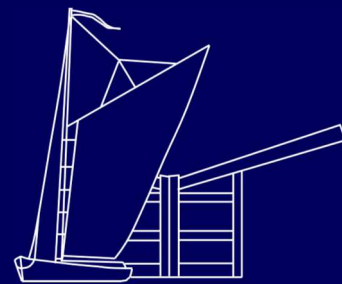


# QUAGMIRE

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL  
TRUST

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1



WINTER 2020

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## Royston Bridge in February



One of Alex Martel's images from his 2020 NWDC Desktop Calendar—see page 14

# Meet the New Chair



**Tom, I know that you have been involved with the Canal's restoration much longer than most other Trustees. What was your early involvement?**

I shared a flat in London with Andrew Darwin who with Paul Atterbury travelled the canals, researched and wrote the Nicholson's Guides. The dry asides in the commentary are mostly Andrew's.

Soon after I moved to Norwich, in the 1970's, Andrew and I joined an inspection of the Canal by Caribbean Cruiser (lent by Blakes) in the vicinity of Honing after James Forsythe had formed the Broadland Canal Group with Wynter Blathwayte, (vicar of Horning) Guy Crane, Roger Hopkinson and others. James was chairman of the Wherry Trust at the time. One of those inspections was carried out by David Hutchings. David Court of Blakes was a keen supporter of the Group.

**What attracts you to assist the Canal owners with the restoration of the Canal?**

My interest in the project is in the industrial archaeology which the canal represents and the opportunity to add to the variety of water borne activities in the Broads Area by making a former sailing canal accessible for the first time since 1937. Many readers of Quagmire are already familiar with the history of the canal and the opportunities to work on it to restore the navigation.

**What would you see as your main aim as Chair of the Trust?**

To concentrate on my concern to see the completion of all that the OCC wants achieved and, eventually, the ability for the public to access the navigation from the adjacent public highways at Swafeld, Royston Bridge, Ebridge and Briggate.

**Have you any particular concerns about the restoration?**

I worry that well established and funded conservation groups and the Environment Agency should come to regard the restoration of the navigation on the Canal as only a 'nice idea' once their environmental agenda has been fulfilled.

**What particular attributes do you have that you feel will assist you in your new role as Chair of the Trust?**

My experience in dealing with landlord and tenant matters relating to commercial property and in understanding issues concerning boundaries, rights of way and access.

**Have you any particular ambitions for the Trust's work during 2020?**

My ambitions for the Trust in 2020, which are in no particular order:-

- To widen the sense of attachment by the local community so that healthy numbers of volunteers in the workforce can be maintained.

- To encourage participation in the project by the young and the development of skills that they would not acquire in their normal working life such as the use of machinery or expertise in the knowledge of wildlife -aquatic and otherwise

- To maintain the diversity of uses particularly on the water.

- To encourage the land owners and their tenants to be well disposed to the users of the navigation and allow the Trust to exercise the rights to maintain the canal under the authority granted by the 1812 enabling Act.

- To manage access to the whole canal environment in a way which does not spoil the natural attractions because of parking issues or the belief that it should have the facilities of a municipal park with safety regulations and facilities.

- To support the Old Canal Co Ltd in restoring a flow of water to operate the machinery in Bacton Wood Mill.

- To broaden the income base to meet the cost of the restoration.



**"in the 1970's, Andrew and I joined an inspection of the Canal by Caribbean Cruiser"**

**Roger Hopkinson, David Hutchings, James Forsythe and Wynter Blathwayte - at Honing Lock 4 Dec 1972 (EDP)**



# Springwatch along the Canal with Perry, Suki and Tom



Canada Geese

Walking or boating along the Canal during the first three months of the year, it may at first appear that there is very little about by way of wildlife. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is lots going on, and plenty to see.

The winter months can sometimes turn up a few wildfowl apart from the regular Mute Swans. Tufted Duck have been occasional visitors in the past, with the regular Little Grebes, Cormorants and sometimes even Canada Geese put in an appearance. The trees and bushes along the canal often hold mixed flocks of Tits, Goldcrests and other small birds. They

find food and safety in large flocks at this time of year. Crows, Magpies, Buzzards and Kestrels are all common sights, along with a hunting Barn Owl if you're lucky. If it's mild, watch out for Kingfishers returning from their winter quarters on the coast.

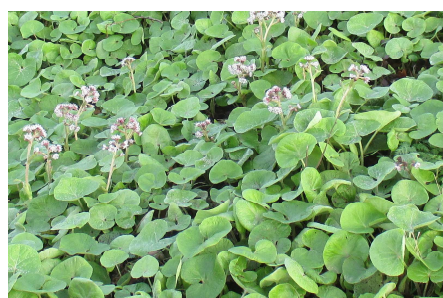
It's not uncommon to see the first butterflies of the year, even in January, given a mild day or two. Moths will begin to feature more strongly again in the second half of March, although numbers will still be low.

Muntjac Deer, Foxes and Water Voles are all rather easier to see early in the year, before the vegetation which provides them with cover has regrown.

