

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 107

Spring 2024



THE TUB BOAT

Forthcoming Events for 2024:

7th July to 29th Sept - opening of The Barge Workshop at Helebridge every Sunday
from 2pm to 5pm

Sunday 21st July Bude-Stratton Heritage Day at The Parkhouse Centre, Bude

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to editor.bchs@gmail.com or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and sent to Mike Moore (Tel: 07790 744823) to reach him by 15th June 2024.

Officers

Chairman	Chris Jewell
Vice-Chair	Viki Herbert-Coulson
Secretary	Peter Daniel
Treasurer	Martin Shannon
Membership Secretary	Martin Shannon
Events Secretary	Stuart Spooner
The Tub Boat Editor	Mike Moore (<i>non-trustee</i>)
Website & Social Media	Jacki Stephens (<i>non-trustee</i>)

Other Trustees

Lesley Moores
Michael Coulson
Sandy Faulkner
Adrian Gannon

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





Registered Charity No.1086646

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Cover photo: Mistral leaving Bude on 4th May

Creaks from the Chair

I have now returned. In the last edition of The Tub Boat, you were treated to the “Secretary’s Scribbles” because of my stay in hospital which was due to me deciding during November that I did not need to take my daily dose of prescribed medication. The effect was catastrophic. I was admitted to North Devon District Hospital at Barnstaple on a “blue light” run by ambulance one night in December and I remember thinking that I may not survive. However, the NHS performed very well and saved me. I returned home on 8th January having learnt a hard lesson and, ironically, needing to take more daily tablets than before. The lesson is “Don’t be stupid and make sure you take your tablets”. I wish you all the best and hope that you had a good Easter.

Chris Jewell

AGM – Sunday 18th February 2024

As usual, the AGM took place in the Gallery at The Castle Heritage Centre, Bude between 10am and 4pm on 18th February. At 11am Mr John Puddy gave a presentation on the SS Freshspring which is moored at Bideford (see detailed report on page 5). At the end of the presentation Mr Puddy gave a file of images and documents about the activities of Captain Peter Herbert who owned and operated vessels in and out of Bude ensuring that the sea lock and the lower wharf remained open for shipping. These documents will be scanned, and copies will be produced before they are donated to Bude-Stratton Town Council for safekeeping at The Castle Heritage Centre. Coincidentally, one of our trustees, Viki Herbert-Coulson is the daughter of Captain Herbert, and she has written an article about his life and activities (see page 21).

After the presentation, there was a break for lunch before the formal AGM started at 2.30pm. Following approval of the minutes of the 2023 AGM, and presentation of the annual reports by officers, Peter Daniel and Stuart Spooner were re-elected to the committee after retiring by rotation.

It was also announced that plans were being made to increase the subscription rates from September 2024 (further details are shown in the Membership Report on page 7). The meeting closed at 4pm.

Chris Jewell

Treasurer’s Report for 1st January – 31st December 2023

A summary of the annual financial statements of the society, which have been independently examined by Leonard & Co is reproduced on page 6.

Presentation by John Puddy at the AGM

At the BCHS AGM held on Sunday 18th February 2024 there was a presentation by John Puddy, Chairman of The Steamship Freshspring Trust (a Registered Charity), and a model of the actual ship was on display. The SS Freshspring is an historic steamship built as a water carrier in 1946 and is registered as a Vessel of Historic Importance. She is currently being restored to working order at Bideford. One of the historical images shown of her working life was where she was alongside and supplying pure water for use in the boilers of an Aircraft Carrier.

Consideration is being given to convert her to 'greener' hybrid power with use of Hydrogen and there has been a feasibility study for her use as a passenger ship.

Jeff Dover



Model of SS Freshspring - photo by Jeff Dover

Officers elected for 2024/25

The following officers were elected at the first BCHS committee meeting after the AGM on 21st February 2024:

Chairman:	Chris Jewell
Vice-Chair:	Viki Herbert-Coulson
Secretary:	Peter Daniel
Treasurer	
& Membership Secretary:	Martin Shannon
Events Secretary:	Stuart Spooner

The following members remain in position:

Jacki Stephens:	Webmaster
Mike Moore:	Tub Boat Editor

Chris Jewell

ACCOUNT 1

£

Balance as at 1 January 2023	2,863.79
Add Income	6,317.25
Less Expenditure	<u>(7,379.49)</u>
Balance as at 31 December 2023	1,801.55
Add Cash in hand	<u>88.00</u>
Total of Funds available for Account 1 on 31 December 2023	<u><u>1,889.55</u></u>

ACCOUNT 2 - EDUCATIONAL FUND

£

Balance as at 1 January 2023	734.22
Add Income	216.11
Less Expenditure	<u>(180.00)</u>
Balance as at 31 December 2023	<u><u>770.33</u></u>

ACCOUNT 3 - PROJECT FUND

£

Balance as at 1 January 2023	4,806.71
Add Income	37.73
Less Expenditure	<u>0.00</u>
Balance as at 31 December 2023	<u><u>4,844.44</u></u>

ACCOUNT 4 - COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

£

Balance as at 1 January 2023	1,453.50
Add Income	41.09
Less Expenditure	<u>(29.60)</u>
Balance as at 31 December 2023	<u><u>1,464.99</u></u>

ACCOUNT 5 - ARCHIVE PROJECT

£

Balance as at 1 January 2023	281.56
Add Income	0.00
Less Expenditure	<u>0.00</u>
Balance as at 31 December 2023	<u><u>281.56</u></u>

The significant points to report are as follows:

The main categories of income for the year were membership subscriptions, donations and grants, supplemented by publication sales.

