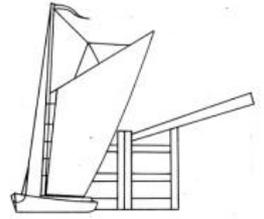


Quagmire

The Summer 2019 newsletter of
The North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust
Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation No 1180474

Working to secure Norfolk's Canal Heritage



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News...

Do you fancy paddling your own 'canoe' on the Canal? Here's your chance **to hire an inflatable kayak**. If you are wondering what the difference is between a kayak and a canoe, in a kayak the paddler is seated and uses a double-bladed paddle pulling the blade through the water on alternate sides to move forward. In a canoe, the paddler usually kneels or sits on a raised seat and uses a single-bladed paddle to propel the boat forward.



Kayak hire costs **£20 for a half day** and includes buoyancy aids, paddle and a safety briefing. The kayaks are available to hire on Saturdays and Sundays, either 10am or 1pm and **must be booked in advance**. The kayaks take up to 2 adults and 1 child (200kg) per boat.

Of course, if you do indeed own your own canoe you are welcome to enjoy the tranquillity of the Canal.
Call 07585 160 772 to book a kayak.

--oOo--

Trust Chair, Ivan answers a recent recurring question:-

So Just What is Going on at Ebridge?



Sixty or so years ago, when the Mill was still using the Millpond as a water supply, the old lock gates were starting to fail, so cement bags were piled up against the old gates, maintaining the water level. (photo c.1950 Les Edwards)

Continued...



Sixty years on, little remained of the old gates, and the cement bag dam was deteriorating. Failure of the dam would have led to the loss of the water in the reach up to Bacton Wood Lock. Wildlife and fish would have been the first to suffer from lack of water - water voles, pike and our resident swans all losing their watery homes.



Much of the community use of the Canal would have been lost: no model boat club, no family fishing, no canoeists, no trip boat, no paddleboarders, no wild swimmers, no water life for the photographers, the naturalists or walkers to enjoy. The Canal would have reverted back to its 2008 state shown here.



The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust decided that the replacement of the top gates was a priority and, at the same time, the first major restoration project that they had taken on off their own bat - for all the other major restoration work on the Canal has been undertaken by the Old Canal Company, with the Trust volunteers assisting where possible. The Trust applied for an EU LEADER grant in 2018, for the materials needed to replace the top lock gates and provide stop planks to isolate the lock for repairs (something the original engineers forgot to include). The Trust was successful in gaining the £26,151 needed for this. Next, the Trust needs to find the monies to actually create the stop grooves, stop cills, repair the brickwork of the wing walls and the gate cills. At the same time, the paddles need renewing and the culverts cleared - and the funds need raising for this as well!



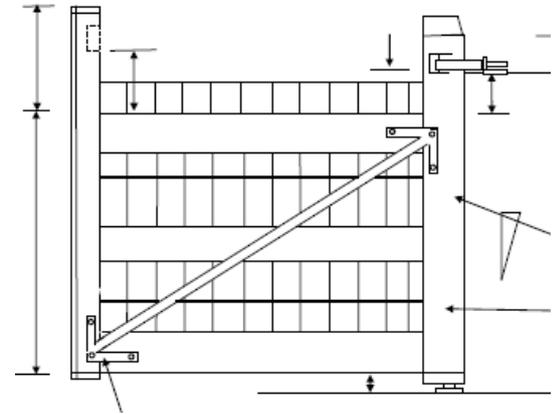
So, just what is happening? The first task was to lower the Canal so that an earth bund could be placed across the Canal, which happened over the weekend of 27th April 2019.

(Photo Norma Albinson).

Continued...



Next the cement bags and gate remains were removed, so that the gate and plank Manufacturers - Hargreaves of Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire - could come and accurately measure up for the wood and ironwork. The wing walls and area were cleaned



ready for repairs and the fore bay concreting for the stop drop boards were installed by volunteers.

The original lock beams have been recovered, one from the lock chamber and the other, which had been buried in two parts, from the lock island. These are being refurbished and will be fitted to the new gates. When appropriate the bund and stop planks will be removed, and the gates once again retaining the navigable level of the Millpond. (Photo shows Darren Burying a lock beam)



This will be the completion of Phase One of Ebridge Lock Restoration. Next will be the repair of the chamber walls, and then new bottom gates. Meanwhile, the IDB and NCC should be sorting the collapsed culvert by the road.

You too can help this fantastic project - either by joining the volunteers undertaking much of the work - or by giving a donation towards the work. (Or both.) **We need another £9000 for Phase One**, and then further funds for Phase Two - the lock chamber and Phase Three - bottom gates. Help to bring North Walsham's Ebridge Lock back to life! E-mail secretary@nwdct.org for info - and come and join us!

