

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.

The Falkirk Wheel.

Chairman's Comments

AGM 2005. No-one came rushing forward to be chairman so here I am putting pen to paper again!

I have attended several Region committee meetings where issues such as; amendments to the proposed EA order for inland waterways under the Transport and Works Act 1992; BW Consultation Forum and Jubilee's Jubilee Journey have been reported on. Read your copy of 'Waterways' for more details and to find out about other current happenings.

I have also attended some BW User Group meetings with Ian and thank him for the many other meetings he attends on behalf of our branch. The user group meetings are an opportunity for different groups who use the waterways to put questions, queries and concerns to BW. If you are aware of any matters which you think should be discussed contact Ian or myself.

In March a meeting was held in York to see if it would be feasible to set up a York section, to keep an eye on the Ouse corridor. It has been a concern to the committee that we haven't the man power to do this. I was delighted with the response at the meeting and thank those who have come forward to be actively involved. See page 15 for further details. At the AGM I was disappointed (but unfortunately not surprised!) that no-one offered their help on the committee. We now have only 7 committee members so we do have officer vacancies. We will do what we can but none of the present committee feels able to take on these positions as well as the job they are already doing.

As you are enjoying the waterways over the summer please consider giving more help to your branch.

The branch sales stand will be at the trail boat rally at Chesterfield and at the National at Preston Brook. Are you attending either of these events? If so come along and help. It is interesting and rewarding talking to the public about the waterways we enjoy, and is an opportunity to raise funds and gives the small group who man the stand a break.

As mentioned in my comments in the last 'Milepost' we are having a tombola again at the National. It's not too late to donate prizes. Contact a committee member to drop off or have prizes picked up from your house.

Finally have a great summer, wherever you travel on or near the waterways, near or further a field. Let's hope for some good weather so we can make the most of our fantastic waterway network.

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 September. We look forward to hearing from you.

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION
WEST RIDING BRANCH

Minutes of the 2005 AGM held at Centenary House, Leeds, Friday 11 March at 8pm.

Present: 24 members

1. APOLOGIES: Alistair and Peggy Furness, Ben Hobson
2. MINUTES OF THE 2004 AGM: Proposed by Elaine Scott, Seconded by Shirley Hobson. Accepted.
3. MATTERS ARISING: None

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

I would like to thank all the committee members for the support they have given over the last year and all the hard work they have done.

A special thank you to Frank and Barbara Rigby and Ken Nelson who retire from the committee after many years service and to David Jessup for his time as chairman.

Thanks to all members who have attended social meetings, supported the raffle and helped the branch in any way.

We took part in the clean up 2004 by painting mileposts between Bingley and Leeds, attended the National Waterways Festival at Burton on Trent and the sales team also attended the Skipton and South Pennine Festivals. We have been able to allocate £1,500 to the Barnsley, Dearn and Dove Canals Trust and were pleased to support them by giving them space on our stand at Burton.

As we look forward to another summer I urge more of you to become actively involved with branch activities, to help promote the waterways you enjoy to others. As usual more people on the committee would help spread the load of jobs to be done. Help on the branch stand at the various waterways festivals would be most welcome, remember it's not just for the committee, we are all part of West Riding Branch.

Last September, when I agreed to be chairman, it was to be up to this AGM. However I am prepared to carry on for the next year, but if there is any one out there who fancies the job full training will be given!

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The branch has had another busy year. Every year there seems to be an increasing work load and this year as usual, we have had no nominations for new committee members.

I would just like to thank again those committee members who are not standing for re election for all their work over the years. And ask if anyone would like to be co opted onto the committee this year. You can just be an ordinary committee member with no particular responsibilities and can do as little or as much as you feel able. Just having someone to do some of the little jobs that form part of the committee's workload would do some thing towards relieving the burden on the remaining committee members.

Many of our committee members are currently doing more than one job. Your honorary secretary for example as well as dealing with most of the correspondence to the branch, also attends the British Waterways user group meetings and deals with planning applications because we do not have a Navigation or Planning Officer. Given that the branch area covers a dozen planning authorities, trying to keep an eye on planning is a rather add hoc affair.

I also attend many (umpteem) other meetings such as the Kirklees Public Meetings on Cycling, which I keep an eye on how proposed cycle routes could affect the towing paths in Kirklees. I am also an IWA representative on the Barnsley Canals Consortium. I also try and let you know what is happening in our branch area by writing pieces for the branch magazine.