This year there have been the following notable receipts:

A donation of £1,500 from the IWA West Country Branch which enabled us to make a donation of the same amount to fund improvement works at the Barge Workshop

Member donations of £700 towards our replacement storage shed

Grant income of £695 from Bude Stratton Town Council towards Bicentenary costs

The key areas of expenditure were as follows:

Replacement shed costing £1,713

The aforementioned donation of £1,500 toward Barge Workshop improvements

The production and distribution of the quarterly newsletter “The Tub Boat”

Cost of publications printing

Bicentenary costs

AGM expenses (2022 and 2023 AGM costs were paid in 2023)

Annual public liability insurance

Web site updating

Storage costs

The Project Fund includes £4,500 designated to future works.

Membership Report

	Number
Paid Membership 31 st December 2023	
Life Members	26
Annual Members	84
	<hr/>
	110
Additional family members	9
Total members	<hr/>
	119

We are extremely grateful to have received the continuing support of our membership including some generous donations towards our replacement shed.

Since the end of 2022 the number of Life Members is reduced by 1 but the number of paid-up Annual Members rose from 76. So far in 2024 we have 1 new member and a further late renewal.

The trustees have recently conducted a review of the society's recurring income and expenditure and identified that due to rising costs against, at best, stagnant subscription income we can no longer predict that this income will cover our operating costs. We have therefore reluctantly taken the decision to increase our subscription rates from 1st September 2024 to the following:

Adult	£20
Senior	£15
Corporate	£40
Family	£30
Junior (18 and under)	£5

We hope that by making an increase now it will enable us to continue to achieve our objectives without the need to raise rates again for several years to come. In anticipation of this change it would help immeasurably if standing order mandates could be altered in readiness.

Thank you all for your continued support and please let me know if your contact details change or if indeed your circumstances change such that you are able to make future subscriptions under Gift Aid. Please contact me directly on 01288 356367 or bude.canal@gmail.com

Martin Shannon, Honorary Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Robert Harris

On 20th March we received the following sad news from Rufus Harris. "I'm not sure if anyone in the current canal society remembers my dad (Robert) but he was chairman of the society back in the 90s. Unfortunately he passed away over the weekend. He was very fond of Bude and its canal and I remember exploring various parts of it with him as a kid including abseiling into a huge underground wheelhouse. He will be much missed. "



I remember that my first contact with the original Bude Canal Society was when I read about a presentation which Robert was doing at Holsworthy. I often wondered what the Bude Canal was all about but then I was only aware of the short Barge Section from Bude to Helebridge. However, after Robert's illuminating presentation, I realised that there was much more to the Bude Canal than just the 2 miles from Bude. Not long after that, I became a member of the society and I attended the first AGM at which I was elected onto the committee and served as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. In that role I worked very closely with Robert and got to know him quite well. After he left as Chairman of the Bude Canal Society, I continued to keep in touch with him by email including after he moved to County Cork in Ireland. Although he invited us to visit him when we were in Ireland, despite being frequent visitors, sadly we didn't make it to Co. Cork. Robert continued his interest in canals and visited many of the restored waterways in Ireland writing blogs on his expeditions.

We send our condolences to his wife Finola and his son Rufus and we remember Robert fondly during the time he spent in Bude.

Mike Moore



Robert's home in Co. Cork "Nead an Iolair" which means "Eagle's Nest"

The Barge Workshop

We are pleased to advise that the Barge Workshop at Helebridge will be open on Sunday afternoons from 2pm to 5pm for the summer period starting on the 7th July with the final opening on the 29th September. Please take advantage of this opportunity to see one of the unique Tub Boats which operated on the canal and other interesting artefacts including the cradle (see article on page 22).

Mike Moore

An Appeal

Dear members. Your society needs you.

We are currently planning events for the society for 2024 and 2025 and wanted to engage with our members to ensure you have a say in what we do. We are running a short online survey of ideas and if you could take a couple of minutes to give us your thoughts the trustees would be very grateful.

The link to our survey can be found on: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RMZ3QGM>

Many thanks in advance

Stuart Spooner CMIOSH, Events Secretary



On the River Dart during our last annual coach trip in 2019

Bude Valley Management Advisory Group

We have been advised that the next meeting of the Bude Valley Management Advisory Group will be arranged when the current dredging work has been completed.

Chris Jewell

Bude Harbour update

Some vessels were lifted into the canal on the 27th April and should be locking out in early May subject to suitable tidal and weather conditions.

Chris Jewell



*Above: Gypsy Princess (L) and Mistral (R) being lifted into the water on 27th April.
Photos: Rob Goodwin*

Left : both vessels safely in the canal.

Dredging Programme Update

The extensive programme to dredge the Bude Canal continues to make progress but not without challenges that have led to an update in the expected timeline to completion.