There are two ways that you can help raise monies. The first is the easiest - by completing the **gift aid form on page 4**, we can claim 25p for every £1 that you have paid in membership fees since the inauguration of the Trust CIO, i.e. backdated until 29th October 2018, (**which would immediately raise £473 if every member did this**) and second, by adding a donation for the Ebridge Lock and Canal, which, with Gift Aid, will earn another 25% by courtesy of HMRC.

If you would like to send a donation, please send a cheque, payable to the **North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust** to me at **the address below***. If you do not wish to send a donation, put £0 in the donation box - that is no problem.

Alternatively, the e-way - complete the electronic version of the gift aid form, which can be found on the website and e-mail to membership@nwdct.org and, if donating, pay to the Trust's account: **North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust, Branch 60-15-54 Account Number 72562498** Adding **EB and your initial and surname** in the comment box.

***Ivan Cane, NW&DCTrust, 36, Hayes Lane, Fakenham, Norfolk. NR21 9ER. 01328 862435**
chair@nwdct.org

Please help the Trust achieve its first big project - a restored Ebridge Lock

Charity Gift Aid Declaration - for members and for other multiple donations

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

I want to gift aid my donation of and any donations I make in the future or have made since 29th October 2018 to:

The North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust CIO

I am a taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details:

Title	<input type="text"/>	First name or initial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>		
House number or name	<input type="text"/>		
Street	<input type="text"/>		
Town/city	<input type="text"/>		
County	<input type="text"/>		
Postcode	<input type="text"/>		
Date	<input type="text"/>		

Please add your e-mail and/or telephone number here if you are happy for us to contact you in the future

e-mail	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>

Please tick if you do not wish to be publicised as a donor

Please notify the NW&DCT if you:

*want to cancel this declaration,
change your name or address,
no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.*

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Recent Events

On **Wednesday 17th April** I was on for a talk about the canal at the Hickling Ladies Group in a church room in that village. Gisela came with me as did her friend Daphne (both of whom had done so well in sales at a talk for the Norfolk Forestry Group in Easton College in February) and Nigel Lloyd, who is keen to be able to take on some of the talks when more of us older ones fall off the tightrope. A very well attended group with about 40 folk there. They were keen because the canal, and most of them knew about it, was not too far away and more to the point, in their county. There were several questions at the end before the tea came around and I was most surprised to be given an envelope with some cash inside. That cash totalled a magnificent £90.

It may not have been recorded in the Quagmire before but I gave a talk on the 26th March to the Norfolk MG Owners Club in Norwich. The talk was NOT about the canal but nevertheless I did donate the proceedings to the Trust. There were no sales that night, of course!

David Revill - liaison Officer

On **June 12th** the Trust held another Film Evening showing the latest DVD made by our talented film-maker John 'Jonno' Parker. There were an estimated 140 people eager to see the new films which showed the on-going restoration of the Canal. The film started from the **BBC coverage of the test re-watering** in January last year and went on to show **five years of restoration along the dry section**. Other highlights included a **canoe trip along the re watered length**, the **restoration and launch of Ella II** (in the pouring rain!) and a short section entitled "**Canal Newsreel**" incorporating odds and ends shot during the last year.



Before the film show, there was an opportunity to purchase the Trust merchandise, become a member, watch a photo presentation of the canal and buy raffle tickets. The Trustees were very generous in providing prizes including whisky, wine, fruit basket, grocery voucher and tickets for trip boat Ella II.



Trustees were trying to hide their panic as the doors to the Atrium were still locked, 10 minutes before the films were due to start. A 'plan B' was hastily devised, which involved refunding all the entrance monies, offering tea and cake and a question and answer session with Trustees. Fortunately, our helpful technical support, Cameron, rushed off to find a caretaker who came and unlocked the doors.

We hope this problem did not spoil the enjoyment of the evening too much and we thank everyone for your patience.

Huge thanks go to Jonno for producing another valuable record of the restoration. He turns out in all weathers, takes many hours of film and spends countless hours editing. If you wish to **purchase** one of these latest DVDs for £7, please contact us via the website.

Photo shows Jonno filming at Ebridge Lock

Ivan Cane – Chair

Ebridge Lock Bottom Gates

Ebridge Lock is the deepest on the Canal with an enormous 12 foot drop, and so needs tall gates at the bottom, that's 3½ foot longer than those at Bacton Wood. The wood for those cost £10,000 plus.

Manufacture of Ebridge Lock top gates is £18, 216 plus so the bottom gates would, with additional metal work, cost in the region of £20-£28K.

Now, it so happens that there were some second hand gates, ex Leeds and Liverpool Canal, up for sale. They are about 25 years old, and in need of re-planking and adjusting, but could be utilised to give many more years of life - especially on a canal, such as ours, where use would be low and by knowledgeable lockers. Graham Pressman, Tom Carr and David Revill agreed to inspect the gates and make a decision as to whether the Trust should buy them.