**Perry Hampson**



Fox



Winter Heliotrope

*I've said before "It's never really winter to a botanist" as there's always something flowering, budding, or in catkin to see even at this time of year. Notable at the moment, in full fragrant flower, is the super display of Winter Heliotrope Petasites fragrans on Royston Bridge and northwards. It's one of our few truly winter-flowering native species,*

*as opposed to opportunists like Daisy Bellis perennis, and the*

*'autumn straggler' White Dead-nettle Lamium album, which can flower whenever the temperature is over around 5 degrees C. Look out too for the subdued purple catkins of Alder Alnus glutinosus, adding subtle colour to the winter scene, and mingling in Christmas-tree-decoration style with the handsome black cones.*

*Looking forward to summer, the 'mini-nature Reserve' in the back soke north-west of Royston Bridge has had a much needed bank cut by the IDB. The cut looks drastic, but this special stretch of soke was getting very overgrown, and we trust that the many special plants that grow here – like Water Plantain Alisma plantago-aquatica, Frogbit Hydrocharis morsus-ranae, and Whorl-grass Catabrosa aquatica - will grow back all the better for this clearance.*

**Suki Pryce**



'mini-nature reserve



Dave McKervail with a 13lbs 2oz Pike

It's been a wonderful winter, the unseasonably warm weather has made for some great fishing and it's wonderful to see so many folk enjoying the canal for a mixture of pursuits. It is lovely watching the peaceful pleasures of anglers, walkers, model boat club, canoers, visitors enjoying a cruise on the trusts trip boat Ella II and even swimmers enjoying the warm winter weather.

One angler who enjoys fishing the canal when he visits from Scotland wasn't disappointed over Christmas. He safely landed some pristine pike of 4lbs, 8lbs,

**Tom Webster**

10lbs, 11lbs and 13lbs. Winter is a great time to visit the canal.

All Trust contact details can be found on page 15

## 2019—That Was The Year That Was -Thanks to CIO Status.

2019 was a year of huge progress for the Trust, using its new CIO status to the full. This new status allowed the Trust to apply for a loan, and to bid for an EU LEADER Grant (such a grant needs a bridging loan). With loan help from the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) and the East Anglian Waterways Association (EAWA), funds were obtained for the purchase of top lock gates for Ebridge Lock and for a full set of stop planks.

CIO status then enabled the Trust to employ contractors to build and remove bunds, build the new lock gates and open accounts with local firms for all the other materials required.

Gift Aid status allowed the Trust to ask members to Gift Aid their subscriptions (If you haven't done this yet—please see the item on page 14). It also enabled the Trust to increase the generous donations to the Ebridge Lock and Canal Appeal by another 25%.

The ability to rent property meant that the Trust were able to take on Units 4 & 5 for storage, a mess room and a training room. The latter, still with bulging ceiling, was used by the Trust's Training Officer as a venue for the RNLI's rope and rescue line throwing training in August.

Having all this space then enabled the Trust to apply for a Big Society Grant for Canal and Bank maintenance machinery.

Without CIO Status—none of this would have been possible.



RNLI Training session August 2019—Unit 5

*“neither the owner or Trustees fully realised just how much work would be required”*

### The Units

Earlier in the year the Trust heard that John and his service garage of thirty years, in Units 4 & 5, was “retiring”. The Units’ owners offered the Trust the opportunity to take the building over, however, neither the owner or Trustees fully realised just how much work would be required to refurbish them.

The owners replaced two external walls, whilst the Trust removed the remainder of thirty years’ accumulated rubbish, stripped the wiring and set about making the old service area a workshop for the volunteers’ tools and equipment. The old spray shop is to become a training room and the garage storage area the volunteers’ mess room. During 2019, the workshop has been set up, with our volunteer David B constructing internal partitions, racking and fire escape routes whilst Darren C tackled the re-wiring. The Trust has asked Ralph G to take on the role of Caretaker/Manager, and he has applied his warehousing skills to organising the workshop and tool storage. During 2020 the training and mess rooms are the challenge for the Unit’s team. If you would like to volunteer to help with this work—please contact Ralph.

Unit 4, then and now, in February and October 2019.

Below, Jonathan removing ivy, Carpenter David and Electrician Darren .



Quagmire

All Trust contact details can be found on page 15





Nigel and Terry busy in the chamber

## 2019 Projects

Although the EU LEADER grant allowed the Trust to employ contractors to make and fit the gates, it was still down to the Trust to undertake all the other associated work, such as rebricking most of the wing walls, re-setting the coping stones and laying the slabs for the stop log cill. This, under Graham P's watchful eye as Project Officer, (backed by consultant Anthony Byfield) led to a new project volunteer group being set up, and as they were working on the Ebridge Chamber they gained the nickname of the Chamber Ensemble! Their main WP leader was Nigel Thompson who soon gained a reputation of exacting standards, being on site most days. After the gates were fitted they "kept going" repairing the holes in the west wall of the lock chamber and cill wall itself. Sadly, for the Trust, Nigel moved to the USA with his family, however Terry has ably taken over the role as Ensemble WP leader. Thwarted by the hole preventing work on the East wall, the team moved to Bacon Wood Lock to install grooves and cill for top stop planks. (This will enable lock repairs in the future—and also help to control the re-watering levels).

