

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 51

Spring 2010





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Cover: The Mantis undergoing winter maintenance on the Wharf Photo: Mike Moore

Creaks from the Chair

Since Edition 50 of *The Tub Boat* we have been joined on the committee by Pamela and Ralph Daniel whom we welcome with open arms. This has swelled the ranks to ten, the largest number in the history of the Society. Before this, it has been quite a while since any new addition to the committee and most of those already serving have done so for many years, often in the same capacity, with great dedication. Of these, there will inevitably be retirements sooner rather than later in the future, if for no other reason than knowing they can no longer do the job as well as they once did. It follows, therefore, that the need for fresh and younger blood is ever with us to back up the old'uns, gain valuable experience, offer new skills and keep our Society vibrant. If you feel disposed to answer this call to arms, you will be very welcome and more popular than you thought possible.

Those of you keeping abreast of Society matters will know about the Bude Canal Regeneration Project Phase II, a BCHS initiative. Following on and necessitated by the uncompleted original Regeneration Project, Phase II seeks to redress the sad omissions of this otherwise noble scheme by campaigning for the raising of Rodds Bridge and the installation of a slipway at Higher Wharf, so that the restored canal can actually be used. The Society's sights are fixed on these objectives and all our pioneering resources channelled to their ultimate achievement. We have funds earmarked towards our share of the costs. To see the eventual completion of the whole original scheme must be paramount in our ambitions. We have many allies and friends so there is much to encourage us in this vital enterprise. (See report on page 7)

Meanwhile, our canal is in good heart, full of water and abounding in wildlife. At the time of writing, a lone swan has arrived unbidden to take the place, we hope, of the resident two which died so mysteriously and tragically some weeks ago, the ducks are pairing-up nicely and the ratio of drakes to ducks seems less overwhelming than in previous years.



The ducks near the canal
Photo: Mike Moore

We now refer to otters in the plural. These lovely creatures are seen by many walkers over the whole length of the waterway and are much loved and photographed. One individual (otter) at least, is a consummate exhibitionist revealing himself on frequent occasions doing all the things otters do to an enchanted and delighted audience. *Audrey Wheatley*

Secretary's Report

The Eighth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Falcon Hotel Bude on Sunday 21st February 2010. The Secretary reported that it had been a very successful year for the Society. The highlight of the year had been the official opening of the £5 million Bude Canal Regeneration Project on 27th March by the Duke of Gloucester. The Society took an active part in this and our chairman Audrey Wheatley escorted the Duke to the newly repaired Sea Lock Gates after the opening ceremony.

The Society had supported the Town Council in the manning of the Helebridge Barge workshops for public admission on Sundays during the summer. We too have helped to organise Canal Day with the Council and have taken an active part in both the Bude Carnival and Lifeboat Days. On the social side there was a splendid expedition to Dunster, Minehead and West Somerset Railway which was much enjoyed by all. It had been a great year.



Lawrence Wheatley
Photo: Mike Moore

At the end of the meeting Lawrence Wheatley was presented with an engraved glass tankard to honour his thirteen years as editor of the Tub Boat, a great achievement.



Liam D'Arcy Brown Photo: Mike Moore

The A G M was concluded by a presentation on the Grand Canal of China by Mr Liam D'Arcy Brown. The canal was the pride of China being 1,400 years old and

over eleven hundred miles long, running from near Shanghai to Peking (now Beijing). Mr Brown was warmly applauded and answered many questions. *Bryan Dudley Stamp*

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the 2009 year end accounts and schedules to the meeting. The following is a brief account of the situation as at 31st December 2009.

Account 1		£1,932.08
Account 2	<i>Educational Fund</i>	£ 398.95
Account 3	<i>Project Fund</i>	£2,280.79
Account 4	<i>Canal Day</i>	£ 536.45
Account 5	<i>Archive Project Fund</i>	£ 268.95

The Treasurer explained that the year end total for Account 1 was less than for the previous year by £378.

The main reasons for this were:

- i) Reduced surplus on fund raising events.
- ii) Non renewals as at 31.12.2009 of memberships
- iii) An unexpected need to reprint the booklet 'Bude Canal – Some Interesting Facts'.

Whilst we have no control over i), the non renewals in ii) should improve in early 2010. The expenditure for iii) will balance out in 2010 when orders for the booklet are received from other outlets.

The Project Account balance includes some sums which are pledged to two local projects.