Ivan Cane – Chair

Graham Pressman - Project Manager (Ebridge Lock Restoration ph1)

It was a 500 mile round trip to inspect the gates in Skelmersdale, with Tom Carr driving heroically and steadfastly. Added to that, I especially thank him for sharing his experiences of the NWDC with me on the day-long journey. There is so much to learn, which is fascinating to hear first hand from such an experienced volunteer of such long standing.

The lock gates have been ordered (both for bottom of Ebridge lock and the top of Swafield bottom lock), Delivery is not expected terribly soon, but when there is a back-load for the hiab delivery truck, to keep costs down. Both sets will need to be re-lined, but the frames and paddles are more or less perfectly sound.

The gates will be delivered to Ebridge, where they will be re-faced in new timber, probably supplied by Gunton Park Sawmill. **An early 19th Century Water Powered Sawmill Still in working order and keeping history alive.** Russell Yeomans, there, will cut us timber, using the water-powered mill, as it becomes available over time. The work of fitting the lining boards will be performed by our own volunteers on the lock side, for all to see.

The plan is to begin work on the chamber walls as soon as the volunteers have recovered from their marathon on the wing walls at the top of Ebridge lock.

The Environment Agency has been incredibly helpful and have included the repairs to the chamber walls and the installation of bottom gates in our original permissions application. They have provided constant guidance throughout the project and been very helpful from start to finish. I can do nothing but applaud their staff for their service and incredibly supportive and helpful attitudes!

My special thanks, also, to Hargreaves Lock Gates. Especially Nigel, who has done us so proud. They have made a big job so easy to complete and shared so much of their experience with all of us. I am proud to have their plaque on the gates. Their work is of the highest quality and their attitude to it is so refreshing to witness. I have rarely seen such power, energy and enthusiasm, combined with a wicked sense of humour, since my days on 'the cut' watching BWB staff rushing to complete a stoppage, so that we could get on with delivering our boats-loads of cargo on time.

So, we have achieved a lot and have much more to get done. I am so proud to have been able to work with all of those who fund, manage and volunteer for The Trust. Thank you all so very much!

Graham Pressman - Project Manager (Ebridge Lock Restoration ph1)

Graham Pressman – Boating Officer

...and another thing...

Mentioning the British Waterways Board leads me to think of a very long-term friend of mine, Tony Byfield, who was one of those very BWB men who kept us running on the cut in the old days of delivering drums of lime juice to Roses at Hemel Hempstead, from Brentford to Boxmoor in the mid 1980's, using pairs of 72ft riveted steel traditional working narrowboats, carrying 50 tons per trip and two and a half trips per week throughout the autumns, winters and springs, for example. He has generously shared his knowledge of the way things are done with me, for decades now. His only motive has been to pass on knowledge, so that it isn't lost to the world. It has been my privilege to receive that experience and to pass it on. I hope I can continue to do that for a few years to come. He has been my mentor and has always been there to guide me when I have lacked confidence (nearly every day throughout the project). His lifetime of experience has been invaluable. Thank you Tone!

Graham Pressman – Boating Officer

*Mary Black – Newsletter editor
and Chris Black – Vice Chair*



After much soul-searching, partly owing to reasons of health and also personal reasons, we have found it necessary to resign as Trustees. We remain committed to the restoration project and we will attend work-parties when circumstances allow. The Canal restoration has been a big (dare I say the biggest) part of our lives for many years and we have thrown ourselves into the physical work as well as the myriad jobs that are needed 'behind the scenes'.

Chris became involved with work-parties about 15 years ago and I joined him 12

years ago. Volunteers Ivan, David, Roger, Darren and others had already been working on The Canal for some years.

In those days the work was all cutting down trees and brash as shown in the first photo, taken in 2009 above Ebridge Spillway. The second shows us accepting an Environment Award in 2014 on behalf of the Trust (note that we do possess clean clothes.)



Sadly, this edition of Quagmire will be my last and the Trust is looking for someone to take over from me. Taking on the publication of the newsletter proved to be a steep learning curve for me as I had not been involved with anything similar before. Some of you will remember the 'reverse' photos and text spilling here there and everywhere. Eventually I invested in 'Word 2007 for Dummies' which was invaluable.

I would like to send grateful thanks for the many complimentary comments about Quagmire that I have received from members over the years. It is gratifying to know that people actually read it!