"After the gates were fitted they 'kept going'"

Meanwhile, another project group has tackled the "hole" (see page 9). So 2019 saw the setting up of the Project groups to complement the regular Sunday and Thursday Groups. There are of course some volunteers who go to all!!!!

## The Fleet



During the year, the continual upgrading of *Ella II* has progressed. A new electric outboard more closely matching the solar powered batteries has been purchased. Rigid sides to help to better protect the winter passengers have been fitted. Sue B, as well as acting as boat number two for the Heritage Open Day's Walk and Water, has also been used for carrying the stop planks from Ebridge to Spa Common, ready for use at BW Lock. The new weed cutter (bought with Big Society Grant) has been regularly seen cutting the central channel above Ebridge, much to the delight of the swimmers, fisherfolk and boaters. The little aluminum workboat has not been forgotten, having been used to clear the debris from BW Lock. If anyone has a spare boat trailer, that could be used

for the little boat, so that it can be moved to Honing or Swafeld to help out there, please contact the boating officer.



## Work Parties

The regular Sunday and Thursday work parties have met throughout the year, working on the Canal from Honing to Swafeld locks, from bank vegetation management to laser levelling, from cutting turf ponds to balsam bashing, from repairs to Ebridge spillway to fitting notice boards.

The Trust's equipment has been in regular use, and the new tractor (purchased with Big Society grant), now licensed for road use has been seen mowing the banks, winching the prototype reed clearer at Honing Staithe, moving bricks in its trailer or box to Ebridge Lock and generally busy.

## Training

CIO status has enabled Sue, the Trust's Training officer, to "buy in" training packages, as well organise "in-house" schemes—such as the new induction training for volunteers introduced this year, and volunteer's handbook.

The Happisburgh RNLI provided "Throw Line Training", part of the nationwide *James's Story*. Andy Segon, of VTS Event Medical Services, provided an Emergency First Aid at Work (on the Canal) course, with ten volunteers gaining certification, and Johnson Bros a Tractor Driving Course.

Nationally, volunteers attended the Annual Canal Restoration Conference, and a Restoration Hub Training day looking at ways of encouraging young people in volunteering. It is hoped that more national courses can be attended in the coming year (The Trust can help funding petrol expenses)

# Thursday Work Parties



Bridge over west soke dyke—part of the Town's NWP new Canal Walk



Ebridge Notice Board



McConnel Swingtrim



Swafield West Bank 9 Jan 2020 (AB) (see p8)

## Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> November – Completion of self seeded sapling removal from Royston/ Swafield reach

Chris very kindly brought his mini-digger in to remove the self seeded saplings alongside the canal bank from Royston Bridge to Swafield. John assisted by knocking off the mud from the arisings and piling them up ready for recovery to the car park at Royston Bridge (all done in the pouring rain). The western side of the canal was mown between Royston bridge and the Paston Way bridge both to ease pedestrian access for the new Town's Canal Walk (see page 11) (Mark Shopland, WP Leader)

## Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> November – Clearance of Ebridge culvert entrance and reinstallation of Notice Board

Rough grass cut by Chris and arisings left to dry out before disposal. Ebridge Notice board re-installed by Terry and John in approximately its original position and mower trailer emptied of bricks at the culvert repair site. McConnel scythe offered up to tractor and successfully mounted on three point hitch and power take off. Some adjustments to correct the mounting angle is to be investigated later. (Mark Shopland, WP Leader)

## Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> December – Repair Tractor Winch and Test McConnel Swingtrim

Tractor winch repaired by disassembling the drum to release a full turn trapped under the flange. Chris and John fitted the extended draft links to the tractor and the scythe assembly was mounted to ensure adequate clearance between all items. All looks good and it is planned to mount the control support bracket assembly on the tractor's mudguard.

A trial run of the scythe showed that it was working correctly and that the two damaged hoses were in fact actually leaking. One was removed to serve as a model for the manufacture of replacements. (Mark Shopland, WP Leader)

## QUAGMIRE

Welcome to Volume Four, which has come to you in a new format and with a new Editor. Our Huge Thanks to Mary & Chris Black for their last ten years' Q, a difficult precedent to follow.

We would appreciate any comments that you have about the new look, (yes the font will be larger next time!) and of course any articles that you would like to submit for publication.

Please contact Editor Ivan at [Qeditor@nwdct.org](mailto:Qeditor@nwdct.org)





# Sunday Work Parties



## Sun 10<sup>th</sup> November – Unit 4/5 Emergency evacuation route clearance

The accumulated rubbish from 30 years of use as an outside storage for the former service garage, was removed to allow a clear emergency exit route from the units. (Alan Bartram, WP Leader)

## Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Nov – Clearance of arisings at Royston Bridge & clearance of path to Thurston Centre.

