

# THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society  
No. 97

Autumn 2021



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## **Forthcoming Events for 2022:**

- Friday 28th Jan    Bude Canal Trust AGM at 2.00pm. at Pancrasweek Parish Hall.  
The agenda includes a proposal to transfer ownership of the  
Aqueduct section of the canal to the Devon Wildlife Trust.
- Sunday 6th Mar    BCHS AGM at The Castle, Bude starting with a presentation at  
11.00am followed by a Buffet Lunch at 1.00pm and the formal  
AGM at 2.30pm.

Full details of these events will be in the next edition of the Tub Boat. Under the present circumstances we are still unable to plan any further events during 2022 but we will give another update in the next edition of The Tub Boat.

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## ***Cover photo: Lock gate being lifted ready for refitting***

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

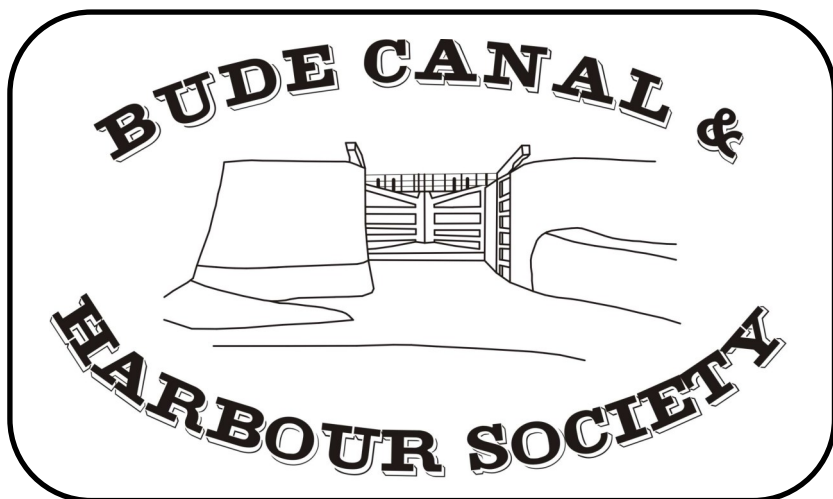
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<b>Trustees:</b>	Chairman	Chris Jewell
	Vice-Chairman	Lesley Moores
	Secretary	Peter Daniel
	Treasurer	Martin Shannon
	Membership Secretary	Martin Shannon
	Events Secretary	Betty Moore
	Minuting Secretary	Vacant
	Other Trustees	Lucille Opie
	The Tub Boat Editor	Mike Moore (non-trustee)

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

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Registered Charity No.1086646

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## **Creaks from the Chair**

The summer of 2021 is past and the unusual practice of 'stay vacations' is receding. As you will probably be aware the West Country and especially Cornwall have borne the major part of it. Every day crowded streets, roads, beaches and shops, thousands of extra visitors, some being covid aware and considerate, and many more not. The whole tourist trade creaking at the seams with the increased demand and lack of staff. The vaccination programme is doing what it was intended except, for some reason, there are many people of younger years who are reluctant to get jabbed. Is it ignorance or selfishness? All I know is I am grateful for my two jabs and when the booster jabs start, I will be grateful to have mine. The other phenomenon is generally people, masked or not, acknowledging each other, all mainly strangers. Have we learnt to respect each other at last, or not? As usual, time will tell.

Regarding the Bude Canal, the Sea Lock is coming back from being out of action. The gates have been rehung and a multitude of minor tasks have been completed. However, at the time of writing (31/8/21) a problem with the gate paddle in the outer gate on the north side has arisen. Basically, it is not working which means the sea lock cannot be filled with water to test the gates. Hopefully it will be solved locally rather than needing specialist treatment, all of which is delaying the gates from being operational. The mechanism has seized up, not surprising when for over two years it has not been used. A double dose of WD40 could be the answer? Subsequently, it appears that the gate paddle was stuck in the closed position so that it was possible to fill the lock so that the yacht "Tina Maria" was able to lock out on 21 September. See my report on page 9 for an full update.

