

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 91

Spring 2020



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Forthcoming Events:

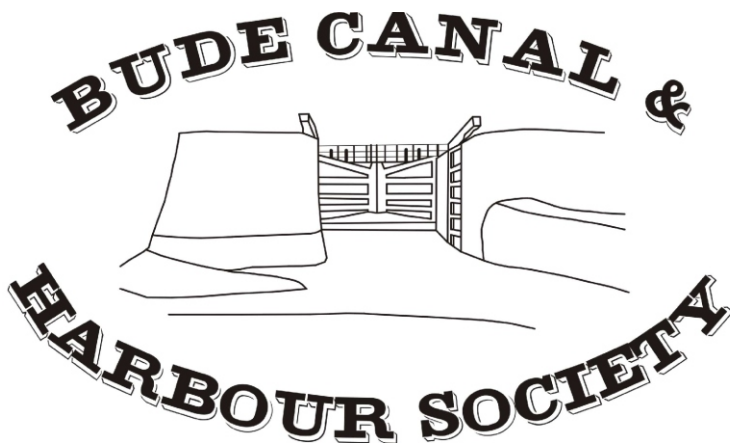
- Sunday 19th July Bude Stratton Heritage Festival. BCHS stall and display panels. Although Bude-Stratton Town Council have already cancelled all events up to the end of June, this event is still shown on their website. However, under the circumstances, we believe that it is most unlikely that it will take place on the planned date.
- July, Aug & Sept Our plans to have a stall at the Bude Farmers Market on The Barkhouse Green on Fridays 10th July, 14th August and 11th September are also in doubt due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- Autumn 2020 Our Annual Coach Trip including a boat trip on the River Tamar which was planned for the July/August period has now been postponed. We may organise an alternative trip much later in the year if circumstances allow.

See page 8 for further details.

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to bude.canal@gmail.com or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and sent to Mike Moore (Tel: 01288 361878) to reach him by 15th June 2020.

Trustees:	Chairman	Chris Jewell
	Vice-Chairman	Lesley Moores
	Secretary	Peter Daniel
	Treasurer	Martin Shannon
	Membership Secretary	Martin Shannon
	Events Secretary	Betty Moore
	Minuting Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
	Other Trustees	Lucille Opie, Anne Longley
	The Tub Boat Editor	Mike Moore (<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.



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Cover Photo: New apartments on Higher Wharf

Creaks from the Chair

Well it didn't take long into 2020 for gloom and frustration to cloud the brand new year on many fronts, internationally, nationally, and for BCHS locally.

It will be almost Easter when you read this issue of 'The Tub Boat' and since the last issue (No.90) we have had some response from Cornwall Council about the inland locks and the removal of water voles to permit works to be carried out (details are on page 9).

The best news is that we now have a new Trustee, Martin Shannon, who lives in Stratton. Additionally, he has agreed to take on the responsibilities of Treasurer and Membership Secretary, which is great news, and will allow the Society to function properly. The Trustees welcome Martin and look forward to a fruitful and long relationship. We now have seven Trustees but would welcome anyone else who may be interested. Contact info@bude-canal.co.uk

Bi-centenary 1819-2019 has come and gone and overall I think BCHS with our friends in Bude Canal Trust Ltd did the best we could to celebrate and recognise the importance of the start of creating a canal at Bude. In three years and four months it will be the bi-centenary of the opening of the canal for trading to and from Holsworthy. Another celebration? May be, so watch this space.

Chris Jewell

AGM on 23 February 2020

Chairman's Report

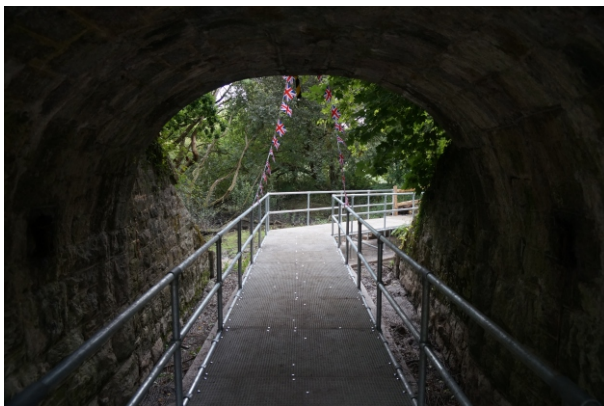
The events of the day started at 10am at The Gallery at Castle Heritage Centre, Bude. The Gallery was set up to allow our display panels 'Bude Harbour and Canal – The early days' to be displayed and also to prepare for the presentation at 11am by Darrin Hewings of the Stover Canal Trust on 'The Stover Canal'.