The operation to remove over 4,000 cubic meters of silt from the canal have never been easy, impacted by lack of available land on the canal-bank and by the presence on non-native invasive zebra mussel, challenges that have been compounded by a slow start to works whilst the complicated set-up was established and poor weather during the early part of 2024. Whilst it has always been a strong desire to complete the element of works within the Crescent Car Park by the start of the 2024 Easter Holidays, the delivery contractors Cormac are now reporting that this target will likely be extended until the end of April.

Cornwall Council, who own the canal recognise that the visitor economy is vital to Bude and that the canal is a popular and iconic community asset and the decision to continue to complete the task through a timeline extension is based on the importance of removing the silt to deliver the outcomes of increased flood water conveyance, a safe depth for water activity use, improvement of freshwater habitat and increased longevity of the canal. About half of the car parking spaces within the Crescent carpark remain available, with the Harbour, Summerleaze and Crooklets carparks being close alternative options.

Canal Remains Closed

To protect the safety of the general public and staff delivering the dredging programme, the canal will remain closed to all activity including private launches and fishing within the works zone between the buoy markers until further notice of a reopening is issued by Cornwall Council.

Issued by Cornwall Council, 15 Feb 2024



Bank repairs above Falcon Bridge

Easter 2024 Update

We will suspend all operations over the Easter break, from Good Friday through Easter Monday. This means there will be no activity related to the dredging or the piling projects on the canal, in the upper basin and harbour. Having completed the pile installation for the embankment repairs, we hope this will reduce noise disturbance to the local community (see photos on previous page).

Starting on Tuesday 2nd April, dredging operations will commence on the inland zone from Truscott's bridge, with pipework taking silts to Whalesborough. From Wednesday 3rd April work will resume on the embankment repairs with all works within the fenced-off area and inside the silt curtain installed along the line of the piles, so there will be no encroachment into the canal for these works.

Updates are available at <https://www.cormacitd.co.uk/search?query=bude+canal>

and at <https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/bude-canal-and-harbour>

We would encourage you to check these updates if you have any questions whatsoever.

*Charlotte Evans MCIEEM MRes, BSc hons, Countryside Officer – Major Projects,
Cornwall Council. March 2024*

The Sand Railway

Context – why is the work needed?

The current condition of the lower sand railway walkway adjacent to the sea is very poor following erosion from wave action and has consequently been closed by way of barriers on public safety grounds. Prior to closure its condition posed serious challenges to all users, particularly the mobility impaired forcing pedestrians to use the narrow uneven concrete strip adjacent to the sea wall coping with a significant vertical drop to the River Neet.

Between the lower walkway and the higher canal walkway lies a low natural blockwork retaining wall which transitions into a sloping pointed blockwork revetment. This wall and revetment retain the bank and walkway, which in turn supports the canal, therefore its integrity is critical to prevent a loss of water in the canal if breached. The wall and revetment structure are also exposed to wave action and have suffered damage with a section of sloping revetment having been ripped out by wave action and replaced previously. More recently it was noted that there has been leaking of fresh water through the canal embankment in the locality of the lock gates which is being investigated in separate works.

It is key to understand that both the current surfacing and retaining wall were industrial structures and as such never “designed” using the same methods as currently employed today. The structures were built using local materials and techniques over 100 years ago and have been repaired when defects arise. A changing climate mean these structures are now exposed to rising sea levels and greater levels of wave and storm action, which is hastening their deterioration.

It is key that we develop an acceptable proposal to stakeholders and planners in a timely manner to prevent further damage to the structure, preserve and enhance the heritage of the location, as well as protecting it for future generations. It is feared if a solution is not agreed there may be further and significantly worse damage incurred which will cost more to remediate and may have to be undertaken as emergency works resulting in a less agreeable solution.

History of proposed design solutions

Cornwall Council have been aware of the issues in the area for a period of time and have been working to develop a suitable proposal that will be acceptable to the community and various planning consultees.

Current proposed design solutions

Detailed proposals have been put forward covering the following elements:

Surfacing - It is proposed to amend the current surface level to be even from the seaward site to the current position of the canal retaining wall/revetment. The proposed raised surfacing level would allow a strong and even surface to be constructed however this level will have to be subject to detailed design, but it will be key to incorporate the historic granite setts into the final surface which will require a change in their height but not location. A robust reinforced concrete slab forming the walkway surface is proposed.

Retaining wall - The current retaining wall has been fixed using mortar over the years and was never designed to take wave impact. When previous storms have occurred and damaged the wall it has simply fallen apart and allowed the retained soil to be eroded. A proposed new gabion wall would withstand wave impact and can be designed to retain soils and has the option to be planted with soil and seeds to provide a natural looking finish that will evolve over time.

Revetment - As the case with the current retaining wall the current revetment has been patched up over the years and when it has failed it has simply disintegrated and lost retained soil. A proposed Gabion mattress similar to the above gabions is proposed – this can be overlaid over the existing uneven revetment providing a cost-effective solution and can be filled with local rock as well as having the option of being seeded which will help it blend in over time as well as offering a high level of defence from wave action.

Other general comments and proposals

Further information about the sand railway and the heritage should be captured on a notice board. Taking into account previously proposed options and feedback from Historic Planning & Historic England, a further developed proposal has been assembled for consultation before being submitted as a planning application. The proposal needs to ensure the structure is robust to the impacts of a changing climate, but also to take account of the heritage nature of the structure. It is key to note that the below proposals have been developed with longevity, cost, aesthetics & heritage implications in mind, and it is key to ensure whatever proposal goes forwards does so in a timely manner to prevent further damage and potential further losses of heritage items.