The other significant action is that the Chairman of the IWA – West Country Branch, Ray Alexander, has written a letter (see page 14) to relevant local councillors urging them to get Cornwall Council, owners of the canal at Bude to include in a future bid to 'The Shared Prosperity Fund' a grant to complete the 'Regeneration Project of the Bude Canal'. That is to replace Rodds Bridge with a moveable bridge and to provide a slipway for trail boats and other suitable craft to access the canal. BCHS fully support this request and the additional benefits it can bring to tourism infrastructure and local employment.

Finally, time slips by, but this is an urgent appeal for any member to consider becoming a Trustee. Therefore, if you are over 18 years of age, of good character, live relatively close to Bude, have a care for the canal, have IT skills, and would like to consider being a Trustee please make contact via [info@bude-canal.co.uk](mailto:info@bude-canal.co.uk) or ring me on 01288 352298. At present we only just have our minimum number to comply with our constitution. So, thought for the day when you read this 'perhaps I could help out'.

Thank you. Stay Safe.

*Chris Jewell*

### **Retirement of Anne Longley as a Trustee**

Anne Longley has been a long-standing member of the Society and its predecessor for 30 years becoming a Trustee in February 2002. She has reluctantly decided that she needs to stand down since she now finds it difficult to get to meetings. Her fellow Trustees would like to thank Anne for her long service to the Society which was much appreciated.

Anne was also the volunteer coordinator for the Bude Heritage Centre archives and her historical knowledge of the Canal was much valued.

We wish her well and will keep in touch.

*Peter Daniel, Hon Secretary*



*Anne Longley accepting her retirement gift from the trustees with her bouquet in the background*

## **Membership Report**

It is subscription renewal time of year with the membership year running from 1st September and after what can only be described as another very challenging year, we are extremely grateful to have received renewal by standing order from vast majority of our members. If you do not currently pay by standing order, please consider doing so as this prevents the payment being overlooked and also saves time for you and the society. Membership cards are enclosed for those members who had renewed at the time of writing this report and will issued upon receipt of payment going forward.

Details of our bank account as required to set up a standing order can be found on the renewal form (copy enclosed as appropriate) and also on our web site at the bottom of the membership page by clicking on the quick RENEWAL link. The web site address is <http://www.bude-canal.co.uk/membership.htm>.

If you are an eligible taxpayer and have not previously completed a Gift Aid declaration, please look at "The Way Forward" document located via a link at the top of the membership page of our web site. The Gift Aid Scheme significantly increases the value to the society of your subscription. This year we were able to reclaim over £200 from H M Revenue & Customs which is equivalent to 20 senior annual membership subscriptions!

It is very pleasing that we have been able to restart some activities over the summer months and hopefully 2022 will see a more normal programme. There have certainly been many people enjoying the canal with a significant number of visitors to the Barge Workshops in Helebridge.

Thank you all for your continued support and should anyone require any further information or forms by post contact me directly on 01288 356367 or [bude.canal@gmail.com](mailto:bude.canal@gmail.com).

*Martin Shannon*  
*Honorary Treasurer and Membership Secretary*

## **Books for sale**

Over the last 18 months there have been very few opportunities for the Society to sell any books from its stock. To remedy this there is now a page on the Society's website from which books can be purchased, either by email order and direct bank payment, or by cheque sent to Chris Jewell.



Six titles are available ranging from the Bi-centenary commemorative booklet to the standard work on the Bude Canal by Helen Harris and Monica Ellis.

*Peter Daniel, Hon Secretary*

### **Bude Valley Management Advisory Group**

Maintenance work continues on Whalesborough & Rodds Bridge Locks including repairing paddles, sealing leaks, removing silt, pressure washing and re-pointed. The water leak between the inner gates has been sealed.

Work is being undertaken to stop water leakage through the banks from above both locks. Water has been found leaking through the back wall of the paddle chamber at Whalesborough Lock (*picture below*) so it has now been re-pointed.

As mentioned in my last update the ditch which runs alongside the towpath between Rodds Bridge Lock and Whalesborough Lock has started to flood and water has been flowing across the tow path into the canal. This was caused by a blocked culvert which runs underneath the canal and empty's out on the far side into a marshy area. A contractor has partially cleared the blockage, but it will also need to be cleared from the opposite side of the canal.