*Mary Black – Newsletter Editor
Chris Black – Vice Chair*

Newsletter Editor

This is an ideal role for anyone who prefers to work at a computer rather than the rock (or in this case lock) face. Trustees send items or articles to the Editor who then compiles them into Quagmire. Work-party reports are sent regularly and it is up to the Editor to include relevant photos, sent by Alan and others. Minutes of meetings are also used in order to glean ideas for articles. **Quagmire is sent out quarterly** - the Editor sends to Trustees and then Andrea, Membership Secretary, forwards it to members. Articles are vetted by the Chair before printing to avoid unintended errors. The format of the newsletter is not set in stone and you would be free to make changes and improvements to the layout and look of Quagmire.

The newsletter is so important to keep members informed of how their membership money is spent as well as the progress of the restoration. If you'd like further information you may contact me directly on mdablack@btinternet.com. Or contact Ivan Cane – Chair at secretary@nwdct.org

Events co-ordinator.

The Trust is looking for an organised person who is able to co-ordinate the team and our Trust events. Our main annual event is our 'Information & Open' weekend, which will be held this July at Ebridge Lock.

You will not be working on your own as together we keep in touch via email bandying different ideas to ensure our event is successful, we just need someone to co-ordinate us all.

It's preferred but not essential that you are able to attend Trustee meetings to report back the Events plans. Our meetings are held once a quarter at the Quakers Meeting House, Mundesley Rd, North Walsham at 2pm on a Tuesday. More information is available via the email address below.

Visit our website for an idea as to what we have planned at www.nwdct.org/events.html



Work-party co-ordinator

Another role for someone who does not necessarily wish to do physical work.

Long-term objectives need planning – but that is possibly the easy bit! The role could be described as Project Manager as you will need to juggle work-party dates, availability of equipment, volunteers and work-party leaders. You will need to be flexible as given the nature of the restoration, often something urgent will need to be done and your plans will have to be put on hold.

Ideally you will get to know the volunteers as they each have a unique set of skills and experiences and the best way to do this is to visit work-parties. Key Trustees will always be willing to discuss plans and suggestions for how to carry them out.

This role will require someone willing to send work-party plans to the volunteers via email.

If you are interested in taking on one of these roles, it would be preferable but not essential that you are able to attend Trustee meetings. Our meetings are held **quarterly** at the Quakers Meeting House, Mundesley Rd, North Walsham at 2pm on a Tuesday. More information is available via the email address below.

If you wish to discuss these roles further or require any more information please get in touch via email at secretary@nwdct.org

Sue Kirrage – Education & Training Officer

Induction procedure being rolled out for all new Volunteers

When I joined the NWDC Trust as a member and a volunteer I initially found it challenging to pick up all the information I felt I needed about the background, history and extent of the Trust activities. I wanted to know what to expect of the Trust and what the Trust might expect of me. I wanted to know more about the responsibilities I was taking on.

The website was informative, but a bit out of date in parts. This will soon be much better - as it's undergoing an upgrade and being updated by a professional Web designer. The Facebook and other Social Media pages proved helpful too, but how to be sure that I'd 'got it right' in my understanding - and did I now know the 'who', 'what', 'why' and 'what if?'

I started to think in February 2019 - about how we might develop an Induction procedure for new volunteers - and from that was born the first edition of 'The Volunteer Handbook' for the NWDCT. The idea is to have a checklist of information, history, expectations etc that must be shared and for the volunteer to have a record of this all in one 'booklet'.

We have 2 lovely venues in which to undertake Induction - the new unit at Spa Common in the worst weather, but whenever possible on one of the two trip boats at Ebridge Mill, weather permitting.



*Sue with Dave Townsend,
Boat Crew volunteer*

The Handbook finally went to print in early June this year and the decision was made at a Trustees meeting to induct any new volunteers using the agreed procedure, as described in the Handbook. The first volunteers to undergo the new induction procedure (Dave Townsend, Bridget Penny and Colin Sims) met with the Education Officer over the month of June and have passed their comments on how the process worked for them. Each volunteer will also undertake any further specialist induction or training as needed, provided by the Leader of the Team in which they will be working. These teams are: Boating, Fishing, Support, Wildlife, Work Parties.

Team Leaders, Membership Secretary and Trustees are now all required to immediately inform Sue Kirrage, once a new volunteer joins, so that Sue can undertake their generic induction and monitor the effectiveness of the procedure. The inductions have so far passed without anyone getting wet or muddy in the process and mainly in fine weather at Ebridge. So far, so good. It has been amazing and humbling to learn of the breadth of skills and experience that our volunteers bring to the Trust, as well as experience at first hand their energy and enthusiasm.

