

Mile Post



The Magazine of the
West Riding Branch

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IWA Headquarters .

Postal Address - PO Box 114, Rickmansworth, WD3 1ZY.

Location of Building - 3, Norfolk Court, Rickmansworth, WD3 1LT.

Telephone - 01923 711114. www.waterways.org.uk

NOTE: The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of The Inland Waterways Association or of The West Riding Branch. They are, however, published as being of interest to our members and readers.

Cover Photograph.

Getting a boat ready to go through Standedge Tunnel -- east to west.

Chairman's Comments

First of all, A HAPPY NEW YEAR to all our members. Hope you had a good Christmas and managed some cruising or other activities along the canal. My family enjoyed a short cruise which included ice, heavy showers and bright sunny intervals, a good mix of boating weather!

We enjoyed a varied autumn social programme and thank all the speakers for their presentations.

Although it is only January plans are already in hand to attend events in the summer. By attending events with our sales/exhibition stand we can help raise awareness about the waterways and hopefully make money to help support various waterway schemes.

As a branch member it is an opportunity for you to pass on your enjoyment and support of the waterways to others. Come along and help for an hour on the stand, it is actually very enjoyable and interesting chatting to the public and other groups who attend waterway events. We have decided to have a tombola again at the National Festival so save your unwanted Christmas presents and donate them for prizes.

Also as we approach March and the AGM, I urge you to consider joining the committee. The more help we have the more active West Riding Branch can become.

Chris Pinder

London's Lost Route to Basingstoke

by Katie Sayles

I gave a talk about the Basingstoke Canal at our September meeting to enlighten those who are unable to explore southern waterways.

During the 18th Century tradesmen in Basingstoke were keen to sell their goods in London and found the route transporting such items along the River Thames unsatisfactory. The best route was to build a canal eastward to the river Wey Navigation at Byfleet in Surrey.

The Act of Parliament was passed by 1778 and construction took place between 1788 and 1794. 30 locks were built; 28 being in Surrey and 2 in Hampshire. John Pinkerton was the main contractor for the work and he often paid his workers using tokens, which could be exchanged for goods at local shops.

The use of the canal boomed during the building of the London to South Coast railway, Aldershot Army Camp and the transportation of bricks from Nateley Brick Works. During the 1920s Alex Harmsworth bought the canal and continued to transport goods from the Farnborough area to London.

After the canal was sold by auction in 1949 it was acquired by the New Basingstoke Canal Co, but its owner, Mr S.E.Cooke did not maintain it for navigation. In 1966 its sad condition provoked a group of Brookwood residents to form the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society and thus began the campaign for its restoration.

Having confirmed the Compulsory Purchase Order in 1973, and Hampshire County Council giving the go-ahead for the first official working party, in just two weekends the towpath from Barley Mow Bridge through to Broad Oak Bridge was transformed. In 1976 Surrey County Council bought their section and the whole canal is run as a joint operation by the Councils.

Work on the flight of 14 locks at Deepcut started in 1975 and took ten years to complete. They were restored by volunteers and teams of unemployed school leavers recruited under Manpower Services Commission (MSC) training schemes. The Canal Society was granted more than £75,000 over a period of seven years from 1977. Most of the 72ft by 14ft chambers underwent major renovation and the construction of by-pass weirs, which did not previously exist

Clearing the water channel of thousands of tons of accumulated silt, several feet deep, has been a major undertaking. In Surrey, where access to the canal by road is easier, the County Council used mechanical excavators to dredge the channel.

The Canal Society tackled the 15-mile and less accessible western end using a 70ft steam powered floating dredger aptly named "Perseverance". Work began at Odiham in Hampshire in 1975. The dredger can now be seen at Ellesmere Port Museum waiting restoration.

In 1991 the canal was opened for use. The Duke of Kent officially opened the canal in May of that year. Due to the lack of water in the summer months the canal may be closed for short periods of time. To reduce the closure backpumping schemes have been planned. The one for the first flight of 6 locks at Woodham has been complete and the Society is currently working on the second flight at St Johns. At the September meeting the West Riding Branch made a generous donation of £50 towards the backpumping scheme at St John Flight.

For those seeking more information you should look at : www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk or write to **Doreen Hornsey, Membership Secretary, 'Mallards'**
94a Aldershot Road, FLEET, Hants GU51 3FT

Meet Your Committee

A Personal Profile of Chris Pinder (chairman)

Now in my fifties I've been involved with canals for about forty two years. In the early 60's with my family and the dog we hired a marine ply cruiser from Inland Hire at Christleton, progressed to a cruiser of our own and canal holidays became a way of life. I was fortunate that my wife, Liz, experienced canals before we got married and caught the bug too!