The repairs to the tow path where root heave has caused damage to the surface have now been completed. The canal and marshes are continually monitored for any defects to ensure that users are not put at risk. This is particularly important as the tow path is used by all abilities.

Earlier in the summer Blend youth club offered to do some work on Peter Truscott's Bridge which links the canal with Pethericks Mill. This involved sanding down and staining and they have done a fantastic job and deserve some credit and recognition for all the good community work they carry out around the town.

The refurbishment of Rodd's Bridge has been completed but within two weeks of the work being finished the bridge was damaged again which I reported to highways. It has now been repaired again, hopefully this will be the last time for a while! The rails either side of the accommodation bridge at Whalesborough need repairing which we are hoping to complete in the autumn/winter (*see photo*).



As you have probably noticed the Himalayan Balsam has been in full flower again this year both in the marshes and next to the canal. Wherever possible we try to control it, however it is extremely difficult to control it where it grows close to the water's edge due to access issues and in the marshes where nesting birds can be disturbed. We have been pulling it where it is safe and accessible

As part of our maintenance agreement with the Environment Agency we have to regularly clear three sluices within the Pethericks Mill flood storage area. During a flood event these sluices allow water in the River Neet to enter the storage area to prevent flooding in the town, this is especially relevant on a high spring tide when there is a large swell and heavy rainfall. This defence was implemented after the 12th June 1993 flood when properties were inundated along the Strand and the Crescent

The Environment Agency have started work on improving Bude's flood defences. The scheme will cost £2.1 million which has come from the government's £170 million flood alleviation fund. The majority of the scheme will focus on improving the flood defences along the River Neet. However, the earth flood embankment to the rear of the tourist information centre will also be restored and widened, the Environment Agency also want to improve maintenance access. We are working closely with the contractors Keir to ensure that any impact on the meadow behind the TIC is kept to a minimum. The meadow has a healthy wildflower population as well as the rare Bee Orchid. I have been in contact with the county ecologist to ensure that mitigation measures are in place and that we are being consulted on the work they wish to undertake.

*Gareth Cann, Cormac Countryside Senior Sites & Trails Officer*



## **Bude Sea Lock – a view from our Chairman**

Since June this year a lot of preparatory works have been done at the site in readiness for the outer gates being fitted and made operational during August.

So on the morning of Thursday 10th August, I went to the Sea Lock to watch the process slowly come to be. It was a lovely day, calm and dry and ideal for lifting huge wooden gates and placing them back in position. Bude at this time of the season, and with the effects of the 'staycation' was really busy with people everywhere.

On my arrival I went to the best viewing point, the walkway on the canal gates. From there you can look right into the lock chamber which is 120 feet long by 30 feet wide by almost 30 feet in depth. On the south side of the lock was huge crane, bright orange in colour, its jib fully extended was at least 60 feet in length. Its stabilising arms, two on each side, were extended for 10 feet with their circular feet pads on the level surface, a stable base which allowed the crane to extend its jib to reach over the chamber to lift anything that needed to be moved or repositioned. In attendance there was a team of workmen mainly in orange work clothes, in the lock chamber another group of men in black waterproof clothing. The lock chamber had water depth of about three feet.

At first all this activity seemed a bit frenetic but on watching you could see that there was a chargehand who was directing operations. Initially this was to pump out most of the water in the lock chamber. Down at that level just outside the chamber was a large excavator which was making a sand barrier to divert the river water from coming into the chamber. Meanwhile the men in the chamber set up the pumps and long black pipes to carry the water. The electric pumps were fitted to the end of the pipes. When all was in place and connected the pumps were switched on, receiving their electricity from a large generator on the south side of the lock.



With great efficiency the pumps were pumping the water to such an extent that you could almost see the water level reducing. A small excavator was then lifted by the crane and lowered into the chamber (*see photo page 9*) and proceeded to make channels to concentrate the flow of water to where the electric pumps were operating. Soon the water level was mainly down to about one foot. The excavator then moved sand away from the front of the gate recesses creating two pools of draining water.

Meanwhile, above on the lock side, preparations were being made to get the north gate ready to be lifted and refitted in its correct position. This was most appropriate as this had been the gate that ceased to function in Spring 2019 causing the Sea Lock to be non-operational and set in motion the long consideration and consents that were being put into practice in a logical sequence right before our layman's eyes. All under the control of the chargehand who by word of mouth and simple hand signals directed the crane and his workmates to each task. All the while an almost continuous stream of holidaymakers and locals were crossing the canal on the walkway on the inner canal gates.