Sue Kirrage - Education & Training Officer
& Volunteer Induction Co-ordinator education@nwdct.org

Work-party News

*So much is happening on the Canal that work-parties have taken place as and when necessary. Volunteers have often worked **day after day** and have not always managed to send detailed reports. Sometimes we've let photos tell the story. Thanks to photographer Alan and also Ivan, Tom C, Nigel T and Graham E. Terry, Mark, Alan, Nigel T and others have all stepped in to act as leaders at different times.*

28th April – building the bund



Teamwork by Graham Pressman and Jeremy Cushing



The completed bund



Removing the original structure



Photographer Alan sorting the mud and sediment

Friday 3rd May 2019

Frank, Nigel T and Terry went to Ebridge Lock and erected all the safety fencing around the site. All the old iron brackets and lock pivots etc were removed from the old timbers. The remaining wood from the gates were all collected and loaded on to trailer and taken back to Spa Common. They hoped to meet on the following Tuesday to free of the jammed paddle and to start removing the wooden beams in the floor, and then clean up the area ready for the new concrete base.

Tuesday 7th May

Nigel T and Terry cleared out the mud and sediment from where the lock gates swing and removed the old wooden beams from the floor ready for the new concrete base to go in. Also, the jammed paddle on the west side was removed and the new one, which was collected from Laurie's yard, was fitted and tested by winding up and down. They also fitted a two rail barrier so no one falls over the drop into the lock whilst they were fiddling around fitting the gates and repairing the brickwork.

24th May laying the concrete base



Thursday 30th May



Stop planks in place



Chris H with latest volunteer Bridget Penny

Congratulations and thanks to all of those who have been working at Ebridge Lock Top Gate restoration, phase one! As, on 30th May the stop planks were installed.

This is a great step forward, and now means that Millington's omission in his lock plans of 1825, of not providing stop log (plank) grooves, so that the lock can be drained for maintenance, has been rectified. It also will mean that when the top gates are installed, there will be two lines of protection. (Note the pyramid builders methods of moving heavy loads used to get the planks in place). At the same time, WP volunteers have continued to re-point and replace bricks that will be below the waterline after the bund is removed.

Work parties have been working nearly every day for the last few weeks on preparation for the stop logs (new cill and concrete base) as well as brickwork repairs. Work will continue on the upper brick layers of the wing walls, where wherry wear and the ravages of time have eroded, and some re-alignment to incorporate the stop log grooves is required.

Ivan Cane – Chair

13th June



Frank and Nigel T

The weekend's rain had meant that the bottom of the bund was very squelchy, and so not possible to work from. This meant all brickwork was carried out from the top of the wall. The bricklayers concentrated on the west wall, with Frank and Jonathan supplying their needs. John helped clear some rubble. Ivan brought three loads of bricks, in failing Land Rover, from Spa Common shed. Rain stopped play shortly before lunch, brickwork was left covered, but the ferocity of the rain meant that some mortar was washed out. Despite this, good progress was made, with one layer of facing bricks and the end built up by three layers. The six volunteers were very willing but very wet.

18th June

The modern day navvies completed all the "below" the waterline work and the outer brick layers were completed to their correct height. Once the bund is removed it becomes impossible to work on this area again, as most will be under water! Which means that all that fine pointing and patching will not be seen again for another century.



Steve and Terry

2nd July



Dennis, Terry, Bridget

Terry and the volunteers were pleased to welcome Dennis back to work-parties after taking time off following a health scare. He says he is feeling much better now and is looking forward to getting involved with the Canal project again.



Hargreaves staff installing the gates

3rd July



Hargreaves completed their work on the top gates. They were a brilliant team - who also commented on our volunteers "You can see how one volunteer is worth 3 conscripts" they were very impressed by our Tuesday team, and our preparation work for them. Hargreaves is a firm that works with canal restoration groups across the country, so their praise is based on experience. *Well done everyone.*

7th July

Three volunteers and one "pressed" husband worked hard at Spa Common today. First job was to complete the clearing of Unit 4 - which meant two trips to the tip/recycling depot, and other gear stored in appropriate areas of the yard. Unit 4 was then split into several "spaces" - Tools, Events, Misc, Boating and Machinery, with the back of Unit 5 becoming the Mess room and merchandise storage, and the front of Unit 5 for the various banners and display items for Open Weekend.

After a big sweep through, the container was sorted, with items moved across to the various spaces - and lots of surprises found hidden at the back of the container - with Dennis finding his 2017 tool inventory. Fuel, building aggregate and cement, sacks and other items were left in the container.

There are planks and brackets available in the unit for anyone who wishes to pop along and hang the tools or put up shelves, which is the next job for each section.



Forthcoming work-parties:

Thursday 11th - clearance and preparation of area around Ebridge Lock for Open Weekend. Meet up with Mark S at Spa Common at 9:30 to collect machinery. Volunteers will be mowing and prepping the area for the erection of tents and marquees for the Open Weekend. (Volunteers will also be welcome to help set up and take down over the weekend - and to come to the Saturday Evening "Do" - to eat, drink and see who gets the Top and Bottom Gate awards this year!!!)

Open Weekend 13th & 14th July - Everyone welcome. Either to come and browse - or early Sat morning to help set up, or Sunday afternoon to pack away. We still need a van to move items from Spa Common and Back.

