

THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR

The Newsletter of Buckingham Canal Society

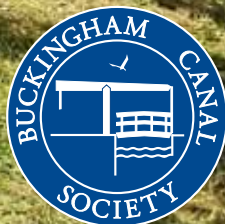
Registered Charity No. 1156662

Issue No. 117
Autumn 2023



Featuring:

- It Takes a Festival to Shake the Summer Blues
- We Are the Champions...Naturally
- Workboat Diana's Complete Engine Overhaul



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 Autumn 2023 edition of The Buckingham Navigator.

It's been a busy summer indeed, and for quite a while a very wet one. With projects progressing and becoming ever more involved and requiring more and more input, we still need much more help. If you or someone you know can lend us a hand at this critical time in the Society's history, please contact us. Whether it's attending work parties, organising public events, taking on lead project roles or even becoming a trustee that interests you, then now is the time to speak up. Very exciting times are upon us now, and you can be part of this tremendous opportunity to broaden or impart your skills with us. **See page 11 for more details.** Finally, as this edition is again jam packed, it is with regret that the Seasonal Wildlife Report has been held back once again.



Thank you to all the contributors. Cover photo: Artisans and visitors basking in the colours and warmth of our annual festival. **See page 14 for the full report.** © Shivanshi Marwah. **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 X at: www.twitter.com/bcsocietyuk

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

Watch us on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

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Ian Matson
Editor

In This Issue

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 Restoration Site Update | 24 The Stars Stream In to Braunston |
| 8 Health & Safety Refresher | 26 Funders |
| 8 Buckingham Canal Society News | 26 Patrons, Partners & Supporters |
| 11 We Still Need More of Your Help | 27 Corporate Members |
| 13 The Summer Statement | 27 Corporate & External Volunteer Groups |
| 14 The Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair...A Heartwarming Community Celebration | 28 Buckingham Canal Society Craft Group |
| 19 The Marketing Report | 28 Future Events |
| 20 Diana's Motivation | 29 Work Party Dates 2023/2024 |
| 22 The Community Engagement Report | 29 Next Navigator |
| | 30 Contact the Committee |

Restoration Site Update



Up to their necks in it...well almost. Volunteers from Santander taking a break from the office and getting plenty of fresh air by undertaking essential annual vegetation control at Bourton Meadow on 11th May. This was one of many site visits by several corporate groups using their yearly allotted team building days.

Work Piles Up at Cosgrove...and Volunteers Stream In



Work still continues with the biggest task in hand currently, and that is with the piling work and the creation of the narrows at the farm crossing site to the west of Bridge No.1 at Cosgrove. What a difference a month makes, from 15th June (**above**) to 27th July (**below**), and that's just the weather! Seriously, as you can see, work has progressed with the piling on the south side, or towpath side. In the image below you can see that deadman piles have been installed and connected to the piling walls with ties and brackets for stability.



We have also been fortunate to have had several corporate groups assist us at our Cosgrove site over the past three or four months. These are mostly arranged with Athina or Shivanshi, and have varied in size from just four people all the way through to over forty at a time! Various tasks have been completed with them, including the preparations for our festival (**see page 14**), moving rubbish recovered from the lock chamber and the canal, and moving materials for our ongoing projects. Furthermore they've helped with the towpath improvement work by laying more stone, assisted in erecting various signs, and contributed to the removal of excess vegetation from the canal and along the bank.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Corporate Groups Wade In and Help Get the Job Done

Bourton Meadow (**below**) looks so beautiful at this time of year with plenty of attractive purple flowers along the banks. Most of the work this summer has been connected with the regrowth of the reeds and the weeds in the canal bed. So as well as hedge trimming, most of our time has been spent clearing the reeds from the banks and the weeds from the canal bed. The best method for this type of work has been to wade in to the canal and remove these reeds and weeds by hand.



Luckily the weather has been warm, so plenty of volunteers have been available to try out this method, including myself who donned waders and ventured into the canal for the first time! A very enjoyable experience indeed in the very hot weather... and a lot of weeds were cleared too! We were helped in these tasks by corporate volunteer groups from Santander on Thursday 11th May (**see page 4**), and Network Rail on Thursday 8th June.

We also have a new interpretation board at Bourton Meadow to replace the earlier one which was vandalised. This board has been updated with some new features too. Please do check out this all new and updated information point when you next walk the canal at Bourton Meadow.

We're Keeping it Ticking Over at Hyde Lane

Because of the wet summer which has caused the extra growth of weeds at Bourton Meadow, most of our volunteer's time has been spent there. We've still kept our hand in at our Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve at Hyde Lane though. We have painted all the lock gates and bench seats, cleared and strimmed the areas around the seating area and strimmed the towpath and part of the canal bank too. The wildflower planting we undertook last year has worked well on the non-towpath side, and looks very attractive.

We have also been running events for children taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme which is something I always enjoy doing. I am hoping to carry on the repair work on the lock chamber in September while working with some of the Cosgrove volunteers.

I always need more volunteers at both sites so please do contact me if interested. See below for more details.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Do You Dig Canals?...We Do!



