

BRIDGE



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2021

The monthly newsletter
published by the

The
Grantham Canal
Society

CHARITY No: 507337



The Grantham Canal Society's Team who helped rebuild Kingston's Lock (lock 14)

Original photo by Jim Freeman

ONLINE
COPY
ONLY



This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

Following the completion of the GCHI Project – or the Heritage Lottery Funded restoration of Locks 15 and 14 – the Society activity now turns to matters different. Thanks to changes made by the Government the Society can now meet its supporters collectively and in a formal setting.

Thus an event is planned for Monday 30th August at Woolsthorpe. I hope those of you who can will come and talk to us and tell us your views on developments within the organisation. In our turn we will request your assistance and continued support for the restoration of the Grantham Canal.

In September we are planning to have an open day at Lock 14 for everyone to come and see the high quality workmanship that volunteers have delivered using materials which your donations have provided. The potential day for this is Saturday 18th September and opening times are likely to be from 11am until the daylight fades.

We hope that this will give all our supporters and members an opportunity to see what has been achieved at Locks 14 and, if you walk a little further, at Lock 15. In the opposite direction along the towpath is our next lock project - Lock 13. May we count on your further support and start this work? Although it looks a mess this lock is in better condition and we do not think that it will require dismantling as those in the GCHI Project. It is still a major restoration

task for which GCS will have to raise significant funds. If you are in a position to support us with funding, materials or practical help please come and talk to us.

The Society is in urgent need of experienced volunteers who could lead on specific tasks. Somebody with experience in Civil Engineering is essential; and an individual with background in Marketing could help raise the society profile.

In addition we need a person based in the West Bridgford area who would enjoy developing new volunteer teams along the west end of the canal. If you, or you know someone who could enjoy leading in any of these areas, please put your name forward.

Our need is urgent so that we can maintain the restoration progress of recent years.

I look forward to talking to you on 30th of this month at Woolsthorpe or on 18th September at Lock 14 worksite.

Mike Stone.



Support the IWA & become a member

<https://waterways.org.uk/support/ways-to-give/join>



Lock 14 Opening

The long gestation of the Woolly Mammoth pales into insignificance compared with that of the Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative(GCHI) conceived way back in 2009!

Locks 14 & 15 have both now been reborn. Tuesday 3rd August 2021 was Lock 14's day to be proudly shown off to the public at large with radio, press and television coverage.

Mike Stone, our Chairman, was the first to speak to the assembled group on the lock side, which included many who had given freely many hours of their time in bringing this project to its successful conclusion.

A project of this magnitude could not have been delivered without the input and support of many individuals and organisations. Mike was at pains to pay tribute to South Kesteven District Council, without which, the project would not have got off the ground at Stage One. Priceless volunteers too received his praise, not only from the Grantham Canal Society(GCS), but those of the Waterway Recovery Group also.

The Canal and River Trust, predominant owners of the canal, were thanked for financial support and, expertise willingly shared. So too were the National Lottery Heritage Fund, suppliers of significant funding and 'the castle on the hill' for the loan of land for access and works compound. He turned to thank personally, His Grace the Duke of Rutland, Patron of GCS whom, we were pleased, could be with us on this momentous occasion.



**GCS Chairman Mike Stone (Brown Jacket)
Richard Parry,(L), Duke of Rutland (R)**



**Gates open The Three Shires prepares to leave
the lock**

Continued ...

Lock 14 Opening (*continued*)

Sustrans, Bottesford Angling Association, Messrs Sainsbury and groups representing archaeology, bats and many others all came in for a mention, as did the wider Community, who have supported us over many years, and continue to do so, with funds and materials.

Richard Parry, Chief Executive of the Canal and River Trust hailed the project a 'triumph' and paid tribute to the 'brilliant' volunteers and also thanked the Duke of Rutland for his support.

The Duke thanked everyone for coming, reiterating the thanks given by other speakers before being invited to cut the ribbon. There followed a round of applause as the top gates of the lock opened and Senior Skipper John expertly steered The Three Shires through, just as the last boatman to use this lock did 90 years ago.