Nationally the IWA is undertaking a historic structures survey. So of course it falls on your (**“overworked”**) secretary to move things forward for the branch. I was very pleased to have had two responses to my article in the “Milepost”. One member has offered to put the BW listed structures into IWA spreadsheets. And another has offered the use of his digital photographs of bridges on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. This is one of those areas where branch members can be involved without being on the committee. And it would be nice to have some more people involved in this project as otherwise it will only move forward very slowly.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT:

We have not had as many local events to attend therefore income was down.

The treasurer had prepared a balance sheet giving the year's accounts and outlined it to the floor.

Balance 31st December 2004 - £2,576.14 (This includes £,1500 allocated to Barnsley, Dearn and Dove Canals Trust)

7.ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS: Proposed by Shirley Hobson. Seconded Elaine Scott. Accepted.

8. ANY BUSINESS NOTIFIED UNDER BY LAW 40: None.

9. STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE SIZE: To be left at 12 for the time being. Currently we have 7 committee members.

10. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS: No one up for re election.

11. ADDRESS BY REGIONAL CHAIRMAN:

John Reeve thanked Chris Pinder for stepping into the chairman's shoes and thanked Ian Moore for all the meetings he attends. He also thanked Ken Nelson for the work he does at the National Festivals and the educational work he does.

Region are trying to get IWA direct representation for the Ouse corridor. There will be a meeting on Monday 21st March 2005 at St Mary's church near Marygate, York at 8pm. An officer from York council will attend. There are various events planned on the river at York for 2006. At Council level IWA has been dealing with matters relating to the Environment Agency Transport and Works Act, British Waterways Advisory Forum and Tree cutting.

Jennifer Mosley thanked Jean for selling the raffle tickets and for being willing to carry on with the job.

‘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.

February:

Mr Gallagher and family	Wakefield
Mr and Mrs Berry	Huddersfield
Mrs J Walker	Huddersfield
Mr and Mrs Inman	Leeds
Mr C Jagger	Leeds

March:

Mr K Chapman	York
Mr C Robinson	Harrogate

April:

None

Your Branch Needs You!

As you may have noticed on page 19, your committee still **desperately** needs new members. We are now at an all time low of only seven committee members

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

Please consider joining us. Why not come along to a meeting to see what goes on. We may even try to bribe you with coffee and biscuits.

Speak to any committee member to find out when and where the next meeting will be held.

We look forward to seeing you!!

GLASGOW TO EDINBURGH

The Forth & Clyde and Union Canal

In the days of sail, it was tempting to contemplate avoiding the trip around the Hebrides, which had sunk the Spanish Armada, and it was as early as 1650 when King Charles financed the connection between Grangemouth and Bowling, linking the North and Irish Sea.

It was thanks to the wealthy landowner, Lord Dundas, who lived in London but owned most of the land around the eastern end at Falkirk and Grangemouth, that the project was started. Not only was he the chief shareholder, but he was also a great pioneer.

One of his experiments was with the first stream driven narrow boat 'Charlotte Dundas', built in 1788, which was to pull two other loaded narrow boats (on a windy day) 20 miles in six hours.

Work began on the 'Great Canal' in 1768 at Grangemouth by John Smeaton * and by 1773 he had opened it as far as Kirkintilloch. The harbour became Scotland's first inland port. On holidays, so many boats were tied up here that you could walk from one side of the canal to the other.

After lock 20, heading east to west, John Smeaton came across Dullator Bog and he believed he could cut across it by filling it with water to prevent it from collapsing, but he was disastrously wrong. The cut continued to fill up with slime, which required more than 55ft of earth and stones to build up the banks and towpath. Even a stable disappeared into the bog. This part is still the widest cut on the canal.

The construction also disturbed the eco system, causing a plague of millions of frogs to spread across the countryside in search of a new home.

Smeaton also found a soldier, on horseback, trapped in the bog whilst fleeing the victorious Highland Army after the battle of Kilsyth in 1645.

Boats were built at canal side yards, such as in Kirkintilloch, and were launched broadside in the canal, which caused a wave across the water, often drenching local school children who were allowed time off to watch the event. This was thought to have caused the cholera outbreak in 1832 and isolated the town. Barges were towed through by paddle wheel boats for a mile either side before being hitched back to the horses.

