

# THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society  
DIAMOND JUBILEE ISSUE

No. 60

Summer 2012



---

# THE TUB BOAT

## Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

---

### Forthcoming Events:

Thursday 5th July Bude Valley Working Party. Meet at the Tourist Information Centre, The Crescent Car Park, Bude at 10.00am.

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

Saturday 4th Aug Afternoon walk at North Tamerton organised by local church from 2.00pm with a barbecue from 6.00pm. Cost £5 per person. For further information ring 01409 271376.

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.

---

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 15th September 2012.

---

<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	Anne Longley
		Ralph Daniel, Pam Daniel
	Membership Secretary	Mike Moore ( <i>non-trustee</i> )
	The Tub Boat Editor	Clive Horton ( <i>non-trustee</i> )

---

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.

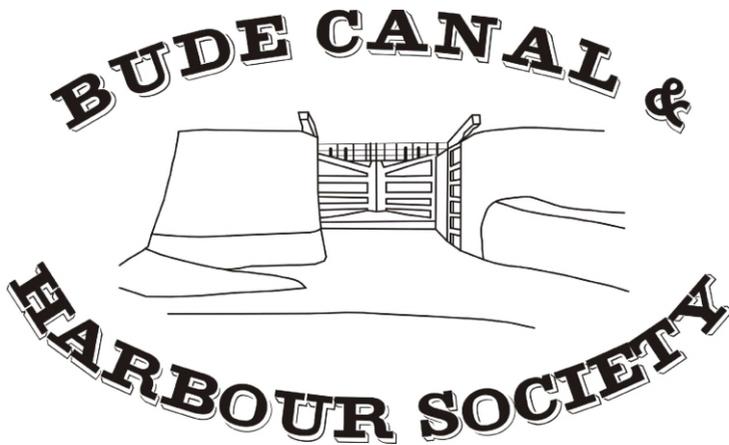
---

Corporate Member of



Supported by





# THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 60

Summer 2012

## CONTENTS

Creaks from the Chair. . . . .	2
Bude Canal Trust Report. . . . .	3
Bude Valley working parties. . . . .	4
Virworthy View. . . . .	5
Mammal Sightings Log . . . . .	7
Bude Local Nature Reserve & Bude Canal . . . . .	8
Navigation Event Report. . . . .	8
Rolle Canal & NDWS visit Booking form . . . . .	10
Helebridge Barge Workshop. . . . .	11
Letter to the Editor. . . . .	12
Padstow trip photo report . . . . .	13

Cover: Audrey Wheatley our Chairman dressed for the Diamond Jubilee  
Photo: Mike Moore

## **CREAKS FROM THE CHAIR**

It is a remarkable coincidence that this, our sixtieth edition of TTB should occur in the sixtieth year of the Queen's reign. Amidst much wonderful spectacle, all seemingly unfazed by ghastly and very British weather, was that marvellous river pageant in which river craft of all sizes, descriptions and denominations, also taking part were no fewer than seven narrow boats. One of these was nb Nanshe, owned and steered by IWA National Chairman Clive Henderson. I believe it is no mean feat to navigate the River Thames in a narrow boat at any time so he must be feeling pleased and proud to have done so on such a prestigious occasion despite such frightful conditions. All congratulations to him from us all and not a little envy from me at least.

Last year Bryan Stamp retired as Hon Secretary and though we have as yet no replacement for the post of Secretary, I am pleased to report that David Phillips has kindly offered to take on the overseeing and management of the society's Charity Commission affairs. This was one of Bryan's jobs and we are grateful to David for doing this for the society since Charitable Status has many advantages to those who acquire it. Thank you David.

Our trading season began with a somewhat sparsely attended Canal Navigation but never-the-less the two inland locks got an airing (or should it be watering) and it was good to see no fewer than three gigs on the canal rowing for dear life among the many canoes. Brains continue to be racked as to how this event can be improved. Raising of Rodds Bridge and provision of a slipway for visiting boats would be a good beginning and we continue to nag away about these two vital matters.

We look forward to seeing members and friends at some, if not all of our remaining events -- weather permitting!

Audrey Wheatley.

### **Editor's Note**

Bryan Dudley Stamp has now stepped down from the committee and is no longer a trustee. I am sure you will all join with me in thanking Bryan for the many years sterling work he has put in for the Society.

