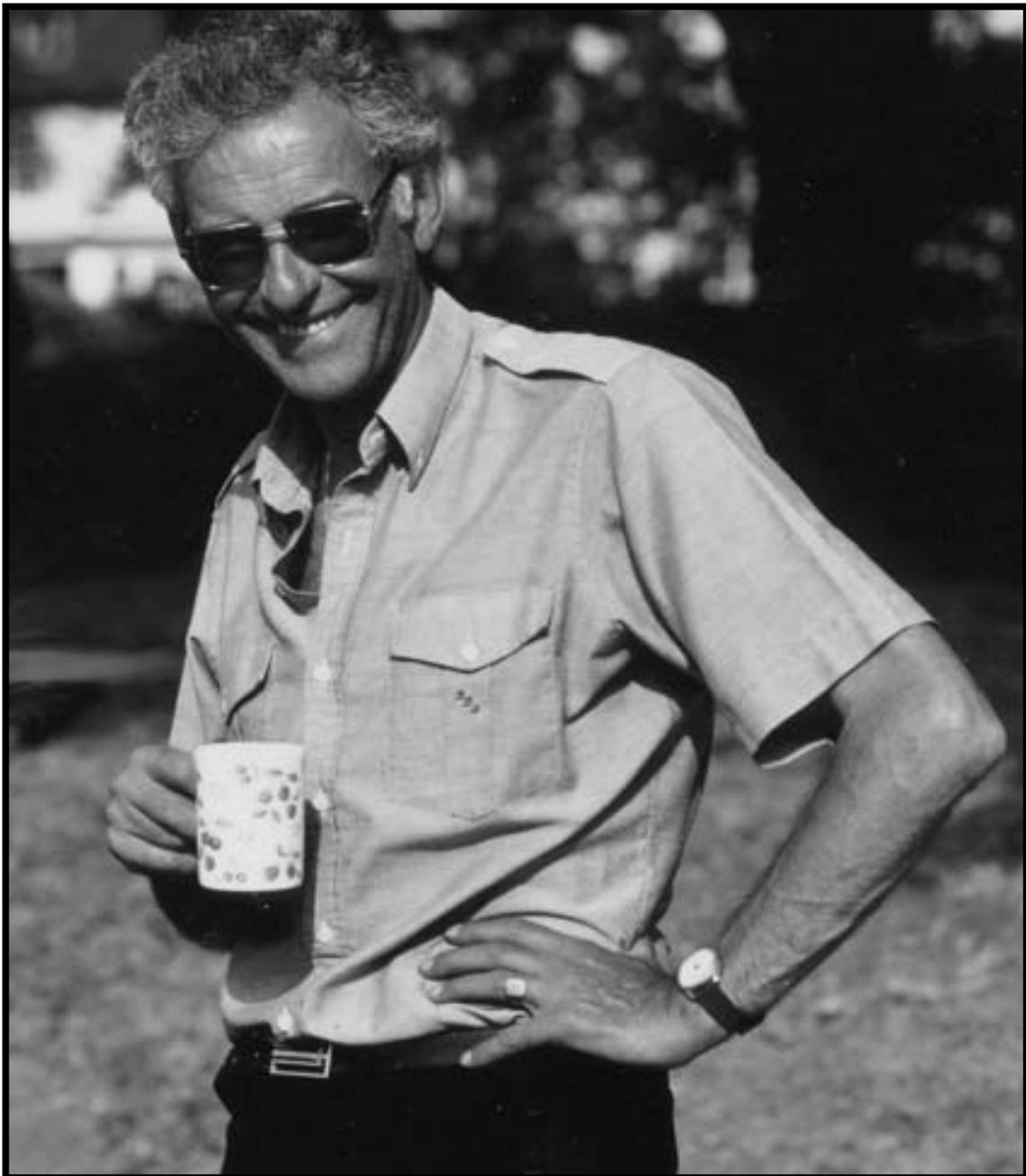


# **MANCHESTER PACKET**

**IWA** The Inland  
Waterways  
Association  
**Manchester Branch**



*Dennis Suleman 1930 - 2005*

**May 2005**

**No. 17**

# Inland Waterways Association Manchester Branch committee

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# Editorial comment

by Rohan Jackson

## ***West Bengal to Lancashire - no wonder it's late***

My apologies for the rather late arrival of this Manchester Packet. I was sat in the gentle winter warmth of India when I happily offered to assist the Branch Chair with getting this publication to press. India has a leisurely pace, and I felt a long way from the world of deadlines. Life since returning to Lancashire and my boat, has been quite different. Colder, for one. A crowded work schedule descended & contributed to the delay in producing this Packet. Now in a brief lull it is time to get this out.

