

# THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 59

Spring 2012



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### Forthcoming Events:

Sunday 10th June Society stall at Bude Motor Classic Event at the Rugby Ground

Saturday 23rd June Coach Trip to Padstow with boat trip to Wadebridge and back and optional visit to Prideaux Place. See booking form enclosed.

Saturday 21st July Rolle Canal Society visit to the Bude Canal including Merrifield, Hobbacott, the Barge Section and Bude Aqueduct

Sunday 5th Aug Bude Stratton Heritage Day

Saturday 11th Aug Garden Tea Party at The Barn House, Higher Penallt organised by Bude Canal Trust. 2pm to 5pm. £4 per person.

Saturday 18th Aug Society stall at Bude Carnival.

Saturday 25th Aug Society stall at RNLI Lifeboat weekend.

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Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to [cshorton23@btinternet.com](mailto:cshorton23@btinternet.com) or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and send to Mike Moore (Tel: 01288 361878) to reach him by 16th June 2012.

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<b>Trustees:</b>	Chairman	Audrey Wheatley
	Vice-Chairman	David Phillips
	Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
	Treasurer	Chris Jewell
	Events Secretary	Betty Moore
	Minuting Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
	Other trustees	Bryan Dudley Stamp, Anne Longley Ralph Daniel, Pam Daniel
	Membership Secretary	Mike Moore ( <i>non-trustee</i> )
	The Tub Boat Editor	Clive Horton ( <i>non-trustee</i> )

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The views expressed by the contributors to this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society which does not accept responsibility for them.

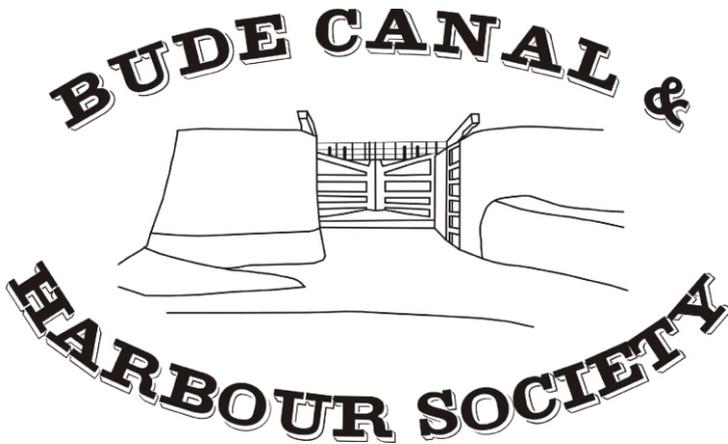
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Cover: Blue Hills moored outside the old museum building in February  
Photo: Mike Moore

## **CREAKS FROM THE CHAIR**

The chair has been creaking quite a lot recently.

There has been an unavoidable variation of occupancy of the chair at committee meetings over the last year due to the inevitable, occasional absence of one member or another. In the past such absences have not caused undue concern but these days, alas, so thin on the ground are active committee members now, when one is temporarily not available, his/her job has to be done by another willing to do that particular job despite having a job already. Since the Chairman alone sits idly doing nothing except occupy the chair during meetings, it doesn't take much imagination to envisage the interesting swapping of roles which ensues when the chair is handed over so that the chairman can make herself useful and everyone else shunt the other tasks between them. We are nothing if not versatile on BCHS committee! This state of affairs is, alas, not unusual; the running of voluntary bodies is not easy if there are few volunteers and it seems these days people are reluctant to commit themselves. However, any offers from anyone near enough to give a hand on the committee will, needless to say, be rapturously received.

After a lovely spell of spring weather the canal is looking good though there are signs that the rampant reeds of middle pound are on the march again and one wonders if there are any plans in the management to keep them down. We have all got used to the sight of a wide, well-watered canal and no one wants to revert to the bad old pre-regeneration days.

We look forward to another season of events when we try to promote the canal to anyone who doesn't yet know about it and hope to meet all of you who need no convincing, at some occasion during the summer.

Audrey Wheatley.