A multitude of children, families with pushchairs, with all manner of holiday accessories, surfboards, towels, backpacks, all squeezing past those of us who chose to be spectators at this long-awaited event.

Then at last the lifting straps were attached to the north gate and with a simple hand gesture, slowly and surely the gate rose up (*see photo on front page*) and was carried suspended across the lock and then manoeuvred into its rightful place and carefully let down into the gate recess until it was sitting on the pivot. To secure it the restraining metal collar strap was put around the head of the post beam on the inner edge of the gate. Once done, the lifting straps were taken off and there it was upright and steady, back where it should be. It obviously went well, and the attention was then focused on the south gate and the same sequence was followed and soon this gate was being lifted and positioned into its recess. Moments later, after some manipulation it was obviously on the pivot, and the collar strap was secured, and the gate was in place and upright and another important step had been taken in returning the Sea Lock to being operational.

Then there was a flurry of activity using the giant crane to recover pumps, piping, and the small excavator from the lock chamber to the safety of the lock head area. The two balance beams, the final part of completing the gates, would now be done on Friday 13th. Friday came, the weather was still kind, dry but with a stronger breeze. It was good that both gates had been fitted the day before, increased wind speeds are not good when dealing with large wooden gates in the confined space of a lock chamber. Each gate weighing 6½ tonnes. I was a bit later arriving at the Sea Lock than I had wanted and as such I had missed the north side balance beam being fitted. But it was now 4pm on Friday afternoon so the site was made secure for the weekend. The south side balance beam would now be fitted on Monday 16th August.

By chance I spoke to Paul Vincent, the Bude Harbour Master, who had a satisfied and relieved smile on his face. He commented that after the second balance beam had been fitted there was a list of other things to be done in sequence; fitting new restraining collar straps on both of the canal gates, having the canal inside these gates checked by a dive team for debris, checking the outer gates will actually close, checking gate paddles before closing outer gates and filling the lock with water, and removing the excessive sand on the floor of the lock chamber. By then, all being well, it would be poised for normal use as and when needed.

It would allow for some boats and small yachts which had been as it were trapped in the Lower Basin to be on their way. Mr Vincent added that he hoped a series of opportunities about the Sea Lock being available would be taken up, to celebrate the Sea Lock being back in commission.

All participants would receive a certificate that they had been through the Sea Lock at Bude. I for one, and many other people, would welcome that as a type of celebration on the importance of the Sea Lock and the Canal and recognise again the catalytic effect that the creation of the Canal and Harbour had on this northern corner of Cornwall over 200 years ago. A relatively safe haven, a place for trade to be properly established, the creation of much needed employment, and the start of infrastructure separate from the mother town of Stratton. The birth of the place now called Bude with all its own history, stories and families.

*Chris Jewell*



*The first major operation  
of the Sea Lock when  
boats locked in on  
17th October*



## **Canal Stakeholder meeting 15 September 2021.**

The quarterly meeting of the Canal Stakeholders Group was held online on 15th September 2021 and was led by Cornwall Councillor, Peter LaBroy, and Don Martin, Cornwall Council Officer whose remit includes the Canal. Also present were Gareth Cann, Cormac; Alan Whittle, Bude Canal Trust; Ray Alexander, IWA; and myself representing BCHS.

Don Martin reported on progress with the dredging programme. Depth survey and testing results on the silt have both been received. Volume calculations and cross-sections will be prepared from the depth survey. The analytical results show that the silt is suitable for agricultural disposal although the presence of zebra mussels in the lower stretches will mean that it will have to be ploughed in immediately. The water vole survey is scheduled for 24th September. Consent procedures with Natural England have started and they will be concerned about the zebra mussels. Disposal consents procedures have also started with the EA and DEFRA with Lippitt Associates advising on the waste disposal aspects. A working group has been set up and a programme for dredging timescales will be issued. The Whalesborough end is relatively easy and will be done before March 2022 but the remainder will be next year depending on restrictions.