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

Buckinghamshire Council Local Heritage List

On Thursday 15th June I attended a thank-you event in Aylesbury Museum, arranged by staff from the Local Heritage team. It was an intimate event attended by ten organisations (**opposite, with project team leader Eliza Alqassa, second from right**) that had suggested sites to be included in the listing. Councillor Rachael Matthews gave a short address to congratulate the staff involved in setting up and managing the list, along with those who had put forward suggestions for inclusion in it.

Central government provided funds to twenty-two local authorities as part of a national scheme to help identify and protect local assets that had not been considered for listed building or ancient monument status under existing legislation.

The team had set what they thought was an ambitious target of achieving two thousand nominations, but currently there have been over three thousand, which shows the level of public support. Over two hundred individuals or organisations put forward suggestions.



Almost eight hundred have so far been approved for listing, with nearly nine hundred more being prepared for listing. A handful have been considered important enough to be included in the national scheme. **Buckinghamshire's Local Heritage List can be viewed in full using this link: local-heritage-list.org.uk/buckinghamshire/list**

It's not all buildings and monuments. There are gardens, artworks, open spaces and even street furniture. In fact anything worth protecting from future development works. Planners will be referring to the list when considering future planning applications. Three of the nominations from Buckingham Canal Society have been included on the listing. These are Hyde Lane Lock, Thornton (old) Canal Bridge and Cattleford Bridge west of Thornton.

As part of the event, the staff managing the listing project prepared a light-hearted award ceremony (no prizes or awards involved) so that each organisation attending won a category related to something they had nominated. Our own Terry Cavender won the Fashion Icon award for best dressed on a site visit! No-one wears Hi-vis quite like Terry!

Phase 1 of the project is now closed, but it is hoped there will be a phase 2, when you will be able to nominate other local landmarks within the Buckinghamshire Council administrative boundary. Sorry folks, that excludes Milton Keynes.

Richard Dwight
Trustee and Treasurer

Navigating the Revealing History of Our Canal by Foot

On Tuesday 18th July I lead a five mile walk with my local walking group. The route took us through Stony Stratford Nature Reserve and through the horse tunnel at the Iron Trunk Aquaduct and up on to the Grand Union Canal towpath. We followed the Grand Union

to where the Buckingham Arm meets, and walked the arm before heading back to our starting point in Stony. All this while giving the group a talk on the history of the canal.

This was on the Tuesday evening before the weekend of our Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair (**see page 14**), so I was able to take the opportunity to hand out posters for the coming weekend and invite everyone to join us at the festival. A very pleasurable and engaging evening was had by all, with everybody really enjoying the walk...including Bramble the dog!

Getting the Word Out There About Events in Your Area

If any members know of events or festivals they think might be of interest to other Buckingham Canal Society members, please get in touch. **Could you please forward the details on to me using my contact details on page 30, and I will include them in the newsletter's Future Events column.**

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Barratt Homes Donates Homesteads for Our Little Friends

Recently, local homebuilder Barratt Homes generously furnished the Society with some fancy new pads for our canalside wildlife buddies. These included an RSPB Dewdrop Bee Biome (**below, left**) and an RSPB Silhouette Hedgehog Home (**below, right**). The unveiling of these delightful and useful wildlife homes took place at our annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair (**see page 14**) back in July, and will certainly provide much needed habitats for their target species. Athina said that it was an honour to unveil these gifts at the event.

Not only that, they kindly presented us with a cheque at the festival for £250 (**opposite**) to fund more tools for the upkeep of our various project sites. Athina Beckett said "We are incredibly grateful to Barratt North Thames for donating money towards maintenance tools as these are costly and something that we were in desperate



© Matt Reading



© Matt Reading



need of to keep our vital restoration going.” Marc Woolfe, Director of Sales at Barratt North Thames, said “ We love working with sustainable groups within the communities we build in, and it was great to see our donations already having a positive impact at an event such as the Buckingham Canal Festival.”

Ian Matson
Editor

Engage With Us at Another Exciting Local Heritage Event!

We are delighted to invite you to join us at another upcoming local heritage event, where Buckingham Canal Society will be participating. This will offer a fantastic opportunity to connect with us, learn about our cause, and support our efforts to preserve and celebrate our canal’s rich heritage.

Come to the Oculus Conference Centre in Aylesbury on 7th October for the Bucks Local History Fair for a day of heritage celebration. This event runs from 10am to 4pm and showcases the local heritage, historic buildings, archaeological sites and parks that hold significance to our community. Visit our free stand and display to explore the stories and objects that matter to local people. Learn about the Buckinghamshire Local Heritage List (**see page 8**), which records the county’s local heritage, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

Events such as this are a celebration of our shared heritage and a chance to engage with like-minded individuals and societies. Your presence and enthusiasm will contribute to the preservation and celebration of our canal’s rich history. **For more information, or to express your interest in attending these events, please reach out to us using my contact details on page 30.** We eagerly await the opportunity to connect with you and celebrate our heritage together.