## **AGM – Treasurer's Report**

The accounts sheets and schedules were previously circulated to members present. There were no questions on them by the members for the Treasurer.

The year end balances for the accounts as at 31.12.2011 were as follows:

Account 1	£1877.15
Account 2 Educational Fund	£ 398.08
Account 3 Project Fund	£2642.54
Account 4 Canal Day	£ 272.01
Account 5 Archive Project Fund	£ 332.22

The Treasurer highlighted the following points:

· Account 1

Year end balance reduced by £474.87, when compared with 2010.

This is probably due to lower sales of stock, reduced surplus on events, missed events due to weather/manpower levels, lower renewal levels and lower casual donations.

- The change regarding the printing of 'The Tub Boat' saved £327.30 in costs compared to 2010.

· Account 3

The year end balance of £2642.54 has £1500 earmarked for 2 specific projects:

- i. £1000 towards the replacement of Rodds Bridge to allow navigation of the canal
- ii. £500 towards the re-roofing of the Barge Workshop at Helebridge, where the Tub Boat is stored.

This leaves £1142.54 available for a suitable project .

· Account 4

Canal Day. BCHS does not receive any support from Cornwall Council towards the 'Canal Day' element of Bude Stratton Heritage Day

· Account 5 – Archive Project

There are no major projects ongoing at present. BCHS has the original letters/press cutting re the attempt in the late 1960s to remove the sealock gates and replace with a spillway. These

need to be presented in an appropriate manner.

## MEMBERSHIP

As at 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Total memberships, including life members	132
Total number of members, including life member	144
Total Life members	26

The Treasurer then gave an update on the Higher Wharf situation, in particular, the meeting on 9.1.2012 of the Bude Area Community Network, when the HiWAG petition was discussed by B.A.C.N.

On 9.1.12, about 70 members of the public attended the B.A.C.N and questioned Mr Peter Marsh, Head of Property, East Cornwall, about the proposed sale of the Higher Wharf. However, it was clear that Cornwall Council still intend in due course to sell the land for development. The petition and the survey by BSTC had no effect on the thinking of Cornwall Council.

Since this meeting there has been some movement by Cornwall Council, in that a community bid for the land, together with a good business plan may be acceptable to secure the land. As a result, HiWAG have met twice and are actively investigating what needs to be done to produce a community bid.

The HiWAG group has acquired extra members who have an interest in the securing of the site and development for community use.

These are; Budehaven Community School, Bude Dive Club & Bude Canal Trust.

The view of HiWAG is to achieve a multiuse centre for the community and access via a slipway to the canal.

With regards to the unfinished canal project, BCHS has written to B.A.C.N and asked if they would write to Cornwall Council and ascertain when the canal project will be completed.

The Treasurer closed by thanking fellow trustees and members for their continue support during the past year, with special thanks for Mike Moore for his watching brief and help with the account system.

Any member wanting a copy of the 2011 Accounts and Schedules,

should contact the Treasurer on 01288 352298 or [info@budecanal.co.uk](mailto:info@budecanal.co.uk).

Chris Jewell

### **Membership Report**

We welcome the following new member who has joined since December:

Jane Bickle, Westby Road, Bude

Could members who have given us their e-mail addresses please remember to send any updates or amendments to [info@budecanal.co.uk](mailto:info@budecanal.co.uk) so that we can continue to notify you when the newsletter is available on-line and for us to send any other notifications or booking forms etc. Thank you for your assistance and for your continued support.

Mike Moore

### **Bude Canal Trust Report**

Work has continued through the winter months and our Thursday work days have in the most been blessed with dry weather since the start of 2012 which has enabled the small group of 2-4 volunteers to continue cutting out the willow and blackthorn from the canal profile plus finish burning all of the brash left over from this and the vegetation cut back from the canal nearside bank and footpath hedge.



Vealand area Photo: Mike Degnan



Vealand area Photos: Mike Degnan

We are coming to the end of the major cutting back season although the mowing of the footpath between the top of the Vealand Inclined Plane through to Virworthy Wharf and Tamar Lake will shortly be coming a priority to retain easy walking access throughout.