The next main item was the letter from Ray Alexander of the IWA (*see page 14*) about the possibility of using the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund to fund the outstanding works on the Canal Regeneration Project, ie the raising of Rodd's Bridge and the installation of a slipway. Don Martin will refer the letter upwards internally to ensure that we get a response. They will want to revisit the original Consultant's report.

Gareth Cann reported that Cormac are still doing works to remedy leaks on the inland locks and are tackling the Whalesborough lock paddle chamber. I reminded them that they still haven't pursued the simple remedial works to the lower gates on the inland locks (as suggested by Alistair Ogden) and that we had offered to provide funds.

There was no discussion on progress with coastal protection works at the sand railway; it is not part of Don Martin's responsibility nor on remedial works on the Planekeeper's Path but Gareth has been involved in our recent discussions about that so we will see if any progress can be made on alternative funding.

*Peter Daniel*

**Letter from IWA West Country Branch  
to Cllr Peter LaBroy, Cornwall Council**

**Bude Barge Canal and outstanding regeneration works**

I am writing to request you to consider including in a future bid from Cornwall Council to the Shared Prosperity Fund the outstanding works that are required to finally complete the Bude Canal Regeneration Project. A substantial part of the regeneration project, between the Sea Lock and Helebridge Basin/Marhamchurch Inclined Plane, was completed in 2007-9 at a cost of £3.8m and the canal has since become a well-used community asset. However, key elements of the regeneration works remain outstanding, principally relating to Rodds Bridge, which is currently a fixed bridge with insufficient air draught to enable trail boats to pass underneath and the construction of a slipway to enable trail boats, canoes, kayaks, paddle boarders and others to access the water.

The Bude Barge Canal is in our view an important heritage asset and following the regeneration works in 2007-9 there is clear evidence that it has become a well-used local asset and well-liked by the local community, including by walkers, runners and paddlers. The Canal is a quiet zone that benefits the mental health and wellbeing of its users – an important aspect of modern life – and in addition is a wildlife corridor throughout its length. Furthermore, the existence of a fully segregated cycle path is a significant bonus that brings with it considerable safety benefits and also meets the DfT's guidance for segregating cyclists and pedestrians where possible.

Completion of the outstanding elements of the regeneration is in many ways long overdue and would, in particular, enable trail boats and other craft to use the canal, thus attracting more visitors to Bude and the surrounding area, adding interest and colour to the canal and enhancing the Town's economy.

Bude is a Coastal Community and Town but missed out being selected as a participant in the Government's Towns Fund initiative. The outstanding works of the regeneration project will we believe fall within the themes that will be identified for the Shared Prosperity Fund and would bring further benefits from this important heritage asset and visitor attraction to the Town, its residents and businesses. We believe that the works required are worthy candidates for inclusion in Cornwall's bid to the Shared Prosperity Fund and suggest that action is taken now to identify the options available



and prepare detailed plans and costings in order that both a suitable replacement for Rodds Bridge and the construction of a slipway are in shovel-ready form to include in a bid to the Fund.

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is a membership charity, founded in 1946, that works to protect and restore the country's canals, navigable rivers and derelict waterways. IWA members' interests include boating, towpath walking, industrial archaeology, nature conservation and many other activities associated with the inland waterways. IWA's network of volunteers works closely with navigation authorities, other waterway bodies and a wide range of national and local authorities, voluntary, private and public sector organisations.

IWA is aware that the boating industry needs to play its part in reducing carbon emissions and helping the Government reach its Net Zero ambitions. Last year IWA published a vision for sustainable boating which identified the need for the Government to invest in and support charging points, dredging and better availability of alternative fuels. IWA is working with others in the industry to examine these and other options for sustainable boating. We have recently launched a Guide to Greener Boating, which explains how diesel-powered boats can be more than 90% carbon neutral and also provides practical tips for boaters.

I trust that our letter will enable you to consider including the outstanding regeneration works in a future bid from Cornwall Council to the Shared Prosperity Fund and I hope you will feel able to take this forward.

Yours sincerely,

For and on behalf of The Inland Waterways Association

*Ray Alexander*

Chairman: IWA West Country Branch

### **Letter from our Chairman to the Bude & Stratton Post**

Dear Sir

With reference to the Bude & Stratton Post of 15th September 2021, page 3, and the article concerning the 'sand railway' adjacent to the Bude Canal. There are some inaccuracies which need to be corrected.