The village of Cadder hides a dark past. It is thought that after the opening of the canal, the infamous body snatchers, Burke and Hare, took the bodies from the Kirk yard here. It was claimed that they put the bodies into chemical barrels and shipped them to Edinburgh by canal boat. It is also thought that they met as canal navvies working on the Falkirk tunnel.

In 1773, Robert Mackell took over as engineer and continued the canal to Hamilton basin at Applecross Street, which was the merchant centre of Glasgow.

Work ceased here for eight years, until Robert Whitworth became engineer in 1785 and extended the Glasgow branch eastwards to Port Dundas which completed the link to Bowling and finally opened the coast-to-coast Forth & Clyde canal in 1790.

In 1831 'Swift boats', which were passengers only, pulled by two horses at a time and changed every two miles, cut the journey time to Glasgow in half and attracted 200,000 passengers a year. In 1841 a nightly 'sleeper' service was introduced. They only stopped when railways bought out the service.

During the Second World War, the five locks at Maryhill had special stop locks built which could be closed to prevent flooding if the canal embankments were bombed.

In 1885, sewing machine manufacturer, Singer, moved to Clydebank and became not only the biggest on the canal, but in the world. By 1913 the

factory was producing 1,300,000 sewing machines, employing a workforce of 14,000.

Even the canal was full of gold because someone had tipped a bowl of goldfish into it and they thrived on the warm water from the Singer's works outflow.

The Union canal was completed in 1822, thirty-two years after the Forth & Clyde, and designed as a contour canal by Baird from Edinburgh to Falkirk.

It is 33 miles of lock free canal until it reaches Falkirk, where the navvies had to hide the canal under a 2,076ft tunnel so the owner of nearby Callander House couldn't see it.

The Union canal can boast Scotland's longest tunnel and largest aqueduct which crosses the river Avon. It is 80ft high and 810ft long with 12 arches, each with a 50ft span.

A smaller aqueduct, 76ft above the Almond Valley, was made famous by a 75ft pillar of ice. It was during the great freeze in February 1895, and attracted a great many visitors.

Finally eleven locks were built to lower the canal 112ft down to the Forth of Clyde, and a further 16-lock flight east to Grangemouth.

During the time the Forth of Clyde was in use it was the first to carry vehicles such as carts and railway wagons.

In 1868 it was bought by Caledonian Railway, but it was in 1963 that the Castle Cary Road Bridge (1773) finally closed this canal.

By Jane Hutchinson

Courtesy Geoprojects and the Internet

*

John Smeaton was born in Austhorpe Lodge, Whitchurch, Nr Leeds. He attended Leeds Grammar School and joined his father's law firm.

Amongst his chief works are the Eddystone lighthouse and the Forth & Clyde canal and bridges in towns, including Banff, Coldstream and Perth.

He is regarded as the father of civil engineering in Britain and founded the Civil Engineers in 1771.

John Smeaton died of a stroke on 28th October 1792 whilst walking with his family in the garden in Austhorpe.



Lock 14 Forth & Clyde Canal

Meet Your Committee

A Personal Profile of Elliott Mosley (Treasurer.)

I was brought up in Baildon and attended schools in Baildon and Bradford.

After leaving school I was apprenticed at Thornton Engineering, where I specialised in auto electrical engineering.

After two years in the R.A.F. I returned to the motor trade where I worked for about forty years in sales and management.

I married Jennifer in 1959. We have two sons and a daughter and five grandchildren to date!

In 1968 we moved to Bingley and were regular visitors to Five Rise and Three Rise and the canal in general.



I joined the I.W.A. at the Saltaire Festival around this time - probably in the early seventies.

When the children were young we had our annual holiday on hire boats for several years, gaining experience and interest in the waterways system.

This led to us buying our own boat many years later on which we have been able to spend and enjoy longer holidays in our retirement.

* * * * *

NAVIGATION NOTES

Calder & Hebble Navigation

British Waterways has received planning permission from Wakefield Council to demolish the old coal chute at Fall Ing basin. This is the last coal chute on the Calder & Hebble Navigation and the West Riding Branch, the Calder Navigation Society and Wakefield Historical Society all objected to the demolition.