Long sections along the Aqueduct length now have clear open views of the canal profile and the temporary raising of the water levels from the winter rains have provided some indication on which of these would lend themselves to repair work and insertion of retaining bunds to partially re-water in the future.



Burning at Vealand Photo: Mike Degnan

A considerable section of the footpath from Virworthy Wharf towards Lower Tamar Lake has had the upper surface scraped off

and re-stoned with repairs to the nearside canal edge and one drainage pipe, both of which were causing some very wet muddy places although there are still some areas to complete.

Seven bird nesting boxes kindly donated to the Trust by Bude Cubs and Scouts have now been located on trees along this section and round the Wharf green.

Remains of a second abandoned work boat has also been uncovered between Virworthy Wharf and Virworthy Mill. Unfortunately, along with the first one neither is in a very stable condition and will remain literally stuck in the mud.

The section, approaching the raised Aqueduct over the river Tamar and beyond Burmsdon farm, although only a permissive path has been one of the last sections where clearance of the footpath has been worked on. A short section just beyond Burmsdon bridge has had a mass of wild daffodils just coming into bloom along with the familiar primroses, bluebells shortly to follow.



Burmsdon Photo: [Mike Degan](#)

A couple of hedge laying days were organised by DWT and the Lakes Trust which completed some work needed at Dexbeer and Virworthy for which we are very grateful. Tree felling down the Inclined Plane is continuing.

Funding support is still proving difficult to find which is keeping the major repairs to our historical features very much on hold.

Google search Bude Canal Trust or copy / paste <http://www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk/events.html> to keep up to date with forthcoming events as dates arranged become available.

Mike Degnan

## **Friends of Bude Valley – update – February 2012**

Since most people who came to the public meeting seem primarily interested in activities and helping, it has been decided to try to grow the Friends of Bude Valley organisation more gradually and less formally, rather than setting up the full organisation at this point (with all the committee time that would involve).

It therefore seems sensible to start by organising a series of volunteer work days – plus some walks/talks – and to develop the Friends organisation progressively via involvement in those activities before setting up a formal structure.

The events will be run under the aegis of Cornwall Council's 'Countryside Volunteers' scheme

### **Other working parties**

The next work party is expected to be on the section of the Planekeepers Path between Cann Orchard and Hobbacott where improvement work to the timber walkways is planned which is scheduled for May. Further details from the Bude Ranger, Gareth Cann.

Other volunteering events are being considered. These include some vegetation clearance work (but not in the birds' nesting season), Himalayan Balsam pulls, some surveys (orchids, trees and other nature), work on the inland canal locks and clearance of encroaching vegetation on the paths.

If people are interested, there could also be some working parties at Tiscott Wood or Warbstow Bury.

### **Walks / Talks**

Some guided walks / expeditions can be organised covering the nature, history or construction / artefacts of the Bude valley if there is interest in this – also some talks / displays.

## Interests questionnaire

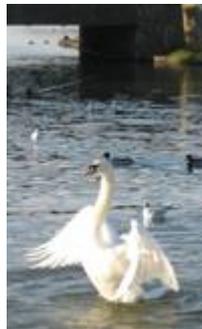
Before the further events (working parties or walks/talks) are scheduled, a form will be circulated to enable people to indicate (if they wish) their areas of interest and what time of the day/week they would like events to happen. This will help in planning events that cater for all.

## Organisational help

I too would prefer to spend my time on working parties rather than organising them. Hence, if anyone is interested in helping to organise future events and communicating the details, please do contact me ([info@atlantictrail.co.uk](mailto:info@atlantictrail.co.uk)) or contact the Bude Ranger, Gareth Cann ([Gareth.Cann@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.Cann@cornwall.gov.uk)).

## Postscript

Many of you will have seen that two swans have been on the canal or in the marshes for the last few weeks. Let's keep our fingers crossed that they too decide that Bude Valley is a great place to spend time!