So this newsletter began in wintry Kolkata - where the canals perhaps resemble the UK waterways in their dire days of the 1960s. There is talk of renovation, but so far little evidence. When I cruise the Link, Stanedge and the Lift, I am reminded to be hopeful that things may yet improve there.

The Packet began to take shape when cruising with friends on the Lancaster in Spring. As I twiddled with fonts, gutters and pixels, we spied water voles and kestrels alongside.

The Packet gets its final makeover while preparing to depart for a summer's cruising. As I write, the Branch Chair is fitting my solar panels - perhaps so as to reduce by one the possible excuses he could hear for a delay with the next edition...

I shall not say much about Dennis, the Packet's editor. Others who have known him far longer will do that. I met Dennis only three years ago on joining the Branch, but I have fond memories of sharing travellers' tales at the Marple event last year - an event he had been instrumental in organising - and strolling into Bugsworth Basin, with him pointing out the many things of interest. He would be happy to know that it is at last open again.

I do not propose to step into his shoes, as I cannot match the many years of experience of the waterways that he brought to this role. Instead I appeal to our readers to take up where he left off: if you have a tale to tell of interest to our readership, please do email me.

## From the Branch chairman

by Steve Connolly

Dennis Suleman our cheerful, knowledgeable Editor died suddenly in January. Dennis leaves an enormous space in the lives of all who knew him and we have given over our front page for a picture as we would like him to be remembered. I personally will miss his forthright advice freely given whenever Dennis thought fit. His legacies are the memorials to others he admired and thought 'fitting' to honour.

Now it's us who need to propose a suitable memorial to 'Our Dennis'. Suggestions please.

By the time you read this the AGM season will be behind us until the autumn season starts. Whilst some of you view AGMs with the same enthusiasm as creosoting the garden fence, for me it's an opportunity to

- *continued overleaf*

# From the Branch chairman

- continued

network with like-minded folk, and the region AGM was a perfect example of this: vice presidents, chairmen and women past and present, coordinators, project managers, chief executives, engineers, surveyors, website managers, secretaries and treasurers. The *pièce de resistance* being the presence of Viscount Knollys as our guest speaker. Everyone was chatty and relaxed except me who had a report to do from the front - not my favourite pastime. The branch was host for this year's AGM and the Hollinwood Branch Restoration was an obvious focus and the Daisy Nook Country Park an obvious venue. The challenges and changes of restoration were brought home when it was pointed out that we were sitting on the original bed of the canal. One of the challenges will be persuading the hard-working rangers that the canal restoration will enhance the country park and the obvious need for a new John Howarth Centre will enable them to assemble even better displays than the wonderful ones on show at present.

Another of Dennis' legacies was his valued work as our magazine editor and I thought that we might be obliged to cease production for a while. However Dennis left things in such good order that we have been able to produce this edition with the expertise of branch member Rohan Jackson. I was very grateful for Rohan's offer of help when he realised our predicament and though this edition will hit your mats later than usual we hope you will find it as interesting as those produced by Dennis.

This delay allows me to include a résumé of the Branch's efforts at celebrating the reopening of Bugsworth

Basin at Easter - and what a chilly Easter it was. The Branch was trialing the new WoW banners, designed by Gillian Bolt, one of IWA's WoW coordinators. The banners are bright orange and I was able to verify their effective visibility even through the rain and mist. This poor weather did not however deter the locals, who are a hardy bunch, as were the crews of the 96 boats that brightened up the arms of the basin. We were delighted to entertain some 116 children over the weekend who partook in at least 6 activities each in the WoW marquee, once again kindly loaned by High Lane.

It would not be unkind to say the main attraction of these activities was the making of a foghorn; well, actually the main attraction was blowing a foghorn after making it from parts supplied by an industrious Mike & Jill Malzard. It would be difficult to describe the pleasure these foghorns brought to all who came within earshot, I began to feel sorry for those who were compelled to stay within earshot and by Saturday evening there were parents talking of burning down the WoW marquee [only joking!].

My thanks go to the WoW team, especially Mrs Denise Chairman, who had a very busy time of it all aided by a smashing bunch of helpers. Keith Fowler had a good weekend promoting the Branch from an impromptu membership stall assembled around his campervan and has had at least one new member confirmed.

A letter of thanks for our enthusiastic participation in the event has been received from Jill Malzard at IWPS.

# From the Region chairman

by Margaret Fletcher

We have completed the Annual General Meeting season in the region and look back at what has been achieved in the last year and try to persuade members to join either the branch or region committee. At the Manchester Branch AGM members were encouraged to attend either a branch or region committee meeting as an observer. We are always looking for new committee members who can contribute new ideas and share the workload.

What has been happening?

In the North West Region we unveiled a finger post at Marple Junction as a memorial to the late Ted Keaveney. Ted had been a previous IWA North West Region Chairman and National Deputy Chairman; he later was a Vice President of the North West Region. The finger post was paid for by IWA North West Region, Macclesfield Canal Society and British Waterways.