1. The need for a 'railway system' became necessary when in 1821 it was realised that transporting sand from the beach into the canal via the Sea Lock was impractical. This caused the Bude Harbour and Canal Company to construct a 'railway system'. This required a trackbed to be built adjoining the canal embankment, and then a plateway system of four foot gauge and a cast iron bridge over the adjacent river. This system lasted until 1923/4. The then owners of the Canal, Stratton & Bude Urban District Council, purchased rails for a tramway and the trucks from the Bude Recreation Company who had enclosed a site and filled it with sand. That site was and still is adjacent to Bude Castle. The tramway rails are the rails that can be seen on the former trackbed, now a walking route. The tramway allowed sand to be taken until 1942, including to the Railway branch at Lower Wharf.
2. The main line of the canal was to Blagdonmoor, near Holsworthy. The branch towards Launceston terminated at Druxton Wharf, near Launceston. The feeder arm was a short section of canal from Brendon Moor to the canal reservoir near Kilkhampton, now known as Lower Tamar Lake.
3. The inclines are planes not plains. The term 'plane' is a geometric description of the angle of a straight line on a surface.
4. There were six inclined planes. Five were powered by underground waterwheels. The sixth, the largest plane at Hobbacott, was powered by cisterns of water attached to a chain being dropped down deep shafts. The power created drove a continuous chain (loop) to which the tub boats were attached by a simple chain device and then travelled up or down the plane on rails.
5. The sand was rich in 'carbonate of lime', about 70% that is calcium carbonate, an alkali which broke down the heavy clay soils which were acidic.

Thank you.

Chris Jewell,

Chairman, Bude Canal & Harbour Society,  
Registered Charity No.1086646

## **The Sand Railway**

We have been in discussion with Bude-Stratton Town Council regarding the interpretation board for the sand rails and Chris Jewell has provided suggested text. A draft design of the board has been received from Janine King, Heritage Officer and the final wording has now been agreed with BSTC. Janine has sent a copy of the proposed design to the officer at Cornwall Council responsible for this project requesting that the new board should be of a similar design, in terms of font and style, to the existing board which is on display further along the wharf so that they match.

The reply from Cornwall Council indicated that the works had unfortunately been delayed due to Historic England needing to review the proposal, and which may now result in a Planning Application (Listed Building) consent. They will, however, look to incorporate the information board in due course and have copied Cormac in for awareness. Once they have a better understanding of timing to progress the works, they will be in contact with all relevant parties again to keep everyone informed.

*Peter Daniel*

## **The Storm Tower, Compass Point, Bude**

Bude Stratton Town Council has submitted its application for a grant from Heritage Lottery to do the works. The Council has agreed with the result of a public consultation on 19th August regarding the re-siting of the tower and its alignment to maintain the lines of sight, also the construction of the roof. The works will be done by specialist contractors. The new site will be 100 yards inland from its current position. The rate of erosion of the cliffs is estimated at 1 yard per year. With funds already secured from BSTC (£25,000), Cornwall Council (£50,000) and crowd funding (£60,055), the HLF have now announced that the grant application for £249,362 has been successful so the scheme can now go ahead as planned with contractors due to be on site from April 2022.

*Chris Jewell*

## **Update from Bude Town Council on the 27th August.**

Last week we ran a public consultation on The Compass Point Project, this well attended event gave an update and overview of the whole project as well as discussing specific aspects of the build. We asked the public to have a say on their preferences for the roof and the orientation of the building.

The architect and quantity surveyor for the project attended the meeting and answered questions from the public as well as the Officers from Bude-Stratton Town Council and Cornwall Council. Information presented at the meeting has been made available for the last week for the community to view and have their say. The full council last night voted in favour of the professional recommendations, which were also the selected preference of the public from the consultation.

Orientation selected: Maintain the current orientation to ensure the sight lines to the breakwater and sea remains. This means the tower will continue to be slightly east- north- east rather than true to compass markings, which adorn the external facade.

Roof material selected: The selected material includes an internal steel structure with a zinc external finish, the current internal dome will not be able to be replicated with this material.

