see photo, page 11**). Some of the boats ended up in strange places, even abroad, and one wonders how they got there and why. Many of the pictures shown during the presentation will have come for her book on the same subject. The talk generated a few questions from the audience and was received very well.

There was just time to choose the lucky winners of the raffle (yes, no-one enters without buying a ticket or two) and selecting the prize of their choice from the winner's table. Someone was eventually forced to take home an exceptionally large stuffed animal (a toy, in case you were wondering). That concluded the evening, leaving the trustees to clear up and make their own way home.

Finally, a thank you to those who bought raffle tickets and donated prizes (even the person who snuck the stuffed animal onto the prize table). The raffle raised £92.00 and donations for the buffet raised £62.00, all of which was much appreciated.

Richard Dwight
Trustee & Treasurer

Perseverance II (AKA Percy)

Percy made the journey to its mooring near Bridge No.1 at Cosgrove by the end of March (**below**), and is gradually being worked upon (**right**) to get her fully operational. **See Issues 109 & 111 for more on the**



story to date. We now have the loan of a flat workboat from Canal & River Trust and have been able to resolve the thrust issues with the hydraulic motor. The cavitation cowling is being adjusted by Matt to further resolve her thrust output. Paint preparation abounds with the application of red oxide primer, to be followed by some colour coats over the summer months.

Can You Help Explain the Mystery of Jaycock?

At the farm at Cosgrove where we cross the canal for access, there is a small inlet. Recently we discovered that this is called Jaycock. We have no idea why. We aim to restore this as a slipway, with more details to follow in subsequent editions of this newsletter. **If anyone has any knowledge of any description relating to this inlet known as Jaycock, please contact one of the trustees using their contact details on page 30.**

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Come and Join Spike at Bugingham Palace



Over the past few months, we have started to create a bug house affectionately known as Bugingham Palace (**left**) at a spot near to Bridge No.1 in Cosgrove. Work is almost complete but it still needs a few finishing touches. We already have one resident by the name

of Spike (**below**), as you can see from the photo. We have also made a start with some planting of soft fruit and herbs for local wildlife and walkers to enjoy.

If you are passing, please feel free to add anything interesting to the Palace.

Colin Levett

Trustee and Grants Officer



The Spring Statement

Hello and welcome to another exciting edition of The Buckingham Navigator. It has been a busy time for us. We held our first full face-to-face Annual General Meeting & Social Evening since 2019, with an outstanding attendance. We were very pleased to have Lord and Lady Scott of Foscote attend and show such ongoing support for our work.

We have held several work parties with the Waterway Recovery Group to look at our small leaks in Section 1 whilst undertaking remediation works. This has had a noticeable positive impact. More materials have been moved to Bridge No.2 to help with those works being undertaken there. The sluice has been fully renovated and is now in fine working condition.

The team have put in many hours of work on Admiral Cavender's fleet to make it ship shape (well workboat shape) and gleaming with new paintwork. Speaking of our fleet, we have now had it confirmed that our fleet has expanded again with the long term loan of a flat workboat from Canal & River Trust.

We have had much interest in our advertisement for a marketing lead to come and assist us in this area by bringing experience and enthusiasm. To add to this, the committee were saddened by the resignation, for health reasons, of our Minutes Secretary Robert Jones. All of us thanked him for the hard work he has put in to keep us all on track. As such we would love to have a volunteer come forward for this role to assist the committee in its smooth running (a personal plea from me, please volunteer quickly before they all gang up and make it my turn to do them).

Looking forward, we have our first Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair since before the COVID-19 pandemic. This promises to be a fantastic day (or weekend) out. Please support us and come along to look at the work we've done, enjoy being beside the water and perhaps do a little retail therapy. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Rob Morris

Trustee and Chairman

Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair

It's the breath of fresh air you've all be longing for! After the unplanned absence over the last two summers, our 27th (which should by now be our 29th) annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair returns to take place over the weekend of 23rd & 24th July. This falls, as is usually the case, one week before the very popular Linslade Canal Festival, thus allowing traders enough flexibility to attend both events and giving the public something to look forward to at either end of the week!