The presentation commenced on time, with a good range of illustrations to show before and after images to tell the story of how the Trust has been revitalising the remains of the Stover Canal. Mr Hewings works for Sibelco, the clay company who own adjacent land to the canal and who are able to provide crushed masonry from developments at their company as hardcore for the former towpaths and other sites, which is a very fruitful relationship. Among the significant works done is the refurbishment of the 'graving dock' and exposure of the granite tramway sections.



The Graving Dock before refurbishment

In addition the former canal can be walked from Jetty Marsh to Teigngrace. Mr Hewings also spoke about the clay industry and the major volumes of clay extracted each year and how that the majority is exported and the volumes of clay held in reserve to cater for fluctuations in trade.



The new walkway constructed under the railway near Jetty Marsh

Mr Hewings answered a range of questions before finishing at 12.15pm. After the usual thanks and expression of appreciation, the Gallery was re-configured for the Buffet Lunch, excellent as usual, which was appreciated by 12 members. Our thanks to the Castle Manager, Mark, and his staff. The AGM commenced at 2.30pm. It was attended by the Chairman and 14 members. The minutes of the 2019 AGM were accepted and duly signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of that meeting. The Chairman's report mainly focussed on the Bi-centenary celebrations during 2019. He reiterated his thanks to various persons and organisations and Bude Canal Trust for their input and interest –

David Martin, Martin Group Services, Bude – design and production of the display 'Bude Harbour & Canal – The early days'.

Mrs Jackie Stephens – design and production of the Bicentenary booklet.

Bude Youth Theatre – creation and presentation 'Hidden Depths'.

Mr Phil Dean – volunteer driver for the two Tub Boat Canal visits.

Mr Edward Bailey and Mr Andrew Dinner – owners of two canal sites visited.

Mr Harry McConville – local artist for dedicating his 2019 summer exhibition to the Bicentenary.

The Falcon Hotel – for the celebratory buffet, which underlined the importance of the anniversary and was a suitable and well accepted occasion.

Bude Junior Academy for spending their activities week studying the building and the maintenance of the Bude Canal.

All in all, the Bi-centenary celebrations were a good effort by BCHS and the Bude Canal Trust, involving many elements of the community, and thanks are due to all involved.

The Chairman then moved on to other matters. An update on the status of the canal and the impending urgent works are reported elsewhere (see pages 8 & 9). He spoke of the necessary need to maintain the numbers of Trustees; there is an ongoing search to find suitable persons and he reported that a new Trustee, Mr Martin Shannon, is able to take on the responsibilities of Treasurer and Membership Secretary, which is much appreciated. The Chairman then thanked his fellow Trustees for their support and work during the past year. That included Simon Browning, the Bude-Stratton Town Councillor representative for his advice and contributions at our meetings.

The Secretary then gave his report followed by the Treasurer's report (see pages 4 & 5).

The accounts were proposed for acceptance by Peter Daniel and seconded by Mrs Betty Moore and unanimously accepted. The Inspector of accounts for 2020 was proposed by Mike Moore and seconded by Lucille Opie. It was unanimously accepted that Leonard & Co of Bude would continue in this position.

The Election of the Committee followed. The Chairman advised the meeting that two Trustees were seeking re-election, Lucille Opie and himself, Chris Jewell, and Martin Shannon was seeking election as a Trustee. As usual, as there were more vacancies than nominations, there was no need for a formal election. The Chairman asked the members present if they would give a show of hands to informally accept the nominations. There was a unanimous response.

There were some questions. The most important was from Lucille Opie who reminded the Chairman that he had not mentioned the Bude Junior Academy project in July when the children spent the whole of their activity week studying the Bude Canal. The Chairman apologised for this omission and gave a brief resume of what the school had done and what BCHS had done to assist the school with their project; this included funding a poetry competition, an hour long Q&A session with two classes of year 3 (8 year olds), and providing material relating to the history of the canal. It was a very worthwhile project.