CRT Project Manager being interviewed by BBC Radio Lincolnshire

Further interviews took place, and with cake and Belvoir cordials on offer, there was an opportunity to mingle with people, many we'd not seen in real life for what seems like an age!

We don't have funding yet for Lock 13, the penultimate in this flight of seven – our funding team are beavering away on this one – see, I resisted saying belvoiring!

Mike did suggest a retiring contribution...

This was essentially a press-day, with space and facilities either very restricted or non existent at the lock, precluding a larger gathering. I understand there will be chance for us all to get together later, with the opportunity to sup more cordial; cordially of course.

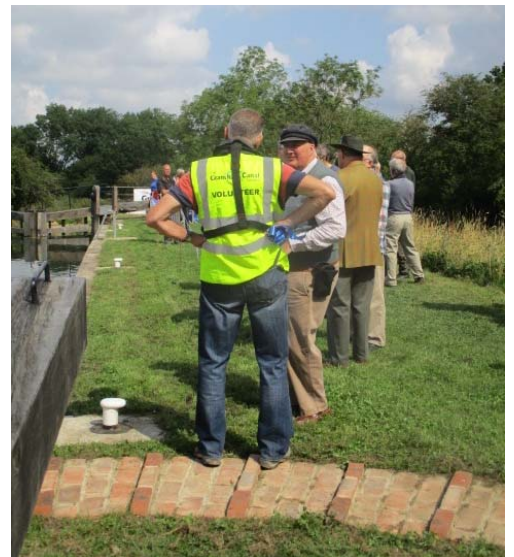
See The Three Shires making history here:

<https://youtu.be/m4ADCR0lgOE>

Tony Jackson

Photos of Kingston's Lock opening ceremony

(This heritage lock project does have a name - not just lock 14)



Many thanks to John Clark and Jim Freeman for these excellent photos

Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal by James Faulconbridge



Butterflies

The Big Butterfly Count runs from 16th July to the 8th August each year – by the time you read this, it'll be only just too late to get involved, but there's always next year! The aim of the project is to track trends in butterfly populations across the UK from year to year and it has revealed some important data already – some species ranges are expanding as climate change makes new areas accessible, whilst some which are already at the southern extent of their climatic envelope are being condensed into smaller areas still. The data also helps scientists understand how butterfly populations have responded to the conditions each year, as well as track migratory species such as the painted lady.

The concept behind the Big Butterfly Count is simple – spend 15 minutes watching and count the numbers and species you see. Several people have submitted records along the canal, with some being shared on twitter revealing species such as gatekeeper and red admiral as well as day-flying moths such as the magpie. The canal provides perfect habitat for many of our generalist species – there is a good diversity of native wildflowers to provide a nectar source for adults, as well as food plants for the caterpillars to develop.

You can get involved with the Big Butterfly Count next year by signing up at the website <https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org> - there are some great resources too such as spotter sheets to help you identify what you see and build your knowledge of our native butterflies.

THE SOCIETY INVITES APPLICANTS FOR THE FOLLOWING VOLUNTEER ROLES

Marketing Manager

To manage and raise the profile of GCS particularly at the Nottingham end of the canal, working closely with its Events, Operational and Fundraising teams and increasing the membership of the Grantham Canal Society.

To work closely with our vibrant Facebook and Twitter Feeds and to organise our public relations so that we have regular press announcements for public consumption.

Project Manager

With a practical construction background to work alongside our Special Projects Team to manage a variety of construction projects both large and small. This will involve managing and organising our willing construction personnel and delivering safely projects to completion

**Please email your interest to
Jo Altham who handles our Volunteer
Communications on email:
volunteercomms@granthamcanal.org**



The Grantham Canal Society welcomes you to come and meet us face to face finally!

We have missed you – we are now up and running and we want to welcome you to join us on Bank Holiday Monday 30th August 2021, we have been quiet on the events front for a while now but thanks to the Dirty Duck pub allowing us to use their Duck Hall we can hold our first event this year.

We are not able to use the depot at Woolsthorpe because we are mid-way through our slipway project and therefore it's quite the building site!