As our family grew bigger, so did our boats. We currently have TYKE TOO our third boat and the second we have fitted out. We also enjoy walking and cycling in the country side as well as along the canal. I enjoy attending waterway events (20 Nationals in 21 years!) chatting to the public and other waterway enthusiasts. This is the second time I have served on the committee and after being a branch member for twenty four years was finally caught and persuaded to be Branch Chairman.

The Milepost.

Is there anyone out there who could help the branch by writing something for inclusion in the Milepost. Have you been on an interesting boating trip? Tell us about it. Is there something waterways related you feel strongly about? Write us a letter about it. Any amusing stories? Tell us all! E-mail us at boblaing@blueyonder.co.uk , hand it to one of us, or post it to any committee member before the beginning of May. We look forward to hearing from you.

‘A Warm Welcome!’

The West Riding Branch extends a warm welcome to these members who have joined us since the last Mile Post. We hope to meet you at some of our social meetings.

September:

Mr and Mrs Hemingway	Selby
Mr Martin	York
J Duckett	York
Mr White	Hebden Bridge

October:

Barnsley, Dearn and Dove Canals Trust	
Mr J Gilkes and Miss V Doux	Hertford Heath
Mr and Mrs Armitage	Rothwell
Mr Walton	Sowerby Bridge
Miss E Crosby	Heckmondwike
Ms J Dickson	Sowerby Bridge

November:

Mr Ormerod	Wakefield
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Your Branch Needs You!

As you may have noticed on page 8, it will soon be time for the Branch Annual General Meeting. Your committee still desperately needs new members. At the moment we are without a social secretary - a vital job if the monthly social events are to continue.

We only meet around six or seven times a year, usually in each other's houses.

Please consider joining us. Come along to a meeting to see what goes on. If you decide it's for you send your nomination to Ian before 8th March.

IWA HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY

The IWA has become increasingly concerned about the loss of small buildings, structures and artefacts connected with the inland waterways. With this in mind, the Association has launched an Historic Structures Review to help safeguard what remains.

The first stage of doing this at branch level is to start making a list of everything from warehouses to mileposts. Then at a later stage more detailed information can be added.

We have a standard survey spreadsheet to record information on, which once complete for a particular waterway can be e-mailed to IWA head office for inclusion on the IWA website.

We have also a list of the listed structures belonging to BW in our area. This though does not cover listed structures that do not belong to BW, so getting that information is another task.

We need volunteers on the ground to compile the initial lists.

We liaise with local canal societies etc to pull together all the information available.

We currently have no one to co-ordinate this nor to enter all the information onto the spreadsheets. And so far have had only one person who has volunteered to help by compiling the listing for the Calder & Hebble Navigation.

If you want to help we can e-mail the spreadsheet and list of listed structures to you or provide paper blanks to fill in if you don't have access to a computer.

If you are interested you can e-mail me at ianmoore66@hotmail.com or write to or phone me at the address at the back of this newsletter. Or you can come and talk to me at one of the branch social meetings.

More information on the Historic Structures Review is available on the IWA's website (www.waterways.org.uk) as a briefing note in the library section.

Ian Moore
Honorary Secretary IWA West Riding Branch

NAVIGATION NOTES

Barnsley and Dearne & Dove Canals

The contract for the restoration feasibility study was awarded to W.S. Atkins late in August and the study should be complete early in 2005. Website www.bddct.org.uk

Bradford Canal

Civil engineers Arups have produced a scoping study on the restoration of the Bradford Canal, for Bradford Council, Bradford Centre Regeneration and British Waterways. Rebuilding the canal is being considered as a tool for regeneration which would create waterside development and increase the value of adjacent land.

Calder & Hebble Navigation

Outline planning permission has been applied for the Wakefield Waterfront development. This covers the area along the Calder to the north and south of Wakefield Flood Lock. It is a mixed use development that includes a new art gallery for Wakefield. It “seeks to retain and restore as much of the historic structures as possible whilst opening up the site to the public and providing opportunities for new architecture to complement the old.” There are four grade 2 listed structures that will be substantially retained.

There will be archeological excavations at the north end of the site where there were once a number of boatyards including a dry dock infilled in the 1960’s.

Leeds & Liverpool Canal

In the last Navigation Notes, we said that Eller House alongside the canal at Kirkstall had been refurbished as offices. It has actually been turned into three houses with a new office building close by, where once glasshouses stood.