Edited version of the Stakeholder Engagement note prepared by Maxwell Needham-Bailey, Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Asset Manager, Environment Service.

6 February 2024

Response from Peter Daniel on behalf of BCHS

I have consulted with fellow trustees of the Society, and these are our preliminary comments.

- We are concerned that a concrete slab, albeit with cast-in features, will actually speed up the waves and make them reach further. However, installing baffles or cobbled paving over a slab would defeat one of the objects of improving accessibility. There is no easy answer to this contradiction.
- The low vertical retaining wall is part of the original 1823 construction and marked the location of the passing loop/siding on the plateway. It is a shame it can't simply be refurbished/rebuilt as it is, rather than replaced by gabions.
- Note that it is not just granite setts that mark the plateway. Many of the setts, distinguished by the holes where the plates were fixed, are of local Culm Measure Sandstone. There are four lines of sets visible in places marking the two sets of parallel plateway rails.
- In principle, we have no objection to raising the setts providing they are positioned accurately.
- Similarly, we have no objection in principle to the gabion mattress revetment
- Gabions and mattresses need to be filled by hand to prevent later re-arrangement of contents by the sea. They should also be filled with local Culm Measure Sandstones stones rather than something that isn't local. We also wondered about potential storm damage to the basket wires and whether any damage might produce projecting broken wires as a safety hazard.

I hope these comments are helpful. Perhaps you could let us know how Historic England respond?

Peter Daniel

Rodds Bridge

Following the report of the closure of the bridge over the canal in the last edition of The Tub Boat, letters were sent to Cornwall Council by BCHS and the West Country Branch of the Inland Waterways Association.

A copy of the letter from BCHS sent on 4th March 2024 is shown below.

Dear Charlotte

Rodds Bridge, Bude Canal

Thank you for your letter of 21st February sent to Ray Alexander. The Canal & Harbour Society have noted your disappointing response, and we are not sure that it does help to explain your approach.

A business case for restoration of the barge canal section to navigation, including a moveable bridge at Rodds Bridge, was made prior to 2007. The reference to Falcon Bridge is irrelevant; this was in the original scoping exercise but was never included in the final Regeneration Project. A replacement for Rodds Bridge was, however, included in the project but was only taken out at the last minute when Heritage Lottery Funding was generally pared back to cover the cost of the Olympics. This was removed, rather than other elements, since it was seen as a simple stand-alone item that could quickly dealt with subsequently. How wrong that idea proved to be!

The water main is also largely irrelevant. Presumably it will need to be twice moved temporarily during the like-for-like replacement. It would be relatively easy to achieve a permanent diversion by trenching down the canal banks and across the base and then it would be dealt with once and for all.

You refer to the relatively short length of waterway beyond the bridge, but it is nearly a mile up to Helebridge and the inland locks and the accommodation bridge at Whalesborough have already been rebuilt to allow for navigation. A regular trip boat, perhaps electrically driven, going from the upper basin up to the landing stage at Helebridge would allow passengers to walk through the underpass to the Barge Workshop 'Museum', or to visit the Weir restaurant, or to continue up the canal incline into Marhamchurch. It would, we are sure, be a popular attraction for both visitors and local people.

You don't have to venture outside the south-west to see beneficial navigational use of short lengths of waterway. In Devon there is the Grand Western Canal at Tiverton with its trip boat, horse-drawn in this case, and facilities for other boats. In Somerset, on the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal a variety of trip boats are available at Higher Maunsel Lock. At Langport, in Somerset, there is an electrical trip boat powered by solar panels. All these waterways also have slipways so other boats can be launched. There are many other isolated lengths of canal across the country on which trip boats are operated, such as the northern end of the Lancaster Canal.

How is it that neighbouring counties of Devon and Somerset can successfully implement schemes that provide for navigation along short isolated lengths of waterway and yet Cornwall doesn't even have the vision to consider that such an idea is possible or desirable, despite 90% of the work already have been done.

In the email from Andy Bartle of Cormac on 20th February 2024 he suggested that a like-for-like replacement might cost £225,000 and that a lifting bridge might cost £2.0 million. The latter figure seems to us to be grossly over-exaggerated. For a lifting bridge alternative the bridge deck would be substantially the same as a fixed bridge. The balance beam mechanism is essentially fabricated steelwork and might add say £150,000 to the cost, and there would need to be modifications to the bearing abutment – say £100,000. The suggested need for remote control, CCTV, electronic barriers etc is completely over the top. The swing bridges on the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal operate with simple steel barriers that fold back over the bridge so the bridge cannot be moved without the barriers being across the road – the cost would be a few thousand pounds at most. The cost of the original proposed moveable bridge at Rodds Bridge, included in the 2001 strategic study final report for the Regeneration Project, was £190,000. A quick calculation with Construction Price Indices since 2001 suggests that this would be £460,000 in today's prices, which is not inconsistent with the above.