Shivanshi Marwah
Community Engagement Lead

We Still Need More of Your Help!

We Need Your Help With the Piling

Our small team are continuing to make progress with the piling and the creation of the narrows at the Buckingham Arm farm crossing near Cosgrove, albeit with dwindling numbers as the holiday season approached. Some good additional help from corporate groups was welcomed, but we still NEED MORE HELP to continue with the work to get this section open and the piling completed as there’s lots more to do. No experience

is required, so if you have a few hours free, please come and join us on Tuesdays or Thursdays most weeks. We are now at the stage of having the stop planks in place and banging away at the next group of piles before completing the rest of the piling on the towpath side.

We Need Your Help With the Boats and Plant Too

Diana is now fully functional (**see page 20**) and has already had her maiden dredging experience with us at Cosgrove, which was successful. We do still NEED MORE HELP with operating her and our other boats, excavators and other plant to enable us to progress the various tasks at Cosgrove, and yes, that includes even more dredging! We also NEED MORE HELP to sort out maintenance activities on the boats and the plant we have in order to keep it operational, safe and compliant.

We Need Your Help to Shake Off the Festival Blues

This year's Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair was a good event (**see page 14**), but the support from others was somewhat lighter than in previous years. So much so, I question if the festival is viable, with several of us maturing like cheese along with health ailments that affect us stalwarts. We NEED MORE HELP to arrange, setup and dismantle everything at our annual event. I'm not sure how more unsubtle I can be!

However, I must give a huge thank you to those who did help out with the event including the planning, manning, setting up, taking down, transportation of stuff, boat moorings and signage etc. We now have a great checklist for the next event with lots of spaces to write peoples names against tasks. As they say, many hands make light work.

In Fact, We Just Need More of Your Help With Everything!

You don't have to get muddy, but you can if you want. You don't have to turn up every week, but you can if you want.

In order to keep the great work that the whole team has achieved over the years trundling forward, we NEED MORE HELP on the ground with events, fairs, markets, and walks etc. We NEED MORE HELP at practical levels with vegetation control, bricklaying and construction etc.

We also NEED MORE HELP to organise and plan work parties, events, maintenance, and you can even get involved in project planning and document writing etc. We could even do with a few more trustees. And at the risk of being ageist, we need some young folk to help keep the Society going through the next however many years. Here I consider under sixty to be young, but will happily welcome the over sixties as well.

So please talk to your family, neighbours, friends, colleagues, dogs, cats, cattle (you get the idea) about getting involved and proving that this is not impossible! **Please more details, please reach out to me or any of the trustees using our contact details on page 30.**

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

The Summer Statement

Hello and welcome to our latest edition of The Buckingham Navigator. For those following our social media postings, you will have seen all the progress made, as well as the fantastic festival we had at Cosgrove! For those not yet following us then I would highly recommend it as you will see regular updates and photos of all the ongoing work by our team of hardy volunteers. The stop planks are now in at the old farm crossing near Cosgrove, as well as the piling, leading to the canal slowly filling up bringing it to almost navigable depth as I write. Here's hoping that later this year the stop planks under bridge one can be removed (given how hard they were to fit, I suspect this will be a more challenging task than currently anticipated), and the slow increase in depth allows the clay on the banks to rehydrate and swell to form a watertight channel.

With all the progress at Cosgrove, it is easy to forget that we have other sections in water which require ongoing maintenance and care. This is ably undertaken by a regular team of volunteers on Sundays and every other Thursday. This hard work has created a magnificent habitat for wildlife, and there can be few better opportunities on a sunny evening than to go to one of these sections and sit quietly as the sun sets, watching nature in all its beauty.

Looking back to my very first visit to Cosgrove, I was nagged into going as it would be good for me to go out and have something to do. I didn't imagine from that first day in the void under what is now Bridge No.1 just how much could be achieved in such a short space of time by volunteers. These volunteers are the strength of the Society, and I would strongly encourage everyone to give a little time to actively volunteer, even if it's just once every couple of months. There are many different jobs that are undertaken, so something suitable can likely be found to meet peoples needs or abilities.

We recently held our annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair, and despite the weather not being full of the glorious sunshine of last year, the feedback and comments I have seen clearly demonstrate the support the Society has, and that a great time was had by all. As well as the canalside event, the usual craft fair took place in the village hall. This was very well supported, with people going home with lots of new purchases to go with the treats they bought from our assortment of fantastic canalside traders. **See page 14 for the full report.**

Many thanks have to be given to all those responsible for organising the event and the volunteers working on the weekend who made it all possible, despite some last minute challenges, the smallest of which was my not being able to attend due to health issues. Here's hoping you all had a fantastic summer!



© Matt Reading

Rob Morris
Trustee and Chairman

The Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair...



...A Heartwarming Community Celebration!

Over the weekend of July 22nd & 23rd, Cosgrove Marina and Village came alive with laughter, creativity, and a true sense of togetherness. It was an event like no other, where everyone from young to old found something delightful to enjoy.

