

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 63

Spring 2013



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Forthcoming Events:

Sunday 28th April Stall at Bude Motor Classic Event at the Rugby Club

Saturday 15th June Deadline for articles for inclusion in Tub Boat No 64 to reach the editor Clive Horton on cshorton23@btinternet.com

Friday 21st June Bude Canal Trust Open Day at the Falcon Hotel starting at 10.00am.

Mon 1st July Publication of THE TUB BOAT No 64

Saturday 20th July Annual Coach Trip to Plymouth for boat trip on the River Tamar.

Sunday 28th July Stall at Bude Stratton Heritage Day

Saturday 17th Aug Stall at Bude Carnival

Saturday 24th Aug Stall at RNLI weekend

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to 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 June 2013.

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

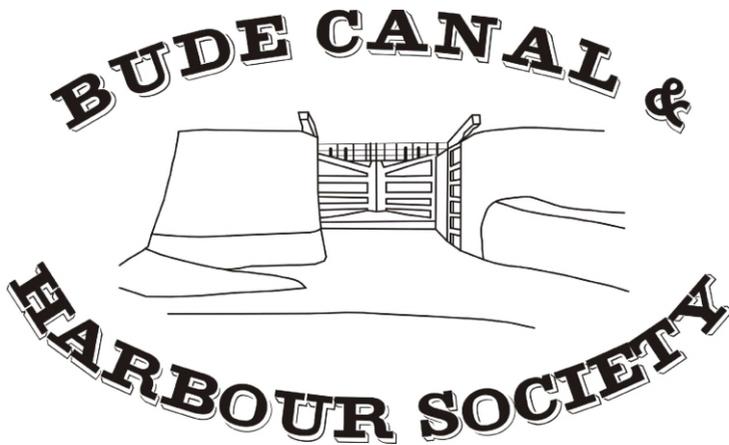
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CONTENTS

Creaks from the Chair.	2
AGM Report	2
Membership Report	4
Treasurers Report	4
HIWAG	5
Landscape Partnership Project.	6
Virworthy View.	7
Bude Canal Trust Report.	8
HMS Dasher.	11
Annual coach and boat trip	13
View from the north	13

Cover:HMS Dasher on her visit to Bude in 1992
Photos: Mike Moore

CREAKS FROM THE CHAIR



Editor's note

Following the retirement of Audrey Wheatley from the position of Chairman, Anne Longley has very kindly agreed for one year only to take on the position of Acting Chairman. The society also has a vacancy for the position of Secretary. Members are requested to consider seriously whether they can put themselves forward for these positions at next years AGM.

AGM Report

At the twelfth AGM of the Bude Canal and Harbour Society held at the Falcon hotel Chairman Audrey Wheatley welcomed twenty one members and two guests. She opened by saying "as with a lot of societies like ours, the year has not been a good one. Fundraising has been difficult because of the dreadful weather causing the near annihilation of gazebo, stock and helpers at our first event of last summer. We even had to cancel one event altogether, nevertheless some trading was possible and all was not lost." Her thanks went out to all those who support the society in the many ways that are necessary to ensure it is as successful as it is.

Audrey then told the meeting that this will be her last occupation of the chair at an Annual General Meeting as she is to step down as from today. She said the new Chairman will be decided at the next committee meeting and she wished her/him the best of luck in the knowledge that goodwill and co-operation will be received from colleagues which will be

of comfort and support.

Audrey ended by thanking all those present for showing an interest in all we try to do to further the well-being of our canal. Next Chris Jewell gave his Treasurers report (contained elsewhere in this newsletter) and this was followed by the approval of the accounts and the appointment of John Harris subject to his agreement as Inspector of accounts.

Committee elections resulted in no changes as those that had stood down by rotation were re-elected.

The last business of the agenda was members questions where:-

Bryan Dudley Stamp asked what the present position is with regard to the Ruby Trail. Chris Jewell replied that it is on hold and is hopeful that the Landscape Partnership might be able to progress it. The cycle route is encountering problems because there are several small plots of land involved. Mike Moore said that there were proposals to have a different route which would mean going on the roads, and this would not be very acceptable when used by tourists with young families. Lucille Opie commented that Cornwall Council should go back with proposals. Nigel Pearce, Cornwall Councillor, said local members want to go ahead with the cycle route but the problem is that the land owners do not want to sell. He said that Dan Rogerson MP has visited some of the land owners to encourage them to help.