Further cost savings could be achieved by imposing a weight limit on the bridge. The approach roads are not suitable for HGVs and are signed as such. A 7.5 tonne weight limit would be entirely reasonable. Alternatively, you could save even more by closing the road to vehicular traffic and building a pedestrian/cycle bridge at higher level. After twelve months closure, residents will be used to it not being available and with climate change it is likely the road across the valley will be frequently closed by flooding in any case. You could also have saved money by installing the modern swing-bridge offered to you for free a few years ago.

As I said at the start of this letter, we are disappointed with your reply, but not surprised. In all our correspondence with Cornwall Council, over the last twelve years or so, Council officers have never addressed the issue of why the Council are deliberately choosing to waste investment already carried out and the assets created. Indeed, on many occasions, there has been complete denial that there was ever any intention to restore the barge canal to navigation, despite all the physical evidence on the ground and the documentary evidence provided.

Replacement of Rodds Bridge with a moveable bridge is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to put in place one of the outstanding jigsaw pieces from the Regeneration Project. Instead of recognising the opportunity, Cornwall Council seem intent on wasting the investment that has already been made.

Yours sincerely, Peter Daniel, Hon Secretary

In addition, the following item was posted on the BCHS Facebook page.

“Rodds Bridge is closed to vehicles while a replacement is designed and built. Back in 2007 the Regeneration Project was intended to restore the barge canal up to Helebridge to navigation. The vast majority of the work was done (inland locks restoration, Whalesborough bridge raised, back pumping installed, dredging) but at the last minute, replacement of Rodds Bridge with a moveable bridge was removed due to funding shortfalls at HLF. Don't worry, everyone said, that's an easy stand-alone project which can be done later. That was 17 years ago. Now that Rodds Bridge needs replacing you might think that Cornwall Council would take the chance to complete the scheme. But no, they are intending to replace it with another fixed bridge, and it will be a further lifetime before that is replaced. Another missed opportunity by Cornwall Council, and an amazing determination to waste the investment already made.”

Mike Moore

Bude Flood Defence Project

Construction update

Now the flood defence works are mostly completed with some remedial ‘making good’ elements to undertake prior to the site team's departure. This includes:

- Reinstatement to where the site compound has been situated
- Kerb installation and coping stone laid in accordance to the design drawings
- Plaining the existing carriageway and resurface along Ergue-Gaberic Way
- The site set up will be reduced down to a smaller oasis unit

Nanny Moore's Bridge

The project team would like to thank everyone for their patience whilst the necessary closures to Nanny Moore's bridge took place throughout January. The team were able to open it a few days earlier which was well received.

Whilst there are no future closures planned, whilst some of the remedial works take place, there will be a temporary closure for approx. 5 hours week commencing Monday 12 February (exact date will be communicated nearer the time via social media and site notice boards)

Considerate Contractor Scheme

Site Agent, Jack Walker and Stakeholder Manager, Kelly Cowling welcomed the CCS Assessor, Sharon to site mid-January where she audited the scheme looking at three categories: Respect the community, Care for the environment and Value their workforce. All were given the highest marks and awarded the Excellence performance level.

Drop-in session – 24 January

Special thanks to Deacon Debbie Marsh for her hospitality and use of the church for the planned engagement session Wednesday 24 January. It was well attended and useful session where the project team had the opportunity to update both businesses and residents.

Keir & The Environment Agency, February 2024

The final edition of Bude Flood Defence and River Restoration Project newsletter was issued in April 2024 and is shown below.

Construction Update

The project team are delighted to share that the Bude, The Crescent Flood Defence and River Restoration Project is now complete.

Ergue-Gaberic Way is now back open to the public and car parking spaces can be used. The new car park meter is located at Nanny Moores Bridge.

Whilst we have entered the Spring months, there has not been much dry weather, meaning that the new turf remains and will be laid when the weather improves. To do this, there will be a temporary three-day partial road closure. Immediate stakeholders will be advised accordingly.

Community Engagement

Deacon Debbie Marsh had become well known and popular onsite as she'd often offer 'goodies' to the site team. Then one day in a conversation, Debbie asked if the project could assist her in setting up and starting a surplus store, kindly donated by the local supermarkets...

...and that is exactly what happened. A shed was sourced and installed with a little help from the site team for the whole community to enjoy.



Throughout the project, the team have sourced ways to engage with the local community, but the most fun and messy activity was the last to come and worth the wait.

In March, local schools and education groups were contacted and offered the opportunity to come and have a go painting the new wall which runs along the riverbank with natural yoghurt. This natural process is found to speed up and encourage the bacteria and lichen growth making it an ecological haven.

It was a wonderful success and enjoyed by everyone, including a daddy and twin daughters' duo.



These photos were taken at high tide on the morning of Tuesday 9th April. The extremely high water level demonstrate the importance of maintaining robust flood defences at Bude.

Thank you

Now the scheme has come to an end, the project team would like to thank both public and businesses affected by the works, who have afforded the team patience, have been polite and inquisitive into what the scheme entailed, especially those accessing Ergue-Gaberic Way when the road closures were in place, thank you.



A notable 'thank you' to Bude Methodist Church, Neetside Doctors Surgery, Recreations Ground, Community Centre and the Masonic Lodge.

Keir & The Environment Agency, April 2024

A Man of The Sea - Captain Peter M. Herbert

A man of the sea, a sailor, a captain, a ship owner and a campaigner. All of these words could be used to describe my father, Peter Herbert.

