

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society
No. 82 Winter 2017/18



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Forthcoming Events for 2018

The AGM will be held on 18th February 2018 in the Willoughby Gallery, Castle Heritage Centre, Bude, between 10am and 4pm. The itinerary for the day is as follows; 10am Meet at the Castle Heritage Centre. Followed by a short walk, weather permitting. 11am approx. Return to Castle Heritage Centre. Coffee/tea break £2 per person. 11.30am Presentation by Ian Harrison on the project at Rosemoor, near Torrington regarding a section of the Rolle Canal. 12.15pm Presentation by Robert Hodgson, Chairman of Friends of the Grand Western Canal on their plans for the "Park 'n Glide" project at Silk Mills near Taunton. 1pm Buffet Lunch incl tea/coffee at £8 per person. MUST BE PRE-BOOKED by 18th February and PAID. 2.30pm AGM. 3.45pm Pack up, etc. 4pm Leave premises.

If you intend to partake of the AGM please complete the enclosed booking form to give some idea of numbers attending the various aspects of the day. I hope to see you there.

Chris Jewell

Events to be arranged

May 2018.....Annual Coach trip. Not yet finalised. Details in the Spring edition of the Tub Boat.

Events for 2019

16th to 28th February...Exhibition at the Heritage Centre, The Castle, Bude entitled "Bude Harbour & Canal – the early days". This is part of the celebrations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the start of building work on the Bude Canal on 23 July 1819.

Sunday 24th February.....AGM at Bude Heritage Centre, The Castle, Bude.

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to walton50@btinternet.com or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and sent to Peter Daniel (contact details on back page) to reach the Editor by 15th March 2018.

Trustees:	Chairman	Chris Jewell	
	Vice-Chairman	Stan Noakes	
	Secretary	Peter Daniel	
	Treasurer	Mike Moore	
	Membership Secretary	Mike Moore	
	Events Secretary	Betty Moore	
	Minuting Secretary	Vacancy	
	Other trustees	Lucille Opie,	Anne Longley
		Lesley Moores	
	The Tub Boat Editor	(<i>non-trustee</i>) Chris Walton	

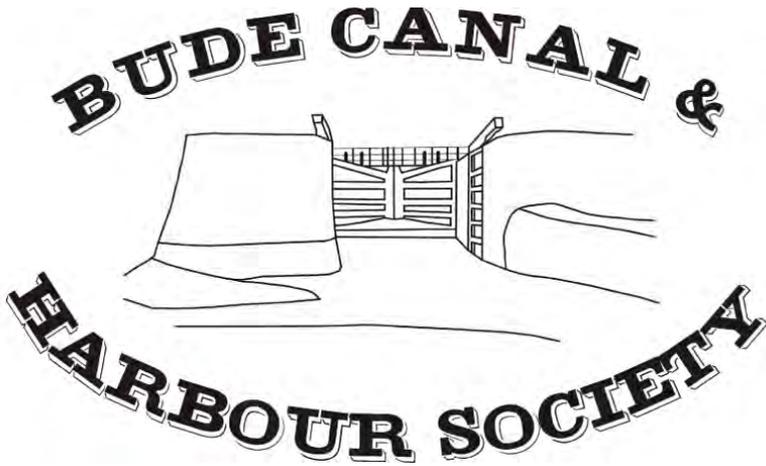
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“Creaks from the Chair”

When you read this it will be 2018 and we will be looking forward to lighter and warmer days. The AGM for 2018 will be on a similar basis to that of 2017. BCHS will have the use of The Gallery at the Castle Heritage Centre from 10am to 4pm. Weather permitting there will be a short walk starting at the Heritage Centre for about an hour. On return to the Castle there will be two presentations by invited guest speakers about projects they are developing for their Canals. The first is based on the Rolle Canal at RHS Rosemoor, near Torrington. This will be followed by the exciting plans on the Grand Western Canal at Silk Mills near Taunton. There is a link between them which is that they are both canals constructed by James Green in the 1820s. Then it will be the buffet lunch which needs to be pre-booked. There is a booking form enclosed with this newsletter.