And finally a plea - one more major job before we can remove the bund - the wing walls need painting with a waterproof compound. This would be great if done over the Open Weekend - demonstrating volunteers at work, or on **Tuesday 16th or Thursday 18th** or any other day that week. Doesn't need a great number of painters- but volunteers are needed - once done we can re-water the gates, maybe that weekend of 20th.

Suki Pryce – Wildlife Officer

Monitoring the Canal's Water Quality

We have been keen to try to get some objective measurements of the health of the Canal's water, and now are delighted to welcome informal volunteers Nick Lewis and Gordon Woolcock - both long-time amateur naturalists, now retired. Nick got into monitoring aquatic invertebrates a few years ago through his son Jonathan Lewis (formerly of the Norfolk Rivers Trust): Jonathan was seeking volunteers to help the NRT, and Dad decided to help. Volunteers were given training by the Environment Agency, and Nick has continued to use these post-retirement skills along with long-term friend Gordon - for example in monitoring the River Mun at Templewood, Northrepps. The two have now most kindly agreed to do some work for the Canal Trust, and began on 25 April 2019, aided by invaluable Boating Officer Graham Pressman.

Our photos show the three aboard Ella 2 after a cruise up the Ebridge Mill–Spa Common section of the Canal to take bottom samples. They found the northern part heavily polluted with silt (probably from a North Walsham town drain), and devoid of any life at all – animal or vegetable. But heading south, the water quality improved steadily (presumably as the suspended solids settled out); by Ebridge Mill it could be classed as good. Quality is assessed by the amount of key indicator species found – Caddisfly larvae, Up-wing fly larvae, Stonefly larvae, and Shrimp; and in photo 1 we can see Nick hauling up a sample from the Canal bottom. This is rinsed free of mud, and then he and Gordon separate the key species into a compartmentalised tray for counting as in photo 2.



Other species found on this first outing included Fresh Water Mussels, Fresh Water Snails, Water Beetles, Water Louse, Midge Fly larvae, Tubiflex Worms, and Leeches, plus Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis*. Samples taken around mid-way also contained a large number of empty snail shells of the Lymnaeidae family, though no live molluscs were found. Overall, this is a most positive and exciting result from an initial survey, and I'm sure everyone associated with the Canal will be delighted to hear about it. We knew that the presence of abundant fish in this section was a positive sign, but Nick and Gordon's findings prove that their presence is based on a healthy supply of sustenance further down the food chain. And if we can get the source of pollution at Spa Common sorted out (by the construction of a settling pond, for example), this will also obviously make a big difference to the overall water health of this stretch of the Canal. Armed with Nick's objective and scientific findings, the Trust can now swing into action by asking the Environment Agency and Anglian Water to cooperate in getting this outfall and - possibly - the one next to Swafield railway embankment cleaned up. Meanwhile, sampling by our super surveyors will continue regularly.

Suki Pryce - Wildlife Officer

International Foraging Along The Canal

I thought I knew a bit about foraging, but was put to shame early in May by expert Saifon Hicks. From a Thai family who love using wild plants, Saifon – now of North Walsham - is applying her knowledge to the English countryside, and has found the Canal to be a veritable cornucopia. Her basket (an informal work of art in its own right – we didn't 'pose' this photo) held Dandelion heads to make Dandelion 'honey' ("Delicious! My friends love it!"); Plantain leaves and Forget-me-nots that she'll deep-fry (who knew?); flowering Campion for cut flowers, and much more. A care worker on shifts, Saifon relishes any chance to get outdoors and enjoy the sun, fresh air, nature and plants. "Better to eat good food than take medication", she avers; and I couldn't agree more. Inspired (and slightly shamed) by her enterprise, I gathered some Hedge Garlic on my way back to the car to cook myself, and enjoyed it with chicken and vegetables later. I should make the effort more often – thanks for the inspiration, Saifon.



Saifon foraging

NB The laws covering foraging are diffuse and not always clear, but common sense can prevail on the Canal. There is a common law right to forage for plants as long as it's for your own personal use and they're growing wild. Picking cultivated crops or collecting wild plants for commercial purposes would be considered theft - the intended use is the key. Technically, you should ask the landowner's (The Old Canal Company's) permission; but in practice, moderate picking of anything common should be fine. Don't dig any plant up without permission (well – Alder seedlings, and Himalayan Balsam – help yourselves!); or take any parts of rare plants or disrupt their habitat by careless foraging or damaging activities. And if asked to stop or leave by someone with the right to do this, you must comply immediately.