First job was to use the tractor to pull RG's van which had got stuck in mud at roadside edge of parking area on north side of RB. Hence a rather late start to planned work.

Then moved to path, leaving tractor at bund although west side to path from there was probably OK. Path mown and strimmed and overhanging foliage cut back. As finished work on path, Laurie arrived, and state of footbridge and bund alongside, was inspected. Work then concentrated on clearing top and sides of bund so that edge could be clearly seen. Lunch taken near sluice. After lunch cleared east bank of alders south from Swafield. Two overloaded trailer trips made to RB. (Alan Bertram, WP Leader)



## Sun 8<sup>th</sup> December – Clear Fallen Trees on Honing Staithe and the Canal Path

### BEFORE

On arrival, found work in progress on cutting down trees, by NCC and Electricity Board, on road bank between canal bridge and bridge over old railway, the aim to remove trees from around power cables alongside road. No contractor work in progress today (Sunday) but much tidying up of canal land needed (fallen trees and brash on land), but hopefully will be done before contract completed.

### AFTER

Fallen tree from canal bank near bridge cut up and tidied, path tidied with brush cutter. Tree across walk removed at ground level, but still hung up tree across path at higher level. Walk strimmed to maintain width. Noted a considerable number of hung up trees in woods within walk circuit.



After lunch, tests were carried out with winch on tractor using CH's device to put out reeds in staithe cut – very much more effective than at Briggate.

All Trust contact details can be found on page 15

# More Work Party Reports



Dance of the mowers

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Dec, 5th Jan, Thur 9 Jan– Western bank tops between Paston Way and Swafield Bridge**

The trailer was loaded with two mowers, strimmer and hand tools and taken to Swafield behind the Defender. The path was clear enough to enable the trailer to be taken to the Condensate Bridge. The Blacks concentrated on tidying the base of the east abutment, whilst the remainder of the group tackled the brambles and heavy weed growth on the west bank. This area has not been tidied since cleared in 2015/16, hence there is a considerable amount of timber hidden under the vegetation. A route under the bridge was first cleared, then Ralph & Kevin with strimmers and Steve and Alan on the mowers tackled the vegetation. However, the Trust's machinery was not "man" enough to tackle more than a hundred yards or so. A heavier brush cutter is needed for this type of job. (Sponsorship offers welcomed.) Some saplings were cut down and piled by the west abutment for later burning – but root removal would need access with the digger. The next WP, with the help of the DR mower, completed the mowing, with two new volunteers using slashers (as no brush cutter) to trim the banksides. On Thursday Chris kindly brought his digger to the site and used it to widen and consolidate the path under the old Railway bridge from material previously left by Laurie. Frank, John and Ross supported this work by moving, raking, levelling and consolidating this material by hand. The tractor was then used to further consolidate this path by running it back and forth over it.



## Sunday's WP Christmas Cheer

Following the morning's work above, at 12.30 the group of ten, moved back to the Meeting room, nicely warm with a fan heater, to enjoy seasonal mulled wine and mince pies (courtesy of the Blacks) to accompany their packed lunches. Three members from the Chamber Ensemble, plus the Chair and Laurie also dropped in. making a pleasant hour for a good natter, and mullings for the year ahead, before an early end to the day.

**SNCT volunteers gauging depth of silt & W&A Lift bridge .Photos courtesy of the Canal Trusts**



## Waters Elsewhere

It was been reported in the Waterways Press that the **Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust** have gained a £98,000 EULEADER grant for dredging around one and half miles of unnavigable canal through Newport. This came following work volunteers undertook measuring the amount of silt in the length, which in turn allowed their Trust to determine the cost of dredging so in order to bid for funding. (*Waterways World* Jan 2020) . Meanwhile on the **Wey and Arun**, three weeks of Canal Camps did the bulk of work building the structure for the new Birtley lift bridge, which now awaits a steel deck and lifting gear. Their Trust are now raising funds for a second liftbridge needed on this length of canal. (*Nawvies* Dec 2019)





# The Hole Story



Past President Alan Faulkner clearing the hole in 2006

This problem dates back to the 1912 floods, when silt was washed off the road blocking the Canal. The culvert was probably built to allow carts to cross the soke dyke, for there was a staithe above the lock. It's unknown when the arch collapsed, but the hole was noted as of concern when the East Anglian Waterways Assoc. (EAWA) work parties first worked there in 2003. In March 2004 the NCC asked the EAWA if they were the owners as they were worried about the stability of the bridge parapet that was dropping. This led to discussions between the Internal Drainage Board (IDB), Norfolk County Council (NCC) and East Anglian Waterways Association (EAWA) looking to place an