At the heart of this fantastic gathering was our close-knit community, coming together to celebrate the beauty of our canal and the talented artisans within our midst. The festival was a perfect example of how our community spirit shines bright, creating memorable moments for everyone involved.

This year's Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair marked a digital milestone, being listed

on Google Events and Eventbrite. With over one hundred online reservations, it attracted a diverse range of attendees, embracing modern convenience and widening its reach.

Activities for All Ages: A Celebration of Fun and Exploration

The event provided a fantastic array of activities, ensuring there was never a dull moment. Kids and families were delighted by a thrilling lucky dip (**right**), scavenger hunt and a Wordle challenge, where young minds explored the canal's scenic surroundings with glee. It was lovely to see children laughing and making new friends while enjoying the great outdoors.



Vibrant Vendors and Unique Crafts: Showcasing Local Talent

Our local artisans truly outdid themselves with their creative crafts and delightful offerings. From eye-catching paintings to beautifully handcrafted items, our talented vendors captured the hearts of festival-goers.



Charlottes Arts, Cruising Crafts (**above**), Crystal Cat Gifts and Ian Freemantle's Wood Sculptures from the One Tree Project were but a few of the many inspiring and creative vendors in attendance. Their passion and dedication were evident in every piece they showcased, with Ian Freemantle's exquisite wood sculptures breathing life into nature's wonders.

Festive Food and Treats: Satisfying Every Palate

Ah, let's talk about the mouthwatering treats that graced the festival! Pecorella Ice Cream kept everyone cool and refreshed with their scrumptious ice creams, while Daisy's Bakin Butty served up yummy bacon rolls that had us all drooling. For those with a sweet tooth, Oh So Dough (**right**) offered irresistible doughnuts that disappeared as fast as they were served.



Community Partners and Awareness: Caring for Our Waterways

The festival was not just about all the fun and festivities; it also served as a platform to raise awareness for our precious waterways. Canal & River Trust and Accessible Waterways Association (**left**) played a vital role, spreading awareness about the importance of preserving and protecting our beautiful canal. Their dedication to this cause is truly commendable.

Music, Raffle, and Joyful Moments: An Unforgettable Evening

As the sun set, the festival came alive with live music by River Mouse (**below, on Sunday**) on Saturday evening. The sweet melodies and toe-tapping beats had everyone dancing and swaying to the rhythm, creating an enchanting atmosphere that filled the air with joy and laughter. But the excitement didn't stop there! Throughout the weekend, we were entertained by an array of talented performers, each bringing their own unique flair to the festivities.



But the real showstopper was the much-anticipated raffle! The traders were in for a treat, and the lucky winners walked away with fantastic prizes, courtesy of our supportive local businesses. Among the delightful prizes were haircut vouchers from HK Hair based at Furtho Manor Farm, delectable cakes from Isla Jane Bakery in Buckingham, a sumptuous meal for two from Dipalee Lounge also in Buckingham, and even bottles of fine wine from The Mitre Pub in...well you guessed it...Buckingham.

And as the evening festivities continued, the aroma of fish & chips filled the air, courtesy of our local food vendors. There's nothing quite like savouring crispy fish and golden chips, surrounded by friends and neighbours, to make the evening truly special.

This unforgettable evening was made possible by the incredible talents of our performers, the generosity of our local businesses, and, of course, the unwavering support of our beloved community. Together, we created joyful moments that will be cherished for years to come.

A Resilient Spirit: Rain or Shine, Our Community Prevails

Despite a little rain on Saturday, our community spirit remained undeterred. We saw everyone rallying together, making the most of the festival's offerings and spreading positivity all around. And boy, did Sunday shine brightly! The sun smiled upon us, and more visitors joined us to make Sunday an absolute blast (**right**).



Radio Buzz: Spreading Festival Spirit and Awareness!

The festival was further energized by the presence of BRMG Radio. Throughout the weekend, the radio station conducted engaging interviews with various festival participants, including Linny Beaumont from Canal & River Trust, Tracy Clarke from Accessible Waterways Association, our very own Terry Cavender, and Nick Lake from Friends of Raymond (**right**), just to name a few.

These lively interviews not only shed light on the importance of preserving our waterways, but also showcased the passion and dedication of individuals and organisations working to safeguard our natural treasures.

BRMG Radio, with their energetic hosts, kept the festival atmosphere buzzing, spreading the festival's spirit far and wide beyond our community. Their presence further strengthened the sense of unity and community that was at the heart of the event. It was a joy to see our local talents and activities reaching a broader audience through the radio waves, making the Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair a truly memorable experience for all.



Thank You, Our Wonderful Community!

As we bid adieu to the Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you - the vendors, the participants, the organizers, the volunteers and the visitors. Your support and enthusiasm made this event a tremendous success and a true testament to the power of our vibrant community. We eagerly look forward to more such joyous occasions in the future, where we can come together, celebrate our unique talents, and strengthen the bonds that make us the tight-knit community that is Buckingham



Canal Society. Until the next time, keep smiling, stay united, and let's continue to make Cosgrove a place where love, creativity, and also togetherness thrive!