Planning this year's event is now well under way. The main event, as many of you will know, will take place along the canal towpath from Cosgrove Lock and all the way down to the local landmark, the Iron Trunk Aqueduct. We have once again booked Cosgrove Village Hall

after six years of amazing success with the craft fair in that location. Entry to the festival is free throughout, although there is a small charge for the craft fair to comply with council regulations. The Society warmly welcomes you to what will be our biggest & best festival yet!

Don't Leave it too Late to Book Your Trading Space or Mooring!

Bookings for canal and village hall traders as well as the visitor boats opened earlier in the year, and there has been no shortage of applications. If you find you are unable to book a space this year because spaces are filling up fast, we will keep a waiting list open for potential traders and visitor boats in the event that anyone is unable to attend. Any applicant traders and visiting boats would need to make an up-front payment at the time of placing their booking. This keeps us into line with the way other similar festivals are managed and gives us a more predictable income. **See page 16 for booking contact details.**

Soak it All Up Along the Towpath...



Amongst the boat traders we will have all the usual favourites plus a few new attendees. There will be a good mix of charity boats, food suppliers and arts & crafts traders amongst others. Besides the trade boats, there will also be a variety of towpath stalls too, with a wide variety of wares, refreshments and games amongst other things. We will have our own information tent too where you learn of all our latest achievements and of those that are still to come. There will be entertainment too, adding to what will be a wonderful canalside atmosphere and a long overdue day or two out for all the family!

...and Get Crafty in the Village Hall

Located a stone's throw from the canal on Bridge Road, the organisation of the craft fair element of the festival in the village hall is well underway too. We promise a full house again this year, with talented artisan crafters who will bring a variety of unusual and quirky handmade goods to their tables! You will recognise familiar faces and meet new crafters too, but with whomever you meet you will certainly find new designs and plenty to tempt you. The space that the hall provides always means we can hugely increase the amount of traders we can accommodate across the event, both here and at the canalside, rather than being confined to the canal alone.

We pride ourselves on the handmade...with hand turned and rustic wood, decorative prints and oil painted art. You will also find mosaics, ceramics, quirky cards and dolls nestled alongside silver, beaded, ethnic and polymer clay jewellery. And if that's not enough, there will also be fused glass, gin, chutneys and preserves. Some of the crafters are also offering demonstrations too! In addition to all things hand crafted, we will have a room dedicated to pre-loved and vintage items. So there will be all sorts of lovely things to see and buy as a present or a treat for yourself.

We have an external caterer in the village hall this year for the first time, but don't worry, the lady running the kitchen will have a selection of homemade cakes and some hot snacks available throughout the two days. Pop along for refreshments if you start to flag. There will be different offerings this year for you to enjoy. The hall also offers disabled access and toilets.

We Need Your Help Once Again

As always, extra help will be needed to begin setting up the festival on Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd July, and also to dismantle everything at the end of it on Sunday 24th July. As usual, the village hall is booked from 9.00am to 5.00pm on both event days to allow traders time to set up and dismantle stalls.

We would like to thank everybody who helped out way, way back in 2019 (it seems so distant now), but clear your diary as we really do need your help again as we regroup this year. There will be a great variety of tasks to suit all, and we will need assistance with activities including, but not restricted to: Working on the Games Stall; The Lock Ransom, whereby training will be given to operate the lock gates; Mooring the boats; We are also looking to add to our qualified First Aiders where possible, and extra help manning the doors at the village hall. **For these, and many other tasks, report to the information tent on the day, or ideally let us know when you are available in advance - see below.**

Whether you can spare a couple of hours or a whole day, all help would be much appreciated as this event is our one big opportunity where we can reach out to the public to explain our current and future projects and promote the Society. This is especially important as a huge amount has been accomplished since our last event. If you haven't been involved for a while, it's a chance to meet up with the other volunteers. Why not also invite your family and friends along to the event for what is promising to be a very enjoyable weekend! You would also be very welcome to join the boaters on Saturday evening for a fish & chip supper, although this must be booked in advance.