On **Bank Holiday Monday 30th August 2021 between 10am and 3pm** we will be presenting our most recent work and updates on activities for our supporters to see (including the slipway, canal maintenance and Lock 14 completion). We will provide updates on this year's fundraising success's including our 'Crowd Funded Vehicle' which we have now purchased. We will be available to talk about our exciting future projects big and small (near to Woolsthorpe and a bit further away).

As well as the usual membership and merchandise tent, we will be holding a raffle, card tombola and our famous cake stall will be back supported by our amazing cake bakers.



The Three Shires Trip Boat will be running for 30 minute boat trips (pre-booked) both Sunday 29th and Monday 30th August, our crew have been operating boat trips on Sundays throughout the summer and we hope to resume a more normal service very soon with trip boat short rides and longer pre-booked 2 and 4 hour cruises whilst the weather stays nice.

On Bank holiday Monday we will have a number of our team leads available to chat about volunteering and lead roles within the Grantham Canal Society as well as what your membership means to us even if you are not in a position to actively volunteer.

We will have some fun educational activities for children as well as refreshments and Ice Creams will also be available on site.

We would love to see you – come down with the family

Date – Bank Holiday Monday

30th August 2021

Time – 10am – 3pm

**Venue – Duck Hall, adjacent to the
Dirty Duck Pub, Duck Lane, Woolsthorpe,
NG32 1NY**

PLEASE NOTE: Whilst we have a card machine cash/change would be preferable for raffles/tombola and refreshments – there is no cash machine nearby .



ON THE CUT



The Hunter/Gatherers return on Centauri



**Weed gathering by Otter
A never ending job!**



**Log hunting in Otter
Finding the elusive prop killer log**



Mudlark in action



**The log's demise
Never to offend again**

Some photos from various GCS members indicating the numerous tasks our volunteers undertake on a regular basis.

My diary from the Isles of Scilly by James Faulconbridge July 2021

Running a vineyard in a coastal location will always make us at the mercy of the weather – unfortunately this was brought into sharp focus in July! Storm Evert came through with winds gusting 70mph and polished off a good proportion of this year's growth on vines. This damage will only affect this season's crop – the vines themselves will bounce back – but the hope of a harvest from these vines is out of the question now.

Luckily our high evergreen hedges protected the rows which were lucky enough to be in the lee of the wind so all is not lost. The fields we have here on the vineyard are tiny by modern agricultural standards – the largest is just 0.4 acres and some of our smaller are only 0.03 acres! These small fields used to be surrounded by dry stone walls to protect spring crops from the winds and over the last century, evergreen shrubs were added which significantly increased the level of protection. Even though we've now switched the crop from spring flowers and potatoes into grape vines, the field structures have remained the same and offer an essential protection against the wind.

The wind also shook a bumper harvest on the apple trees, but they've clung onto most of them and soon the first varieties will be ripening. Scilly Pearl is a truly local cultivar which is ready to pick at the end of August – it is a delicious eater but doesn't keep well at all so pressing and juicing is the best way to preserve a crop to enjoy throughout the year.

July has otherwise been spent in the usual mid-summer tasks of managing the site. The grass in the rows is cut and the arisings piled in the rows to mulch the vines; whilst the vines themselves are shooting up and need training and curtailing into their guide wires.

Those crops which have survived the storm are now feeling increasingly precious, so our next job will be dragging out and installing the nets which keep the birds away from the ripening grapes. We left this too late in our first year and the resident blackbirds, thrushes and starlings had already settled themselves in for an autumnal feast. Once they'd had that first taste, they were intent on working out how to break back in, so this year we're hoping to get the nets on before they start!