**Shivanshi
Marwah**
Community
Engagement Lead

The Village Hall Artisans Get Their Own Live Music!

The festival weekend started with a poor weather forecast, which did not bode well. Despite this, or perhaps because of this, soon after opening time on Saturday had passed, a steady stream of visitors made their way to the craft fair in the village hall. This year more space was found for a few more stalls with some new faces, as well as the regulars. It turned out to be a fairly dull and wet day, but around three hundred and fifty adults passed through, if only to make use of the facilities, get a hot drink and sample the home-made cakes.



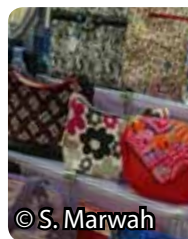
© Richard Dwight

Various activities had been planned for the canalside festival, but one of the entertainers was unable to perform because their equipment was not compatible with the rain. Well, that was the canalside's loss and the village hall's gain! Just after 4.30pm someone

came in and asked if we would like them to perform in the hall. After a brief discussion it was agreed that they could, and the band known as The Fabulous Miss Jones (**above**) set up their keyboard and sound system and started their set. It should have been a trio, but their saxophonist had to be elsewhere, so it was just the singer and keyboard player left to perform. They played half a dozen jazz/swing songs for the assembled few, as by now nearly all the visitors to the craft fair had gone, bringing the stallholders day to an end.

All back again on Sunday morning, starting the day with a bacon butty, thanks to our on-site caterers. The weather was much improved, with sunshine and no rain, so a slower start to the day. Visitor numbers picked up as the day progressed, and by closing time were up to about four hundred, creating a huge buzz amongst our creative folk with their gorgeous and colourful creations (**below**), with many not seen here before. All the stallholders seemed to have a good day. Once they had all packed up it was down to the usual few to pack away all the tables, sweep and mop the floors and leave all as we found it.

Richard Dwight Trustee and Treasurer



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The Marketing Report

We Are the Champions, Naturally!

Hello there! As we bid adieu to the Festival wave and the gentle warmth of summer, we hope you've had your fair share of sun-soaked days and golden tans.

Let's take a moment to reflect on the events that shaped our recent journey. First and foremost, a heartfelt thank you to each individual and organisation that stood by us – before, during, and after our festival. Your unwavering support and contributions have woven a tapestry of success for our Society.

A resounding applause to our incredible volunteers! With each work party, you've marched alongside us, bringing us closer to our ultimate goal of rejuvenating the canal. Special mentions go to the spirited students of Cranfield University's Green Team, and the venerable staff of Network Rail and Santander, amongst others, who dedicated hours of work to us at Cosgrove. Together, we cleared the towpath and added fresh strokes of paint, a true display of collective determination.

Speaking of accolades, Buckingham Canal Society received a remarkable honour – the Natural Environment & Climate Champion Award from Buckingham Town Council (**right**). This recognition echoes the dedication our Society pours into safeguarding our natural haven. It's a testament to the passion and drive that you, our supporters, infuse into our cause.

And that's not all! The spotlight turns to the horizon where exciting new partnerships await. The esteemed Buckingham University is intrigued by our strides in enhancing biodiversity. Their interest aligns with our vision, igniting a spark of collaboration that promises even greater achievements in this realm.

Behind the scenes, our Community Engagement Lead deserves a standing ovation. Shivanshi's relentless efforts have paved the way for substantial support and visibility, propelling us toward our dreams with unwavering determination.

As we look ahead, our gaze extends beyond the summer rays. With winter on the horizon, we welcome the prospect of new financial partners and eager volunteers. Together, we shall script a tale of progress that echoes through the seasons.

Thank you for being the heartbeat of our Society. Stay tuned for more inspiring updates as we continue this journey, one step at a time.



Edima Inwang
Trustee and Marketing Manager

Diana's Motivation

As you can read in the 'Diana's Dramas' item in the Spring 2023 edition of The Buckingham Navigator, when we went to fetch our dredger from Apsley we immediately encountered problems with her engine. After some preparation, we initially managed to get the engine running only for it to come to a smoky halt. It soon became apparent that the engine had seized (a seized engine is one where it will not rotate at all!). The only way of investigating the cause and repairing it is a complete strip-down of the engine, which in turn can only be performed by removing the engine from the boat and taking it to a workshop, or more precisely, to the garage at my house!

If you haven't done so already, please read the aforementioned article to see the trials we had in returning Diana to Cosgrove.



Removal of the engine was quite straight forward and workboat Louise, with her HIAB (Hydrauliska Industri AB) crane, made light work of lifting the 68Kg engine out of the hold and onto a trailer positioned on the quayside. It was amazing to see such a heavy weight hanging from a small lifting hoop provided on the engine for that very purpose! A short journey down the A5 and the trailer, with engine still on board, was residing within my garage (**left**).

Given its weight, there was no way to remove the engine from the trailer, so all work on it would be done whilst it rested within it. The first job was to give it a blast with a pressure washer as it was covered with layers of dirt and thick oil from years of use, and as a result of its submerging in the canal (**right**). Once it was mostly clean, I could start on the methodical process of taking it to pieces and finding out what was wrong.