Rochdale Canal

A new sanitary station was opened at Todmorden in 2004. And a new waterpoint installed at Hebden Bridge sanitary station. These sanitary stations are now leased by BW from Calderdale Council.

BW has a program to improve ground and tailgate paddle gear over the next 2 to 3 years.

Branch Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the West Riding Branch of the Inland Waterways Association will take place on **Friday, 11th March 2005, commencing at 8.00pm**, in the Social Club on the top floor of Centenary House, North Street Leeds.

Nominations in writing for the Branch Committee must reach the Secretary, Mr Ian Moore, 2 Eric Street, Leeds, LS13 1ET not later than first post **Tuesday, 8th March 2005**. New members are urgently needed to strengthen the committee.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Approval of minutes of the previous AGM.
3. Matters arising from the minutes.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report.
7. Adoption of accounts.
8. Any business notified under by-law 40.
9. Statement of committee size.
10. Election of committee.

After the AGM it has been the practice in the past for members to present a slide show. These occasions are usually most enjoyable. If you have any slides you would like to bring, please do, so that we can all enjoy them.

Regional Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the North East Region of the Inland Waterways Association will take place on **Wednesday, 13th April 2005**. The venue is Guppy's Enterprise Club, Nunery Lane, near Micklegate Bar, York. Doors will be opened at 8.00pm. The meeting is held upstairs. There is plenty of parking space in the large public car park directly opposite Guppy's.

Nominations in writing for the Regional Committee must reach the Secretary, Mr David Swabey, 18 Skottowe Drive, Great Ayton, Middlesborough, TS21 3EG by the first post on **Wednesday, 30th March 2005**. All nominations must be signed by the proposer and seconder and contain the consent of the nominee.

New members are always welcome.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of last AGM held on 28th April 2004.
3. Matters arising.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report & presentation of Accounts.
7. Adoption of Accounts.
8. Statement of committee size.
9. Election of committee members.

Our First Trip on The Leeds & Liverpool Canal

Hello!

We are new in the area and would like to tell you about our trip from Leeds to Shipley. We travelled through Leeds, Kirkstall and Apperley on the weekend of the 20th and 21st November to get to Shipley where our new mooring is. It took us 4 hours the first day and four hours the next day. It was such a great experience! On Saturday, a British Waterways officer who did all the locks for us between office lock and Newlay 3 locks generously escorted us to Newlay. It was sunny but very cold! It took me a good half an hour to warm my feet up in the boat after a mere two hours cruising! There were a few cyclists and runners determined to get fit no matter the weather and couples holding hands, well, gloves. There was something romantic about it all, maybe because the cold weather didn't stop the life on and around the canals from taking place. When we arrived in Rodley we stayed the night at the visitor moorings and saw that there was another boat moored there and another boat was leaving. It seemed quiet and quite charming with the swing bridge and the pub the Railway on the canal side. We decided to walk in order to warm our feet up and we ended up at the Barge on the other side of the bridge, a cute little pub with a coal fire in the main room and a games room at the back. The next day friends came and helped us finish the trip to Shipley, which was only 7 miles or so from Rodley, but there were 10 swing bridges, a double and a triple lock!

The trip from Rodley becomes really picturesque with hills in the background and houses all dispersed in the valleys, dark brick buildings predominating, high chimneys reminiscent of a past specific to Yorkshire, making this bit of the canal a special place that you would recognize even if you were put there by magic and asked what part of the country you think you're in. Then we reached the woods, which kept us covered from the dull skies of the day. It was definitely warmer this time, but the blue sky we

had on Saturday was now grey and we could feel drops of rain. I put the potatoes in the coal stove for a later lunch. We stopped in Apperley where we picked up other friends and went to the pub up the road for a few drinks. It was midday and everyone was getting hungry so when we came back we had the potatoes with beans and cheddar. They were delicious! We continued our trip, the seven of us on a forty-foot canal boat. It worked out well as the boys were outside doing the locks and the bridges and the girls were inside chatting, cooking and making tea and coffee! I would pop out for the locks, as the boys needed me to drive into the locks and throw the ropes to them. I can't believe how organised we all were. I have to say that all these people are from Yorkshire, Jon and me are the only outsiders! I am French and Jon is from the South but we have travelled extensively and take photographs. Two of Jon's photographs are in the new IWA calendar, one of them being the front cover! When we reached Shipley, it was already dark but we found our mooring easily. Now we can't wait to go through Saltaire, Bingley and eventually Skipton, hopefully this winter if it doesn't get frozen. This is a trip that we have been looking forward to for a long time. We would love to hear from people who have been there in winter.

by Virginie and Jon.