As you will know, over the past few years BCHS has been trying to engage Cornwall Council in conversations regarding the future of Bude Canal. In September 2017 we wrote to CC with specific observations and requests about Bude Canal. They have sent a reply which did not deal with all the points raised. Consequently a follow up letter has been sent emphasising these outstanding concerns. We await their further reply. Once we have CC's replies to all our concerns, observations and requests a full report on these matters will be made available to all of our members.

On 23rd July 2019 it will be the bi-centennial anniversary of the start of construction of the Bude Canal. The construction of the canal and harbour resulted in a major social change to this part of Cornwall. It increased trade, created jobs, and was the catalyst for the development of Bude. It changed Bude from a miniscule habitation to a working port and trading centre. It became the far flung railway destination at the end of the Atlantic Coast Express route from London Waterloo, which developed the tourist trade, on which Bude and Cornwall currently depend. Sadly we no longer have a railway or a working canal. In this issue is a feature from 'Connect Bude', a local group who are working to improve railway connectivity in conjunction with OkeRail at Okehampton. This is a long term project which will be for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. If you feel you can support Connect Bude there is a membership application form enclosed.

Chris Jewell

Membership Report

We welcome the following new member who has joined the society since September:
Mr S. Ash, Duckpool.

I must thank those members who have already renewed their subscription for 2017/2018 and particularly those who have given additional donations. However, some members have still not renewed. Would they please complete the enclosed renewal form by return to maintain their support for the Bude Canal & Harbour Society and receive future newsletters. Remember that only fully paid up members can vote at the AGM in February.

Can I also remind those members who are taxpayers and who have not yet completed a Gift Aid declaration that they can obtain a copy from the website or from me by calling 01288 361878.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Mike Moore

Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Bude Canal Trust Report

Work in Progress from September to December 2017

September

Continuing through September and the majority of the following months seemed to be taken up with cutting back and clearing fallen trees from both the footpath side and those on the far bank. Although we managed to finish the last piece of canal widening, north of Virworthy Wharf



before heading back down to Vealand to remove a couple of medium size trees on the far bank starting on the Puckland section

Reports came in the following week of trees down on the Puckland section, completely blocking the footpath



Although not strictly on the section owned by The Trust the volunteers offered to clear the access to the Merrifield wheel pit which had become severely over grown during the previous years.



This also provided the opportunity for those volunteers who hadn't seen this structure previously to experience the size and construction involved.



October

Into October initially involved clearing the vegetation from the canal section crossing the River Tamar and mowing the footpath through to the end of the Permissive Path



before returning to the section north of Holsworthy Junction where many of the smaller trees on the far bank were leaning over the canal restricting the view of the canal profile.

This continued through to the end of the month cutting out and removing the roots of young willow tree growth.



The caving volunteers arrived at the end of the month on their last visit to take a range of photos, measurements and direction details whilst clearing the last blocked section up to what appears to have been the remains of the archway into the wheel pit construction.



Although the structure of the building itself seems to have been destroyed and filled with all sorts of debris the calculation have provided a better guideline of the original location of its position relative to the top of the Inclined Plane for future investigation.

November

The small amount of water still flowing out of the stoned exit of the adit is presumably seepage of surface water and this has gradually almost silted up the channel to the point it has at sometime changed its course away from its purpose of providing a water supply to the next section at base of the Inclined Plane. However, the course of the original channel remains although surprisingly, seems to have just been cut through the surface clay and not been stone lined. During the first weeks of November, an effort was made to clear much of the silt from the 'ditch' profile.

The following weeks in November involved clearing more fallen trees on the Dexbeer and Wooda section, the largest having ripped its root-ball out of the far bank of this built up section and completely blocking the footpath.



December

The repaired leak by the overspill at Virworthy Wharf has been retaining the high water level from the continuous recent rainfall for several weeks and work commenced and completed the construction of bridging over the undermined footpath.



Sea Lock Maintenance

A series of photos taken at the end of September when members of the lock gate crew were freeing the outer gates on the Sea Lock ready for the imminent locking in of the fishing boats for their winter maintenance. When the lock has not been used for a while sand builds up against the gates making them difficult to move. One of the paddles on the inner gate was opened to flush out the sand so that the outer gates could be gently rocked back and forth to free them so that they could be closed successfully.