Stripping an engine is a fairly simple process if you have the right tools. Generally, there is only one way to do it, with all parts being held in place by other parts. Just find the starting point and slowly remove the subsequently exposed components. The only thing to remember is exactly what part goes where so that you know where to put it back when rebuilding! In this instance, this is a two-cylinder engine, and if you want to reuse components then parts from the two cylinders should not be mixed up. This is because over time, they develop wear patterns and damage can be caused by mismatching these parts.

Whilst stripping the engine it was evident that some work had been done in the past. In particular, one of the cylinder heads had been replaced. This was not a cause for concern as these Lister engines are very robust and rebuilds are not uncommon.



The more I removed, the more it became obvious that the cause of the seizure was the main crank shaft. Everything else came off easily, but still the crank would not turn. Finally, the only thing left was the flywheel and crank itself, and this was a problem to me. I did not have the appropriate tools available to remove the flywheel. Professional help was required. Thankfully, Terry had encountered a professional engineer who could assist. An appointment was made for him to visit me...

Next problem...The engineer caught COVID-19! This was to cause the first delay in getting the engine fixed. It would be almost a month before he recovered and was able to get to me.

Eventually the flywheel was removed, and with some reluctance the crankshaft was extracted (**right**). Finally, with the last component taken out, it was clear that it was the cause of the seizure. The centre bearing was locked solid. When finally split from the crank it was obvious that the bearing had failed, overheated and the 'white' metal melted.

Now to fix...More professional help was required. The crank would need to be 'ground' to clean the bearings ready to take new 'shells'. The grinding has to be done on a specialist lathe and to a precision of thousandths of an inch. A crank can be reground only a few times before you get to the limit of what it can take. So, as I took it to the engineers, I had my fingers crossed that it would still be within limits.



A few days later the bad news came back...but not the bad news I was anticipating. Upon close inspection, when preparing the grind, the engineer discovered two hairline cracks in the crank on the bearing that had seized. This was terminal, in other words it was non-repairable!

Let's sum up what had been found...When we first attended Diana to bring her back from Apsley, we found the oil emulsified. We replaced the oil and managed to start the engine, but it soon failed and seized. Whilst stripping the engine down I found many traces of poor maintenance and possibly signs that it had been underwater before we acquired it (remember it had been sitting in the marina for several years, unused and unattended). It's possible that the crack in the crank was the cause of the seizure. But more likely in my opinion was that running the engine with poor quality oil, both before and after we acquired her, caused overheating in the bearings and the subsequent crack.



Now the next major delay: we needed to source a new crank. Luckily there is a specialist company, Sleeman & Hawken Ltd, that can provide brand new and used parts for these old engines. They had a used crank that could be prepared for us... the bearing would be ground and new shells provided. Several weeks later the crank and a box of other parts for the rebuild arrived (**left**).

The time spent waiting for these to arrive was not wasted: all the internal parts that had been stripped out of the engine were thoroughly cleaned and inspected. All were OK. The main crank case and other visible components were also cleaned and then given a fresh coat of Lister 'Mid-Brunswick' green paint.

Finally, the reassembly began. Everything went together with reasonable ease. Just like the disassembly, reassembly can only be done in one order: D follows C, follows B, follows A, etc. I didn't need to call in the engineers to replace the flywheel: having seen what they did to move it I decided that with the correct tool, and with assistance from Matt to lift the very heavy flywheel, I could do it myself. The tool (a VERY big socket) was expensive, but not as much as the labour charge for having the engineers attend yet again!

Now the big day came: the fuel line was attached to a can of diesel and the engine turned over by hand to prime the fuel pumps. Then a battery was attached and a temporary starter switch installed. The switch was flipped. The starter motor turned the engine...it fired into life! Yippee. First attempt and it was working! Relief!

The trailer, with rebuilt engine was driven away from my garage and taken back to Cosgrove. Louise and her crane did the reverse job of lifting the engine back into Diana's hold (**right**). Almost finished, there was still some replumbing and rewiring needed to be done. And then the day came when the engine could be restarted when back in its proper home. Another clean start. Everything was working as it should!

The story of Diana and her transformation into a working boat for the Society will continue in a future edition of The Buckingham Navigator.

Alan Mynard

Website Administrator and Archivist



The Community Engagement Report

Empowering Communities and Nurturing Bonds: A Journey of Impact and Connection

As we reflect on the incredible journey of Buckingham Canal Society since our last newsletter, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support and enthusiasm shown by each one of you. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, creating a positive impact on the lives of individuals and the communities we serve.

In an endeavour to ease the financial burden on our cherished patrons, we proudly joined hands with Free Wills, a non-governmental organisation. Through this partnership, members of our community can now have their wills made for free, from the convenience of their homes, liberating them from the heavy expenses often incurred when seeking legal assistance. Witnessing the empowerment and sense of security this initiative brings to our supporters warms our hearts.