Photos & Text  
Neil Hutson

## A walk along the Bude Canal at Vealand

When I read the last copy of the Tub Boat, I thought, Whoopee!, we should now be able to see this section without fighting our way through what, at times, felt like Amazonian bush! Hurrah for the volunteers who cleared this track so effectively. It now looks so like an operational canal, that one could wish it were possible to put it

back into water. Indeed the bed looks as if it could be completely cleared and in water for long sections. If nothing else it would support fishing.

It's not a long walk from Lishaperhill to the Burmsdon inclined plane and Aqueduct, and it was interesting to see the exploratory dig by the Trust Time Team. A pity, as Steve pointed out in his article that so little has come to light so far. It really is surprising that so little evidence is to be seen, and is probably due to the recycling of anything that was not tied down, I am looking forward to seeing more evidence of the docking bays, at both top and bottom.

The information boards gave a useful description of the site, but I was seriously depressed by the congratulatory tone of the Devon Wildlife Trust when describing the way in which they had cheerfully ruined some 100 acres of pretty good farmland. For many years farmers there fertilised the completely sterile and non productive culm grassland with phosphates so that crops could be grown there and nurtured it for many hard working years. The trust has removed the top 30cms of this fertile soil to return it to sterile moorland again. They claim the reason is the creation of yet another area of 'culm', and yet it seems to me that everywhere I drive in Devon there is culm. Has anyone ever done an inventory of the land which is being downgraded in this manner?

I will leave you with a quote from the Government's Foresight report, '40% more food will be required to feed the world within the next 20 years'. We already have to import 50% of our food from abroad. Britain will not be exempt from the pressures this will bring. But once again, many thanks to the volunteers who have made this section of the canal such a pleasure to walk. Let's hope a lot more people will now enjoy it.

Tony Barnes

### **The Bude Motor Classic 2012 Event on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June.**

Bude Motor Club will be holding its 3rd Classic Motor Show at the Rugby Ground in the centre of Bude on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and the society will have a stall at the event. This year the Show will again be totally FREE to all entrants and visitors alike. The show site has full bar and food facilities. It is superbly situated next to the River Neet, close to Bude town centre, the Bude Canal, the Castle and

the fabulous beaches.



Some of the winning cars at last years Bude Motor Classic event Photo M Moore

Entries are invited from all interested parties, including clubs and individuals. Vehicles (and visitors!!) of all types, age and condition are most welcome! (Cars, Motorcycles, Steam vehicles, Commercials etc.). Instead of sending out entry forms to those who would like to attend the show with their vehicle, the club have decided to hand out the forms on arrival for completion on the day. It would be useful if you can email the club with your intention to attend, and what vehicle(s) you are showing. If you are coming as a group and wish to exhibit your vehicles together, please let the club know and they will allocate a space large enough for your needs. They will have plenty of room so just show up!

Once again, any monies raised during the event, by collections, donations and bring and buy sales etc. will be donated to the club's chosen charity for 2012 which is Little Rays of Sunshine (Bude).

Betty Moore

## **Coach and Boat Trip to Padstow on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012**

This year, for our annual outing, we have arranged a coach trip to Padstow for an optional afternoon visit to the historic house "Prideaux Place" followed by an evening one-hour boat trip on the Jubilee Queen from Padstow to Wadebridge and back. When we first arrive at Padstow there will be time to take lunch or explore the area before we board the coach at 2.00pm for a short trip to

Prideaux Place for our conducted tour of the house (optional). We will return to Padstow by coach at 4.30pm where there will be further time to explore the town and harbour before we board the Jubilee Queen at 7.00pm for our boat trip to Wadebridge and back.

The itinerary is:-

11.00am Leave Bude by Coach from the Crescent Car Park  
12.15am (approx) Arrive at Padstow  
2.00pm Board coach for optional visit to Prideaux Place for conducted tour of house  
4.30pm (approx) Coach returns to Padstow  
7.00pm Board the Jubilee Queen for boat trip to Wadebridge and back  
8.30pm Board coach for return to Bude  
9.45pm (approx) Arrive at Bude

The combined fare for the coach and boat trip to Wadebridge is £16.00 per person and an additional £6.50 per person for the optional visit to Prideaux Place. Cream Teas are available at Prideaux Place at £5.00 each.