- i) The replacement of Rodds Bridge with a bridge to allow navigation - £1,000 – linked to Phase II.
- ii) A contribution to Bude Stratton Town Council for their project to rejuvenate the Barge Workshop and provide interpretation - £500.

Neither of these projects is imminent.

Overall the accounts are stable and do not present any problems for the viability of the Society.

The Treasurer thanked fellow Trustees and members for their support and help during the year, in particular Mike and Betty Moore, and also Mr John Harris who inspects the accounts.

The accounts for 2009 will be put on the website in the near future. Any member who wishes to have a hard copy should contact the Treasurer on 01288 352298. *Chris Jewell*

Membership Report

We welcome the following new members who have joined since December:

Ms P Wright, The Castle, Bude

Mr & Mrs D Jones, Holsworthy

Mr J Dabbs, Redwood Grove, Bude

Could members who have given us their e-mail addresses please remember to send any updates or amendments to info@bude-canal.co.uk so that we can continue to notify you when the newsletter is available on-line and for us to send any other notifications or booking forms etc. Thank you for your assistance and continued support. *Mike Moore*

Forthcoming Events

Annual Coach Trip – 19th June 2010

This year our Annual outing visits Exmouth for a 75 minute boat trip on the River Exe and estuary. On return to Exmouth there will be plenty of time to take lunch and sample the pleasant town of Exmouth before returning home to Bude. The itinerary is:-

9.30am	Leave Bude by Coach from Crescent Car Park
11.30am	Arrive Exmouth
12 noon	Boat Trip
1.15pm	Return to Exmouth
	Afternoon in Exmouth
6pm	Leave Exmouth for Bude
7.30 -8pm	Arrive at Bude

The total cost for the whole trip including the boat trip is £15 per adult. Children under 16 £7.50.

If you wish to come with us on this trip please complete the enclosed booking form and send with your remittance to C. Jewell, 4a The Crescent, Bude EX23 8LE by 9th June 2010. Please make cheques payable to Bude Canal & Harbour Society.

Visit to Rolle Canal – 4th July 2010

On the 4th July 2010 BCHS are having a return visit to the Rolle Canal, to see the progress of various works on the canal and inclines taking lunch at “The Cyder Presse” in Weare Gifford. The visit is a walking tour via the Tarka Trail, permissive Paths and minor roads. Most is on a level route and it is about 4 miles in total. The last site to visit is at Annery to view the



The rebuilt tidal lock awaiting installation of gates Photo: Mike Moore
 progress on the Tidal Lock and Basin area. Mr & Mrs Wills the owners will be on hand to meet and greet. Light refreshments will be available for which donations should be given. The cost for the walk is £2.50 adult, no charge for children U16.

The itinerary is:-

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 10.30 am | Meet at Annery Kiln (Park on adjacent land) |
| 10.40 am | Walk to nearby Tarka Trail and visit sites of Inclined Plane, Wheelpit and sections of canal. View Beam Aqueduct from Tarka Trail |
| 12.45 – 1pm | Arrive at “The Cyder Presse” for lunch |
| 2pm | Walk to Annery |
| 3pm | View Sea Lock etc (Refreshments donations please) |
| 4.30pm | Depart for home |

Timings are approximate

If you wish to come on this visit please complete the enclosed booking form and send with your remittance to C Jewell, 4a The Crescent, Bude EX23 8LE by 25th June 2010. Please make cheques payable to Bude Canal & Harbour Society.

Please wear suitable footwear. *Betty Moore*

Barge Workshop

BCHS volunteers will be opening the premises again this year to allow public access to see various heritage artefacts including the Bude Canal tub boat. There is no admission charge and the Workshop will be open 2pm to 5pm every Sunday afternoon from 25th July to 26th September 2010, inclusive. *Chris Jewell*

Guided Walks – 2010

This year BCHS will be conducting guided walks open to the public on the following dates – all Sundays; 25th July, 15th August, 5th and 26th September 2010.

These walks need to be booked and paid for at £1 per adult at Bude Visitor Centre, The Crescent Car Park, Bude. Walks start at the Sea Lock, Bude at 2pm and follow the towpath to Helebridge and include a visit to the Barge Workshop to see the tub boat. It is a 2 mile walk to Helebridge and thus it is 2 miles to return to Bude. It is a level walk with stops to view and learn about the canal.