Peter grew up in Bude, living at 19 Queen Street, spending a lot of his time either on the beach or around the canal and the many craft that plied their trade. His first voyage into ship owning in the 1950's was the purchase of the small ketch Agnes, built in Bude in 1830 and starting her working life as the Lady Acland before becoming lengthened and relaunched in 1904 as the Margaret Frances. Later to become the Agnes when bought by Mr Tregaskes, a Bude merchant. Peter used this small craft to carry various cargos to and from Ireland as well as the many ports in the South West.

The Agnes has her own story to tell which I will save for another time. She was sold in 1957 and the Mary Stewart and the Arran Monarch both came into my father's possession. I believe at about this time the company Herb Ship Ltd was also set up. Over the years Peter owned many ships starting out with ketches such as the Agnes, the Mary Stewart, the Emily Barrett then moving into steam and owning several ex-admiralty VICs as they were known. The Arran Monarch was converted from steam to diesel again being used to carry cargo around the South West.

It was in the late 1950's, early 1960's when concrete was everything that there was a plan by the council to concrete over the sea lock. Needless to say, Peter was a staunch campaigner, joining the local Bude Canal Defence Committee to help save the unique Bude sea lock. I think it also helped that he was able to put the odd ship or two in Bude Canal, necessitating the sea locks to be maintained. If it wasn't for that group of passionate committed people Bude would not have a working sea lock, our canal could well have become a concrete space such as Lemon Quay in Truro.

The Rhone, the Calyx and the C8 are just some ships names I remember from my childhood. Later Peter went on to purchase the Lady Sonia. She was used to trade on the east coast or wherever a paying cargo could be found. She was eventually sold and Peter then spent time away at sea working on various ships as Captain. One such command was the Tower Venture, a modern ship with sliding hatches and marine Rolls Royce engines. Peter rather enjoyed the training course spent at the Rolls Royce factory and especially the executive dining room.

The Despatch became the next addition to Herb Ship, a lovely Dutch coaster with comfortable crew accommodation, much better than the space saving crew shoeboxes of the Tower Venture. Like a lot of Peter's ships, the Despatch was not without issue, bought with a writ on her mast. This was soon sorted, and Peter had her registered to the port of Bideford. She traded in the Bristol channel and generally around the South West, meanwhile Peter was also acquiring various other craft and I remember at one time there were seven of his vessels moored up alongside Bideford Quay.

The Despatch was eventually sold and Peter then went on to become more of a wheeler dealer in the shipping world. During these years several historic craft passed through his hands.

During his life Peter owned some 38 vessels many of which have their place in maritime history. He also shared his knowledge and love of historic craft with many people. It often surprises me how he still appears in my life today, such as at the recent informative talk by John Puddy on the SS Freshspring. John having met my father at one point, was also in possession of various documents relating to the sale of a particular Vic, photographs as well passed on to him by Henry Cleary. These documents and photographs will be passed onto Bude Museum at the Castle.

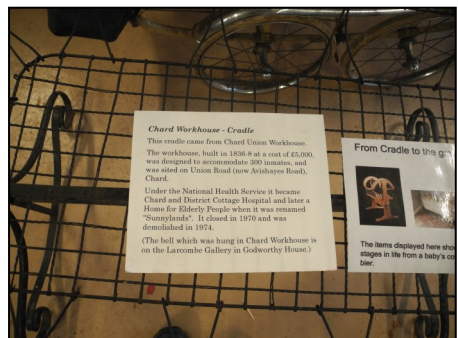
Viki Herbert-Coulson

Cradle

Not strictly speaking anything to do with the Canal but the item (see photo R) is in the Barge Workshop at Helebridge . It's often puzzled us what it is, and the most sensible suggestions have been something from the Post Office sorting system. However, earlier this year I came across an almost identical item in Chard Museum (excellent local museum by the way) and it turns out it was a cradle from the workhouse (see photos below).

Presumably ours at Helebridge came from the Stratton Union Workhouse which used to stand where AWB Textiles now is. I can't remember when it was demolished (1980s?) but no doubt someone will know - and even have a photo of it.

Peter Daniel



Hele Valley Trail

As reported in the last edition of The Tub Boat, the land on the border between Bude-Stratton and Marhamchurch which includes the Hele Valley Trail has recently been put up for sale. This is a very popular walking route which is located within the environs of the Bude Canal which encourages us to take an interest in the sale of this site.

On Monday 8th April, I attended a meeting called by Marhamchurch Parish Council when it was confirmed that the Parish Council would make an application for a grant to enable them to purchase the land consisting of Plot 1 of the site which includes the entrance from Pinch Bridge, the car park and woodland for £190,000. Significant donations have already been pledged, which will be very important in strengthening the case for a successful bid.

I urge you to follow the progress of this group and, if appropriate, make a donation to support the project. Thank you.

Mike Moore

Compass Point update from Bude-Stratton Town Council

The Storm Tower was officially re-opened by The Mayor of Bude-Stratton Town Council (BSTC), Cllr Mike Dawe at a Ceremony starting at 2pm on Tuesday 26/03/2024. It was a bright and sunny day, and it was well attended by a crowd of an estimated 200 people including residents, supporters, and those who had made the Project possible. The opening Ceremony had started with a Reading in Cornish by Jaqui Heard (Myrgh Kemmynieth) Bard of Gorsedh Kernow.