Please Get in Contact Now if You Have Time to Pledge

Work party leaders will be collecting prospective names at forthcoming work parties. However, if you are not able to meet them at one of these in person, but would like help out at the festival, or even book a stall, boat mooring or fish & chip supper, please contact organisers Rob Morris and Amanda Robinson or the Cosgrove Festival Team using either contact details on page 30 & 31. Additional details can also be found by visiting: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/annual-festival/

Ian Matson
Editor

Fundraising for Charitable
Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity Number 1156662

Saturday 23 - Sunday 24
July 2022



**FUN FOR ALL
THE FAMILY!**

COSGROVE CANAL FESTIVAL & CRAFT FAIR

- Historic Boats
- Trade Boats
- Leisure Boat Trips
- Cake Stalls
- Craft Stalls
- Games
- Entertainment



Saturday 10am - 5pm
Sunday 10am - 4pm



Cosgrove Lock,
Lock Lane,
Cosgrove, **Mk19 7JR**

Cosgrove Village Hall,
Bridge Road,
Cosgrove, **Mk19 7JA**

For more information



 buckinghamcanal.org.uk
 events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

This event is organised by the Buckingham Canal Society to raise awareness and funding for the restoration of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal.
Latest information and plans will be on display at the festival

The Spring Wildlife Report

Despite a Stormy Winter, Wildlife is Thriving Along the Canal



Kestrel - female © Ben Sentence

This season has seen an impressive array of four reports at Bourton Meadow through the spring months from local walkers Michael & Diane Hunt. Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, Insects and Flora are represented this time around.

We more or less ended the winter with a bang when Storm Eunice and friends battered the UK, and the treeline along the Buckingham Canal certainly paid the price too! Meteorological winter then morphed into spring, and yet the weather seemed not to follow suit, and it hasn't really shown any sign of producing a decent warm and sunny spell thus far. That said, spring migration for the birds got well underway and has certainly produced a decent crop of rarities across the UK this spring.

BIRDS: The first report of the season, and indeed of the year, was dated the morning of 16th February, just two days before Eunice hit! A single **Cormorant** was noted flying in a direct and concerted manner, as they do, over the meadow. A single **Wren** was seen chattering whilst skulking through the undergrowth, and four highly mobile **Dunnocks** were duly noted too, no doubt including males singing their jangling territorial song to attract a mate.

Also that morning, a trio of Chat and Thrush species were seen, including the ever present **Robin** obliging with a song as always, and a typically harder to pin down **Song Thrush** was observed singing its exhaustive yet beautiful song in the trees along the banks of the Great Ouse. The third was a lonely **Blackbird** foraging for insects. Finally, a **Great Tit** emerged and two singing male **Reed Buntings** made themselves known. The latter is a bird that really favours this stretch of canal for breeding, as you can discover in previous editions.

The second report arrived a month later on 15th March, and was a lot quieter on the avian front. A third record for these pages was of a **Great-spotted Woodpecker** busying itself, flitting between tree canopies, characteristically calling out its single sharp 'chip' repeatedly. A male **Reed Bunting** was singing from the reedbeds, marking its territory.

April saw two visits to site, with the first being on the morning of the 13th. Michael wrote that he had headed out in search of spring migrants that morning. Even if there weren't too many, the morning watch paid off. First up, a female **Kestrel (opposite)** was seen prospecting the meadows, seeking out its next meal, whilst a solitary **Skylark** was cascading in song high above. The cheerful summery song of the Skylark has to be one of my favourites of any songbird.

A first in these pages for Bourton Meadow, Michael reported seeing a stunning **Yellow Wagtail (right)**, which was his first of the year too! To add to that, the more commonly seen, slightly larger but equally colourful **Grey Wagtail** was represented by a singleton too. **See Issue 110 to read 'An Introduction to the Charming Meadow Pipits and Grey Wagtails'.** I'll have add the Yellow Wags now! Watch this space for more in depth species accounts in forthcoming editions.

Another first of the year for Michael and for site was a migratory (and hopefully breeding) **Whitethroat**! Perhaps the first of several for the meadow? To wrap up, a humble male **House Sparrow** (almost unheard of where I live now) and three **Reed Buntings** were making themselves heard.



Yellow Wagtail - male © Karen Bullock
Photography is licensed under Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Finally, the second April walk along the canal was on the 30th. This produced a **Green Woodpecker** (or **Yaffle** - so called due to its loud laughing or yaffling calls, often whilst in flight), a singing **Blackcap** and two more **Whitethroats**.