We firmly believe that every child deserves love, care and opportunities for growth. Collaborating with Milton Keynes University, we have embarked on a meaningful journey of empowerment for children with special needs. Through various programs and activities, we intend to foster an environment where these young individuals can thrive and fulfil their potential.

As the sun shone down on the Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally (**see page 24**) and the Linslade Canal Festival, we basked in the joy of connecting with numerous like-minded individuals, passionate non-governmental organisations and dedicated supporters. The festivals provided us with the perfect platform to not only raise funds through generous donations and bric-a-brac sales, but also to deepen our connections with the wider community. The enthusiasm and attachment people demonstrated to various aspects of our work only strengthen our resolve to continue making a positive impact.

The Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair left an indelible mark on our hearts. Over the weekend, we witnessed the tremendous reach of our Society and the profound influence we have on the lives of everyone involved, from the traders to the surrounding community...and even the pets. It was truly heartwarming to see our community coming together, united by a common cause and the love for our canals. **Please read the full story on page 14.**

As this goes to print, the MK Heritage Open Days will have taken place. The inspiring and creative activities we devised involved a hedgerow recipe walk, treasure hunt, and two online poem and prose competitions. These events celebrate our shared heritage and bring us closer as a community, cherishing the roots that bind us.

In our commitment to inclusiveness and engagement, we are working with Inland Waterways Association and Canal & River Trust to drive under-fifty engagement, ensuring that the torch of passion for canals burns brightly in the younger generation. To each and every member of our community, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Your unwavering support has enabled us to embark on this inspiring journey of community engagement and connection. Together, we are building a society that cares for one another, cherishes our canals, and embraces the future with hope.

As we continue on this path, we invite you to be a part of our upcoming events and initiatives. Together, let us create a legacy of impact and nurture the bonds that make us a thriving and united community.

Shivanshi Marwah
Community Engagement Lead

The Stars Steam In to Braunston

Steady As She Goes for the 2023 Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally

Despite the cost of living crisis, this year's Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally - held in its traditional slot over the last weekend in June - remained as popular as ever. A total of eighty-two historic narrowboats attended, versus eighty-one last year, with the boats coming from all corners of the waterways. And the numbers would have been much higher, if it were not for mechanical problems, perhaps to be expected with these old canal leviathans. Indeed, the Coventry Canal Society's working narrowboat Panther failed to attend for the second year running due to mechanical problems which happened shortly before its intended departure. With fine weather, attendance by the public was also very encouraging. Car park takings were fractionally ahead of 2022. Now successfully revived, the annual Braunston rally remains by far and away the largest rally of historic narrowboats anywhere on the inland waterways.



© Tim Coghlan



© Tim Coghlan

Most disappointingly for this year was the absence again of President, the last surviving steam narrowboat, where the problem of building a new steam boiler to modern standards continues. President, with its butty Kildare, were to have been the stars of the Rally, leading the opening parade. Instead, by way of 'Plan B', Kildare did come, and was towed in that opening parade by the replica steam canal tunnel tug Hasty, with music legend and steam enthusiast Pete Waterman (**above, left**) at last at the helm.

The opening took the now well established format of the chosen pair of boats entering the marina from the canal under the famous Horseley Ironworks bridge to a peel of bells from Braunston Church - 'The Cathedral of the Canals'. Serenading the pageant with fine music was Daventry Brass.

Following Hasty and Kildare were the Braunston based historic pair of boats, the Nutfield & Raymond. In their holds were a number of celebrity guests, including actor and canal enthusiast 'Poirot' - Sir David Suchet and his wife Lady Sheila (**above, right**) - both Vice Presidents of the Inland Waterways Association. Also Richard Parry, CEO of the Canal & River Trust, and Tony Hales OBE, retired Chairman of the Canal & River Trust. Tony still continues his passion for the waterways and has attended every Rally since 2009, and hopes to continue doing so for as long as he can.



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 magnificently re-restored Dory, with its Bolinder engine, co-owned by David Ross and his partner Tracy Pearce. The seventy foot boat was built by Yarwoods of Northwich in 1934 for Fellow, Morton & Clayton. As well as that Buckby Can to be held for a year, David and Tracy also received £250 worth of Midland Chandlers vouchers, generously sponsored by them.

The Guild of Waterways Artists were again provided with their own marquee, sponsored by Braunston Marina, and ten of its members had their works on display, including the great canal artist Dusty Miller, who was also book-signing his new book on his life as a waterways artist. There was also a trade marquee shared with a number of canal societies. Leo McNeir, novelist and canal crime writer had a stand, where he signed copies-for-sale of his very latest book called Ivory Tower. Amazingly this book is the 14th in the Marnie Walker series, which has included greats, like Death in Little Venice. Canal societies were also outside, as were a number of good causes like the RNLI, which were given free space.

The Rally is also billed as a canal festival - in the fine tradition of the first Inland Waterways Association Rally held at Market Harborough in 1950, inspired by its co-founder Robert Aickman. Entertainments included the canal-travelling Alarum Theatre, with their new play 'Rats, Ropes & Revolution', billed as 'A woman's story of the Boatmen's Strike'. The play marked the centenary of that fourteen week event in 1923, which only hastened the end of canal carrying forty years later. This year the Rally's resident music-impresario Janul produced, as she has for some years now, the amazing musicians for the beer tent - a mini-Glastonbury, without the mud. Children were entertained by Professor Diamond's Punch & Judy Show.