The new location has also been determined, based on current coastal erosion patterns, local rock formation and ecology of the site. We hope this will preserve the building for another 100 years.

*Bude-Stratton Town Council*

### **Helebridge Basin - artefacts found in canal**

Whilst on duty at the Barge Workshop during the Summer, I was approached by two local residents who had been “magnet fishing” in the canal at Helebridge. They had recovered a significant quantity of rusty metal objects which they thought may have some relevance to canal when it was in full operation which they were prepared to donate to the society. As the society does not have the facility to keep such items in its archives, I suggested that they let us pass the items over to Bude-Stratton Town Council who may wish to take some of the more interesting items to add to their collection at the Castle Heritage Centre. Subsequently, Janine King, Heritage Officer at BSTC, met with them and agreed to take on some of the artefacts and returned those not required. We wish to thank Steve Paice for bringing these items to our attention and Janine for taking the time to select those of interest. Steve intends to continue his search but some sections of the basin have become rather overgrown with lilies which makes “magnet fishing” more difficult.

*Mike Moore*

## **The Barge Workshop, Helebridge – some historical notes**

This building, now a museum, that stands beside the Canal at Hele Wharf, was a very busy place during the 80 or so years the Canal was in use, being beside the bottom of the Inclined Plane.

It housed the main office and was used as a storeroom for goods that had been loaded onto barges at Bude and drawn along the two miles to Helebridge Wharf. From the storeroom it was loaded onto Tub Boats to haul it up the Inclined Plane to Marhamchurch.

*Lucille Opie*

## **The Planekeepers Path**

In September we received a message from a resident of Marhamchurch regarding the condition of the Planekeepers Path between Cann Orchard and the top of Hobbacott incline. He was concerned that the diversion of a section of the path was still in place after 4 years and that the parts which were accessible were seriously overgrown. He also pointed out that some of the closure notices needed replacing and that the interpretation board at the top of the incline was missing. We replied pointing out that this was a permissive path, and its maintenance was the responsibility of Cornwall Council so we would forward his comments to the Council and the Countryside Officer at Cormac.

Since the path was closed due the unsafe bridges and boardwalks, we understand that Cornwall Council have been exploring various external funding options to either repair the damaged sections or reroute the path to avoid the problem areas. However, so far, they have not yet been able to identify the necessary sources of funding, but they are continuing their search. We have written to them emphasising the importance of reopening this route and maintaining the open sections in good order.

The good news is that the incline and the associated paths have now been cut and the missing closure notices have been replaced but it is still unclear what happened to the interpretation board.

*Mike Moore*

## Bude Canal Trust Report on the Bude Aqueduct

### June (continued from previous edition)

Vealand to Brendon Bridge had been mown but both the hedge face and canal bank top both required cutting (*Photo 1*).

Despite the next section beyond Burmsdon Bridge looking extremely overgrown, a decision was made to leave this to a follow up mowing cut and deal with the Vealand to Burmsdon section first following a report of fallen branches, badger excavations round the Filter Bed picnic bench and a broken plank on the boardwalk.



*Photo 1 - Before cutting*

### July

The first two weeks of this month were concentrated on the Incline Plane and the Burmsdon section, an untouched length since pre lockdown. The Incline Plane was mown, and a number of small broken branches were cleared before going on to the aqueduct bridge over the Tamar (*Photo 2*).



*Photo 2 - Aqueduct Bridge cleared*

All the vegetation was removed from the canal profile; the footpath was also cleared past the farm buildings approaching Burmsdon Bridge and beyond. A really heavily overgrown section before reaching the next open field was cleared with brush cutters, strimmers and the small powered mower. On the return journey the canal profile was cleared in the areas of the old diversion weir and the entrance to the Filter Bed system.

The following week the footpath through the open field was mown and through to the end of the Permissive Path where several branches were moved to create clear access (*See Photo 3 on page 21*).





*Photo 3 - Large fallen tree*



*Photo 4 - Pump House damage*

SWW operators had been reported as looking for a leak in their supply system during the month and we had noticed that one of the window frames had been wrenched out of the surrounding brickwork of the pump house building (*Photo 4*) and water could be heard escaping within the structure. A site meeting was arranged with an engineer which resulted in a report for repairs being entered. New reports of people disregarding the closure notices to the Permissive Path were added to, with no access during catch up maintenance work.