If you wish to join us on this trip please complete the enclosed booking form and send it with your remittance to Mr C. Jewell, 4a The Crescent, Bude EX23 8LE by 8<sup>th</sup> June making your cheques payable to "Bude Canal & Harbour Society".

Thank you for your support. Hope to see you on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Betty Moore

### **BCHS to play host to the Rolle Canal and Northern Devon Waterways Society**

On 21<sup>st</sup> July 2012, BCHS play host to the Rolle Canal and Northern Devon Waterways Society, who are coming to Bude for a day long visit to the Bude Canal, which will include; The 'in water, Barge Canal, Helebridge', Hobbacott Incline and Merrifield Wheelpit. Lunch will be at the Red Post Inn, Launcells. At the end of the afternoon, about 4.30pm, the visit moves to the Aqueduct Section owned by Bude Canal Trust to visit the Vealand and Burmsdon

area. This part is to be finalised between RC & NDWS and BCT and may include refreshments.

If you are interested in the day visit, please contact me (Chris Jewell), to register your interest. The total cost will be £5 per person, lunch and refreshments at the end of the day will be extra. In May 2012, RC & NCWS will be issuing a booking form, to book your place and lunch requirements; I will send a booking form to those who have shown an interest in this visit. Please register your interest by telephoning me on 01288 352298 or email [info@bude-canal.co.uk](mailto:info@bude-canal.co.uk)

Chris Jewell

### **Bude's connection to the 'Titanic'**

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012, it will be 100 years since the sinking of the 'Titanic' on her maiden voyage to New York.

The Bude connection was Archie JEWELL born 4.12.1888 – he was my great uncle and was one of the 6 lookouts on the Titanic. At the time of the collision, Archie was off duty and was disturbed by the impact. Rising and going on deck, he could see that the vessel was in trouble. At 12.45am he was ordered to crew Lifeboat Number 7, which was duly launched with 28 on board – the capacity being 65. They were told to 'stand off the ship' which they did and as such had a grandstand view of the great liner sinking into the sea. The sight of this liner eventually rising up stern first before sliding into the depths of the ocean, with the cries of hundreds of men, women and children echoing across the still icy waters under a clear sparkling sky, stayed in his memory until he died.

Archie survived this tragedy and was the first witness at the British Enquiry in London, starting on 3.5.1912. Having answered 331 questions, he was thanked by Lord Mersey, President of the Enquiry, for the clear and precise evidence.

After the 'Titanic', Archie continued his Merchant Navy career on the 'Britannic', a sister ship of 'Titanic' and survived the sinking of this vessel by enemy action in the eastern Mediterranean on

21.11.1916, whilst engaged as a hospital ship.

In 1917, Archie joined the 'SS Donegal', a hospital ship ferrying wounded soldiers back from France. On 17.4.1917, 'Donegal' was sunk in a surprise attack by a German submarine whilst crossing the English Channel. Archie died with ten other crew members – he was 28 years old. He left a wife and a young son.

The Bude connection for Archie was that he was the youngest son of John and Elizabeth JEWELL, who lived at 34 Kings Street, Bude. Born and raised in Bude, Archie went to sea at 15 years of age, just as his father and older brothers had done before him. He eventually joined the White Star Line, serving aboard the 'Oceanic' for a number of years before transferring to the 'Titanic' in 1912, for its ill-fated maiden voyage.

Archie was my great uncle and he still has relatives living in Bude, Stratton, Devon, Wales, Essex and the Isle of Man.

Chris Jewell

## **RESTORATION, RETROSPECTIVE AND PROSPECTIVE**

We are in a new canal age. The last fifty years have seen an astonishing change in both public and political perceptions of inland waterways. Restoration is no longer some lunatic ideal, but one accepted as obvious and desirable by the man or woman in the street. If you need any proof of this, go to the centre of Birmingham or Leeds where the new developments of pubs, nightclubs, and restaurants **face** the canal, not back onto it. Properties facing the canal fetch a premium of around 20%, compared with identical properties that do not.