The meeting closed at 3.28pm. Trustees and members then packed up the equipment and left the premises before the doors were closed at 4pm.

Chris Jewell

2020 AGM - Secretary's Report

Following the Chairman's report, the Secretary then reported on the routine activities of the Society during the last year. The Society started the year with 6 Trustees, two of which were re-elected at the 2019 AGM – Lesley Moores and Anne Longley. At the March Trustee meeting Chris Jewell was elected as Chairman, and Peter Daniel as Secretary.

Mike Moore agreed to continue as Acting Treasurer and Membership Secretary, although not actually a Trustee, until such time as a Trustee was elected who would fulfil those roles. The Secretary emphasised that six Trustees is the bare minimum allowed under the Constitution and there was a real need for further Trustees. In addition Simon Browning of BSTC attends meetings as the Town Council's representative.

The Charity Commission returns were updated in October 2019 and are therefore up to date. The Secretary summarised the year's activities including 11 Trustee meetings; sales stalls at a limited number of events including the Farmer's Market; talks and visits for other groups; representation on the Bude Canal Trust Partnership and the Bude Valley Management Advisory Group; a summer coach trip; and the manning of the Barge Workshop at Helebridge on Sundays from the beginning of July until September. There have also been regular meetings with Bude Canal Trust.

Chris Jewell and Lucille Opie were due, on rotation, for re-election as Trustees and were duly elected.

Peter Daniel, Hon Secretary

2020 AGM - Treasurer's Report

The balances on the accounts at the end of each year were as follows:

	2018	2019
	£	£
Account 1 General Account	540	1,647
Account 2 Educational Fund	1,089	454
Account 3 Project Fund	4,614	4,621
Account 4 Commemorative Events	3,012	1,404
Account 5 Archive Project	631	379
TOTAL	9,886	8,505

The financial activities for 2019 followed a similar pattern to the previous years but there were a few differences. This year we did not transfer funds from Account 1 into the other accounts as we have done previously as we wished to ensure that we retained sufficient funds in Account 1 to cover our day-to-day expenditure. We ran our coach trip again in 2019 which made a small surplus after taking into account the proceeds from the raffle. There was a further reduction in our other fundraising activities although we did have a stall at the Farmers Market during the year.

The major change in 2019 was on Account 4 which was again used for the Commemorative Events to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the start of the building of the Bude Canal. A separate report was presented which summarised all the financial activities associated with this event during 2018 and 2019. The net balance at the end of 2019 showed a surplus of £952 on these events.

There were no other exceptional items to report.

The accounts for 2019 have been inspected and approved by Leonard & Co and a proposal to appoint them as the Inspector of Accounts for 2020 was agreed at the meeting.

Note for comparison purposes:	2018	2019
	£	£
Total Income	5,619	9,056
Total Expenditure	<u>3,081</u>	<u>10,437</u>
Net Surplus/(Shortfall)	<u>2,538</u>	<u>(1,381)</u>

Mike Moore, Acting Treasurer

2020 AGM - Membership Report

As at date of AGM	No.
Life Memberships	27
Annual Memberships	<u>96</u>
Total Memberships	123
Additional Family Members	<u>11</u>
Total Members	<u>134</u>
Members deceased during 2019	4

(i.e. Jean Hall, Fred Copeland, Hugh Dalzell, Trevor Parsons)

Mike Moore, Acting Membership Secretary

Quarterly Membership Report

Although we have not enrolled any new members since the last newsletter, we have received a few further renewals.

Unfortunately, we have recently lost another long established member. Trevor Parsons, formerly of Bude, passed away in December. We extend our condolences to his family. We have also been informed that Hugh Dalzell, the secretary of the Friends of the Grand Western Canal, passed away in December. Hugh was our contact with the "Friends" as we were honorary members of the group and they were also honorary members of BCHS.



The above photo shows a group of BCHS members who visited the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in June 2006. This was organised by Fred Copeland (far left) who was a member of the team who were working on the restoration of the West Country class locomotive "Wadebridge". This photo should have been included with Fred's obituary which appeared in the last edition of The Tub Boat.