REPTILES: Also at the end of April, Michael reported seeing a rather large female **Grass Snake**. The first record of the year, it is the latest of several reports of the species at this site since Issue 104!

AMPHIBIANS: A **Common Toad** was heard calling on the morning of 15th March.

INSECTS: The mid March visit saw three early records of **Small Tortoiseshell** Butterflies, with a further one, maybe two seen at the very end of April. A second species, the **Peacock**, was represented by a single example two weeks earlier on the 13th.

FLORA: The **Marsh Marigolds** are a member of the Buttercup family and began to show their first, as Michael describes, “young vibrant leaves” by mid February, with flowering noted by the time mid March came around. Marsh Marigolds have a relatively short flowering period, and is usually over in a matter of weeks, but when in flower, produce such a bright explosion of springtime golden yellow across the banks.

You Can Contribute to The Seasonal Wildlife Report Too!

Hopefully we will continue to see more and more wildlife records for Bourton Meadow and our other sites in the coming months, and who knows, something rare or unexpected too! Do keep your eyes peeled, and not just at the sites in this report. As always, the Society wishes to thank Michael & Diane Hunt for their contributions, which were forwarded to Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

Please let us know of any wildlife sightings along any stretch of 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 the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, please visit: www.bbowt.org.uk.

Ian Matson
Editor

The Community Engagement Report



© Becky Hall

It has been a busy few months in the world of community engagement. As the weather has started to improve, so have the events and opportunities to connect with the outside world. We started February half term with a very successful painted rock hunt. Forty rocks were hand painted **(left)** and then hidden at Cosgrove and Bourton Meadow. The idea was to find them, take a picture and post it on our Facebook page and then either keep or re-hide the rock. Many have been found, and some re-hidden. I haven't found one for a while, but there may be some still out there so keep an eye out!

Planning has begun for the Heritage Open Days event in September. Following the success of our foraging walks last year, I am hoping to create something equally as fun. This year's theme is 'astounding inventions', which is perfect for our canal. **Look out for event details later in the month.**

In March, Buckingham Canal Society was proud to attend the Climate Change: Annual Public Meeting, organised by Buckingham Town Council at the Buckingham Community Centre. We had an information stall and participated in the table discussions which aimed to identify key environmental themes to be addressed. It was well attended and was a very useful meeting. The Council hopes to go forward with the ideas and form Community led Climate Action Groups focussing on the areas identified.

The following evening, I was back again at the Buckingham Community Centre for my first Annual General Meeting & Social Evening for our Society. I was on the welcome desk at the door and it was lovely to meet and greet so many people connected with the canal.

I have been working on getting the Society shop online, and the good news is that it is now live. **Check it out via our website.** There is lots of fab Society merchandise to buy, including Athina's beautiful handmade rag rugs. I have more stock to add and am working on ideas for new products.

We have been recently experiencing quite a flurry of corporate groups wanting to come and volunteer with us, now that COVID-19 restrictions have relaxed and people are getting back to work as normal. It is fantastic to see, and we are taking bookings for groups as far ahead now as October! On Friday 11th March we welcomed a new group of volunteers from Ingram Micro (**right**). It was an absolute pleasure to have them. Despite strong winds and ominous looking rain clouds, the team were enthusiastic, friendly and



worked really hard in progressing the towpath construction work past Bridge No.1 at Cosgrove. We are looking forward to meeting another party from Ingram Micro again on Friday 13th May, as well as many other corporate groups over the coming months.

We are also in the process of arranging work experience for trades students coming to us from Milton Keynes College. There are many opportunities in construction available in our organisation, so it is wonderful to be able to provide the students with the chance to put their learning into practice. In a similar vein, this July we are hoping to welcome some students from Shenley Brook End School who are working on a community volunteering project.

At the end of April, we had our first stall of the year at Buckingham's Spring Green Fair. It was a beautiful, sunny day and the fair attracted a lot of visitors. It was also a productive day and it was lovely to hear some interesting memories from people who grew up nearby and remember the canal.