Money has not really been a problem. The costs of restoration escalate with health and safety requirements and the greater difficulty of later canal schemes. At the same time, we have had Manpower Services, Heritage Lottery, Regional Development Agencies, European Union money and others. The ease of accessing money has waxed and waned. Nevertheless, I remain

to hear of any well-managed, well-respected, well-planned scheme held up for lack of money. Of course schemes need to fight for money and progress here can be maddeningly slow. But it is progress even so.

So, what has been achieved?

First generation restorations like the Kennet and Avon Canal have been completed. Here, the entire track remained in the same ownership and each obstacle was manageable with engineering solutions. Even the formidable Caen Hill flight of locks at Devizes is only one lock to restore twenty nine times. Given that and given money from Heritage Lottery, the restoration was simple and straightforward when compared to later schemes.

The second generation of restorations was more difficult. Schemes like the Forth and Clyde, Union, Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow Canal had the benefit of essentially single ownership (apart from the Falkirk flight of locks) and the disadvantage of major obstacles. In the case of the Rochdale Canal, this involved moving a supermarket, repositioning a motorway and nearly two miles of concrete infill. The Huddersfield Canal had Standedge Tunnel and the Bates factory. Nevertheless, given access to funding and engineering expertise, solutions were found and restorations completed. The Montgomery Canal is also in this category and restoration proceeds, slowly but the important fact is that it **does** proceed.

The third generation of schemes is with us now. Restorations like the Cotswold Canals have part of the track intact and part of it lost. Part is held in one ownership (The Company Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation) and part (mostly the Thames and Severn eastern side) is in multiple ownership. So the issues to be resolved include repurchasing and rebuilding lost sections of canal. Here again £25 million sourced from Heritage Lottery Funds, Regional Development Agency and others is now restoring the canals from Stonehouse on the Stroudwater Canal to Brimscombe on the Thames and Severn. The next objective will be to restore the Stroudwater Canal from Saul to Stonehouse, thereby linking the

canals to the national network.

The fourth generation of restorations is also with us. Examples include the Wey and Arun and the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canals. Here there are issues of both tracks which are not intact and multiple ownership. This is not entirely true for the Ledbury to Hereford length of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, but the essential problems of reassembling land ownership remain.

Despite these substantial issues, restoration in both cases proceeds with impressive expertise and achievement. Big money has not arrived yet, though the Wey and Arun Canal Trust in particular are skilled at raising eye watering sums of money from volunteers and other sources.

What could happen as these schemes approach completion? I suspect the fifth generation of restorations will follow. This could include restoration and completion (for some were not completed) of the Kington, Leominster and Stourport; the Chard; the Dorset and Somerset; the Bude; and other canals. Here there are formidable obstacles – virtually no intact track, multiple ownership. Yet, even here, each obstacle could be solvable with expertise and money. The Bude Canal has a restoration trust and an active member's society. The others, including the Salisbury and Southampton Canal and the Itchen Navigation, do not.

Is there a sixth generation to come? I suspect there is. These are most likely to be new canals linking existing destination waterways that are connected with the national system at only one end. So we may see new canals linking the Oakham and Stamford, the Grantham and Sleaford, the Cambridge to Lee and Stamford, the Broads and the eastern waterways, Gloucester and Berkeley Canal to Bristol, Cromford to Chesterfield and (via the Peak Forest Tramroad) to Whaley Bridge in the Peak Forest, Ashby to the Trent and Mersey and/or to the Charnwood Forest, Keilder Water to Ripon, Newtown on the Montgomery to the Kington Leominster and Stourport, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal at Hereford to Brecon on the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal and others.

Is this impractical? Go back, I ask you and remember the totally impractical, enormously difficult and expensive, pointless proposals to restore the Kennet and Avon Canal in the 1950's. We have made the future in the form we wanted. The fact that there are first and second generations of schemes completed and third and fourth generations taking place speaks for itself. If you do not believe this is possible, you need to explain why we can put men on the moon, but not restore the fifth and build the sixth generation.