BCHS provide guided walks for outside groups, clubs and societies who wish to visit the canal either in the Bude area or explore other parts of the canal on a wider basis. BCHS makes a small charge per person or group.

Please contact us if you have an interest in these walks or visits.

Tel: 01288 352298 or email: info@bude-canal.co.uk *Chris Jewell*

Bude Canal Regeneration Project Phase II

We still await a reply from Cornwall Council on our concerns and proposals. BCHS has had informal talks with Bude Canoe Club and Bude Pilot Gig Club about the future use of the land at Higher Wharf. The Bude Community Network Manager of Cornwall Council, Mr Chris Sims, is working to keep this matter current with other officers with a view to a site meeting with local groups and councillors.

On 7th January 2010 Bude Stratton Town Council resolved to liaise with Cornwall Council about this land with a view to its acquisition. They also are awaiting a reply.

BCHS has recently written to Cornwall Council for an update and has been advised that the council will soon be able to engage with the stakeholders in this matter. *Chris Jewell*

TRAC Project

T.R.A.C. is the 'Tourism and Rural Access in Cornwall Project' and involves the improvement and creation of off road cycle and walking routes in Cornwall, and includes the extension of the Bude to Helebridge cycle route to the county border in the area of Budds Titson, using the former railway track.

Cornwall Council has recently received a large grant to achieve these routes. A full press release is due and then the work starts to implement this excellent project which will not be easy, as there are acquisition problems to overcome. The Bude Partnership will be leading the local discussions to advise and encourage public support. This project fits very well onto our Phase II, and BCHS supports the aims of TRAC. To that end BCHS have joined the Bude Partnership to assist the promotion of the off road cycle route. *Chris Jewell*

Bude Canal Trust Partnership

BCHS are a non-funding member of the Bude Canal Trust Partnership which was set up in 2008. The main partners are Bude Canal Trust,



Whalesborough Lock showing new spillway Photo: Mike Moore



Section of canal passing through Dunsdon Nature Reserve Photo: Mike Moore

Cornwall Council, Devon County Council and Torridge District Council supported by other member groups, Devon Wildlife Trust, South West Lakes Trust and Pancrasweek Parish Council. The aim is to secure funding and expertise to ensure the asset known as the “Bude Aqueduct” section of the Bude Canal from Lower Tamar Lake to beyond Burmsdon is maintained and remains available for the public to enjoy.

The Partnership meets quarterly and at the last meeting the following main points were discussed:

- The change from direct financial support from the Local Authority partners to support in kind as a consequence of the current financial constraints.
- The application by Bude Canal Trust for funding from grant bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and Leader 4 for essential works on the canal, acquisition of equipment and information boards etc.
- Work parties supplied by the Devon Probation Service who operate on Sundays carrying out clearance work at various sites.
- Devon Wildlife Trust's plan requesting consent to re-water a section of the canal at Dunsdon Nature Reserve to protect culm grassland in that area.
- Development of leaflets and a website.

- The need to find secretarial support as Torridge District Council cannot permit their officer, Mr Harris, to perform this function in future due to structural changes in the council.
- The Bude Canal Trust's Open Day on 17th July 2010 at Pancrasweek Parish Hall.

The next meeting of the Partnership will be on 4th June 2010.

Anyone who needs more information about the work of Bude Canal Trust should contact Tim Dingle (e-mail: tdingle@toucansurf.com) or telephone 01288 361356. *Chris Jewell*

Bude Canal Trust Report

As many of you will be aware, Bude Canal Trust are an organisation with very few funds, but lots of ambition! So you may have seen in the local paper that we have managed to secure a few donations of one sort and another from local councillors and businesses. The Local Authority ones tend to go into the Partnership account which is primarily for practical work related projects, while the others go to the Trust itself which will hopefully help with administration costs and towards match funding for any future grant applications.



Moreton Bridge Photo: Tim Dingle

On the practical side, despite the awful winter weather, quite a lot has been done in the way of maintenance work. The Community Service team have done an excellent job of clearing the site of the old water works at the top of the inclined plane at Vealand. The water works were where the water supply for Bude was filtered. Presumably, everything was considered to be clean over the 9 miles to the town! Today the site has a good grassland flora as it is lime-rich due to the Bude sand used in the filter beds.

The same team have also cleared scrub from about 20metres each side of Moreton Bridge. This means that the view of the canal from the road is now improved. For walkers it has opened up the view of the original iron arches under the bridge.