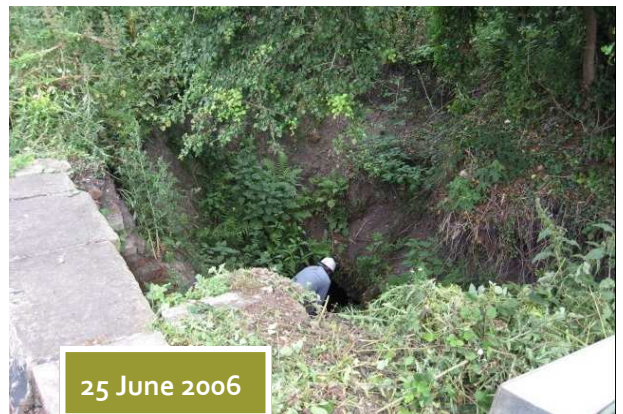
inspection chamber above the "hole", with the former offering the materials for the EAWA to undertake the repairs. However, there was

a proviso that the EAWA would then take on the liability, which it declined. Strangely, it does not appear that the then owners of the Canal, the NWCCo were involved. In 2006 the NCC put in a series of drains to the east of the bridge, aiming to prevent road water causing further erosion to the sides of the hole. By 2018 these drains were blocked and further erosion was taking place.

During 2018, discussions were started between the OCC, IDB, the Trust and NCC to look at ways forward. This was prompted by the need to stabilise the east wall of Ebridge Lock and the concern that the bridge parapet was in danger of slipping, the IDB undertook a CCTV inspection of the culvert and



16 Oct 2011



25 June 2006

found the remainder sound (strangely the actual culvert had not collapsed any further since 2003, just more of the hole washed down it!). As a result the Trust and OCC formulated plans to rebuild the culvert, with the Project team starting repairs in November 2019.

The method decided was to build a sacrificial wooden arch supported on the outside, on which the brick soldiers and stretchers could be placed. These could only be laid a course or two at a time, so that they could set, before the next course was put down. Once the first 6 foot or so was completed, the next 6 foot was uncovered, (for the inner arch had dropped) and that repaired



4 Jan 2020 (D.Eagles)

in the same manner. The Trust have been particularly lucky in acquiring two new volunteers, Trevor and Dave, who have taken on the bricklaying aspect, ably supported by the regular Project (Chamber Ensemble) WP team members. Now the brickwork is completed and puddling clay placed on top, weather permitting in February, the OCC will backfill. The Ensemble will then return to the repairs of the East wall of the lock and to the pumping out of the decades of accumulated road silt from the bridge and chamber. If you would like to help with any of this, please contact the Project Officer, Graham.

The Trust would particularly like to thank the IDB for their considerable help with the project, the OCC plant operatives and the skills of the bricklayers, mortar mixers, labourers and other volunteers.



The last bricks 18 Jan 2020



## Project News—The Chamber Ensemble Work Parties



(Above) Chamber Ensemble busy laying concrete cill

(Right) Finished job with bottom plank in place. Photos TC,

Taking a break from Ebridge, the Ensemble moved to Bacton Wood to construct stop plank grooves and cill for the top of the lock. Although the Canal was a modern typical Telford “Cut and Fill”, many of engineer Millington’s ideas were not in vogue with 19th century construction techniques. For example no provision was made to allow the canal or lock to be drained for lock repairs or channel maintenance in the future. Stop planks enable a lock to be isolated, the water pumped out and repairs undertaken. They also allow the water level of the channel to be lowered in one foot increments (and conversely allowing one foot increments when the pound is re-watered). Hence the need to

install the provision at BW lock. The Ensemble, with their previous experiences with planning and building the facility at Ebridge, soon tackled and built the new plank cill and installed the grooves. Easily said, but involved a lot of graft. There’s still the bottom facility to be installed at BW lock.

If you would like to help out with the Ensemble’s work—please contact the Project Officer. [boating@nwdct.org](mailto:boating@nwdct.org)



*Weasel* in 2010 and 2020 at Ebridge

### “Weasel”

The ex British Waterways Dredger, *Weasel*, first arrived on the OCC Canal in March 2010. Placed in a prepared pond, she then assisted de-silting the Canal up to Bacton Wood Lock. Over the ten ensuing years she has continued to help maintain the channel, especially the

continually silted section at Spa Common. However, these years had taken a toll, *Weasel* has now been pulled up into the old dry dock area at Ebridge where hull holes are to be repaired and a repaint job completed. She will then be ready to tackle pastures new. Both *D B Wright Welding and Fabrication* and *Gee-Force* have offered to help with equipment loans, but volunteer labour is also needed to help, if interested with welding, painting or general boat repair work - please contact Graham P.

Sunday 19th January saw the Work Parties starting work on *Weasel*.



**News snippet**—The EA have found one of the main sources of the siltation at Spa Common, and are working with a local farmer to prevent further field erosion entering the Canal.