M A Handford  
October 2011

### **From the editor**

As I sit here in the the far north experiencing an unprecedented spell of weather for Orkney, the hottest March day in fact since records began in 1857 which at 19.4 degrees is hotter than we normally get in mid summer, I am concious that our next newsletter the Summer issue will infact be the 60th edition of the Tub Boat. Which as everyone knows is traditionally a diamond celebration and as few can fail to spot ties in beautifully with the Diamond Jubilee of our Queen. So I thought it would be appropriate to ask readers to contribute memories of their connections with the Bude canal over the past sixty years for inclusion in the newsletter. Also if you know of any royal visits to Bude then also please let me know. The deadline for contributions is Saturday 17th June. I look forward to hearing from you.

Clive Horton



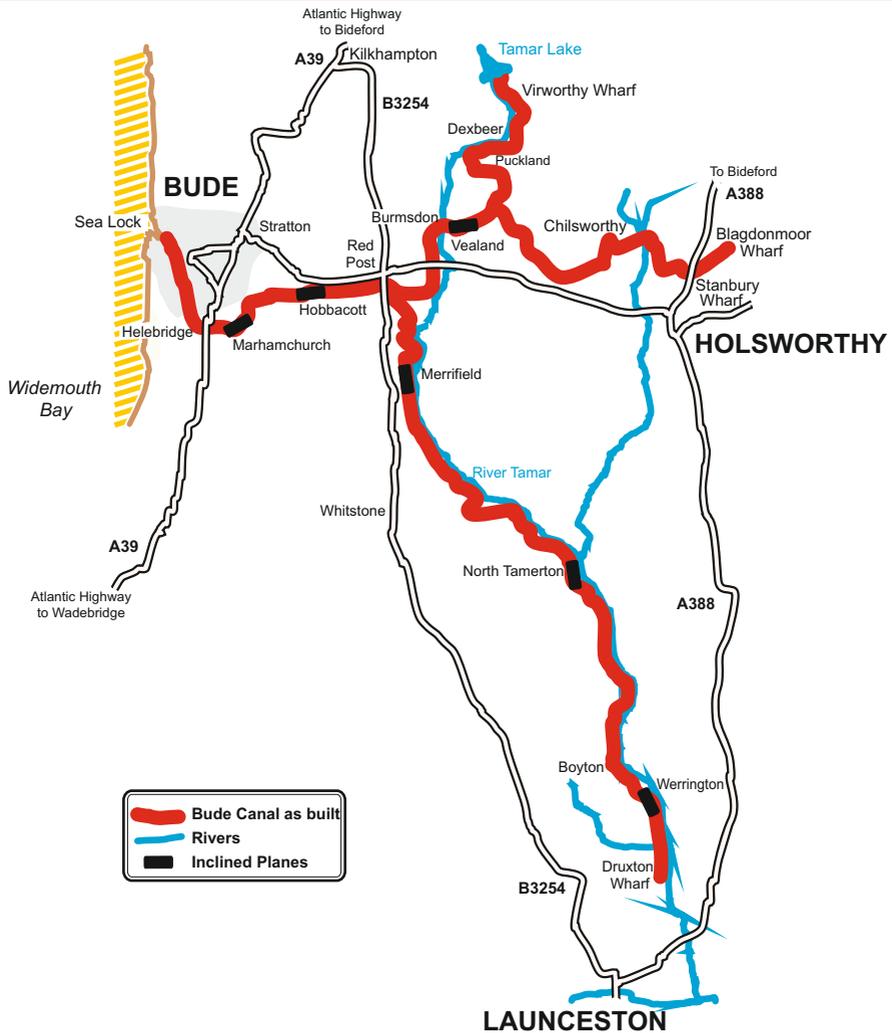
Efford Cottage near the Sea Lock Photo: M Moore

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Published by **BUDE CANAL & HARBOUR SOCIETY**

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