Not all the work has been done by the Community Service team. With my little band of volunteers, and help from Cornwall Council conservation team, we have cut back some of the canal bank vegetation along a stretch between Brendon Bridge and Vealand. This has certainly opened up the view, and created a huge pile of wood! Less strenuous but significant has been work clearing bramble and blackthorn from the path side, as well as hedge trimming along the Vealand section and east of Moreton Bridge.

My little band of volunteers have not confined themselves to the Aqueduct section having finally burnt up the material cut before Christmas between Cann Orchard and Hobbacott.

All of this should make the walks along the canal more enjoyable.

Forthcoming Bude Canal Trust events;

- Saturday 17th July – Open day at Pancrasweek Village Hall
- Saturday 31st July – Barbecue at Bartongate (on the Holsworthy road)
- Saturday 11th September – Garden Party at The Barn House, Poundstock.

Tim Dingle – Trustee, Bude Canal Trust

Virworthy View

It has been a long cold winter and spring seems to be holding back. The grass has not yet started to grow, the snowdrops were late but have excelled themselves by staying longer – sadly the crocuses have had a very short life. Daffodils and bluebells are struggling but with hope and a fair wind we will have a good summer.

Moles seem to be the fashion this year. The Wharf is covered with their 'hillocks' and our garden lawn is, once again, like a lunar landscape. With the ground so wet I wonder they can dig tunnels.

I have not seen the fish in the Wharf since Christmas. I looked on the Internet and discovered that fish do hibernate so I'm hopeful that as the weather warms up we will see the fish again – but still no sign of the turtle. During the very cold weather the Wharf froze over to a depth of ice of just over one inch. This may have cut off the oxygen for a few days. We also had plenty of snow, cutting us off from the wide world for two whole days! It would have been longer without the 4x4.



Wharf Cottage in the snow Photo: Geoff Lowe

The weather has not deterred the visitors, many of them coming from canal counties with an interest to discover the remnants of this unique canal.

Quite a few moorhens have survived the winter – probably because of their acceptance of our hospitality and feeding with the chickens. They certainly enjoy all the water in the canal and mix well with the ducks who are doing a grand job keeping the weeds down. *Geoff Lowe*

New Trustees

At the AGM on 21st February 2010, two new trustees were elected. They are Mr Ralph Daniel and his wife Mrs Pamela Daniel who reside in Bude. Mr Daniel was brought up in Bude before leaving to take up a career in

teaching. They both have a care and concern for Bude and the canal. Now retired, they offer their support and experience to our Society. We welcome them. *Chris Jewell*

Tub Boat Editor – Vacancy

As you will be aware from the last newsletter, Lawrence Wheatley resigned as editor and despite our efforts over the last few months we have not yet been able find a replacement. We are therefore appealing to our members for a volunteer to step forward to take on this important role. The only requirement, other than time and enthusiasm, is to have the necessary computer equipment to receive contributions as text or Word files via e-mail or memory stick and assemble them into one complete file to be submitted, along with suitable photographs, for printing.

Assistance will be given initially in setting this up and handing over to the new editor. Your help is vital to enable us to continue to produce a newsletter which is up to the standard which you have become accustomed to over the years. *Mike Moore*

Obituary: Don Bott (1931 – 2010)

A tall, energetic, friendly man, Don had been a Society member since 1991 when the then Bude Canal Society was a mere infant of a few months. Don was, from the start, a keen volunteer on work parties, helper at events and with Eileen, his wife, joined in many walks and excursions. He was a well-known and popular member of his community in Upton, adjacent to the canal, where he was everybody's favourite milkman and had lived until his more recent move to Bridgerule. In 1995, he received the Eric Chadd



Photo: Mike Moore

award for “Citizen of the Year” for his services to the community. His death in early March shocked and saddened all who knew him and he will be much missed. The Society sends love and condolences to Eileen and the family. *Audrey Wheatley*

A Hobbler's Story

Searching through the Bude Town Archives the other day, I came across this story in a collection of histories and anecdotes by local author John Williams.

Harry Stanbury, whose grandfather Harry Barrett had been the Bude Lifeboat Coxswain in the 1920s, told how the Hobbles were still active in assisting ships to enter the harbour through the 1920s and 1930s.