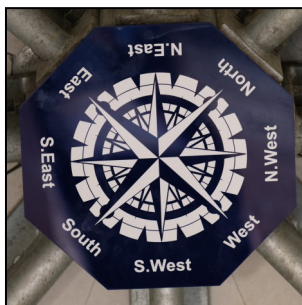
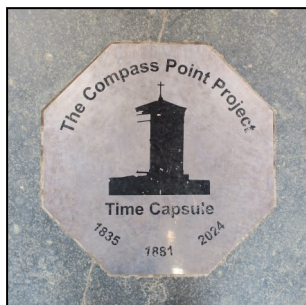
Following this, a Presentation was given by Peter La Broy - Cornwall Councillor & Bude-Stratton Town Councillor. Peter reminded us all of the discovery that due to natural coastal erosion The Storm Tower was now perilously close to the cliff edge and was in danger of toppling over into the Celtic Sea and lost forever. SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE!



BTSC came to the conclusion that The Storm Tower needed to be moved inland by about 100 yards and at a high point so as to be in less danger from further coastal erosion and due its iconic status it would still overlook Bude Harbour and Lock Gates and be visible for miles. Funding was required far beyond BTSCs' resources although they could provide a substantial input. Outside funding was required and it was conditional on it having support from the local community, so BTSC started a crowdfunding with a target of £20,000. The local community soon exceeded that target as £60,000 was raised in 60 days. This, together with BTSC's donation meant funding would be granted by The National Lottery Community Fund.



Initially there was a delay as The Storm Tower is Grade 2 listed and required complexities with the planning application. Apart from approval by BCSC, it was required from other bodies such as Cornwall Council, the Environment Agency, and Natural England. After gaining planning approval, BSTC organised the Project but there more delays due to the Cornish weather with 210 days of rain and 10 storms! The Project was finally completed and hence The Storm Tower Opening Ceremony.



After Peter La Broy's Presentation there was a rendition of 'Cornwall My Home' sing by the Yr2 children of Stratton Primary School. Then the Mayor of Bude-Stratton Town Council Cllr Mike Dawe declared the Opening of the Tower. This was followed by a rendition of 'Trelawny' led by the Bencoolen Wreckers. The lady next to me initiated a rousing cheer and at the end of the Ceremony the BTSC organisers of the event said people could pick up one of the pasties provided as they went home.

It must be said that Bude-Stratton Town Council had impressed with the planned Storm tower Opening Ceremony. It was noted that someone had videoed the Ceremony with one of those shoulder mounted video cameras which cost about the same as a small house and yes it was the local BBC. Later the same day the journalist Janine Jansen presented a piece on BBC Spotlight TV. The expected time lapse video was shown with the Storm Tower being taken apart then put together again at the new site There was an interview with the overall Project Manager who amongst other things pointed out that had they had to move 100 tons of stone. Also interviewed was Alan McIntosh (Mac) Bard of Gorsedh Kernow and Chairman Bude Old Cornwall Society. He expressed his delight and hoped that The Tower would last for some years further.

Bude-Stratton Town Council, March 2024

Bude Canal Trust – Executive Report

Bude Canal Aqueduct land transfer to DWT - Although the Trust remains committed to the transfer, progress on the legal formalities remains very slow. However, an initial draft Transfer Document has now been received which appears to be a good foundation for progress. The BCT is now studying this draft to ascertain whether any minor amendments or tweaks are needed and is hopeful that further progress will now proceed at an increased speed.

Tamara Coast to Coast Trail - The guidebook appears to be selling well and it looks likely that a further reprint will be ordered. It is expected that sales may well speed up even further once the spring arrives and the paths dry out a bit. An article on the route on the BBC's Countryfile programme in January prompted a rush of enquiries.

Tamar Valley AONB (now National Landscape), who have overseen the project, have set up a web page giving information on the route and including a contact facility. It is hoped that this will be added to with a facility for people with issues regarding the route to note any concerns. The web page for contact is:

<https://www.tamarvalley-nl.org.uk/discover-explore/walking/tamara-coast-to-coast-way/faqs/>

Locally, it is understood that some walkers have concerns about the state of the length of the route on the permissive path at Cann Orchard. This concern has been passed on to the Tamar Valley N.L.

Steve Church, Chairman, Bude Canal Trust.

Fund Britain's Waterways

In February we received an invitation to join the “Fund Britain's Waterways” campaign which we have now accepted and BCHS have been added to the FBW members list. See below for more details of the project as supplied by The Inland Waterways Association.

In May 2023 IWA met with more than 20 other organisations who share our concerns about the level of government funding being made available to maintain Britain's canals and rivers, and the lack of certainty about future funding as current grant arrangements come to an end. For example, it was only in July 2023, a year behind schedule, that Defra announced future funding for the Canal & River Trust which has responsibility for over 2,000 miles of the inland waterways network – and the announcement confirmed our fears of further substantial cuts to the already inadequate level of funding. As another example the Environment Agency navigations are also suffering badly.

Given these concerns, and with a General Election looming within the next 18 months, we agreed it was timely to launch a dedicated, time-limited, action group – ‘Fund Britain's Waterways’ (FBW).