Mike Moore



Dredging the Upper Pound

Dredging has recently been carried out on the Barge Section of the canal between Whalesborough Lock and Whalesborough. Here are some photos of the work done.
Mike Moore



View from Whalesborough Bridge towards Whalesborough Lock



Whalesborough Lock



View of dredged section showing dredgings deposited on off-side of canal



Dredged section near Whalesborough Bridge



View from Whalesborough Lock towards Helebridge



Whalesborough Lock. Photos by Mike Moore

Bi-centenary of Canal in 2019

This is an important event and should be celebrated and recalled. BCHS have started to consider various ideas for events etc during the year. As these develop they will be reported in 'The Tub Boat'. We will endeavour to involve the Bude community if at all possible.

Chris Jewell

BSTC – Heritage & Culture Committee

At a recent meeting of the above Committee of Bude-Stratton Town Council the following items were of interest

1. The Heritage Development Officer, Mrs Janine King, reported that she had started a complete audit of the artefacts kept at the Barge Workshop, the aim being to make the collection more relevant to the heritage of the local area. She was hoping the interpretation of and about the following items would be improved – the Gregory workshop, the tub boat, and the tide mill timbers.
2. The audit would aid the development of a much needed leaflet about the barge workshop and its focussed contents. BCHS have agreed to make a contribution towards the cost of a leaflet from monies set aside for interpretation at the Barge Workshop.

Chris Jewell



Here are two photos which were taken when I was on Barge Workshop duty in September - one of the Tub Boat and another of one of the Tub Boat wheels.

Mike Moore

Origin of the overflow/waste weir by The Castle

By the rear entrance gate to The Castle and about 70yds from the sea lock is an overflow/waste weir for the canal. It discharges into the tidal reach of the River Strat. This was not constructed as part of the original building of the canal but came about when the canal was owned by Stratton and Bude Urban District Council. In the early 1920s there were instances of the lower canal flooding onto the Lower Wharf and causing damage to trader's goods on the wharf.



The following information is taken from the minutes of the Harbour Committee of Stratton & Bude Urban District Council during 1923/4. These minute books are kept by BSTC in the Heritagae Centre Archive at The Castle, Bude.

Harbour Committee 6th June 1923

'It was resolved to recommend the Council to construct an overflow weir near the Castle, to prevent canal overflowing and flooding adjoining premises during heavy rains'.

Harbour Committee 12th December 1923

The Chairman reported that the work on the weir near the Castle had been completed.

The next entries relate to replacement of the original plateway which transported sand off the beach.

Harbour Committee 12th December 1923

The Council to make enquiries of the Bude Haven Recreation Ground Ltd as to the quantity and price of trucks and rails that they had for disposal.

It is not recorded in the minutes of the Harbour Committee whether an agreement was reached but at the Harbour Committee 6th February 1924 the following was agreed
'Recommend the Council to purchase about 100yds more of rails from Ward Bros to complete the track'



Harbour Committee 12th March 1924

Chairman reported that the track had been completed.

Harbour Committee 11th June 1924

'Recommend the Council purchase 6 more wagons for conveying sand to the wharf. The Clerk was requested to write to Messrs Ward Bros and enquire the price of same'.