Despite my reminder in the last edition of The Tub Boat, some members who pay their subscription by Standing Order have still not updated their Standing Order Mandates to reflect the new subscription rates which applied from 1 September. It is important that all Standing Order mandates are updated now so that your subscription is renewed at the correct rate in September. If you wish to pay for any shortfall in your renewal for 2019/20 please send me your payment or complete a bank transfer crediting the society's account which is Sort Code: 30-91-41, Account No. 00059181. Please quote your Membership No. as a reference. Thank you for your co-operation and for your continued support.

Finally, I would like to welcome Martin Shannon who was elected as a trustee at the AGM. Martin has agreed to take over the role of Treasurer and Membership Secretary. I am now in the process of handing over to him but there may be a delay due to the current coronavirus outbreak so for now please continue to use my contact details.

Mike Moore, Acting Membership Secretary.

Events update for 2020

The following events had been planned for 2020:

A stall at the Bude Farmers Market from 10am on Fridays 10th July, 14th August and 11th September and tables in the Parkhouse Centre on Sunday 19th July for the Bude-Stratton Heritage Festival. However, due to the coronavirus outbreak, all these events, although not yet formally cancelled, are very unlikely to take place. Similarly, our plans for our annual coach trip which we discussed at the AGM will have to be deferred, possibly until next year. We had intended to organise a trip from the Barbican, Plymouth up the River Tamar to Cotehele Quay to visit the National Trust property at Cotehele House but that would not now be possible in 2020. We may look at an alternative trip much later in the year depending upon the nation's recovery from the coronavirus outbreak.

Betty Moore, Events Secretary



The Shamrock
moored at
Cotehele Quay

Repairs to the Sea Lock

Cornwall Council had intended to carry out the work to lift, repair and reinstall the outer gates during spring 2020. It should be noted that the spring 2020 date means after the storm chains will have been taken off which protect the inner canal gates from the effects of storms and tidal surges. However, we have just been informed that this work will now have to be re-scheduled for September when, hopefully, things return to normal after the coronavirus outbreak. When the work comes to be done an additional consideration is that it will probably have to be done when 'spring' tides are at low water during the day or during the greater period of available work time when there are 'neap' tides.

Chris Jewell



This is the gap which appeared due to the problem with one of the outer gates on the Sea Lock

Future of the Bude Canal

As stated in the last issue of The Tub Boat, we received a reply from Mr Don Martin, a Cornwall Council officer with responsibilities for the Bude Canal.

Briefly, the main points were:

1. A commitment to meet with BCHS early in 2020. Mr Martin was off sick until the last week in February 2020, so we await this commitment to meet up with us later in 2020.
2. An explanation of the trapping of water voles prior to removal to permit works to be done, under licence. The preferred period is early spring, after hibernation and before breeding commences, rather than any other time. Works were planned to be done in Spring 2020, but that has now been re-scheduled for September.
3. Recognition that the outer gates on both of the inland locks need to be immersed in water for long periods, to counter the non-use of the inland locks which allow the gates to dry out and seams to open and which makes the gates not as watertight as they should be. To counter this effect Cornwall Council have offered to fill both locks once a month for 1 hour. This is subject to water availability and the water abstraction licence they hold for water used on the canal. The 'reason' for such a short period of immersion is that both sets of outer gates have dried to the point that to maintain a 'full lock' of water the pound paddles have to remain open. This also means the locks have to be manned during this period rather than left for several weeks or longer to ensure an appropriate immersion for the gates. BCHS have raised this issue of gates drying out many times in the past.



Whalesborough Lock

4. Dredging of the Upper Basin (above Falcon Bridge). An application has been made for Capital Funding of £300,000 to fund all or most of this work. Cornwall Council has already set aside £60,000 for the locks. BCHS have been advised in February 2020 that the £300,000 has been granted. No date has been fixed for the start of this work in 2020 but it should be in early spring to comply with 'the preferred timescale' in the event of any water voles being encountered in the area of the Upper Basin. Although this work was planned to be done in Spring 2020, that has now been re-scheduled for September.