Both Steve and I attend meetings locally with British Waterways and Manchester Ship Canal Company. We recently attended a very constructive meeting with Greater Manchester Police.

Nationally the Committee for Wales has got off the ground and a magazine for members in Scotland has just been prepared.

Recently the Inland Shipping Group became the Inland Waterways Freight Group, a working group of the Navigation Committee.

We appointed two new Vice Presidents: Paul Wagstaffe and Viscountess Sheelin Knollys. Sheelin was the guest speaker

at the Region AGM, and spoke about the role of the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council of which she is chair.

We now publish many of our minutes on the website, albeit with commercially sensitive and confidential items withheld: look at Library > Publications > Inland Waterways Association Council and committee minutes > Council, Navigation Committee, Finance & General Purposes Committee and Restoration Committee. Or go in via news and press releases.

The Officers' Handbook contents are available on the website as are the bylaws which were altered towards the end of last year.

At first we were not too happy with the way in which British Waterways' Openness and Accountability proposals appeared to be developing but recently more progress has been made.

Andrew Lawton, Chairman of Merseyside and West Lancs Branch, and I have been working with Dr Roger Squires, Deputy National Chairman, to create a bid to hold the World Canals Conference in Liverpool in 2007. The bid having been successful we have been working on very detailed planning for the event due to be held in June 2007. We have been greatly assisted in the bidding process and subsequent planning by the Mersey Partnership at no cost to the Inland Waterways Association. The event will be held at the Crowne Plaza Liverpool from 13 to 15 June 2007.

The Mersey River Festival will take place after the conference and I visited the River Festival last year. We hope the

*- continued overleaf*

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# From the Region chairman

## - continued

Liverpool Link will have been completed by then and it will be outside the conference venue. The budget for the event has just been agreed.

There have been changes in our contribution to Wild over Waterways: Inland Waterways Association are now advisors.

Although not a major grant awarding body, the seed-corn funding which we have given to restoration groups remains a significant contribution.

The Right Tools for the Right Job Appeal was successfully concluded at the National Festival and both North Lancs & Cumbria Branch and the region contributed £500 each.

The National Festival at Burton made a healthy surplus despite the bad weather.

The National Trailboat Festival hosted by Monmouthshire Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust coincided with a major improvement in local support.

The National Campaign Festival – Chester and District Branch – is campaigning for the reopening of Runcorn Locks.

The National Conference for Waterway Societies chaired by Lady Knollys was a success..

The National Sales stand attended many events, either for profit or to raise IWA's profile – or both!

IWA has supported meetings of the Northern and Southern Canals

Association (National Chairman, and some Restoration Committee members attend and are often contributors).

We have expressed concern about the apparent effects of the loss in Grant in Aid to the two largest navigation authorities (BW and EA). There was a plea by the National Chairman to members to be evidential in their reporting of navigation deficiencies. One Manchester Branch member wrote a very detailed letter, complete with description, map references and photographs, and the General Manager has written to say he agrees.

Comments to Defra's review of British Waterways (some good achievements but some major concerns) led to lengthy dialogue with BW and promises for improvements – now being actioned.

British Waterways made promises about vegetation control at the national user group meeting.

We welcome the creation of new local canal societies, the Hollinwood Canal Society and the Manchester & Stockport Canal Society.

We are beginning to plan for our Diamond Jubilee year 2006.

I would like to thank all the Branch committee members for all they have done this past year for the Branch and the Association. I would particularly like to thank Steve for taking on the role of Branch Chairman.

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## **The Branch welcomes new members**

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members to the Branch. Do please make yourself known to us if attending any Branch events; if you have any concerns or contributions, please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee.

Mr D Newbold - Cheadle Cheshire  
Mr K Grupe - Escheburg  
Mr & Mrs G Brown - Bury  
Mr S Parker - Todmorden  
Mr & Mrs A Winters - Wilmslow  
Mr A Winteringham - Cheadle Cheshire  
Mr & Mrs D Speer - Eccles  
Mr & Mrs T Leigh - Hyde  
Mr & Mrs A Longhurst - Rochdale  
Mr & Mrs S Saxton - Manchester

Mr R Sym - Stockport  
Mrs H M Jeffries - Lockerbie  
Marple Locks Heritage Society  
Mr R Butler - Manchester  
Mr M Hickey - Oldham  
Mr B Higson - Altrincham  
Manchester & Stockport Canal Society  
Mr & Mrs A Toone - Atherton  
Mr & Mrs G Townsend - Gt. Buxworth High Peak  
Ms P MacDuff & Mr C D De Wet - Macclesfield  
Mr I D McCarthy - Stalybridge  
Mr & Mrs D Jones - Bramhall  
Mr M Roberts - Macclesfield  
Mr D Schofield - Bury  
Mr R Seastron & Mrs L Bunt - Buxton  
Mr R G Wilman & Ms D Knott

# Dennis Suleman

by Margaret Fletcher

I was shocked and saddened when Keith Fowler phoned to tell us that Dennis Suleman had died. He died suddenly at home on 22 January 2005. I last saw Dennis on 19 January at the North West Region Committee Meeting and as usual he took an active part in the meeting. His interest in waterways was long term and he recently described his boating activity as "40 years and 30,000 miles".