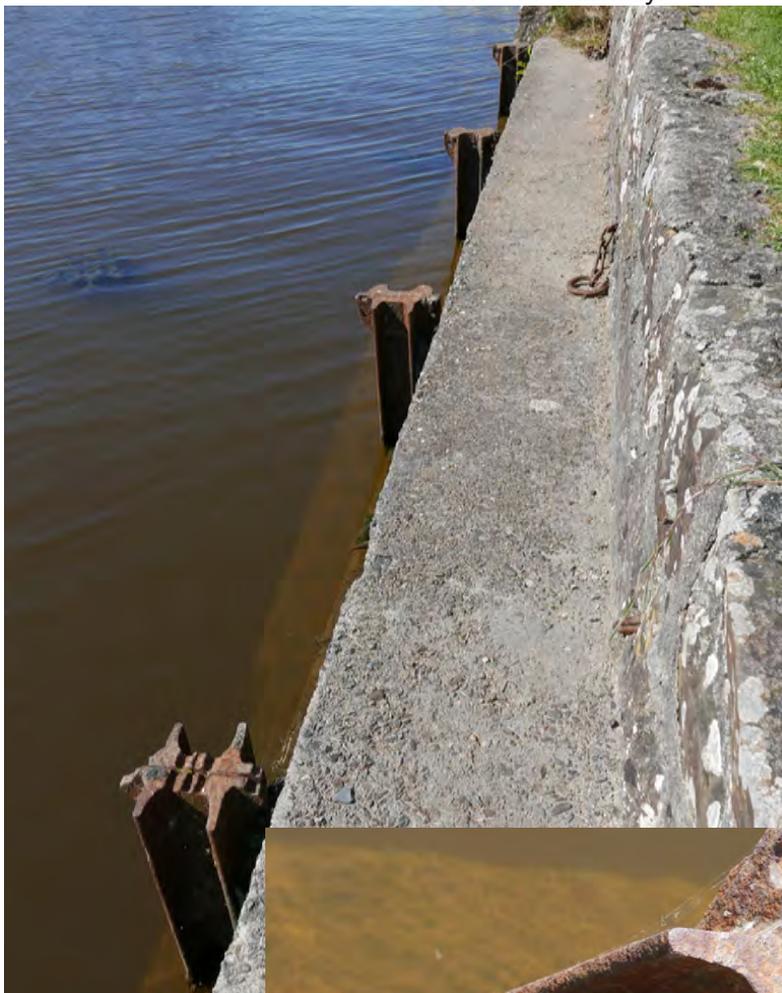
During early 1924 the Council accepted the offers made by Mr F Staddon to purchase the old rails and wagons for disposal. Mr Staddon was the blacksmith that occupied the Forge adjacent to the sand wharf.

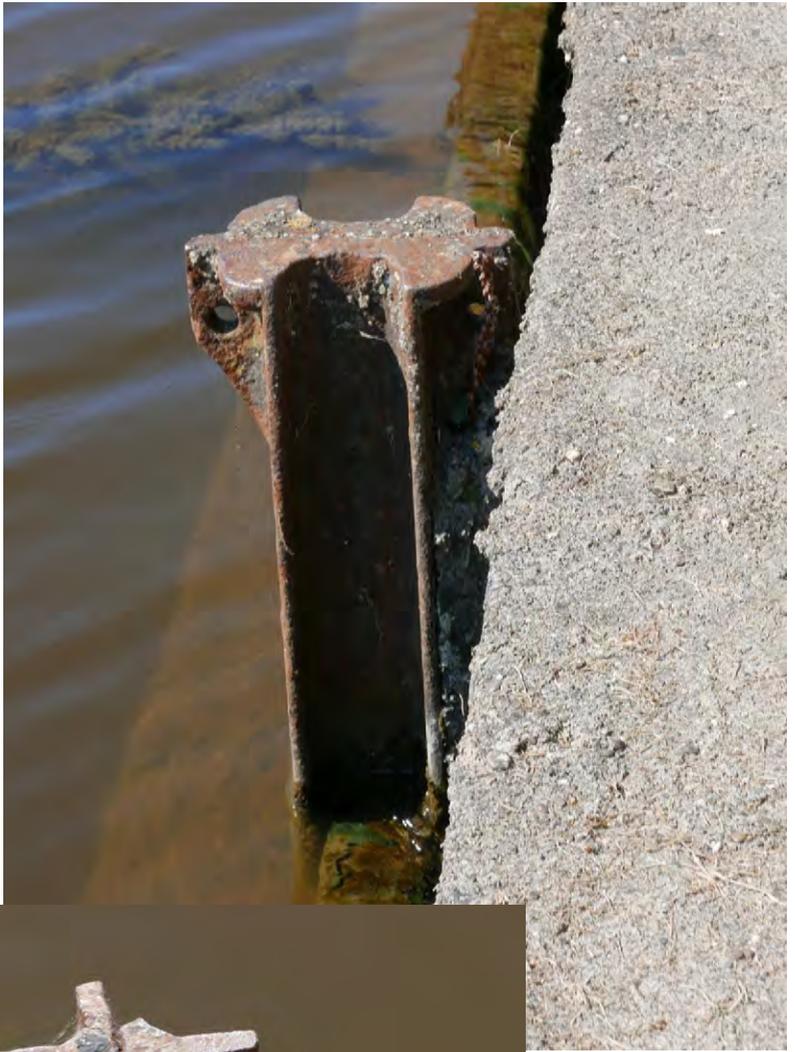


Researched by Chris Jewell using Minute Books of the Harbour Committee of Stratton & Bude Urban District Council of 1923/24.