Healthy vines before the storm



Assessing the damage after

THE WAY IT WAS

By Mike Atherley



This month Mike details the work at Lock 18 by the Grantham Canal Restoration Society

Before we could start any further restoration it was obvious that some kind of bund needed to be built at the topside and at the bottom end and also a temporary water feed around the lock. Before all this could be organised we received notification from British Rail that the rail embankment could be removed and also our friend Dave Carnell contacted us regarding a Derelict Land Grant scheme that had some money still available if we applied quickly. So you can see that from no work we suddenly had far more than we could cope with. It was decided that the D L G was the best way forward because of our lack of finance for any large job and also to contact Waterways Recovery Group to help with the railway blockage. The grant was very difficult and took several attempts before a successful application was accepted. We had decided to apply for all three locks, 18, 17 and 16, to be included and the full amount we applied for was accepted. The problems came both thick and fast, we had to match fund the grant and complete the three rebuilds in a set time. To enable this a Grantham company called Trainline were contacted and they agreed to rebuild locks 17 and 16 provided we cleared the chambers and site and provided a temporary water bypass. The conclusion of this was that their work took all of the grant and we were not allowed to work on their site and we were to provide all tools, equipment and materials. This left us with lock 18 to rebuild without any money or help from the grant. Fortunately the two locks were completed in time, W R G and ourselves removed the railway embankment but all work on lock 18 had to take a back seat until most of the work had been done.

A few years passed with little improvement of lock 18 and we had also committed to hold the I.W.A. National Trailboat Festival at Woolsthorpe in 1994 so all the canal from the A1 to lock 15 could be officially opened. Luck came our way with an offer to donate several lorry loads of clay free of charge to use as a bund top and bottom of the lock. We could get to the site using the old rail track but had to cross one of John Moulsher's fields which was a meadow and it was cut up very badly.

Continued ...



Mike Atherley continues detailing GCRS work at Lock 18

A tracked excavator was hired to construct the bunds and a new pipe run along the bank to provide a water flow. The first job was to break up and remove the concrete cill dam so we could see how good or bad the top cill was. B.W. must have had a change of heart and provided us with a good team of lock engineers/builders who set about the large and complicated jobs concerning the lock chamber. Our team set about the wing walls, replacing missing brickwork and replacing the missing coping stones.

Fred Marsh had good contact with Barnstone Cement Works who provided coloured cement to build new coping stones, Gary Conelly built us a steel mould for that job and obtained a lot of paddle gear and gate furniture from old B.W. stores. B.W. gave us a set of steel quoins which turned out to be faulty after one set had been fitted. They also offered some second hand gates if we collected them, Fred Marsh did that.

A gate builder called Barry made up a set of top gates but unfortunately died before he could finish a bottom set but B.W. came up with a new pair just in time. During the complete rebuild B.W. insisted lock ladders were required and the stop plank grooves at both ends



A young Fred Marsh

were to be cut much larger with steel liners, these were both massive jobs. They did provide us with bollards and stonework to complete walkways alongside the lock chamber. The bottom offside wing wall had to be taken down to base line and a tree was found growing through where it was split. Another big job resolved. After all the gates had been hung it was time to do a water test so the stop planks came out first then a small channel cut through the top bund and the top gates held ok, then the lock was filled and the bottom gates were ok, it was then ok to remove both clay bunds and tidy up the whole site.

The whole three locks were only just completed in time before we needed to prepare the site for the Trailboat festival. Just to manage the grant aid was colossal, accountants, treasurer and loads of paper work to be submitted with bills and time sheets before payment could be received.

to be continued next month

GCS Additional responsibilities and new work means plenty for our volunteers to do

Care enough about our Heritage to join them?

Preparing Kingston's lock for the opening.

The GCS Volunteers mow the grass at the locks and keep the waterway clear between Woolsthorpe and the A1



The GCS volunteers are undertaking more maintenance for CRT and this recently built bund will house clay for re-puddling sections of the canal where required



Clearing undergrowth and building fences is a never ending job and some of our teams are experts at doing it

Whatever the task we are proud of our workmanship
And everyone benefits



Visit www.granthamcanal.org for further details

What else is happening within the GCS?