Moorings on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal in Shipley.

Sales and Promotions

First of all, the sales team would like to thank everyone for their support during 2004.

The National at Burton-on-Trent was reasonably successful, but owing to the weather conditions during the build up period particularly, this not only delayed the opening on the Friday but made it impossible to get the land borne boats on to the dry dock site. Unfortunately we were in this immediate area and we seemed to be left out on a limb and didn't get the passing crowds as we would have done with the boat display in place.

Nevertheless on Saturday and Sunday we were able to attract people to the stand and the tombola was very popular.

The 2005 National is at Preston Brook, again within easy reach of our region and we would like to have a similar attraction at this year's event. So we hope we can rely on you to be as generous as you have been in the past! More of that later.

On the promotion side we have new material and photographs and we had representatives with their displays from the Barnsley, Dearne and Dove. We must thank them for their efforts. They not only helped their cause but also the IWA as a whole. Unfortunately on the Monday the weather took a turn for the worse, with rain and wind, which soon turned the site into a quagmire! WRG did a wonderful job but were fighting a losing battle at times.

We must thank Ken and David and their assistants for transporting, erecting and dismantling the West Riding Branch Stand.

The total profit from this event was £216-20 from tombola and donated items, which was a good result under the circumstances. So thank you everyone for helping to make this a successful event.

2005 Events

Skipton Festival	May Bank Holiday weekend
.Leeds on Water (Thwaites)	July, dates to be announced.
Preston Brook National Festival	August 27th to 29 th

Jennifer and Elliott.

Treasurer's Report

2004 fund raising has not been as high as we would have liked mainly due to circumstances beyond our control. Cancellation of events because of British Waterways re-organisation programme and adverse weather conditions affecting the National Festival.

Having said that, we have raised £400-00 from two main events, making our year end balance £2,576-14 including £1,500-00 allocated to the feasibility study for Barnsley, Dearne and Dove Consortium.

A promising start to a (hopefully) more prosperous 2005.

EVENTS

If further information is required on the canal society events below please contact the following people:-

For Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society walks contact Mike Hustler on 01282 816476. Website <http://townsleyb.members.beeb.net/llcs/>

For Rochdale Canal Society events contact Secretary Brian Holden on 01706 646132.

Website www.derekparsons.com/society.html

The Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals Trust hold open meetings on the first Monday of each month (7.45pm for 8.00pm) at the Market Hotel, Wentworth Road, Elsecar near Barnsley. Chairman Derek Housley is on 01226 790341. Website www.bddct.org.uk

Sunday 23rd January. Kirklees Countryside Unit. Ravensthorpe circular walk along towpaths and riverbanks (5 miles). Meet Alan at 11.15am at former public toilets at junction of Low Mill Lane and Huddersfield Road (A644), Fir Cottage, Ravensthorpe (Grid Ref. 217 199).

Friday 11th February. Bradford Council. Walk along Leeds & Liverpool Canal, through Calverley, Ravenscliffe and Fagley Woods to Bradford Industrial Museum (9 miles). Meet at 10.30 pm at Bracken Hall, Countryside Centre, Glen Road, Baildon (01274 584140). Bring packed lunch and bus fare if returning to Bracken Hall by bus.

Sunday 13th February. Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society. Walk from Leeds to Kirkstall. Meet 11am at Office Lock, Leeds Basin.

Sunday 13th February. Rochdale Canal Society. Walk from West Summit Lock No. 37 to Oldham Road, Rochdale (5 miles). Meet at West Summit Lock (behind Summit pub on A6033) at 1.30 pm.

Sunday 20th February. Kirklees Countryside Unit. Walk along towpaths and riverbanks around Dewsbury (6 miles). Meet Alan at 11.10am at Dewsbury Railway Station.

Monday 4th April. Rochdale Canal Society. "Canal Tunnels" talk by Alan Gilbert, former IWA Lichfield Branch Chairman. Rose & Crown, Halifax Rd (A646), Todmorden (near Woodhouse Road) at 8.00pm.

Sunday 10th April 2005. Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society. Meet at 11am at Stockbridge, near Keighley, Marquis of Granby swing bridge (No 197A) for a walk towards Silsden.

Sunday 10th April. Rochdale Canal Society. Walk from Todmorden to Hebden Bridge (4 miles). Meet at Meet at Shop Lock No. 18, Dale Street, Todmorden at 1.30 pm.