Chris Jewell

The following 4 photos show the detailed construction of the weir using rails from the old tramway.





Connect Bude

Following an original Bude Youth Theatre musical production in March 2016 of 'The Last Train to Bude...?', which attracted over 600 people, a just-for-fun referendum asked the audience for the play if they thought the rail line to Bude should be reopened. 100% of respondents said 'yes' and added persuasive reasons for their vote.

Subsequently, on the 50th anniversary of the closure of the railway line to Bude, 150 people attended (or sent apologies for) a public meeting in Bude, which had been called to gauge the level of interest in starting a campaign to reintroduce rail services to Bude and Holsworthy. The astonishing level of support led directly to the creation of 'Connect Bude' which is now a formally constituted group with officers, bank account, logo and key objectives which are:

- a. To campaign to reconnect Bude and Holsworthy to the National Rail Network, initially via Okehampton.
- b. To promote an improved Rail service between Okehampton and Exeter and beyond.
- c. To ensure the trackbed of the former railway is protected against further development.
- d. To garner the widespread community support of individuals, elected representatives and businesses in order to achieve the first three objectives

Connect Bude is supporting colleagues in Okehampton who, after many years of campaigning, have recently announced the good news that the Secretary of State for Transport has agreed to a trial daily service from Okehampton to Exeter before the end of 2018. We await final confirmation of a start date, but with other lines reopening and feasibility studies being funded across the country, the time is right to build the membership of Connect Bude in order to launch a major campaign to reconnect Bude and Holsworthy to the National Railway Network, initially via Okehampton.

With travel by rail doubling over the past 20 years and changing attitudes as to the vital importance of rural rail as an economic driver in deprived areas, it feels as though we are pushing at an open door in demanding re-connectivity. It is often said 'If they build it people will come' and the experience of other rural lines has proved this to be the case. The Tarka line from Barnstaple to Exeter has enjoyed passenger growth of 234% over 15 years from 2001 to 2015.

Connect Bude will be taking part in the Department for Transport's 'Community Rail Consultation' (deadline 28 Jan 2018) which particularly wants to hear from *'communities not currently served by community rail services but where community rail might develop in the future'*.

The document states *'Supporting a sustainable expansion of the railway network into local communities is an important step in achieving socio-economic growth'*. Connect Bude plans to grow its membership, gather persuasive evidence of the socio-economic impact of reconnecting Bude and campaign hard to make the economic case so that when the opportunity arises Bude is ready to welcome rail.

Given the longstanding historical connections and shared heritage of the canal and the railway we hope that BCHS members will want to support our aims and join Connect Bude. Only by attracting a mass membership can we hope to turn heads at Westminster and prove the demand and desire for rail in North Cornwall.

People wishing to become Individual Members (£10 per person), Business Members (£20 per business) and Supporters (£Free) can do so via e-mail to connect.bude@gmail.com

A membership form can also be printed from our website and posted to the address shown on the form. www.connectbude.uk

Richard Wolfenden-Brown



Connect Bude



View from the North



I write this as we approach the shortest day of the year but you will read it as the days are starting to lengthen and the intriguing opportunities of a new year are unfolding. A hundred years ago no one knew that the fighting in WW1 would cease before the year's end. Ten years ago the people of Bude were unaware of the damage that would occur to the Sea Lock of the canal. One year ago my daughter Fiona was unaware that by October 2018 she will be married.

Soon the Spring flowers along the canal banks will bloom and the leaves will clothe the trees and hedges again. Animals will start to rear young. Summer migrants will begin their long journeys back to North Cornwall. Thoughts will turn from what we can do indoors by the fire to a range of outdoor activities.

So as we enter 2018 I ask you to consider adding to your other New Year's resolutions a pledge to give 2018 minutes during 2018 to BCHS, by either volunteering to help at a sales event, or recruiting new members to join, or taking part in a canal maintenance work party. In case you're wondering, that's less than 40 minutes a week, so just think how much we could achieve if everybody took up this challenge!

Enjoy your spring.