FBW is all about bringing together the widest possible group of organisations and individuals, independent of navigation authorities, with the sole purpose of “campaigning collectively for an increase in government funding of Britain's inland waterways to avert their decline, and to promote awareness of the huge economic, environmental and social well-being value they provide”. This is not only for boat enthusiasts – this is a critical moment for the estimated 10 million people who work, live, study or simply enjoy rivers and canals each year. We're reaching out to waterways users across the spectrum of activities, environmental organisations, businesses, charities, health bodies and beyond.

Since FBW's first media release in June 2023 the response has been hugely encouraging, with over 110 organisations representing hundreds of thousands of users and supporters of inland waterways having joined FBW and close to 50,000 people having signed the public petition. This is important because by building up FBW's membership, a strong message will be sent to government and other politicians about the breadth of concern and the huge value that businesses and individuals alike up and down the country place on maintaining Britain's inland waterways and all its associated benefits. Three well-reported Campaign Cruises in Birmingham, Gloucester and past the Palace of Westminster on the Thames have substantially raised awareness of the challenges facing our canals and rivers and the need for action. Our message has been heard by government, but we need to do more to make it clear just how wide the support for waterways is.

Our plans for 2024 include an important weekend of action over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend (4 -6 May 2024) to highlight the impact of insufficient funding for Britain's inland waterways. The weekend of action will take place across the country on waterways managed by different inland navigation authorities and culminate in a Campaign Cruise past the Houses of Parliament on Wednesday 8 May.

We are very grateful to all the event organisers for their hard work and to those FBW members who have paid for banners and helped to make our funds go further, as well as to the IWA staff team who have managed the logistics of distributing materials far and wide. Please do help to spread the word and support the events, which are listed at <https://waterways.org.uk/waterways/sites/fund-britains-waterways-overview/fund-britains-waterways-future-activities>.

For information on FBW's membership and its activities including the petition, please see

<http://www.fundbritainwaterways.org.uk>

You will find a range of downloadable resources at

<https://waterways.org.uk/fund-britains-waterways/fbw-resources>

and we encourage you to use them in your communications where possible.

Lastly, it would be really helpful if you could encourage all your members (and in turn their contacts) to sign the petition linked from the FBW homepage as shown above.

Become a member of IWA

Join our community of like-minded people from all walks of life and show your support for the waterways. The Inland Waterways Association is the only national charity that works to preserve and restore all Britain's 7,000 miles of canals and river navigations. Loin the IWA—your support can make a difference.

Only IWA does all this, and more...

- We campaign for the waterways and champion regeneration
- We lobby Parliament and fight to improve the waterways
- We offer practical support and advice on waterways restoration
- We run Waterway Recovery Group which supports restoration projects

WATERWAYS.ORG.UK/JOIN

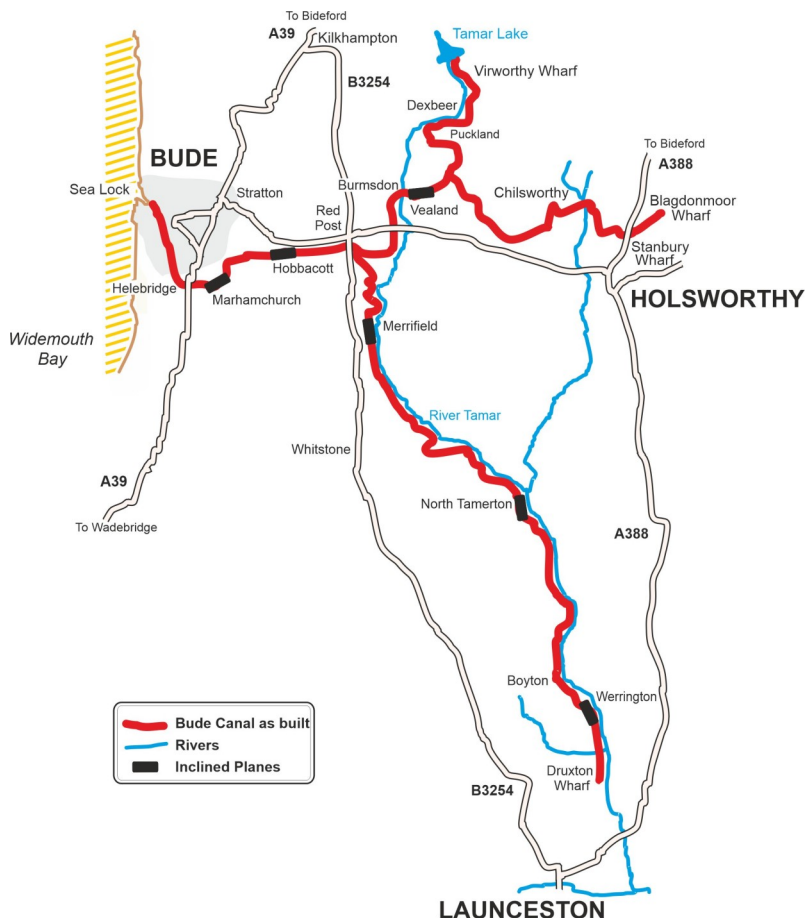
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THE TUB BOAT

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