The fruits of Saifon's foraging

Suki Pryce – Wildlife Officer

Plant Survey at Briggate

This May, with the permission of the North Walsham Canal Company and the Honing Estate, I carried out a plant survey on land at Briggate Lock. I was surprised and pleased to find about a hundred species there, which was *far* more than I expected. These included quite a few species not found elsewhere in the Canal corridor so far. The main plant of note on the site is Greater Tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata*. (See photo below.) Most of us are now familiar with the lone specimen which grows there but there are also about eight more of these splendid 'creatures' in the small Honing Estate meadow on the east side of the lane. Remote Sedge *Carex remota* grows on that side too. Broad Buckler-fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, Red Currant *Ribes rubrum*, Gooseberry *Ribes uva-ursi*, and Alexanders *Smyrniolum olusatrum* are other species new to the Canal list.

Alas, there is also Himalayan Balsam in the east meadow which is Honing Estate land let to a farming tenant. Over the years, much effort has been put into eradicating this pest-plant generally. However, as on NWDCT-managed land, efforts to control it are always hampered by infestations on adjacent private land whose seed re-infects the cleared areas.

"Graham Pressman (my 'minder') hangs out with the site's best-known resident" (*Greater Tussock Sedge*) →



Suki Pryce – Wildlife Officer

Julie Kelleher – ICT Officer

The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust has a **new website** – www.nwdct.org

One of the features is the online Membership Form. We're pleased to advise that the form now includes tick-boxes for claiming 'Gift Aid' and consenting to us storing your personal contact data under the 'General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018)'.

It's in its very early days of development but we have lots of ideas for the new site which will include many more photographs in comparison to the old website.

If you have any pictures of the NW&D Canal stored to your photo albums the Trust would love to see them, it doesn't matter about the condition as it's amazing how technology can improve on old or scratched photographs.

If you would like to share them with us, please post to:

The NW&DC Trust Archivist, 36 Hayes Lane, FAKENHAM, NR21 9ER

After scanning we promise to return your originals back to you. Alternatively, you may wish to email us your pictures. Please send them to secretary@nwdct.org

Julie Kelleher – ICT Officer

Ivan Cane - Chair

On 7th June, the new Compac Tractor and flailer arrived from Johnson Bros of Fakenham, who have been looking after it, since acquisition some time ago now, whilst we waited for Unit 4 to be ready to store it. I would like to thank Johnson Bros for their patience, help and advice with the purchase and sorting the machine out for us.

Michael, Johnson Bros delivery driver and trainer caught us all out by arriving early. Jonathan, Alan, Mark, Chris H and Graham P duly arrived and the training began. Michael was very helpful, patient answering questions - and happy to go over things again, from under the bonnet to the masses of levers - which were way above the non-mechanical Trust Chair's head. (*Not true –Editor.*)



A demonstration of flailing then took place, followed by Alan and Jonathan then trialing the machine itself - slowly mastering their skills along the canal bank.

Another Q&A session and a demonstration of the 1000Kg winch operation followed. After the coffee break the decoupling of the flailer was explained, and then the team were left to their own devices as Michael returned to Fakenham.



Trouble was - they then couldn't start the engine - various opinions and lever positions were tried and the engine fired. The tractor was then moved to its new abode - with only 2 inches headroom.

My Thanks to Mike Stokes, Michael and Steven of Johnson Bros for arranging the training, and machines. To Mark Shopland for bidding for the Big Society grant - and the NNDC Big Society for providing it. Also to Jonno for filming.

Thanks also to the five trainees for attending yet another session on the Canal.

The first job planned for the tractor was to move bricks from Bacton Wood Lock to Ebridge during the following work-party.

Ivan Cane - Chair

Dates for your diary

Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th July Canal Open Weekend.

Julie Kelleher, with help of her friends, is putting together a great programme for the weekend, with some new attractions as well as the regulars. However, we are short on staff - please come along - and bring a friend to help out manning the various stalls - even if just for an hour or so. Please contact Julie on secretary@nwdct.org if you can help in any way - from setting up to taking down - and the bits in between.

On the Saturday, at 2 o'clock, Mike Dicks and Valerie from Radio Norfolk will be there recording a piece to be broadcast on their show on Wednesday 17th July. They will be interviewing Trustees about the History of the Canal, chatting to visitors and stall-holders and taking a boat trip. There will be the vintage canoe club all weekend - and wild swimmers around Sunday lunchtime

On the Saturday evening, from 7:30 until 10+ all volunteers, past and present, and Trust Members are invited to the second get-together. There will be a bar and BBQ and lots of good friends. At 9pm we aim to present the Top Gate and Bottom Gate trophies. The Top Gate Trophy will be presented to the person, who in the opinion of others, has, during the last year, contributed the most to the volunteer's cause. (Jonathan was last year's worthy winner) The Bottom Gate Trophy will be presented to the person who has had the silliest or most amusing happening over the past year (I've conveniently forgotten who that was!). Please pass any nominations for this year's Top or Bottom Gate trophies to me asap via secretary@nwdct.org

Ivan Cane - Chair



Graham P and Ivan at the bar – Open Weekend 2018

Saturday 27th July Norfolk Day.