Clive Horton – Life Member

View from the Bay



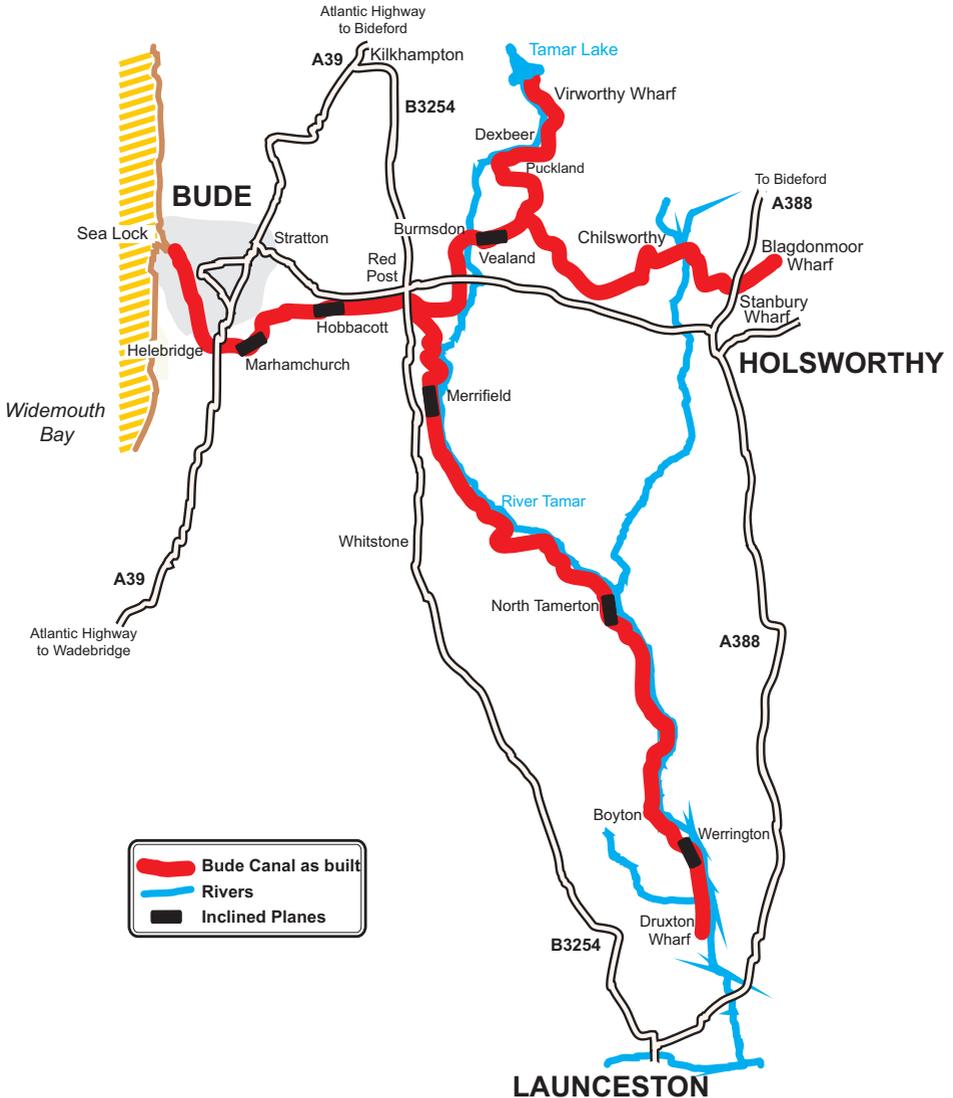
The mild weather we have had here in Widemouth Bay means the grass is still growing, extra work I could do without. I see Bude's new hotel the Premier Inn is scheduled to open this month, I very much doubt that deadline will be met! They will have a restaurant called "Thyme", competing with the local traders. Applications have also been made to open a "Subway" sandwich shop, processed food to the max eh! What with the new stores recently opened, B&M, Poundworld, LIDL and even a Costa, Bude is not what it was. So glad I live off the beaten track!

I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Chris Walton
Editor

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Published by **BUDE CANAL & HARBOUR SOCIETY**

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Printed by Parish Magazine Printing 01288 341617

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Registered Charity Number 1086646