## Heritage Open Days Walk and Water



Sunday's Lunch Break at BW Lock

Following 2018's successful HOD event, the Trust again organized two days of *Walk and Water* events from Swafield to Ebridge Mill. With thanks to the Starling family, both days started with a tour of Swafield Locks, accompanied by contemporary stories of the late 19th Century. Ivan and Roger then led walks to Bacton Wood Lock, with regular stops to point out restoration, historical or wildlife events. At

Bacton Wood a stop

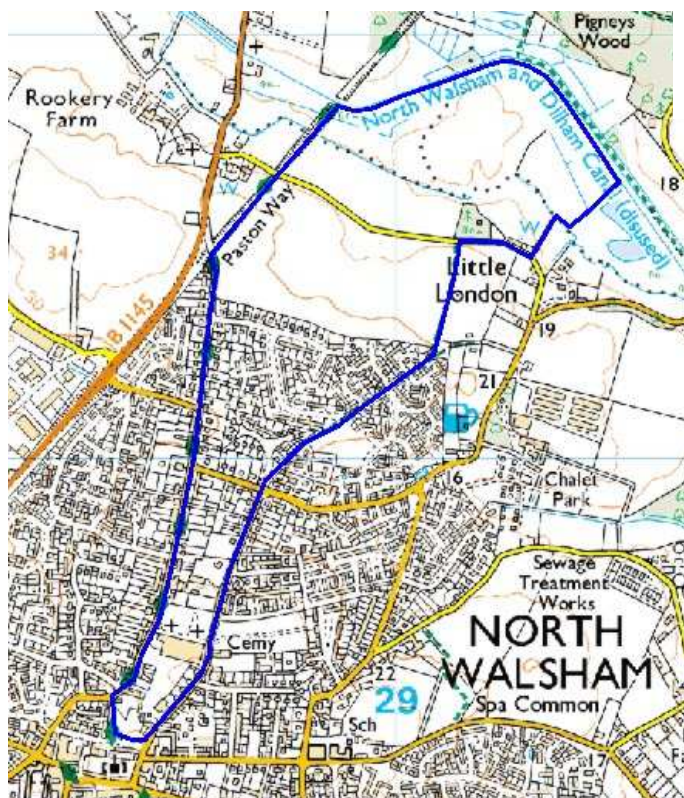
was made for lunch, followed by Graham and Ralph skippering *Ella II* and *Sue B*, to take most guests on the last leg to Ebridge Lock, where updates were given about the lock's restoration.

As in 2018, the 2019 event was well over-subscribed, with 43 participants enjoying the event. This year the Trust will be reviewing its HOD offering, with the *Walk and Water* event taking place earlier in the year.



*Sue B's* party finding it a busy day on the Canal.

## North Walsham Projects' Canal Walk



**"Walk from  
the Town  
Centre to our  
Beautiful  
Canal"**

This not-for-profit company's purpose is to work on projects that will help to make North Walsham a better place to work and live for everyone in the community.

In December 2019 they launched, as part of their Market Town Initiative, a 3 mile signed walk "from the Town Centre to our Beautiful Canal", encouraging all to use it as a "post-Christmas stroll to enjoy the scenery and spot the wildlife". This welcome initiative again reflects the way that the community is now embracing the Canal and its environs. None of this would have been possible without the foresight and hard work of the Old Canal Company in bringing the Canal back to life.

The Trust's Thursday WP on 12th November helped to tidy part of the walk from Little London in preparation for the launch (see page 6).

Our Thanks to Jon, Bob and the volunteers' committee, of the NWP, for bringing this scheme to fruition.

# The Archive Slot—Owners

*“the clerk  
absconded  
with the  
money”*

## 1880's—Edward Press

In **1874**, Edward Press, a miller and corn merchant based at Muckle Hill Farm, Bacton Wood, established a boatyard at Ebridge and acquired five wherries, some of which were subsequently fitted out to take passengers. On 17th December 1885, James Turner the clerk to the company, gave notice of an application being made to the Board Trade for consent to sell the Canal to Edward Press. On **16th March 1886** the Canal was sold to Edward for £600. The Committee entrusted James Turner with distributing the sale proceeds to known holders of the 446 shares out of the original



Edward Press  
and his family—  
courtesy of Liz  
Kiener

586, but the clerk absconded with the money after paying out only 55 shares.

It was not until 10 years later that Edward and four other directors each contributed £110.17s 7d to make good the sum necessary to pay out the remaining shareholders.

On **2nd July 1906** Edward Press died, following an unsuccessful attempt to sell the Canal to a consortium of local businessmen, the Canal was sold at auction to a Mr Bernard Percy on **11th September 1907** for £2,550.



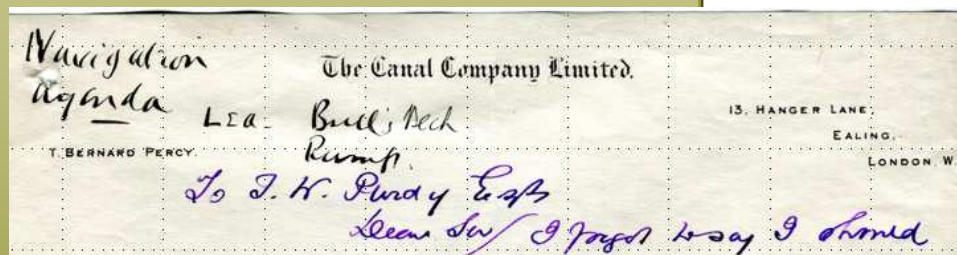
## 1920's—Bernard Percy's Plans

On the **11th September, 1907**, The canal had been sold, at auction, to a Mr. Bernard Percy of 13 Hanger Lane, Ealing, London a director of The General Estates Company, for £2,550.