IWA North East Region Chairman, John Reeve, has recently made the formal presentation of the Offley & Slack Propeller to the Brighouse & Sowerby Bridge Boat Club. This is the trophy presented to the club with the highest proportion of boats attending the National Waterways Festival, which the club won last year at Burton upon Trent.

Leeds & Liverpool Canal

ISIS, the waterside regeneration company half owned by BW, have made public their plans for the development of Leeds Canal Basin. A waterway consultation group has been set up with representatives from BW, IWA, NABO and AWCC to discuss the waterway issues such as moorings and the dry docks with ISIS. If you have waterway related comments please contact branch secretary Ian Moore at westridding@waterways.org.uk or see the contact details in the back of this newsletter. People can of course comment to Leeds City Council on the planning application as well.

Bradford Metropolitan District Council has produced the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Conservation Area Assessment. This is a review of the conservation area covering the canal corridor in the Bradford district. And is currently undergoing a period of public consultation until the 30th of June. It is available to view at Bradford, Shipley, Bingley, Keighley and Silsden Libraries and at Bradford, Shipley and Keighley Planning Offices. And on the internet at http://www.bradford.gov.uk/council/planning/heritage/cons_list_leeds_liverpool.asp

Rochdale Canal

A couple of issues are affecting the western side of the Rochdale Canal.

Having been reopened at Slattocks, between Locks 59 and 60, where the culvert collapsed last year, the canal and towpath are now closed between Locks 63 and 64 due to a major breach on the 25th of April, to the canal embankment close to the River Irk Aqueduct, near Middleton. Unfortunately the canal is likely to remain closed at this point until at least the end of 2005.

A feasibility study has been published on upgrading the towpath from Manchester to the summit to allow for multi-user access including cycles.

For further information on both the above, contact BW North-West Customer Services on enquiries.northwest@britishwaterways.co.uk or 01925 847700 or at Trafalgar House, Temple Court, Birchwood, Risley, Warrington WA3 6GD.

Positive Progress Towards a New Section in the Northeast.

Following on from the successful meeting & "5 Great Churches Cruise" presentation, in York, on March the 21st a further meeting was held on April the 25th. Fourteen people, who were interested in furthering the well being & development of the Ouse/Ure corridor, met at the home of Member Roger Brook. The meeting was chaired by Region Chairman John Reeve, who expressed his delight in the level of response. The majority of attendees were IWA Members & the remaining members of local Waterways related groups.

- ◆ It was agreed that a new section should be set up.
- ◆ The section should be named :- "The Ouse & Ure Corridor Section"
- ◆ For administrative purposes it will be a Section of East Yorkshire Branch. (This was agreed pre-meeting by both East Yorkshire & West Riding Branches)
- ◆ A resolution to effect the establishment of the Section to be put to the next committee meeting of East Yorkshire Branch.
- ◆ In the mean time a Steering Committee was appointed by mutual agreement consisting of :

Chairman John Reeve, Vice Chairman Roger Brook, Minute Secretary Tony Martin.

Planning/PR Keith Chapman plus the East Yorkshire & West Riding Chairmen, Barry Robins and Chris Pinder.

- ◆ Those Region Committee Members present agreed to invite Vice Chairman Roger Brook to the next Region Committee meeting.
- ◆ It was agreed to hold another "open meeting", at York, during the autumn.
- ◆ The next committee meeting will be on 5th May at 1 Croft Mews York.

All those present felt that the IWA had not thus far been able to give satisfactory coverage of the North Yorkshire Navigation's. That was due to the lack of a resident group dedicated to matters concerning the rivers.

Now, when the City of York Council are showing great interest in its waterfront, is an appropriate time to set up the group. Some talks are already ongoing regarding visitor moorings & improving facilities. The proposed Section would also make a positive contribution to consultation regarding new waterside building, in York, & access to the river Foss.

Sales and Promotions.

By the time you read this we will have attended Skipton Festival and the South Pennine Boat Club event.

At Spring Bank Holiday 28th -30th May inclusive we shall be at the Chesterfield Trail Boat Rally. Hope to see you there.

August 27th - 29th inclusive is the big event - the I.W.A. National Festival at Preston Brook. Once again we hope to see you there.

For this last event we once again appeal to you for tombola prizes. You have always been very generous in the past and made it a very successful attraction to the West Riding Branch stand.