Chris Jewell

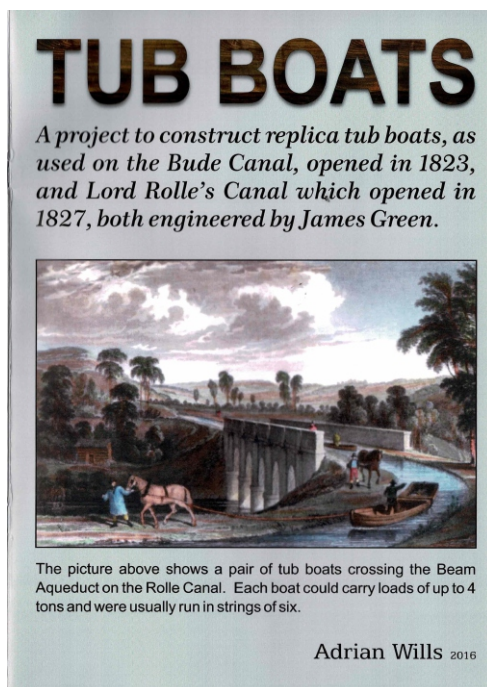
Tub Boats Booklet

Between 2014 and 2016 Adrian Wills and his late friend, Barry Hughes, built two full size replica tub boats as used on the Bude and Rolle Canals during the 1800s. Both canals were designed by James Green.

Mr Wills has had his project work and photos published in a 42 page A4 booklet which shows the boats being built. This is a limited edition of 100. The booklet is available from Chris Jewell, call 01288 352298. The booklet costs £6 if collected or delivered locally otherwise add £2.50 for post and packing.

Cheques to be made payable to "A Wills". Please allow 7 days for delivery.

Chris Jewell



Front cover of the booklet

The Gabion Baskets at Summerleaze Beach

Some of the gabion baskets which were installed to protect the sand dunes opposite the rear of the Castle have now been removed to manage the ever-increasing height of the dunes. In an article recently published in the Bude & Stratton Post, Cornwall Councillor for Bude, Peter La Broy gave an update announcing a new collaboration between Cornwall Council, Bude-Stratton Town Council and the Environment Agency to maintain the dunes.

The sand dunes at Summerleaze have been allowed to erode over the last 25 to 30 years and the metal gabion baskets, which were put in place originally to retain the dunes and have since worn from the weather over the years. This seems to have contributed to the overall size increase of the dunes, causing 'cliff- edging' on parts of the structure. Cllr La Broy had concerns that the trapping of the sand on the dunes has been causing the sand to be lost on the beach and the harbour area, causing difficulties for boats bottoming on rocks rather than a sand-bed. The joint collaboration between the three authorities allowed some of the gabion baskets to be removed to make the dunes safe and approximately three to four courses varying along the width of the dunes will be removed to allow the sand to naturally fall back into the river and flow back out onto the beach. This will see a reduction in the height of the dunes, which will take place naturally without losing natural habitat for the wildlife living and thriving within the dunes.



View of the dunes
before the gabion baskets
were removed

View of the dunes
after the gabion baskets
were removed.
Some gabions
have been left in place
to protect the dunes



Bude Canal Trust Report on the Bude Aqueduct

December

Starting the month on a possible good note, Steve and I had been invited to a revival meeting of the “Tamar Catchment Area” where we presented our case to request help on future funding assistance, availability of larger mechanical equipment and qualified expertise assistance relating to the flooding and drainage issues we will have to deal with on concerns with culverts and out-flowing pipes. Information resources have also been sought with the Devon County Council Flood Prevention Department.

The working week commenced with clearing the 2019 late growth between Aldercott Bridge and Virworthy Mill Farm, spilling over onto the next section to Virworthy Wharf.

A start has been made to sort through all the paperwork records, photos and maps relating to the Trust's ownership and work carried out, these will eventually be taken to the North Devon Record Office at Barnstaple for officially archiving in climatically controlled conditions for public access, thereby transferring them to a more secure and long term storage than we are able to provide.



1 Celebrations

January

On the 8th, the first day back after Christmas and the New Year with late celebrations (1) and brash burning to start the year off (2). Unfortunately followed the next week by more wet weather although we did manage to light more fires.



2 Second burn of the day

Over the next six weeks, time was spent continuing to sort through all the old Aqueduct section records to extract as much historical information as possible for archiving at the North Devon Record Office at Barnstaple.