## Bude Canal Trust Report

Work along the canal was going on at a pace in the last report. That continued to the end of March, when we stop to give the birds, and plants, some peace. By the time we finished we had cut back the hedges and canal bank along the whole length – a remarkable feat. Looking at it now, you'd never know!! This included the stretch from Burmsdon aqueduct bridge to the end. We have also removed all the trees from the floor of the inclined plane giving a better view down it. This was with the help of Mark Betson from Ruby Country and Paul who used his landrover to take most of the timber off site.



Tree removal - Photograph Mike Degnan

We started on putting up a new post and rail fence and gate at Burmsdon Farm to reduce (stop?) trespass into the farmyard. The owner has agreed to finish that job. Also at Burmsdon, Cornwall Council has agreed to put post and rail fencing along the bridge parapet on the south side. It is planned to do that in such a way that walkers can still get to one side of the bridge to enable a view of the bridge itself. Hopefully, these various jobs will allow us to encourage walkers to go to the far end of our ownership. The wild daffodils along the back of Burmsdon were a treat this spring.

Since then most of our work has been trying to maintain the footpath for walkers. Unfortunately, a problem arose with our ride-on mower and it has been 5 weeks waiting for a new part! In the meantime, we have tried to do the path with a hired push

motorised mower, but mostly with strimmers, and to be honest, mostly thanks to Mike Degan.

As a result of these problems, we have had the old big mower repaired which will be a useful back-up. Gerald will be pleased.

There are plans in place to get the sides of Vealand bridge rebuilt. This bridge has serious cracks in it and the brick arches are breaking up. This is at least a start on the major structural works that need doing to all the bridges and culverts.

Do visit our website, [www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk](http://www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk) and do go and enjoy the results of all our efforts.

Mike Degan

### **Bude Valley working parties**

The last Bude Valley working party was on Thursday 15th March on the Planekeepers Path, near the impressive Bude Canal inclined plane at Hobbacott, where we put anti-slip strips on some boardwalk and laid wide mesh green matting over some boggy sections of the path.

Gareth Cann of Cornwall Council has now scheduled two more working parties - both to remove Himalayan Balsam from areas beside the canal, this time much nearer to Bude (probably to continue the work of last summer's Balsam Pull where we cleared an area just inland of the bird hide along the canal towpath).

The dates are Thursday 28th June and Thursday 5th July, both meeting up beside the Tourist Information Centre at 10 am.

For those who have not been on Balsam Pulls before, you will find it is very satisfying work. The plant grows up to 2 metres tall but has very shallow roots and so is usually very easy to pull out. While it has very attractive pink flowers, it is highly invasive as the flowers turn into seed pods that when ripe, explode the seeds out to a distance up to 8 metres. However, it is an annual so just pulling out the plants before the flowers ripen stops this happening. The important thing is to catch it at the right time, usually in June. The plant tends to grow into dense banks, stopping the growth of all the more local species that would otherwise grow there. On the Camel Trail just a few working parties have very dramatically reduced the amount of

Himalayan Balsam. Wearing gloves aids the pulling and, since much of it is growing in damp areas, stout boots or wellingtons are advised. If you are interested there is quite a good article about Himalayan Balsam on the RHS website at <http://apps.rhs.org.uk/advicesearch/profile.aspx?pid=480>

Neil Hutson, Friends of Bude Valley

### **Virworthy View**

You may have wondered why there has been no Virworthy View for some months! well, I have just had a break after ten years trying to write something of interest. I thought that no one was interested anymore but having received a number of requests I have decided to continue to bore you with the mundane activities at Virworthy.

Much has happened since I last wrote - the weather of course has been very wet and then very dry which meant the Wharf was almost devoid of water. There was just enough for the nesting moor hens but with no throughput of water the canal soon dried up.



Towpath improvements - Photographs:Geoff Lowe

There has been a few incidents with the animals. One of the ducks was taken by a fox and also one of the peahens who was sitting in a hedge. We try to get them into secure housing but this one evaded our search. Recently one of the

peacocks took a trip to the Lower lake and stayed away for nearly a week. I think he got homesick and came home on his own! Only one peahen, the white one, has produced chicks this year with only three.

We have had a number of swallows again this year. One pair returning to an old nest in the shippon (next to the house) raised a brood early, but disaster struck! the nest on the beam gave way with four fledglings in it! Unfortunately none survived, perhaps the cats were in the vicinity at the time. As it was an old nest it had perhaps got too dry and could not support the weight. - Anyway, the two parents had a 'site' meeting and discussed the options for a full ten minutes then they decided to rebuild the nest.- which they did and have now produced another clutch.

Talking of nesting birds, there have been Rooks nesting in the Wharf building as well as swallows.