Mick Stanton of Bude Canal Trust said that Holsworthy Town Council is now a member of BCT and is giving a £470 donation.

Adrian Wills of The Rolle Canal & Northern Devon Waterways Society said that he has now completed the reconstruction of a tub boat and if we could get it to Bude we would be welcome to have it for Navigation Day. Transportation makes it prohibitive, however. He is now working on a lead boat.

At the conclusion of the formal business Chris Jewell then

made an official presentation, on behalf of the Trustees, to the retiring Chairman, Mrs Audrey Wheatley, for her unstinting efforts and work for the Society since 1989. Many thanks were expressed.



Audrey and Lawrence Wheatley enjoying the spring sun on the bench presented to Audrey to commemorate her period as Chairman of BCBS Photo: Mike Moore

There followed a digital presentation by Dr Roger Higgs on Bude Rocks

Membership Report

Unfortunately no new members have joined since the last edition of the Tub Boat although there have been a few more renewals.

Could members who have given us their e-mail addresses please remember to send any updates or amendments to info@bude-canal.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

Treasurers Report given at AGM

The accounts and schedules had been previously circulated. There were no questions. The Treasurer went through the accounts explaining the function of each account and highlighting aspects

of the accounts. The main comments were on Account 3, Project Fund. The balance as at 31.12.12 was £2663.91. Of this sum there are two agreed amounts set aside for future projects. 1. £1000 towards the replacement of Rodds Bridge to allow navigation of the canal. 2. £500 – a contribution to the re-roofing of the Barge Workshop by Bude Stratton Town Council. There is a delay on this work due to the premises being used by bats.

Additionally, in November 2012, the Trustees agreed a grant of £100 to Higher Wharf Action Group (HiWAG) as a contribution to their start up costs.

In January 2013, the Trustees agreed a contribution of £250 to costs of writing the 1st stage application for a Landscape Partnership Project bid to HLF. The £250 is payable only when consent for 1st stage application has been obtained from HLF.

Also, in January 2013, the Trustees agreed £100 donation to Grand Western Canal Association Ltd fund towards the costs of re-instating the Halberton Embankment which collapsed last year. The Project has been underwritten by Devon County Council to the total of £3 million.

Membership

Total membership including Life members 128

Total of members including life members 140

Total of Life members 27

The Treasurer, Chris Jewell, then gave an update on other matters of interest to BCCHS.

HiWAG

The group continues with its endeavours. There are 12 member groups who now meet as HiWAG on a monthly basis. It has a Bank Account, continues to develop a business plan which is NOT helped by the fact that the future of the land is uncertain. Cornwall Council has removed the land from its list of imminent sales, but has not moved from its intention to sell. Without a clear position on the land, it is difficult to involve any major funder in the proposals. HiWAG have agreed and are applying to the Charity Commission

for registration as a charitable body. Applications by Bude Stratton Town Council and HiWAG have been submitted to Cornwall Council to register this land as a community asset, which if accepted and registered will reduce the ability of Cornwall Council from selling the land.

With regards to the charitable status, BCHS will have a Trustee, Mrs Anne Longley. I will also be a Trustee representing IWA – West Country Branch.

Landscape Partnership Project

BCHS support the Bude Canal Trust Partnership in its aims and endeavours to obtain funding from HLF to achieve such a project. There is much to do and the process is in its infancy, but if it comes to fruition it should have many benefits, including works on the Bude canal to secure its structures and identity in the landscape area as will be defined. The likely area will be 200 sq kms and include the land from the county border to Holsworthy and across the Bude. Updates on progress and development will be given as appropriate.

Finally, the Treasurer thanks fellow Trustees and local members for their continued support and particularly to Mike Moore for all the help and guidance given to myself and the society.

Any member who would like a copy of the accounts should contact the Hon. Treasurer. However, below are the account balances as at 31st December 2012.