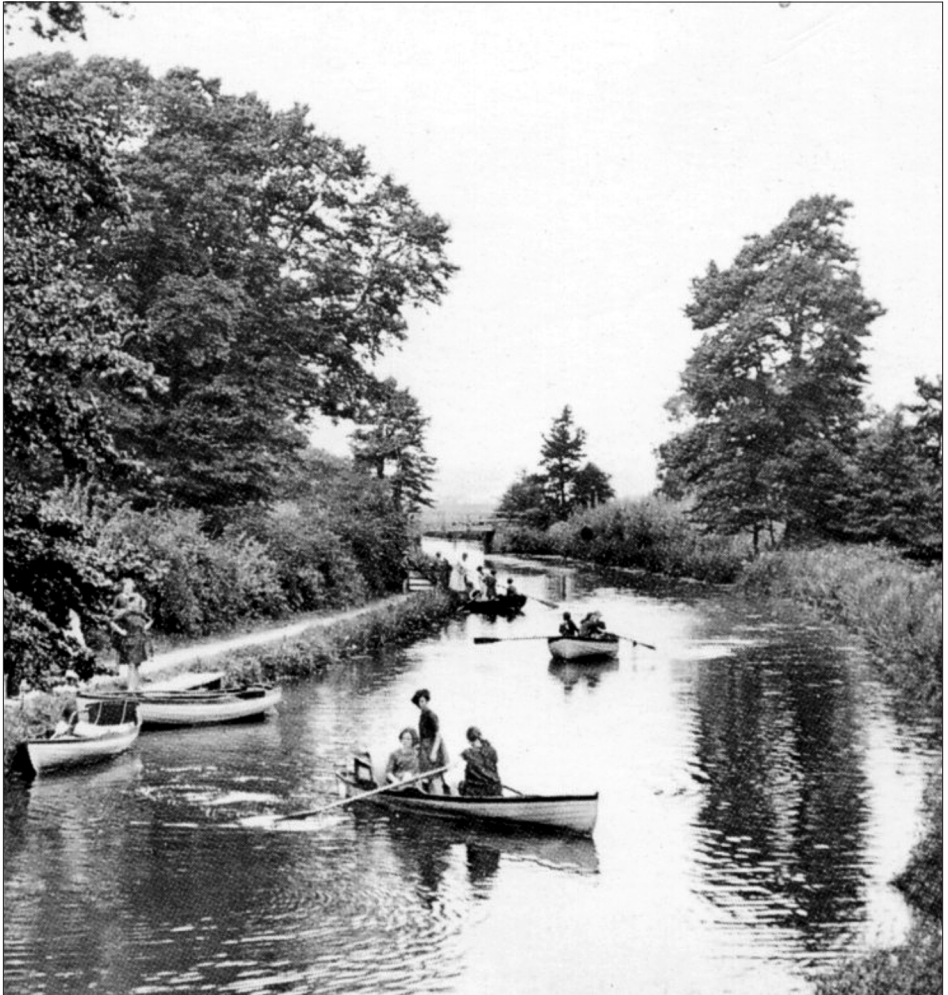
When conditions demanded, a ship requiring assistance would tack up and down just beyond Barrel Rock. The Hobble boat, manned by a crew of six, - four oarsmen, one aft on the steering oar, and one up in the bow, often a boy, they would row out to the waiting ship.

Pulling alongside, having shipped the inside oars, it was the boy's job to hand the boat's painter up to the ship's crew. This had to be done as the boat went up on the swell. Boat secured by painter to the ship, they would sail up the channel to Chapel Rock. From here to the lock gates, on the breakwater side stood a row of hobble posts, and on the beach side a row of buoys.

View of the Hobbler's posts Photo: Mike Moore

Here, detached from the ship and carrying two tow ropes, the hobbler would secure one to the post and the other to the buoy. The ship, with its own winch, would then haul itself along the channel, repeating the attachment to each post and buoy until the ship finally reached the lock.