Those of you who knew Emma - one of our dogs, will be saddened to know she died last year. We have replaced her with another rescue dog called Polly - she is described as a 'corgi with long legs'! Totally different in every way from Sally the blue Merle but they get on together.

The walk from the Lakes to Burmsdon is becoming more and more popular with visitors from all over the country. Perhaps the message is getting out.

Each year I say the vegetation and greenery cannot get any better but I could be wrong! Even the canal is sporting a good crop of weeds and there are signs that the hedgerow fruits are going to be abundant.

A sign of getting old! I have developed osteoarthritis in one knee which is considerably restricting my walking. I think I will get a mobility scooter with four wheel drive and off-road tyres!

Geoff Lowe

## Mammal Sightings Log

3/3/09 Helebridge underpass Three Otters in river  
21/3/09 Upper Canal near lock gates Otter in canal  
12/4/09 River Neet nr Strand Otter in river  
17/5/09 Middle pound Otter on bank  
12/10/09 Upper Canal Two Otters in canal  
15/05/10 Rodds bridge lock Otter next to By wash  
10/07/10 Iron bridge on Cycle path Weasel seen  
25/10/10 Lower basin Otter watched taking duck by fisherman during match  
2/2/11 Helebridge – Stock pond Possible mink sighting  
23/10/11 Helebridge underpass Family of otters seen  
03/11/11 Bird Hide Otter seen in canal  
12/11/11 Marshes Otter seen walking next to dyke  
22/11/11 Harbour Otter seen in Sea Lock  
3/12/11 Opposite bird hide Otter seen in canal  
11/12/11 Helebridge underpass Family of Otters seen in canal  
28/12/11 Rodds bridge Two Otters seen next to by wash.  
24/01/12 Bird Hide Otter seen in Canal  
7/02/12 Peter Truscotts Bridge Otter seen in canal  
8/3/12 Rodds Lock Otter seen next to By-Wash  
22/3/12 Peter Truscotts Bridge Otter seen in canal  
3/4/12 River Neet Fresh Otter spraint found on rock  
9/4/12 Whalesborough Weir Juvenile Otter next to bench opposite weir  
14/4/12 River Neet at Nanny Moores Bridge. Adult Otter in river + 3 cubs  
29/4/12 River Neet at Nanny Moores Bridge Adult Otter in river  
2/5/12 River Neet at Nanny Moores Bridge Adult Otter in river  
3/5/12 River at Crooklets Beach Adult Otter in river  
9/5/12 Summerleaze car park Adult Otter  
10/5/12 River at Crooklets Beach Adult Otter in river  
16/5/12 River Neet at Nanny Moores Bridge Adult Otter in river  
24/5/12 Bude Canal at Peter Truscotts Bridge Adult Otter in canal  
28/5/12 Triangle – at start of tow path Weasel  
11/6/12 Sea Locks and River Neet at Summerleaze beach  
Juvenile Otter in Sea Locks and in river next to beach  
12/6/12 River Neet below castle Seal seen in river

## **BUDE MARSHES LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (LNR) AND BUDE CANAL**

### Marshes Spring/Summer Works 2012

- Vegetation management – Cutting of grass verges and reeds along edges of paths and ponds.
- Repair/ Replace damaged fencing
- Repair of sluices to help control water levels throughout the site.
- Monitoring of dip wells to see how water flows through the site to help manage it in a more sensitive manner.
- Wildlife monitoring i.e. Bea Orchid in meadow
- Maintenance of flood banks and sluices at Pethericks Mill

### Canal Spring/Summer Works 2012

- Maintenance of inland locks and other structures
- Vegetation management – cutting of grass verges and over hanging vegetation along tow path and canal trails
- Control of invasive plants such as Himalayan Balsam
- Flood control during periods of high rain fall and storms

### Wildlife Recently Spotted:

- Kingfisher
- Coots, Moorhens, Heron, Jack snipe
- Swan's and Otters

Gareth Cann (Bude Area Ranger)

## **Navigation Event on the Bude Canal**

On Saturday 31st March, a flotilla of gigboats and canoes gathered in the Lower Basin of Bude Canal to navigate the canal from the Basin to Helebridge using the inland locks at Rodds Bridge



and Whalesborough. Nine boats from the Bude Canoe Club (a mixture of Canadian Canoes and kayaks) and two gigboats (Regatta and Breakwater) with members of Bude Pilot Gig Club set off on the trip at about 10.40am. Both the gigboats and the canoes were locked through both of the locks together on the outward and return trips. All of the boats were back at Lower Basin by 1pm.



All photographs: Mike Moore

Overall, the event was well received and successful.