As summer and the festival in Cosgrove approaches, plans for some lock side planting on Lock Island at Cosgrove are underway. The aim initially is to tidy up the area, do a bit of vegetation clearance and add in some native, bee friendly flowers for colour and variation. Hopefully, come festival time, it will be a lovely spot to sit and watch the canal goings on. **If anyone has any expertise they'd like to share, or would just like to get involved, please do get in touch using my contact details on page 31.**

As if the physical work I do with the volunteer groups wasn't enough, I'm going to be doing a lot of running over the next few months. SixPack Challenge have launched a new series of six routes, called MK Villages, totalling a whole marathon distance. Excitingly, one of these routes follows the Buckingham Canal from Old Stratford to Cosgrove. In addition to this, they have also recently relaunched the Buckingham SixPack Challenge, and the 10k route from that series follows the old canal from Hyde Lane lock back into Buckingham. I have previously completed the original Milton Keynes SixPack Challenge (and got the medal to prove it!) and loved the routes, so I am hopeful that this will be similarly enjoyable. I have a place in the Great North Run in September, so I definitely need the training! **Check out the SixPack Challenge website for further details and how to enter at www.sixpack-challenge.co.uk.**

This week I took part in a local history and storytelling event at Buckingham Library. I created a photo display (**below**) telling the story of the Buckingham Canal and we were

treated to folk stories written by pupils from George Grenville Academy and storyteller Terrie Howey, known as Red Phoenix. There was also music, and some wonderful poetry by Dean Jones, former Bard of Buckingham, including one poem (**opposite**) inspired by the Buckingham Canal! The Buckingham Canal Society display will be on show in the library for the next few weeks.

Plans for the next few months involve, of course, the upcoming Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair, a new display for the Society at The Canal Museum in Stoke Bruerne, stalls at various events and a VisitEngland training event in High Wycombe. Oh, and of course, lots of running!

Becky Hall
Community Engagement Lead



©Becky Hall

Writer's Block by the Buckingham Canal

I recently had the pleasure of meeting a local poet, Dean Jones, who was the first Bard of Buckingham. He is a big fan of the canal at Bourton Meadow. He spends a lot of time there reflecting, and in fact, it even inspired him to write a poem entitled 'Writer's Block by the Buckingham Canal', which he has dedicated to Buckingham Canal Society. He has kindly agreed to let us share it with you below. Enjoy.

*To conquer this dark monster,
This beast that blocks the way;
I might just place my pen down,
Throw that wicked wand away.*

*I'll step into the countryside,
Without curséd pen or phone in hand.
The inspiration that I'm searching for
Buried deep within this land.*

*Earth grips and clings under foot
And darkens these whiter souls.
It's words and rhyme I'm searching for.
Jilted, muted and deserted from its goal.*

*It's writers block, this torture,
I can't ignite my tools with light
It's like a deathly, lethargic, literary lament,
A poet's pathetic, piteous plight.*

*The river winding through the fields,
The gate that's always locked...
...But still, lies my imagination...
A muscle; desperate, detached, defrocked.*

*I reach a canal that begins in Buckingham...
With a middle and an end...?
The shortest tale ever told,
Without twist or turn or bend.*

*A tree with branches dormant,
The reeds blowing in the breeze,
The silent bed of water,
Reflecting everything it sees.*

*It holds on to minute creatures
With life in plentiful supply
It's a slip of hidden heaven,
A gift from nature to the eye.*

*Thank you Buckingham Canal...
for a bit of inspiration
I think I've got my zeal back
Here's to 2020,
A new poem,
A great walk...
And a new dedication.*

Dedicated to the Buckingham Canal Society.

Thanks for the inspiration and all the work that has gone into bringing the Buckingham Canal back to life!

Dean Jones, Buckingham 2020.

For more poems inspired by the canal, as well as his other work, please look at Dean's webpage at: www.lineofpoetry.com/dean-jones-dragonfly-poet/book/poems-by-the-rivers-and-canals-of-buckingham

Photo © Becky Hall

Becky Hall
Community Engagement Lead

Our Publicity & Bric-a-Brac Stall Needs You



© Jonathan Brown

With COVID-19 restrictions now relaxed, our Publicity & Bric-a-Brac stall is once again out and about throughout the year attending canal festivals and village events, while raising funds for the Society. If anyone fancies a change of scene, we readily welcome new people to come along and give a helping hand in running the stall. It's really good fun and you'll also get the chance to attend a wide variety of canal festivals and local events whilst helping to raise funds for our Society to restore the Buckingham Canal. So why not come along and help us make a difference. You won't regret it.