My first memory of Dennis was as a quizmaster at North Cheshire Cruising Club where he ran an annual canal quiz. Because he had cruised so many waterways and walked by derelict waterways his knowledge was fantastic. His questions tended to be themed and a cryptic clue was given to assist those taking part. It was a joy to be a member of a team as the evening was always so enjoyable and challenging and it didn't really matter if you won, but if you did you really felt you had been honoured!

Dennis retired early from the toy trade and was able to devote time to cruising the system with his wife Annice. Dennis was a member of North Cheshire Cruising Club. He was a member of the Inland Waterways Association for many years and was an active member of the North West Region Committee and of Manchester Branch Committee. He was Branch sales officer and editor of the Branch magazine *Manchester Packet*. Dennis did not have an official role on the region committee but he organised the memorials at Marple for Dr Cyril TG Boucher and Ted Keaveney on behalf of the region. The finger post at Marple Junction was the memorial to Ted. North West Waterway Recovery Group, Macclesfield Canal Society and British Waterways worked with Dennis on this

project. Macclesfield Canal Society and British Waterways contributed to the cost.

Inland Waterways Association North West Region Committee have received donations in memory of Dennis and in conjunction with Annice will decide on a suitable memorial to him. Those of us who knew Dennis are sure that he would want any such memorial to be practical rather than purely decorative in the same way that memorials he organised were.

He was a supporter of Waterway Recovery Group and a regular reader of *Navvies* and a contributor.

Dennis was well liked and respected and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. His funeral service was attended by many waterway enthusiasts.



*Dennis surprised by the flash in Standedge Tunnel*

# The Long Way Round to Langley Mill

by Roger Lorenz

In the course of our boating last season we headed for the East & South. Firstly on the Rochdale canal, which had not been open from the Manchester-end when we went over to Ireland. Progress was slow out of Manchester with many trips down the weed hatch. Things speeded up after Rochdale although we had a tussle with some concrete signalling ducts under the railway bridge. Over the Summit and we were on to previously cruised waters down to Sowerby Bridge. The Calder & Hebble, Aire & Calder, New Junction and Sheffield & South Yorks., took us through to Keadby. There was a good Spring tide from Keadby and we went all the way to Cromwell in just over 6 hours with a tidal push to well beyond Torksey. We navigated through Nottingham with the wheelbox still up and headed for the Trent & Mersey.

NEPTUNE moored above Trent Lock for a few weeks whilst we got back to the day job. Our intention, when we returned, was to go up the Soar to Leicester before retracing our route and going up the T & M to Burton for The National. However, it was raining heavily when we returned and we were advised that going up the Soar might be OK, but coming back down could be interesting. So we decided to try the Erewash although we knew that there were some low bridges. At this stage it's worth saying that the last time we were on the Erewash was in the late 60s and early 70s when n.b. ATILLA was moored at Beeston and we were keen to support the local campaign rallies. Cotmanhay was the limit of our explorations at that time and Langley Mill basin was not a place to do much other than fly tip.

So on 23rd August we set off up the Erewash and were pleasantly surprised by the fact that all the pounds were running, weir and depth did not seem to be the problem we remembered it to be. After passing BATH coming downhill at Long Eaton we soon arrived at Sandiacre and were intrigued to see that the short length of Derby Canal had a 'For Sale' sign in it. The weather was awful and it meant that there was no shortage of water!

Progress was good until we reached Hallam Fields Lock where we were obviously a very tight fit and scraped both the handrails on the low arched bridge. We also had to restow the wheelbox roof, which normally sits on top of the engine casing when we are in coupé mode. We had not had to do this before! Still we pressed on and the weather was improving. At Greens Lock we met Elaine who looked after the local swans and ducks. She had been supplied with a windlass and Leeds & Liverpool handcuff key so that she could shepherd the birds out of the locks when they got trapped there. She had never been on a barge before so she rode with us up to Potters Lock where we were obviously too high for the tail bridge again. We lowered the pound back to weir level (at Greens Lock there had been about 4 inches over weir) and fitted NEPTUNE through the bridge. We tied for the night below Commons Bottom Lock after picking up a tyre on the blades. There was a limestone-surfaced track alongside and so we listened to the cars splashing through the puddles outside as the rain sluiced down.