Saturday 16th April. Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals Trust. South Yorkshire Charity Ceilidh at the Silkstone Lodge Club, Cone Lane, Silkstone, nr Barnsley. 7.15pm for 7.45pm. Tickets from Derek Housley on 01226 790341.

Saturday 30th April to Monday 2nd May. Provisional dates for Skipton Canal Festival. On the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Skipton, at the junction with the Spring's Branch.

Sunday 8th May. Rochdale Canal Society. Walk from Oldham Road, Rochdale to West Summit Lock (5 miles). Meet at Moss Lower Lock No.50, Oldham Road, Rochdale at 2 pm.

Saturday 27th to Monday 29th May. IWA National Trailboat Festival on Chesterfield Canal at Tapton Lock, Chesterfield.

Sunday 12th June. Rochdale Canal Society. Walk from Hebden Bridge to Sowerby Bridge (5 miles). Meet at Hebden Bridge Marina at 2 pm.

IWA/Wrg Stamp Bank. Raising Funds for Canal Restoration.

Recycle for Canals.

Stamp bank uses the principle of recycling to raise funds for canal restoration. It may be by collecting together small quantities into re-sellable volumes, cashing in vouchers or tokens to buy raffle prizes or just knowing who will part with cash for a particular item. We currently collect the following.

Used Postage stamps

Any country or age - preferably trimmed about 5mm around the stamp. Stamp collections are also welcome.

Coins and notes

Any currency , current or obsolete.

Aluminium

Foil, cans (not steel!) ring pulls, etc.

Printer cartridges.

Any make

Trading stamps.

Books or loose stamps - and vouchers which can be turned into goods.

Die cast models.

Dinky, Corgi, etc. In any condition.

Please send donations to:-

S.L.Hobson, 24, North Terrace, Birstall, W. Yorks. WF17 9E

Committee Members 2004 / 2005

Chairman

Membership Secretary

Chris Pinder
152 High Street
Yeadon
Leeds LS19 7AB
Home 01132 509371

Secretary

Ian Moore
2 Eric Street,
Bramley
Leeds. LS13 1ET
Mobile 07989 112581

Treasurer

Elliott Mosley
23 Glenholm Road
Baildon
ShIPLEY BD17 5QB
Home 01274 581413

Committee member

Frank Rigby
59 Sand Lane
South Milford
Leeds LS25 5BA
Home 01977 684243

Vice Chairman

Ken Nelson
1 Westbourne Grove
Selby YO8 9DG
Mobile 07836 722198

Sales Officer

Jennifer Mosley
23 Glenholm Road
Baildon
ShIPLEY BD18 5QB
Home 01274 581 413

Committee member

Barbara Rigby
59 Sand Lane
South Milford
Leeds LS25 5BA
Home 01977 684243

Minutes Secretary

Liz Pinder
152 High Street
Yeadon
Leeds LS19 7AB
Home 01132 509371

Mile Post Compiler

Bob Laing
25 Bankfield Road
ShIPLEY BD18 4AJ
Home 01274 581800
E-mail boblaing@blueyonder.co.uk

Mile Post Compiler

Tricia Laing
25 Bankfield Road
ShIPLEY BD18 4AJ
Home 01274 581800

Committee member

David Jessup
19 Millfields
Silsden BD20 0DT
Home 01535 657566

Regional Chairman

John Reeve
10 Perth Grove
Stockton-on-Tees
Cleveland TS18 5BF
Home 01642 580350

Programme of Events for 2004 - 2005.

All meetings take place at 8.00pm on the second Friday of the month, in the top floor Social Club, Centenary House, North Street, Leeds, LS2 8AY.

- 10th September 04 - London's Lost Route to Basingstoke.
Katie Sayles.
- 8th October 04 - Yorkshire Waterways
Laurence Morgan.
- 12th November 04 - Waterway Artist.
Alan Bamford.
- 10th December 04 - Christmas Social and member's slides.
- 14th January 05 - Two Old Ouses.
Stuart Clark.
- 11th February 05 - British Waterways- The Future.
Derek Cochrane.
- 11th March 05 - AGM and member's slides.
- 8th April 05 - Glasgow to Edinburgh via The Falkirk
Wheel - Jennifer & Elliott Mosley

All the social meetings organised by the West Riding Branch are open and everyone is invited. Any member of the general public is allowed to attend and members are invited to bring friends.

The Inland Waterways Association campaigns for the Conservation, Use, Maintenance, Restoration and Development of the Inland Waterways, which are part of our heritage, and are there for the benefit of everyone.

For further information please contact 01274-581413