Account name	£
Account 1	2142.62
Account 2 Educational Fund	542.73
Account 3 Project Fund	2663.91
Account 4 Canal Day	376.01
Account 5 Archive Project Fund	356.50

Chris Jewell Hon. Treasurer

Virworthy View

Summer seems a long way off! just because we have not had a REAL winter - just a rather unsettled, wet, cold and thoroughly miserable period which has kept us firmly indoors. Although we have had our share of floods - nothing like other unfortunate folk in the country and locally around Braunton. Serious flooding is not on the cards for us as we are some 425feet above sea level! but we do get local soggy ground as indicated in the last issue of Tub Boat. Fortunately it doesn't last very long but does cause some lasting damage. Culverts across the canal cannot cope, at times,with the volume of water and so it bores it's way around the culvert and erodes the ground to cause the footpath to collapse. Repairs to the path are ongoing.



You did what with it Gerald! Photo: G Lowe

With Spring just around the corner the birds are starting to collect the discarded peacocks down feathers for their nests. The jackdaws in the Wharf building prefer twigs and sticks for their nests and litter the floor of the building with material they have dropped on the way into the eaves.

A Trust working party in January tidied up around the Wharf and cut back the sides of the path between Virworthy Mill and the Lower Lake to hold back the brambles and other invasive plants. It will soon be time to cut the grass which will complete the impressive makeover!.

Frog spawn was observed in February in the Wharf but two wild ducks have visited some mornings and together with a popular Heron I don't rate the chances of developing many frogs. If only they would wait a couple of weeks I'm sure there would have been a more wholesome meal!

Looking forward to a better Summer this year.

Geoff Lowe

Bude Canal Trust Report

This has been a very busy three months, often hampered by extremely poor weather conditions. Approval was sought and given by adjacent land owners for access to land at both ends of three culverts under the canal to remove trees considered to be a threat to their condition. The arranged date for the tree felling arrived only to have been preceded by torrential rain which despite best efforts prevented any work to be started. The culvert at Cape Horn near Virworthy Mill was almost at full capacity so after abandoning any thoughts of work a general survey along the canal found water levels along most sections capable of using a boat, obstructed only by the willow trees. Some leaks, having occurred naturally over the years or made deliberately sometime in the past were preventing even higher levels.



The water level at Virworthy Wharf had been reduced by removing the stopper boards on the sluice as the input from field run-off was

raising the level too high for the large overflow pipe 200yds north to cope with. A new drainage pipe has been installed between the bay at the Wharf into the next canal section. Placing of sandbags filled with and faced off with clay has stopped all but a trickle of water through the leaking section and the addition of more facing clay should finally solve the problem.

Work started with a digger to cut out a ditch along the outside of the rear wall of the Wharf building in order to lay drainage pipes. This had an immediate positive affect in eliminating water running across the building floor. Polythene sheeting was put in place against the outside wall in readiness to lay pipes and chippings. Unfortunately the heavy downpour of rain over the next two days prior to any follow on work caused the wall of the ditch to collapse. Work to be restarted as soon as we get sufficient drier weather.

The organised work party at Virworthy Wharf was only attended by six volunteers. All the reeds round the edge of the basin were cut back and a boundary hedge was laid in readiness for a drainage ditch to be re-cut in front to take water away from the equipment storage area which is getting waterlogged. All ivy was removed from the road bridge and some weed from the basin in front of the sluice. The hedgerow, nearside canal bank and base profile were cut back uncovering the remains of the second known abandoned work boat. The final repairs were finally completed on the heavy duty mower.



discovery that the mortar on the second partially completed wall had not set due to incorrect materials being supplied. This has now been dismantled in readiness for remedial work. The capping stones have now been lifted clear to enable the side walls to be rebuilt at the same time

The Holsworthy Branch area work day on Saturday, February 16th to clear and burn trees previously cut down was followed up with three more Weekly Thursday sessions and has created a section between Vealand Bridge and Brendon Bridge almost totally clear of trees in the canal profile.



The safety rail and fencing along the edge of the bridge parapet over the river Tamar has now been completed thanks to Cornwall Council for which we are very grateful.