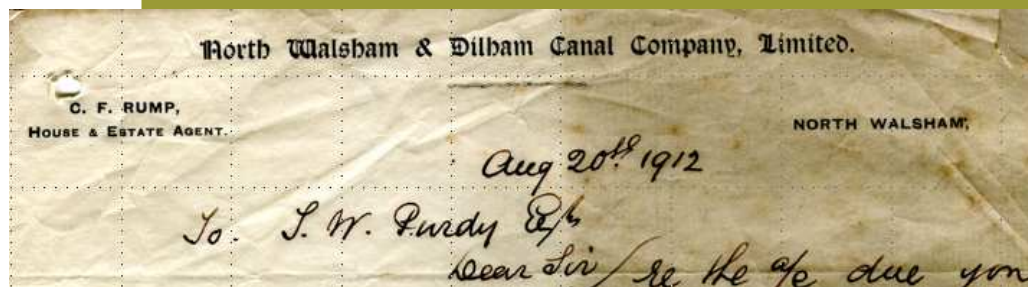
This company already held the freehold rights to the Gorleston ferry and the tolls on Selby road bridge in Yorkshire. At the time the canal's annual income was £390 - £200 being the commuted sum paid annually by Cubitt &

Walker of Ebridge for any tonnage, an average of £165 per annum in tolls from Pallett Barclay & Company of North Walsham plus some rent from bank side grazing.

The **August 1912** floods had breached the Canal at Bacton Wood and the road was washed into the Canal at Ebridge. Repairs were undertaken, but, apparently the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Company Limited were restricted in the amount that they could spend.



**Records reveal  
1920's plan to  
sell Canal to a  
Drainage Board**



By 1920, T. Bernard Percy was probably finding the Canal an unprofitable exercise. How-

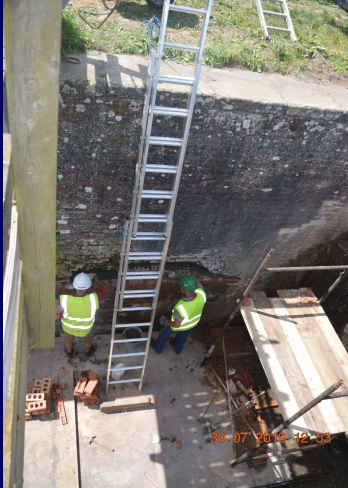
ever, there was "light at the end of the tunnel" for it had been suggested that an East Norfolk Drainage Board, shortly to be set up, should purchase the canal from Mr. Percy, who was asked to facilitate its transfer to the new board. However, the new Board did not materialise, and as Cubitt and Walker were the main toll payers, they decided to buy the Canal for £1,500 on **2nd September, 1921**, with the incorporation of the North Walsham Canal Co Ltd. on **21st November, 1921**. This new company, in turn, acquired the Canal for £1,500 from Cubitt and Walker, who became shareholders in the new enterprise, with Alfred Savill, James Shepherd and William Faulk (Alan Faulkner Archives).

These two archive letters have recently come to light. Does anyone know any more about these two companies?

## From Quagmire October 2009

**EBRIDGE LOCK.** We have made more progress towards the removal of the trees and scrub from the right hand bank looking upstream. We are nearing the end of this obstacle and hopefully the bank will be cleared soon. This pound is now under the ownership of The Old Canal Co. Ltd. and new owner, Laurie Ashton, visited us at our Sunday 11th Oct work party there to give us his good news. We had a long discussion about the removal of the old tree stumps and trees from the bank and the way forward. It was all very amicable and very good news for our aim to get some water back into the canal. There is much work to do at this lock, not least the repair of the collapsed deep culvert beside the lock wall, but the chamber walls appear to be sound and the water control mechanisms remain in place. (Chris Black) Quagmire Volume No 1, Issue No 4, October 2009

**"the new  
owner,  
Laurie  
Ashton,  
visited us at  
our Sunday  
11th Oct  
work party"**



Ebridge Chamber restoration

**Our Thanks to  
all our  
benefactors**

## Have you Gift Aided your subscription?

If you are a taxpayer the Trust can claim an extra 25% Gift Aid for every £1 you donate, either as part of your subscriptions or a specific donation, such as to the Ebridge Canal Fund.

If possible please set this up, all you need to do is e-mail Andrea at

[membership@nwdct.org](mailto:membership@nwdct.org). Please give your full name and address and she will do the rest for you, and the Trust will be 25% better off!

## Would you like to donate to the Ebridge Canal Project?

If you wish to donate to the Ebridge Canal Project, you can do this by paying directly:

**North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust, Branch 60-15-54 Account Number 72562498**

Adding **EB and your initial and surname** in the comment box. Please also email [treasurer@nwdct.org](mailto:treasurer@nwdct.org) so that he knows!