The next morning we found the starboard side of the barge was nicely

pebble-dashed. We were glad that we had not undertaken a cabin paint job at our Spring docking! We pressed on and at Stenson Lock were amazed to see a family of swans approach the bywash and then with dad ahead and mum behind all seven of them slid down the weir. The parents had obviously done it many times before and the cygnets were getting the hang of it. Their rumps must have been well abraded! At Shipley Lock we were way too high and with

passed the Severner WILLOW at Eastwood Lock with the news that the Trent had risen more than 2 ft. and boats were stopped at Trent Lock. We arrived at Langley Lock at 13.20 and had to endure the attentions of the local youngsters as we rose in the Lock. We had made it and were met by Mike and Val. Rain set in so we did not get to explore the Cromford Canal (on foot ) as we had hoped.



*Too big to fit. Credit: Caldwell's*

such a long pound, did not want to take action so we phoned BW Canalphone. Eventually the white pickup arrived and the driver seemed surprised that we had got so far. He thought that the bridges above were even lower and suggested that we turned back. We were not keen so they went off and sure enough after about an hour the level had dropped sufficiently that we could get into the lock. No more problems after that and the flat bridges provided us with plenty of headroom (relatively speaking!) We

Having arrived we contacted various friends in the area and some of them said they would help shepherd us down again on the morrow. Sure enough, nine o'clock next morning saw us in Langley lock again with the locals giving freely of their knowledge. Progress was swift to Shipley Lock where the water level on the Stenson pound was even higher than yesterday. We phoned BW again but nothing happened so we walked down to the lock. Nobody was around so we

*- continued overleaf*

carefully lowered the level until we could leg through. More abrasion to the handrails! The BW men were waiting for us at Potters Lock and watched us limbo through the bridge again. They said that they knew that we would be OK - we just wished we had their confidence. The level had also risen on the Stanton pound so we had another wait whilst this was lowered to suit. The friends left us at Sandiacre and we had a good run down to Trent Lock where we tacked on to the tail end of a long line of waiting boats. When we walked down to the lock the reason was obvious because the bridge that we had sailed under with our wheelbox up now had only 5.5ft

took down to weir, we had little real difficulty. The run from Trent Lock to Langley Mill took 6.5 hours if you exclude waiting time. This is much better than we manage on our favourite, the Leeds & Liverpool canal. We were surprised that so few barges make the trip because it is a true barge canal and except for the low arch bridges (why were they built like that originally?) there aren't any problems. We hope to come back again.

When the Trent subsided it would have been very straightforward to have turned upstream to Sawley and returned to the Bridgewater along the Trent & Mersey,



*As high up as you can go. Credit: Caldwell's*

headroom. In fact we were held up for three more days, but at least we had time to remove the worst of the pebble dash and we got to Burton by train. We will get NEPTUNE there sometime.

So what did we think of the Erewash? Well it was certainly not as intimidating as the towpath rumours led us to believe. We had to modify the channel in a few places but even on the pounds which we

except for the obvious snag that the central section has narrow locks which NEPTUNE will not pass. So we returned the long way via the Leeds & Liverpool. So instead of about 200 lock miles back to Worsley, we had instead to do nearly 500 but at least we were able to cruise two of the trans-Pennine waterways and had the satisfaction of getting an old barge to some of the places that others rarely reach.

# Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal

by Margaret Fletcher

## *History of a waterway*

In 1790 there was a proposal for a waterway to link Manchester with Bolton and Bury. The canal was to link up to the river Irwell at Manchester. One of the land owners, Matthew Fletcher, was the original technical adviser and he was a mining engineer turned coal owner. At a meeting on 19 January 1791 the last amendments to the draft Parliamentary Bill were made. The Bill received the royal assent on 13 May 1791.

The canal was opened in 1796 to Oldfield Road terminus and extended to the River Irwell in 1808. This extension necessitated the building of 5 locks. Originally the canal was built with narrow locks but during construction the locks were altered into broad locks when there was a proposal to link the navigation to the Leeds Liverpool Canal which was still being built. The scheme, known as the Red Moss extension, was to go through Red Moss, a few miles from Bolton, and drop down thirty locks to Wigan. The idea was that the size of craft to be used on the Leeds Liverpool Canal would have been able to use the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal. This was not to be as the route for the Leeds Liverpool Canal was changed, but the MB&B canal was operated as a broad canal.

Coal carrying was one of the main reasons for building the canal. A lot of the mines were situated very close to the waterway so that loading was direct from pit head to boat. Lime, limestone, manure, stone, sand and slate were also carried on the canal. Prior to the construction of the railway between Bolton and Manchester passengers and parcels were carried on the packet boats. Later timber was carried in boats and by

floating it on the water. Night soil was loaded onto boats from carts at Frederick Road bridge in Salford and was shovelled through doors in the bridge parapets into the boat below.