*Photo 5 - Filter bed entrance*

The third week of the month was too hot to carry out any work, but further vegetation was cleared from the canal profile in the Filter Bed area re-opening visual access to the remains of the site of the diversion weir and water entry point of the Filter Beds (*Photo 5*).

## **August**

In response to reports of restricted access which included excessive vegetation growth between Brendon Bridge and Lana Bridge this section was worked on, cutting both the hedge face and canal bank top, restoring a width to allow walkers to travel side by side.

Three volunteers continued with the representative protective edging wall to the unloading bay at Virworthy Wharf (*Photo 6*) with work continuing in the following two weeks to clear vegetation between Lana Bridge and Dunsdon Nature Reserve.



*Photo 6 - Completion of wall*



*Photo 7 - Branch down near DNR*

In the last week of the month work continued to clear vegetation between Lana Bridge and DNR with a small tree down just before Gainsmoor Bridge (*Photo 7*). Still in August, a start was made on the long section south of Virworthy Mill.

## **September**

We concentrated on hedge trimming, dead branch removal and canal bank top cutting, on the section between Virworthy Wharf and Lower Tamar Lake and cleaning up the display in the Wharf building, although the following week the forecast of thunderstorms and continuous rain cancelled a follow up.

*Mike Degnan, Bude Canal Trust*

## **Report in local press - Man dies to save life of disabled daughter**

An 86-year-old man has died in a canal after jumping in to save the life of his disabled daughter. Lawrence Casey, from Callington, entered the Lower Wharf area of the Bude Canal to rescue Jessica after she lost control of her mobility scooter on Wednesday 1st September. Members of the public also "selflessly helped" to save the life of Ms Casey - who is now recovering at home, the family told the BBC.

Cable laying in Bude bay - continued

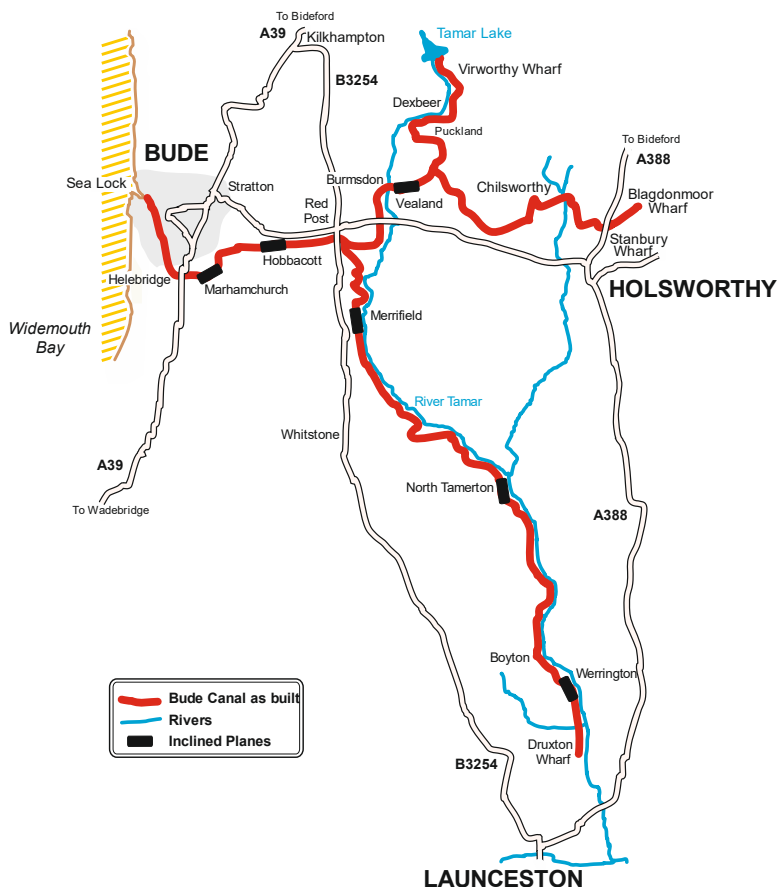


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# THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

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