Please let any of the committee have any gifts you have or phone us and we can collect.

Thank you.

Elliott and Jennifer.

EVENTS

If further information is required on the 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 walks contact Secretary Brian Holden on 01706 646132. Website www.derekparsons.com/society.html

For Kirklees Countryside Volunteers walks phone 01484 234076.

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 (evenings). Website www.bddct.org.uk

23rd April to 29th May. Rochdale Canal Today Exhibition at **Touchstones Art Gallery**, Gallery One, The Esplanade, Rochdale (Tel: 01706 864986). A contemporary exhibition of photographic images of present life on the canal depicting social and economic regeneration and its impact on the people living locally.

Saturday 28th to Monday 30th May 10am to 5pm. IWA National Trailboat Festival on Chesterfield Canal at Tapton Lock, Chesterfield (on A61 near Tesco). A associated boat gathering is also being held at Kiveton Park on the section of Chesterfield Canal that is accessible from the Trent, on the 28th and 29th May.

For both events contact Tapton Lock Visitors Centre on 01246 551035 or helena.stenton@derbyshire.gov.uk.

Sunday 5th June. River Foss Society. Meet at Huntington Church (Grid Ref 616562) at 2.30pm for circular walk (3 miles) along River Foss to Earswick and back. If further information is required contact Pat Rattenbury on 01904 761168.

Wednesday 8th June. IWA South Yorkshire & Dukeries Branch BBQ at Strawberry Island Boat Club, Milethorn, Doncaster. Bring any meat you will eat. Salad, potatoes etc will be provided. Contact Mavis Paul on 0114 268 3927 to say you're coming.

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

Saturday 25th June. Stainforth Waterside Festival. On Stainforth & Keadby Canal, near New Inn, Stainforth.

Stainforth Town Council invites Barges & Boats to its Waterside Festival. The day will include many attractions for all the family.

Free moorings will be available - contact Stuart on 07989 987 136 or Marlene on 01302 844 463.

A 'meet and greet' will take place on Friday 24 June, with a pie and pea supper at the Old Club in the market Place at 8pm. There will also be an owner's jumble sale on the morning of Sunday 26 June.

Sunday 3rd June. Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals Trust. Day trip aboard the Humber sloop "Amy Howson". 8am for 8.30am.

Contact Derek Housley on 01226 790341 (evenings).

Sunday 3rd July. Kirklees Countryside Volunteers. By Water & Way. A walk along the canal bank and back by the Kirklees Way (5 miles). Meet Alan at 11am at Link Road, Dewsbury, behind the Minister (Grid Ref. 247 214).

Sunday 7th August. Kirklees Countryside Volunteers. The Standedge Trail. An interesting walk which traces some early transport routes with particular emphasis on the canal. The ground is rough at times and may be wet underfoot (10 miles). Meet Malcolm at 10am at Marsden Railway Station.

Sunday 14th August. Kirklees Countryside Volunteers. Along the River & Up the Mountain. A walk along the River Calder, then up the Mountain and back along the navigation. (6 miles). Meet Alan at 11am at Link Road, Dewsbury, behind the Minister (Grid Ref. 247 214).

Wednesday 24th August. Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society. Meet at 6.30pm at Todmorden Lock (by A6033) on the **Rochdale Canal**, for a walk to Walsden.

Saturday 27th to Monday 29th August. IWA National Waterways Festival & Boat Show on Bridgewater Canal at Preston Brook, Cheshire. A short walk from Runcorn East Railway Station on the Manchester – Chester Line.

Saturday 17th September. Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals Trust. Day trip aboard the Humber keel "Comrade". 7am for 7.30am.

Contact Derek Housley on 01226 790341 (evenings).

Committee Members 2005 / 2006

Chairman

Membership Secretary

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

Mile Post Compiler

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

Secretary

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

Committee member

Vacant

Treasurer

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

Committee member

Vacant

Sales Officer

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

Committee member

Vacant

Minutes Secretary

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

Committee member

Vacant

Committee member

Vacant

Mile Post Compiler

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

Regional Chairman

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

Programme of Events for 2005 - 2006.

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.

- 9th September 05 - Quiz Night..
- 14th October 05 - The Rochdale Canal - John Reeve.
- 11th November 05 - Not More Knots! - Ken Nelson.
- 9th December 05 - Christmas Social and member's slides.

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