To try and tempt you, some of the festivals previously attended include:

- *Buckingham Spring Fair in April*
- *May Day Fayre at Leighton Buzzard*
- *IWA Milton Keynes Lock Help Weekend at the Three Locks, Stoke Hammond in May*
- *Family Festival Weekend at Stoke Bruerne in June*
- *Braunston & Historic Narrowboat Rally & Canal Festival in June*
- *Our own Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair in July*
- *Linslade Canal Festival in July*
- *The Festival of Water at St Neots in August*
- *Village at War Weekend at Stoke Bruerne in September*
- *Buckingham Christmas Fair in December*

We hope to attend many of these and more once again. The Village at War event is always great fun, as you get the chance to dress up in 1940s costume! It's worth noting that over £1,800 was raised for our canal restoration work by this stall alone in 2019! I'm sure we can beat that now we are back and out & about!

If you have any good quality bric-a-brac that you would like to donate, or would like to give us a hand on the stall this year, please get in touch using my contact details on page 30.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

The Grants & Funding Report

We have had two small successful grant applications during the last period. Firstly, the Society received a grant for £500 from The Skinners' Company - The lady Neville Charity towards the restoration of Bridge No.2. We await approval from Canal & River Trust before this work can commence.

We also received £500 from the B P Collins fund which is managed by Heart of Bucks Community Foundation and will go towards our general costs.

A number of other applications have been made including The National Lottery Awards for All England, the Schroder Charity Trust, East West Rail, the Foundation for Integrated Transport, and lastly, The National Lottery Heritage Fund - Enterprise Development Funding. We eagerly await their responses.

Applications are also envisaged to be issued by Historic England - Everyday Heritage Grants as well as the National Heritage Memorial Fund in the coming weeks.

As always, we are extremely grateful to all of 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

Win Big with Buckinghamshire Lottery

The Buckinghamshire Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes. Buckingham Canal Society has registered with the Buckinghamshire Lottery as a beneficiary.

Tickets are just £1 per week, and 50% of that will come directly to the Society, provided you nominate us as your preferred charity.

Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize, with a top prize of £20,000. Every ticket consists of 6 numbers and each of those is between 1 and 9. There is a draw every Saturday night when a 6 digit winning combination is picked. Match all 6 and you can win the jackpot!

However, before you buy, please do not forget to select Buckingham Canal Society as your preferred charity, otherwise your money will be directed into a general charitable fund, which we do not benefit from. Good Luck!

To play and support BCS you will need to visit the Vale Lottery website to register and buy tickets at: www.buckinghamshirelottery.co.uk.

Funders

We are very grateful for the financial support from all of our funders. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent funders:

- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation - B P Collins Fund
- The Skinners' Company - The Lady Neville Charity
- Waitrose & Partners
- Moto in the Community Trust
- Buckingham & Villages Community Board
- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- The National Lottery Awards for All England
- Co-op - Local Community Fund
- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation for Buckinghamshire - Bucks Coronavirus Stabilisation Fund
- HDH Wills Charitable Trust - Martin Wills Wildlife Maintenance Fund
- Buckinghamshire Council - Local Authority Discretionary Grant
- Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust - Thriving Communities Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Rank Foundation
- The Radcliffe Trust
- The Foyle Foundation

Patrons, Partners & Supporters

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

- Lord Boswell of Aynho
- Lord & Lady Scott of Foscote

We have formal partnerships with the following:

- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckingham Town Council
- Canal & River Trust
- Deanshanger Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Inland Waterways Association - Corporate Member
- West Northamptonshire Council

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of:

- Inland Waterways Association - Milton Keynes Branch
- Inland Waterways Association - Northampton Branch
- Waterway Recovery Group 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



Lionhearts Cruising Club



Taverners Boat Club



The Wyvern Shipping Co Ltd



Inland Waterways Association Northampton Branch

We Support:



Corporate & External Volunteer Groups

We are very grateful to all of the organisations that have ever assisted us with their volunteer groups. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent attendees:

- Waterway Recovery Group - Bit in the Middle
- Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group
- Ingram Micro
- Network Rail
- Waterway Recovery Group -London
- RS Components
- Marsh LLC
- Hallam Land Management Ltd
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Northampton Stake
- Santander
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- McAfee
- Eddyfi Technologies - TSC
- Vinci Technology Centre UK
- Milton Keynes College
- Computacentre
- Stowe House
- Stowe School
- Trees for Cities
- 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

Buckingham Canal Society Craft Group

Our craft group isn't meeting at present because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, but I still continue to make the rag rugs which are sold on our Society stall for £25 each, raising much needed funds for us. **If any members have any unused or old T-shirts which are not wanted, then please get in touch with me using my contact details on page 30.** They can still be used to make even more rag rugs.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Shopping at



Supports BCS

Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support our Society every time you shop, at no further cost to you.

When you shop at www.smile.amazon.co.uk, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as at www.amazon.co.uk, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Buckingham Canal Society, your selected charity.

So smile at our restoration work and please choose to support us so that one day, we will finally have something greater to smile about...a fully restored Buckingham Canal for all to enjoy!

Future Events

Saturday 23rd - Sunday 24th July

BCS Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair

Cosgrove Lock, Lock Lane, Cosgrove,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK19 7JR

Details:

See page 14

Saturday 30th July 11am - 8pm

Linslade Canal Festival

Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, Linslade,
Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 2AE

Details:

www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk

Saturday 6th - Sunday 7th August

IWA Milton Keynes

Fenny Stratford Canal Festival

Towpath south of Watling Street Bridge,
Fenny Stratford,

Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Saturday 27th - Monday 29th August

Inland Waterways Association

IWA Festival of Water

Shobnall Fields, Shobnall Road,
Burton upon Trent, Staffs, DE14 2BB

Details:

01635-414567

event.enquiries@waterways.org.uk

Work Party Dates 2022/2023

July

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

August

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

September

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

October

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

November

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 13th
Sunday 27th

December

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th

January

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 8th
Sunday 29th

February

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

March

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

April

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

May

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

June

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

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 113 (Autumn 2022) by the 1st August 2022 via email, CD, or typed/handwritten letter (in that order of preference) to:

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk or

Ian Matson, 63 Almers 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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Trustee

We are interested to hear from people who would like to join us as trustees.



Trustee

We are interested to hear from people who would like to join us as trustees.



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talks@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Cosgrove Festival Team

events@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.

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Website: www.canalholidays.co.uk Email: wavern@canalholidays.co.uk

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



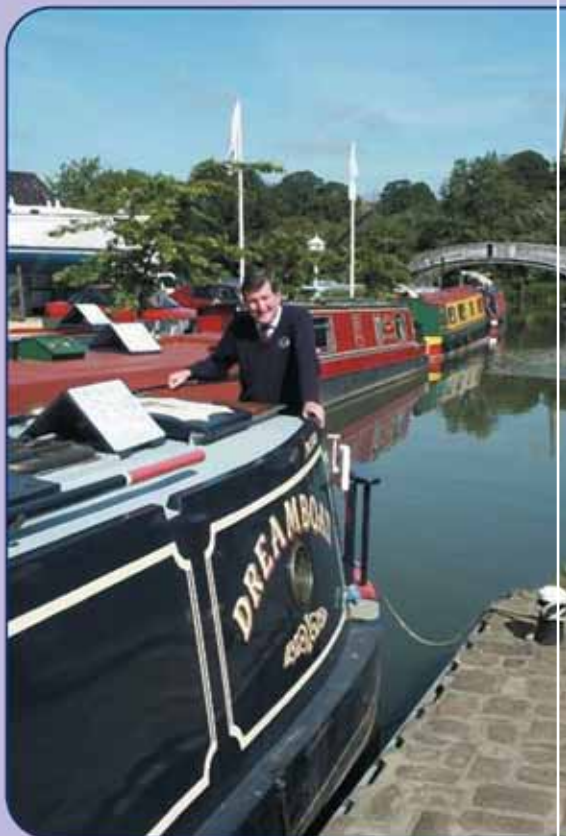
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