On the Sunday evening, to close the event, the Rally sponsored a candle-lit choral concert by Fiori Musicali performing William Byrd's music to mark the four hundredth anniversary of his death in 1623. The venue was across the meadows from Braunston at the ancient church of Wolfamcote. This was to raise awareness of this redundant church and the funds needed for its preservation.

The Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally is sponsored by Braunston Marina and Towpath Talk, and is supported by the Canal & River Trust. Braunston Marina will be hosting the event again next year on the same last weekend in June, 2024, with David Suchet opening it, hopefully aboard the restored President.

Tim Coghlan
Managing Director, Braunston Marina

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:

- Co-op - Local Community Fund
- Buckingham & Villages Community Board
- The Woodroffe Benton Foundation
- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation - B P Collins Fund
- The Skinners' Company - The Lady Neville Charity
- Waitrose & Partners
- Moto in the Community Trust
- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- The National Lottery Awards for All England
- 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:

- Network Rail
- Mitie Group plc
- The Coca-Cola Company
- Galliford Try Holdings plc
- BayWa r.e. UK Ltd
- Santander
- Cranfield University
- Ingram Micro
- Cummins
- Arriva UK Bus - Procurement
- Audi UK
- HSBC UK Bank plc
- British Telecommunications plc
- The Royal Latin School
- Milton Keynes College
- NHBC
- Sava
- Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles
- Waterway Recovery Group - Bit in the Middle
- Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group
- Waterway Recovery Group -London
- RS Components
- Marsh LLC
- Hallam Land Management Ltd
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Northampton Stake
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- McAfee
- Eddyfi Technologies - TSC
- Vinci Technology Centre UK
- Computacentre
- Stowe House
- Stowe School

Buckingham Canal Society Craft Group



©Edima Inwang

Our craft group still isn't meeting, but I still continue to make the rag rugs which I am hoping to sell at the many planned visits to canal festivals and events throughout the coming year. These 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

Future Events

Tuesday 10th October 7.30pm

IWA Northampton

Talk: Water Power in the Nene and Avon Waterways - John Pomfret

The Boat Inn, Bridge Road, Stoke Bruerne,
Nr Towcester, Northants, NN12 7SB

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Thursday 19th October 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Talk: The Chelmer & Blackwater Canal
- John Pomfret**

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Tuesday 14th November 2.30pm

IWA Northampton

**Talk: The 1923 Boatmen's Strike
- Kate Saffin**

The Boat Inn, Bridge Road, Stoke Bruerne,
Nr Towcester, Northants, NN12 7SB

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Thursday 16th November 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Talk: The Cromford Canal
- Hugh Potter**

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Thursday 15th December 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

Christmas Social

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN.

Details:

www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes



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Work Party Dates 2023/2024

October

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 8th
Sunday 29th

November

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

December

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

January

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

February

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

March

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

April

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

May

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

June

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

July

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

August

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

September

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 8th
Sunday 29th

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 118 (Winter 2023) by the 1st November 2023 via email, CD, or typed/handwritten letter (in that order of preference) to:

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk or

Ian Matson, 63 Alnners 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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Cosgrove Festival Team

events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk



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



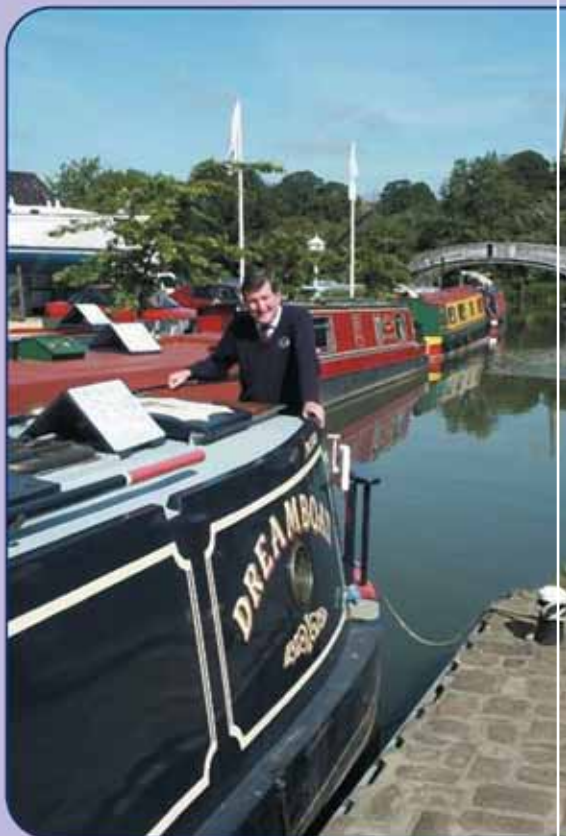
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