3 Gadlock South side

During the refurbishment of the supporting walls of Gadlock, Wooda and Broomhill Bridges it was discovered that much of the damage being done to the original stonework was caused by the growth of the adjacent trees and their expanding root structure. A survey was carried out in order to obtain a quote for taking out the offending trees and stump treating (3).

More burning of brash was carried out the following week before checking the last section beyond the Incline Plane where a rotten plank was discovered in the old boardwalk section (4) and several fallen, hanging or leaning trees on the permissive path will need attending to (5).



4 Rotten plank



5 Leaning trees

After investigating the possibility of creating a bumblebee habitat within part of the Filter Bed area, a wild flower seed specialist employed by SW Seeds and representing a member of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust visited the site to offer advice and support for the potential project.

A report came in of tree damage between Brendon Bridge and Dunsdon Nature Reserve and a walk along the section not only found two trees to deal with (6) but a general removal of invasive willow trees being required and accommodation bridge rails replacing (7). The big tree was removed



6 Unfortunate loss



7 Rails missing

February

Three consecutive weeks were spent north of Lana Bridge removing the invasive willow trees from the canal profile and strimming round the bridge (8). In the middle of the month storm Denis swept through the area and as expected, brought down or damaged trees along the path from the Lower Lake to Lana Bridge.



8 Strimming north side of Lana



9 DNR big tree down

North of Virworthy Bridge and south of Dexbeer Bridge, several smaller branches and damaged trees were left to deal with later, including one (9) north of Dunsdon Nature Reserve. A nice example of a rotting wood fungi was seen at DNR (10).



10 *Stereum hirsutum* at DNR

During the refurbishment of the Accommodation Bridge support and 'lead in' walls at Broomhill, Gadlock and Wooda Bridges the expanding root systems from adjacent trees were found to be the main reason for the stones being pushed out of position and steps were taken to remove the trees and stump treat the remains (11).

The Trust expressed their thanks to the farmers involved in carrying out the operation successfully.



11 Stripped branch dropped



12 Permissive Path notice

March

Starting the month on yet another continually wet day, three broken branches hanging down over the footpath were cut down before carrying on to refit the Permissive Path notice (12) and remove the overhanging small trunks across the last section of the Permissive path. The two broken rails and post supports at Lana Bridge were replaced.

Mike Degnan, Bude Canal Trust

Appeal from The Bude Canal Trust

Recently the Bude & Stratton Post published an article in which The Bude Canal Trust appealed for new members to join them to continue the upkeep of “this treasured resource” i.e. the five mile long stretch of the old feeder canal that runs from Lower Tamar Lake down to River Tamar which is in their ownership.

The article explains the accessibility of the canal for the public and states the aims of the charity which are to retain the historic interest in the old canal while managing what has become an important wildlife area. It goes on to say that with fewer than 50 members, the Trust is heavily dependent on a handful of volunteers, most of whom are now in their 70s. Every Wednesday a party of volunteers ventures out to cut back the brush that encroaches on the path, cut back trees that have fallen across the path and keep the dry canal bed free of obstructions. A spokesman from the Trust appealed for additional volunteers to join the group which meets at 10.00am and usually works until 4.00pm but if you have just a few hours free on Wednesdays please join the Trust and come along to our work parties. Please call Mike Degan on 01288 354162 or budecanaltrust@gmail.com. See Mike's quarterly reports in The Tub Boat which outlines the work carried out by the work parties.

Although the canal aqueduct is primarily an historic item, it is also important as an area that is looked after for its wildlife interest as well. The fact that it passes through two of the Devon Wildlife Trust's nature reserves at Dunsdon and Vealand indicates the kind of value there is in the area. Several leaflets are available which describe the towpath walk and the history as well as other nearby canal related walks.

For more information about The Bude Canal Trust please visit their website www.bude-canal-trust.co.uk/ or contact Mike Degan (see above).

Interesting extracts from “Looking Back” published in the Bude & Stratton Post.

18 February 1950

There is at least one point on which all the political candidates for Cornish constituencies are agreed. It is that farmers should retain their right to take sand from the beaches, provided it is done reasonably.