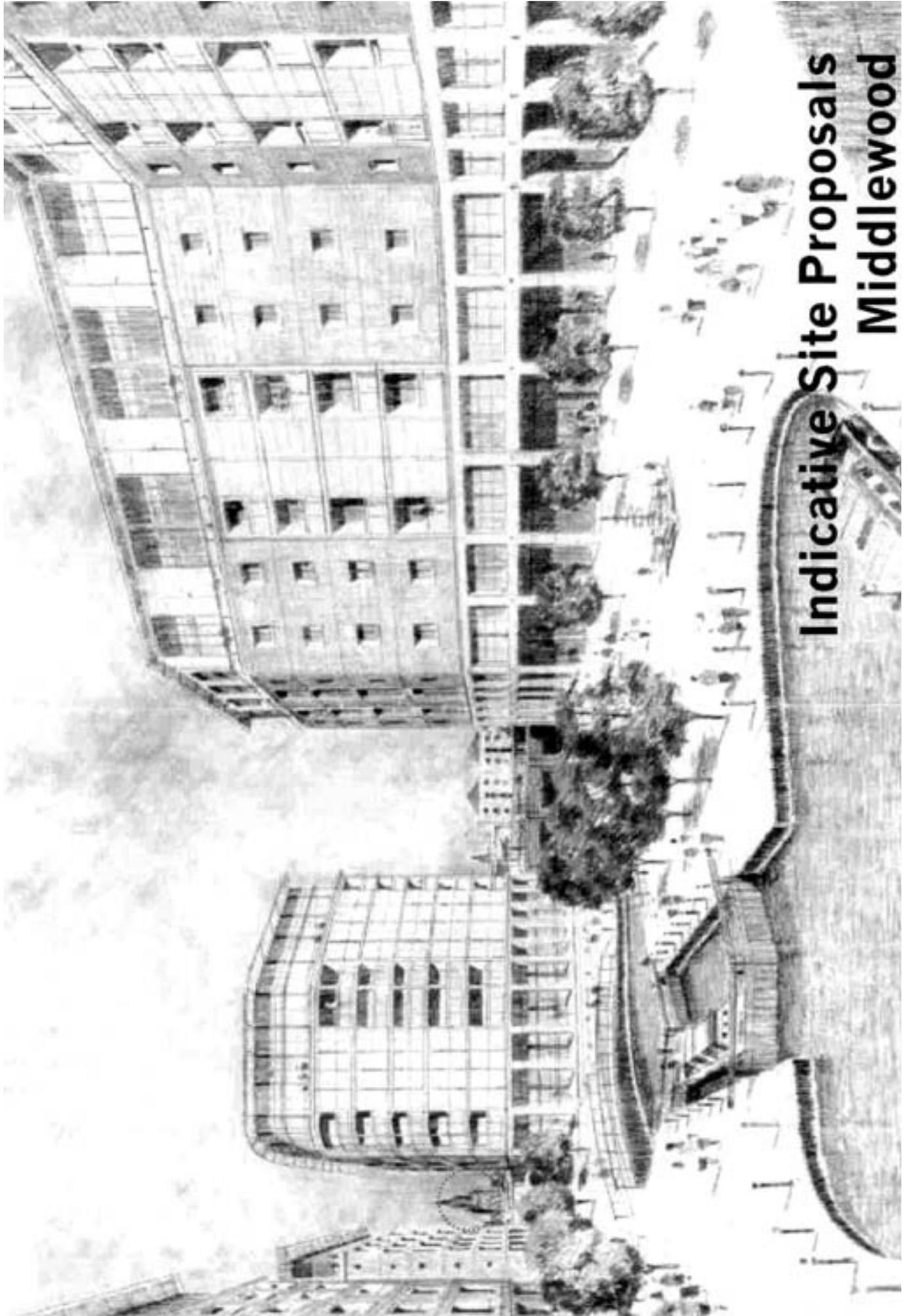
Unlike the tradition on most other canals the boatmen did not live on the boats; they lived 'on the bank'.

In 1830 there was a proposal and in 1831 negotiations were taking place to convert the canal into a railway. In 1831 at the first general meeting of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal Navigation and Railway Company, the line of the proposed railway was varied in order to retain the canal. In 1838, forty years after their introduction, the packet boats were sold as they were proving to be uneconomical and their speed damaged the canal banks. Also in 1838 the company completed the railway and commenced passenger trains between Manchester and Bolton. In 1846 the Company was taken over by the Manchester and Leeds Railway Company, and the name of the company was changed in 1847 to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

By 1924 traffic had reduced and in 1936 there were two serious breaches of the canal bank and traffic fell drastically.

In 1941 Parliamentary powers to abandon the breached sections were obtained. Navigation was restricted to a 4½ mile stretch from the Bury terminus and from Salford to Clifton. More of the canal was abandoned by the 1944 London Midland and Scottish Railway Act.