## Thanks to everyone who has recently donated to the Trust

The Trust would like to thank those who have donated either monies or equipment. Many have asked to be anonymous, such as the benefactor of new kitchen units for the mess room at Unit 5, and several large and small monetary donors. Thanks also for recent gifts of a fridge, microwave, kitchen sink and kettle—all destined for the mess room, much appreciated by the volunteers.

If you have, or know of anyone who has tucked away, the following: Wheelbarrow, bench grinder, commercial brush cutters etc. would you consider donating them to the Trust?

Or perhaps you might like to help with the cost of putting a new ceiling to the meeting room. Please contact the [chair@nwdct.org](mailto:chair@nwdct.org) if you can help.

## Desk Top Calendar

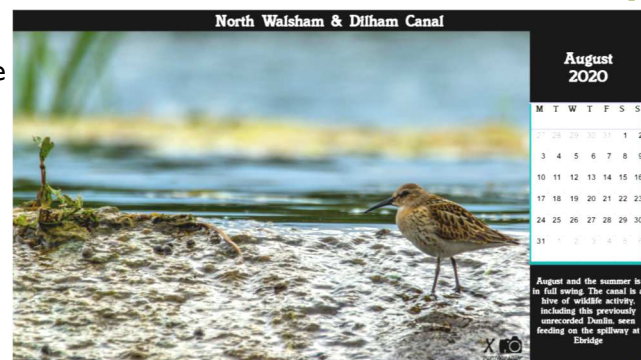


The front cover picture is one of the twelve desk top calendar images that Alex Martel has made, having spent many hours scouring his 2019's photos of the Canal. You may use it as a desktop background for PC's and laptops. Alex is not making a charge for the calendar, but hopes that you will make a donation to the

Trust. To download, go to

<https://tinyurl.com/NWDCT-Calendar>

Our Thanks to Alex for such a fabulous idea.





## Contact the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

**North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust CIO**  
**117 Mundesley Road**  
**North Walsham**  
**Norfolk**  
**NR28 0DD**

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[www.instagram.com/nwdcanaltrust/](https://www.instagram.com/nwdcanaltrust/)

### Email the Trust's Officers:

Chair - Tom Carr,	<a href="mailto:chair@nwdct.org">chair@nwdct.org</a>
Membership - Andrea,	<a href="mailto:membership@nwdct.org">membership@nwdct.org</a>
General Information,	<a href="mailto:secretary@nwdct.org">secretary@nwdct.org</a>
Boat Trips – Graham P	<a href="mailto:boating@nwdct.org">boating@nwdct.org</a>
Fishing -Tom Webster	<a href="mailto:fishing@nwdct.org">fishing@nwdct.org</a>
Grants - Mark	<a href="mailto:grants@nwdct.org">grants@nwdct.org</a>
Work Parties -Mark	<a href="mailto:workparty@nwdct.org">workparty@nwdct.org</a>
Project WP –Graham P	<a href="mailto:boating@nwdct.org">boating@nwdct.org</a>
Quagmire –Ivan	<a href="mailto:QEditor@nwdct.org">QEditor@nwdct.org</a>
ICT – Julie	<a href="mailto:ICT@nwdct.org">ICT@nwdct.org</a>
Training –Sue	<a href="mailto:education@nwdct.org">education@nwdct.org</a>
Treasurer –Barry	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@nwdct.org">Treasurer@nwdct.org</a>

## Coming Events

**Thursday 9th April 2020—[A Coffee Morning](#) in the St Nicholas room at St Benet's Hall, Market Place, North Walsham NR28 9BT**

**tba June 2020—[Film Evening](#)—Atrium , North Walsham**

**Sat 15th & Sun 16th August 2020—[The 8th Annual Ebridge Open Weekend](#)—Ebridge Lock NR28 9NG**

**tba—[Heritage Walk and Water](#) tours**

### **Private presentations**

The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust is often asked to provide talks, historic walks or boat trips for clubs and other groups on the Canal or Trust's work.

If you would like to know more please email your needs to us on [secretary@nwdct.org](mailto:secretary@nwdct.org)

Also, if you're a member of the public interested in attending any of our presentations please contact the booking organisation directly via their website link as these presentations are usually for their club members only.

### **Talks for 2020**

**Thursday 5th March – [Scratby Probus Club](#) (IC)**

**Saturday 25th April - [Maude Wherry Trust](#) (NL)**

**Tuesday 28th April – [Sutton Womens Institute](#) (SK)**

**Wednesday 10th June – [Poppyland, Trimmingham Hall](#) (NL)**

**Thursday 15th October – [North Walsham Garden Club](#) (NL)**

2019 Film Evening at the Atrium



## Swafield Bridge Damaged



Swafield Bridge parapet was damaged by two cars colliding on the evening of December 5th 2019. Luckily no one was seriously injured, but the bridge parapet was severely damaged in two places. The Trust and the local villagers are concerned that any repairs undertaken by the NCC are sympathetic to the bridge's history, for surprisingly, this rare example of a skewed bridge is unlisted. (Photo G. Pressman)