2 March 1995

An objection has been lodged by Bude Canal Society to a plan to lower the water level and eventually drain the reservoir known as Lower Tamar Lake, built more than 170 years ago at Kilhampton, near Bude.

Old Bude Post Card

In March a copy of a postcard was published in the Bude & Stratton Post which showed a view of the river looking towards the Strand with Nanny Moore's Bridge in the centre of the photo. However, the accompanying text states that "The scene looks out over the Bude canal" which, of course, is incorrect although this is not the first time that the paper has made this error. The article concluded by requesting further details of the image including the approximate date. The photo shows Marine Terrace in the left foreground. Marine Terrace appears in a photograph taken in 1904 but is not shown in one taken in 1914 after the Grenville Hotel had just been opened. Another photo which I found on-line shows the Grenville Hotel under construction in 1910 with a note that Marine Terrace shown on the photo was demolished. That would probably put the date of the postcard prior to the end of 1910 but certainly before 1914. I think that the "08" shown on the postmark on the card suggests that it was posted in 1908.

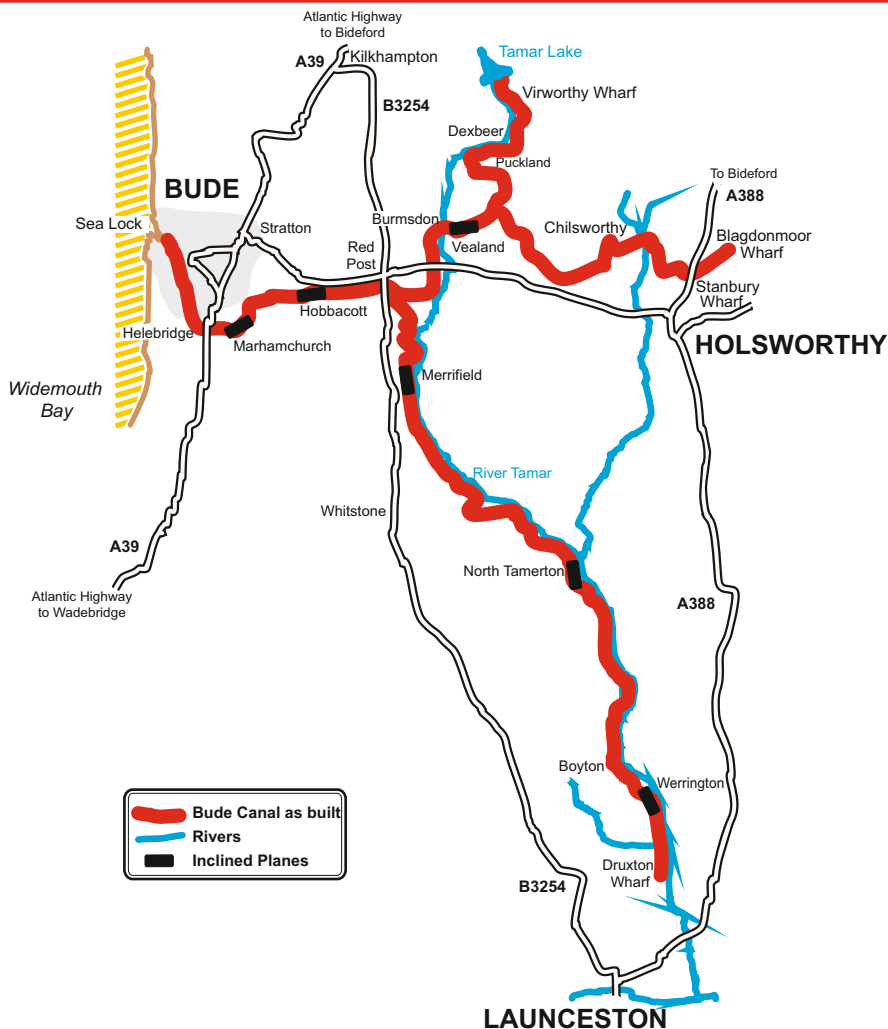
Mike Moore



A modern photograph of the view shown on the old post card

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Published by **BUDE CANAL & HARBOUR SOCIETY**

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Registered Charity Number 1086646

Printed by Parish Magazine Printing 01288 341617