The purpose of the event was two fold:

1. To highlight the need for a public slipway for access to and from the canal.
2. To make use of the restored inland locks by boats (other than the contractors during the project). This event was only the second time that locks had been used by non official boats since at least 1922, if not longer.

Finally, Bude Canal & Harbour Society would like to thank Bude Canoe Club, Bude Pilot Gig Club and Cornwall Council Environment Services (East) for their participation and support in this event.

Chris Jewell



A boat which did not make the Navigation Event  
Photograph: Mike Moore



Photograph: Betty Moore

The Duke of Gloucester with the then BCHS Secretary, Bryan Dudley Stamp (L) and Councillor Neil Burden of NCDC (R) at the exhibition marking the official opening of the Bude Canal Regeneration Project on 27th March 2009

## Visit of RC&NDWS to Bude Canal – 21st July 2012

### Itinerary

**9.45 am** Meet outside Library, Lower Wharf, Bude

**10.00 am** Walk to Sea Lock and then up canal to Truscotts Bridge

**11.00 am** Return to vehicle – drive to Helebridge Wharf

**11.15 am** Walk to Whalesborough and return

**12.00** Visit barge workshop

**12.30 pm** Drive to Hobbacott

**12.45 pm** View inclined plane

**1.15 pm** Red Post for lunch

**2.30 pm** Drive to Merrifield

**2.45 pm** Walk to wheel pit

**3.00 pm** Inspect site of wheel pit

**4.00 pm** Drive to Vealand Nature Reserve (Limited parking!)

**4.15 pm** Walk down inclined plane to Burmsdon Bridge and return.

**5.30 pm** Cream tea available just a little way along the road.

Cost for the day = **£5.00** per head

Lunch extra, **ordered in advance.**

Cream tea = **£3.50** per head

## **The Barge Workshop, Helebridge, Nr Marhamchurch**

As usual, the Society will man the premises for Bude Stratton Town Council to allow public access to view the Tub Boat, kept in the premises, as well as other large artefacts relevant to the local heritage, also kept in the premises.

The premises will be open every Sunday, from Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012 inclusive, 2pm – 5pm, EXCEPT for Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August, when it will be closed. This is due to low manning levels on that day, being the Bude Stratton Heritage Day, in which the Society participates.

As you may recall, following requests from BCHS in 2010/11, BSTC agreed to re-roof the Barge Workshop because of the state of the roof structure and slates. The local contractor was also engaged by BSTC to do works on the former museum premises at Lower Wharf, Bude. That work was carried out, so that part of the premises could be let as units for commercial activity. This work has now finished. Once the contractor has determined how long the work at Helebridge will take, work will either be done before the end of July, or after the end of September 2012, to allow the opening period for 2012. The contractor will have to ensure proper protection and security for The Tub Boat and other artefacts which will have to remain in situ during the refurbishment.

BCHS has £500 set aside to donate to this work as a small contribution to improving the storage conditions of The Tub Boat and other relevant artefacts in these premises.

Chris Jewell

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

I write in reply to Mr Handford's article 'Restoration, Retrospective and Prospective' in the Tub Boat no 59 page 14-17.

An interesting account of the progress made in securing and revitalising our waterways and long may it continue. However, with regards to the future fifth generation of restorations and completions, I have to say that from my experience of being involved in the recent Regeneration Project on the Bude Canal, the concept of fully restoring the Bude Canal to include the whole 35½ miles is impractical and unlikely even in the future. The main factors against its revival in my view are;

- The majority of the canal was of tub boat construction and not suited to modern boating.
- There is no major water supply available to water the system
- The canal had six incline planes which would create health and safety issues and which would prevent the sections of canal between them being linked
- The lack of interest from landowners and local authorities. Locally at Bude, Cornwall Council who own the watered section of the Bude canal show no interest in completing the elements not achieved in the project. That is, replacing Rodds Bridge with a bridge to allow navigation; reconnection of the canal to Helebridge basin and providing a slipway for access to the canal. So what chance for the rest of the canal?

Finally, as to putting a man on the moon, this was achieved by the most powerful nation on earth, driven by political ambition and even the USA has not landed on the moon for several decades!

Thank you

Chris Jewell

## BCHS Trip to Padstow on 23rd June 2012 Photo Report



Arriving at Prideaux Place



The Jubilee Queen



Jubilee Queen's builders plate



Snug in the cabin out of the rain



Braving the elements on the outside deck



Approaching the A39 bridge at Wadebridge, the limit of our trip

All Photographs: Mike Moore