Last year the Canal Trust joined the celebration of "Norfolk Day" by giving people the opportunity to cruise along the North Walsham & Dilham Canal. This enabled trippers to boat part of this heritage industrial gem of North Norfolk, and Norfolk's only sailing canal with locks, that is under restoration at the moment. The cruises encompass a mile of restored waterway from Ebridge Mill to Spa Common, passing under one of the original, and listed, canal bridges, disembarking to inspect the restored Bacton Wood Lock, and learn how it will work, followed by a return cruise enjoying the abundant wildlife from the quietness of the boat.

The trips were very well received and over-subscribed and they will be running again this year. The heritage trips will start from Ebridge at 10 a.m., 12 noon, 2p.m. and 4 p.m. £7.50 per person.

To book phone Graham on 07585 160 772

*All monies raised will help with further restoration of our fabulous secret canal
in the heart of North Norfolk*

Sunday 18th August Throw line Training.

James's story:

In 2005, James Clark was on a night out with friends in Kingston upon Thames. Three days later his body was found in the river. James's death is tragic and it is sadly not isolated. Since James's death, his mother has successfully campaigned for safety measures. One of the solutions is to place public rescue equipment in key locations and train people how to use it.

The RNLI training with throw bags is dedicated to James.



The risks at the locks and along the Canal have been recognised and throw line training has been arranged for all Canal Trust Volunteers.

Training will be delivered by Bob Mann from the Happisburgh RNLI on Sunday 18th August at 3.00 pm for about 2 hours.

Participants will meet at Spa Common Units 4 & 5 Anchor Road, North Walsham, NR28 9AJ.

Places must be booked in advance by contacting Sue on education@nwdct.org or by phoning Graham Pressman on 07585 160772.

Sue Kirridge - Education & Training Officer

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd September Heritage Open Days 'Walk and Water'.



For the Heritage Open days this September the Trust have once again arranged for access to the two Swafield Locks on the North Walsham and Dilham Canal. These two locks were last used in 1893 and officially abandoned in the early 20th Century. However, there still are substantial remains, and one can access into the Upper Lock, that once joined the Canal to Swafield Millpond. The two locks lie on private land, but the Trust have organised with the owners that a Canal Walk will start from Swafield Locks - with parking provided on their land.



Photo shows abandoned Lock No. 5 at Swafield

Following an inspection of the locks, a guided walk will take place down the Canal, starting with the listed skewed Swafield Bridge, passing the remains of the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Committee Railway Bridge, now Paston Way, and then having an opportunity to spot wildlife as we pass the NWT reserve at Pigney's Wood. At Royston Bridge, the history of the Wherry Inn, the bridge and its canal connections will be considered, followed by wildlife spotting again at Purdy's Marsh, with the chance of inspecting the rebuilt Royston Spillway, and to learn about how the Canal collected and maintained its water supply.

At Bacton Wood the restored Lock will be explored and participants can learn how it is operated. Here, also was the "Port" or staithe for North Walsham, with its original bridge and evidence of WW2 Defence Line No 1 fortifications. (There will be the chance to continue one's journey to Ebridge by trip boat Ella II – the fare from Spa Common to Ebridge is £3.) Ebridge Millpond will be the final destination for the 3 mile walk, and after examining the on-going restoration work for the lock, the rebuilt spillway and refurbished mill, ferrying arrangements will be made to return drivers to their cars at Swafield.

An e-booklet is also available, giving the historic background and pictures for the walkers.

Continued...

The walks will begin at 10.30 each day with expected arrival at Ebridge by 2 p.m.

Booking is essential. Telephone Ivan on 01328 862435 to book a place.

There is **no charge** for the guided walk but donations to the Trust are always welcome!

The leaders will be Roger Hopkinson, one of the founder members of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust and Ivan Cane, archivist for the Canal's records and Trust Chair.

Parking in the field on the left, just past Starling's Haulage Yard at NR28 0RH, Bradfield Road Swafield

Tuesday 29th October AGM

This will be the Trust's first Annual General Meeting as an Incorporated Charitable Organisation.

The meeting will start at 7.30pm at Honing Village Hall. NR28 9AB. Enquiries to EVENTS@nwdct.org

Talks & Presentations 2019

7th November

Swafield Villagers

Ivan Cane

The Quagmire is a newsletter for all members of NW&DCT and members are encouraged to make suggestions for future items.

The deadline for items for inclusion in the Autumn 2019 Quagmire (at the Trustees' discretion) is 6th October 2019. Contact secretary@nwdct.org

A few extra photos of the work at Ebridge top lock:-