Emergency First Aid at Work

9 GCS volunteers trained on a one day course, instructed by Gary Ellis from GK Safety Liverpool.
Phil Wright



Duke of Edinburgh Award

Volunteers Josh and Max arrived with parents and all were escorted by Heather Ansell the D of E liaison along the towpath to Lock 14. The fencing was temporarily removed and we build steps up the bank for access to the lock.
Bob Terry



#Trending

By *Tony Jackson*

 @granthamcanalsociety

 @granthamcanal

The re-opening of Lock 14 livened things up on our social media and we had so many lovely messages like these: 'Absolutely fantastic job to all at Grantham Canal', 'Well done team' & 'Wonderful' were typical. Thank you to all who took the time to write something showing your appreciation of our work.

I didn't lay a brick throughout this five year Grantham Canal Heritage Initiative (GCHI) project to rebuild Locks 14 & 15, but I felt privileged to be able, almost daily, to bring you news from the coal face. To be able to share with you some of the hardships due to the vagaries of our British weather, or the frustrations when key materials were delayed – thinking of those huge anchor stones, when the quarry hit a poor seam. Some joyful moments too, as each milestone was reached. One thing I hear mentioned a lot is 'camaraderie' within the teams – I suspect they mean a bit of good natured leg pulling!

There was more to the GCHI Project than bricks 'n' mortar, although these, it has to be said, did feature quite highly. Part of the Community Element was the provision of four fabulous benches, each with a carved theme – wait! It's more exciting than that! Each bench has a family friendly circular walk associated with it! Four individual leaflets have been produced and are beginning to find their way into the community – they're on line too which, I suspect, is how many of you will access them: <https://www.granthamcanal.org/family-explorer-days/>

If you're unable to follow the link, you can find the walks on our website: blue menu bar>Canal>Using the Canal>Family Explorer Days. Print them out or follow the walks on your device. See if you can encourage your children to lead the walk?

There's a puzzle to solve on each – don't worry, they're not too difficult. I managed to solve three out of the four :-)

Tony Jackson



Cotgrave Country Park

Park Fun Day - Sunday 22nd August

11am until 3pm FREE Entry!



Come and have a go at our family friendly **free** activities



It's what we do

Supported by the Co-op Community Fund

- Make a clay creature
- Learn how to make a bird feeder
- Be king or queen of the woods and make a nature crown
- Learn about bats, bees and hedgehogs
- Food & Drink stalls
- Orienteering challenge
- Local and Conservation charity stalls
- Plus much more



Community Events

www.cotgravecountrypark.co.uk



THE FRIENDS OF
COTGRAVE COUNTRY PARK

**ARE YOU A MEMBER OF
THE GRANTHAM CANAL
SOCIETY?**

**Our membership is growing
so why not join us and help
make a difference to our
canal and preserve our
HERITAGE**

**It doesn't matter if you live miles away
or don't wish to actively volunteer - you
will be supporting our efforts**

THE COST IS MODEST!

**The annual subscription rates are
as follows:**

Single Adult:£20

Family:£30

Under 18/Over 60: ..£15



**Our grateful thanks to
the following who have
recently made a donation
to the Society:**

Margaret Leighton, Jeremy Lee,

E M & K L B Babington

John Dodwell, Tony Osbond, Tony Binch,

M G Heppinstall, Anonymous,

Crowd funding - Van, Colin & Chris King,

John Sentence, Jo & Tim Altham,

John Berry, Rosemary Gibson,

Dunn Family Charity (GCWRG SLOW)



**We would like to express our thanks to the many people who have
donated money in memory of David Goodall. David was a canal
enthusiast for most of his adult life. Although he never owned a
narrowboat, he rented many all over the UK for holidays with his wife
Yvonne, friends and family. When they moved to Bottesford 6 years ago,
he regularly followed the restoration projects on the Grantham Canal
and was fascinated by the lock rebuilds. Recently they had started
walking the towpath in sections from Grantham, and got as far as
Hickling Basin before his untimely passing. All money received in
David's name will be allocated to the works at Lock 13, which is the next
one in the Woolsthorpe Flight to be restored."**

L A Barber, L Clarke

Ralph Staplehurst , Nicola Brownjohn

W Dawson, Rita & Tony Newman

M Davies, Julie & Garry Staplehurst