- continued overleaf



# Indicative Site Proposals Middlewood

# Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal

- continued

In the immediate post-war period, like most canals in this country, the remains of the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal were nationalised.

In 1955 in the "Report of the Board of Survey" (British Transport Commission) canals were grouped and the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal was in Group 3. The Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal was therefore 'a waterway having insufficient commercial prospects to justify their retention for navigation'.

A British Transport Commission Act of 1961 abandoned the rest of the canal. Right of Navigation ceased in 1962 but some traffic continued in Bury for a short time. Parts of the canal have been filled in over the years and sections have been sold to a variety of owners.

In 1987 the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal Society was formed and has cleared some parts of the canal, and towpath. They have tried to have the line of the canal protected by objecting to planning applications where the line of the canal would be affected and ensured that the local authorities protected the line of the canal in their Unitary Development Plans.

With the publication of books about the canal, circulation of the canal society magazine, guided walks and giving of slide and talk shows to groups locally, and in other parts of the country, they have tried to promote to enthusiasts and the general public the restoration of the canal.

The society have educational open meetings and often the speakers talk about other canal restoration schemes.

Four magazines are published every year and in this way, members, elected members of the three local authorities, officers of the local authorities and members of parliament are kept informed of activities and aspirations.

In 1995 the society changed from being an informal society to become a limited company and a registered charity.

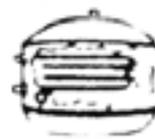
In 1996 the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal Society, the three local authorities and British Waterways, worked to produce a detailed application to the Millennium Commission for funding to restore part of the canal. The bid was not successful but a lot of the detailed work carried out for the bid will be of use in the future.

The Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal Society council are committed to working in partnership with others to restore the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal. Since the end of 2000 the society has been working in true partnership with British Waterways and the three local authorities (BOLTON, BURY and SALFORD) to restore the canal. This partnership is working well and now the canal is to be restored with work starting in 2005 at the Middlewood site in Salford. This is the site where the canal will once again link into the national system when it rejoins the River Irwell.

In 2004 British Waterways published "Waterways 2025" and they list the canals likely to be restored in priority 1 to 4 and the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal is in priority 1.



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# Tales from the Water Womble

by Steve Connolly

## *Spring 2005*

Well here we are again. Dark winter mornings and evenings are a thing of the past; the vast accumulation of wind-blown branches are in the skips or already down the tip; the smaller amount of wintertime canal borne litter has been collected; and the canal is looking wonderful and ready to be admired by users of all persuasions. The sap is rising in many aspects - perhaps not in the fishermen - but practically everywhere else. Mrs and Mrs Canada goose stand on the towpath discussing the attributes of a particular patch of ground on the offside. I feel sorry for those geese in Trafford, close to MUFC, where the available nesting space is somewhat limited due to the huge quantity of litter from the drivers of the trucks queuing for the Freightliner terminal. I phoned a man at Trafford BC, who was promoting canal side regeneration at Sale in a local environmental magazine: I pointed out that the regeneration was somewhat spoilt by all the rubbish on the offside a little further on. So far nothing has been done. Perhaps a copy of this magazine might hit the spot? Power of the press and all that.

It appears I have to apologise to MSCC's Bridgewater department once again. Hardly had the ink dried on my last article, where I complained about the state of the towpath in Leigh and Marsland Green, when the towpath was re-laid with new grit. The section at Butts Bridge is particularly nice now as the factory wall with leaking gutter pipes that contributed to the overall wetness of the towpath has been demolished, opening up the whole area with its new laid towpath.

Opposite this section is the latest inside-first housing development. I have often wondered with this type of construction - where the interior is constructed first in timber, then the brickwork is laid as the interior is fitted out - how fireproof they are. Well late one Saturday night the

effectiveness of the fire retardant was tested to the extreme in a bit of vandalism. To the credit of everyone concerned only half the building was destroyed but most of the scaffolding finished up in a tangled twisted heap. Move on four weeks to new timbers and state of the art scaffolding to the highest Health and Safety spec', and observe one recalcitrant employee on the third floor stood on a milk crate to reach higher: you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it think! One other intriguing aspect of this site is that the interlocking sausages, which are used to prevent damage to the floor should a worker slip, were all packed tightly under the roof. It keeps it safe I suppose.

Pomona lock celebrates its tenth birthday on May 26th. Whilst time has flown and the lock still looks in new condition, that's more than can be said for the stop planks in neat racks alongside, Anybody want any firewood?

The phrase Tall Satanic mills is one with which I am familiar as I was born and raised in Oldham, but tall satanic housing could soon be the latest catchphrase when more folk realise the impact the new development at Hulme lock - sorry, St George's Island - is going to have on the canal side. The steelwork currently stands at 13 storeys and the building is within 2 metres of the canal edge. It really is quite daunting 'going beneath' considering large lumps of steel are being swung about directly overhead.