The press article circulated to all the members and local officials was published in the Bude / Holsworthy Post and the North Cornwall Advertiser but unfortunately there have been no direct enquiries for membership or offers of volunteer help. At the moment this does mean all the physical work is being carried out by two executive committee members helped regularly by just two or three volunteers.

This month the last organised weekend work party at Dexbeer was led by Paul Lott from South West Lakes and with eight volunteers the completion of the hedge laying between Dexbeer road bridge and the first accommodation bridge was all but completed.



All the tree management work has now been planned for Wed & Thurs. 20th / 21st. March.

Please visit our web site www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk to keep up to date with Sue Fields wildlife diary and other interesting information. We also now have an email address, budecanaltrust@gmail.com should you wish to contact any of the committee with enquiries, suggestions or report problems encountered along the footpath. Text & Photos Mike Degnan www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk

HMS Dasher

Watching the local news recently I was surprised and delighted to see an old friend of the society from twenty one years back, namely HMS Dasher, a Royal Navy patrol vessel stationed at the time in Bristol. She has now renewed her affiliation with the port of Padstow and the news item showed her moored in the basin in the centre of the town, the subject of much attention and admiration. Dasher's visit to Bude twenty one years ago was a remarkable and unforgettable event.

Plaque presented to
Bude Canal Society
in 1992 by HMS
Dasher



Photo: M Moore

In 1992 Bude Canal Society was a very new and untried group, striving hard for recognition and acceptance as a serious society

with the well being and care of the canal as its sole reason for coming into existence. I was secretary at the time so can testify to the considerable amount of correspondence and telephone communication which transpired between ourselves (i.e. me!) and Commander Hoggarth RN, the officer who was in charge of all that Dasher and her crew of Bristol University students got up to. It took, in all, eighteen months for the promised visit to come to pass, during which time two separate sorties to Bude were made, one from Commander Hoggarth himself and the other from the young Lieutenant James Morse RN, who at the time was the officer in command of Dasher. These two visits were made specifically to inspect the harbour at low tide and were undertaken in company with the harbourmaster who gave all the necessary information for a safe entry to the canal. I was delighted to trot along in the rear listening to it all and learning a lot at the same time.

Photo: M Moore



HMS Explorer which visited Bude later in 1992 unannounced

HMS Dasher's visit to Bude was a huge success, a marvellous spectacle for all who watched her approach from horizon to lock and into the canal and a subject of enormous interest throughout her mooring in the lower wharf. We promised ourselves a repeat visit but it was not to be, to the great regret of us all. Apparently Dasher had touched bottom on her trip from lock to wharf side and the Navy let it be known that "Her Majesty's vessels could not be used as dredgers and scourers"! Thus we were not able to arrange another visit until such time as the depths in the canal were suitable for a ship the size of Dasher and we all know how long that took! In the twenty one years since then, of course the canal has been regenerated and the lower basin dredged to much improved depths and - who knows? We could be seeing HMS Dasher in Bude

again, this time from just around the corner in Padstow. As a footnote - readers may be interested to know that our editor, Clive, who was an active committee member then and had been given a new toy for his birthday, used it to make a video of the whole Dasher episode - music and all! I still play this from time to time and relive the great pleasure of that unique occasion in the society's affairs.

Audrey Wheatley

Annual Summer coach and boat trip

Saturday 20th July

Coach leaves Bude at 9.00am for Plymouth giving time to explore The Barbican and Sutton Harbour and have lunch before boarding the "Plymouth Princess" at 1.00pm for a cruise up the River Tamar to Morwellham. Entrance to Morwellham Quay is included in the overall price of the trip. The coach leaves Morwellham for Bude at 5.00pm allowing two and half hours to explore the site which includes the historic port, Edwardian farm, Victorian village, railway and copper mine. Refreshments are also available in the Ship Inn at Morwellham. The total price for the whole trip is £25 adult and £20 per child. See booking form enclosed.

View from the North



Here is an interesting shot of Lieutenant James Morse commander of HMS Dasher during her visit in 1992. Lurking in the background as all good editors do is yours truly whose beard is now much closer to letting him into the Santa Claus club. I wonder who those two people on the far bank of the canal are?

Photo: Mike Moore