Harry, who as a boy, often took his place in the bow, had good reason to remember an occasion when things didn't go according to plan. He went up with the boat, handed over the painter, but instead of coming down, he landed in the water..... pulling him dripping out of the sea, the hobbler said, "Don't you tell your grandfather, he'll bloody kill us!" *Anne Longley*



Boating on the canal in the early 20th century

Events Diary:

Sunday 6 th June	Bude Motor Club – Society stall on Rugby Field. 10.00am to 4.00pm
Saturday 19 th June	Annual Coach trip to Exmouth for circular river boat trip (please complete booking form)
Sunday 4 th July	Visit to the Rolle Canal. Meet at 10.30 at Annery Kiln (please complete booking form)
Saturday 17 th July	Bude Canal Trust's Open Day and walk at Pancrasweek Parish Hall
Saturday 31 st July	Barbecue at Bartongate (on the Holsworthy road) organised by Bude Canal Trust
Sunday 8 th August	Bude & Stratton Heritage Day (formerly Canal Day)
Saturday 21 st August	Stall at Bude Carnival
Saturday 28 th August	Stall at RNLI Weekend
Saturday 11 th September	Garden Party at The Barn House, Poundstock organised by Tim Dingle for Bude Canal Trust
Sunday 12 th December	Sherry & Mincepie Walk. Meet at the Castle.

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to info@bude.canal.co.uk or copied onto a memory stick or CD and sent to Mike Moore (Tel: 01288 361878) to reach him by 26th June 2010.

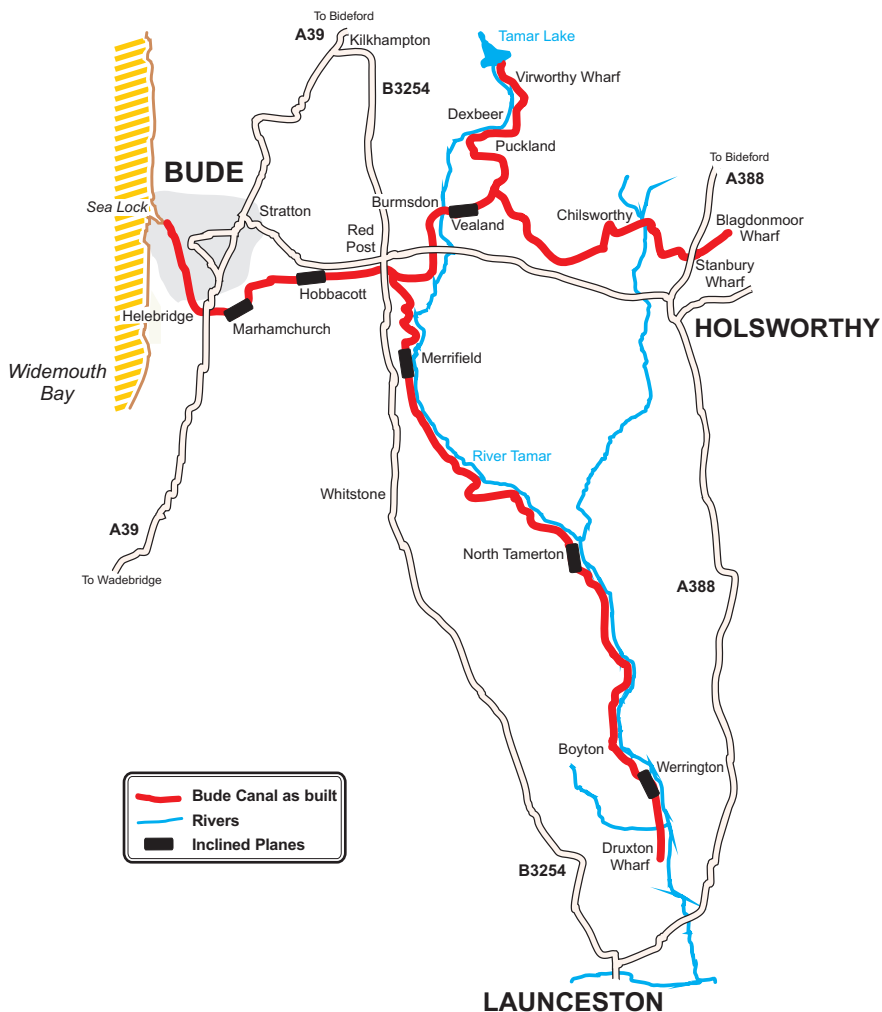
Trustees:

Chairman	Audrey Wheatley
Vice-Chairman	David Phillips
Secretary	Bryan Dudley Stamp
Treasurer	Chris Jewell
Events Secretary	Betty Moore
Minuting Secretary	Jill White
Other trustees	Anne Longley Lawrence Wheatley Ralph Daniel Pam Daniel
Membership Secretary	Mike Moore (<i>non-trustee</i>)
The Tub Boat Editor	<i>Vacant</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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