I recently passed by as a 20 foot section, held vertical by a single chain, was bolted into place 130 feet straight above my head. I do not think this could happen on Deansgate, so why do we boaters have to be put at risk?

# Navigation notes

## **BRIDGEWATER CANAL**

### **Barton Aqueduct operating times:**

1st January 2005 to 6th March 2005  
inclusive: 9.15am to 4.30pm.

13th March 2005 to 20th March 2005  
inclusive: 9.15am to 4.30pm

21st March 2005 to 2nd October 2005  
inclusive: 9.15am to 9pm

3rd October 2005 to 31st December  
2005 inclusive: 9.15am to 4.30pm.

### **Close for annual maintenance:**

4.30pm 6th March 2005 to 12 noon 12th  
March 2005

Enquiries: 0161 629 8266  
Emergency, out of hour's number:  
0151 327 2212  
[www.shipcanal.co.uk](http://www.shipcanal.co.uk)

## **BRITISH WATERWAYS**

### **Plank Lane Lift Bridge operating times**

Mid March, April, May. 8am-6pm  
June, July, August, 8am-8pm  
September to mid Nov 8am-6pm  
Mid Nov to mid March 2006  
weekdays 8am-6.30pm  
weekends 10am-2pm

Enquiries: 01942 242239

### **Preston Brook Tunnel operating times**

24 hours a day, 365 days a year  
Preston Brook portal: entry on the half  
hour until 20 minutes TO only  
Dutton portal: entry on the hour until 10  
minutes PAST only

Enquiries: 0161 427 1079

## **BW OFFICES**

### **Head Office, Watford**

01923 226422

Northern Waterways 0161 838 5580

Northwest Waterway 01925 847 700

Yorkshire Waterway 0113 281 6800

Wales & Border Counties Waterway

01606 723800

East Midlands Waterway 01636 704481

Southern Waterways 01926 626100

Southwest Waterways 01452 318000

Southeast Waterways 01923 226422

Central Shires Waterways 01827 252000

West Midlands Waterway 0121 506 1300

### **Customer Services Centre**

01923 201120

### **New Emergency Freephone No.**

0800 4799947

### **Web**

For general BW info:

<http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk>

For maps and up-to-date stoppage info:

<http://www.waterscape.com>

### **WAP**

Up-to-date stoppage info on your mobile:

<http://www.waterscape.com/mobile>

### **Anderton Lift**

01606 872 819

Booking Charge £5

Free passage without a booking when  
capacity permits

Canalphone North: 01923 201 401

Canalphone South: 01923 201402

(Recorded messages of unscheduled or  
changes to scheduled stoppages)

## Other notices

### ***Rochdale stoppage***

Most of you will be aware that there has been a major breach on the Rochdale. Please do check for the latest information on this by WAP, web, or phone if planning a cruise that way.

### ***Branch Open Meetings***

We are currently reviewing the venue and will bring more info on the winter programme shortly..

### ***Wooden Canal Boat Society opens shop***

The WCBS has opened a shop in Stalybridge as a new outlet for its boat based recycling project, selling clothes and bric a brac collected by boat. The shop on Corporation Street is less than 100 yards from lock 6W of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Recycling trips take place on the first Sunday of most months leaving Portland Basin at 9.30am. The WCBS needs more volunteers to help to develop the recycling project. As well as help with staffing the shop, assistance is needed with internet sales, sales through free ads, sorting, checking and storing collected goods and expanding hte collecting area. Funds raised are used for maintaining and restoring the fleet of 6 historic wooden boats moored at Portland Basin Musuem, Ashton under Lyne.

Recycling trips this year will be:  
July 3rd, Aug 7th, Sept 4th, Oct 2nd,  
Nov 6th and Dec 4th.

For further information please contact  
Wooden Canal Boat Society  
5 Oaken Clough Terrace  
Ashton under Lyne, OL7 9NY.  
T: 0161 330 2315  
E: racheldixon@beeb.net

## **Disclaimer**

The view expressed by our contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the IWA. They are, however, published as being of interest to our readership.

## **Copy dates**

Both the Manchester PAcet and the Chariman's Newsletter will be published twice a year. This will enable members to be kept as up-to-date as possible with events, activities and progress.

Manchester Newlsetter	15 June 2005	(Published July 2005)
Chariman's Newsletter	15 September 2005	(Published October 2005)
Manchester Packet	15 December 2005	(Published January 2006)

The editor will be pleased to consider contributions for future publications. Articles can be submitted in hard copy, by email (inline or as Word attachments) to [iwa@nomadit.co.uk](mailto:iwa@nomadit.co.uk), or on CD posted to the Branch chair.



## **PROPELLER AND STERN GEAR SPECIALIST**

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