

# QUAGMIRE

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST CIO



VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

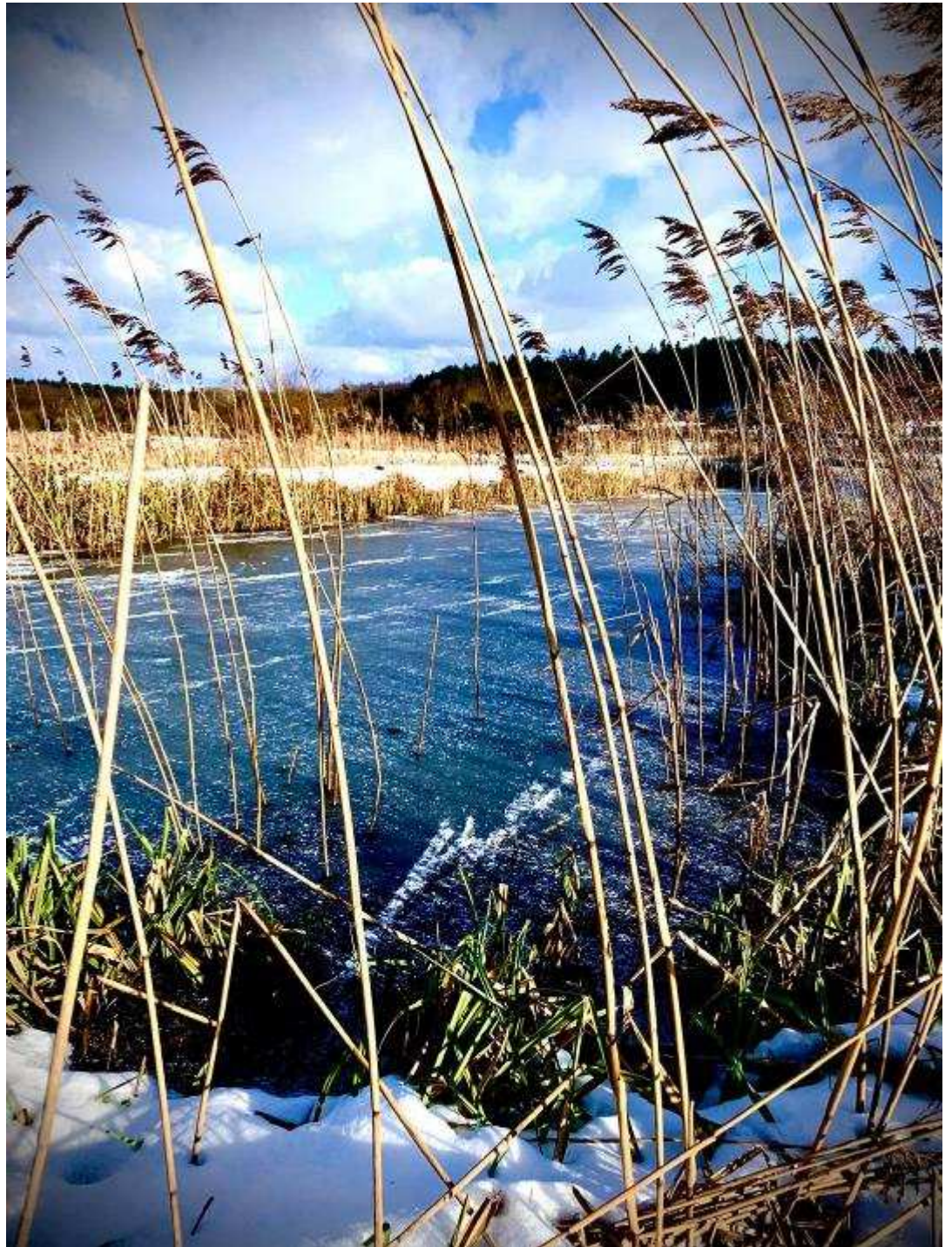
MAY 2021

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**£2**

## *Icy Day on the Canal*



**Shaun Marshall 12 February 2021**

May 2021

# Roy Webster

As briefly announced in our last edition, former football and fishing journalist Roy Webster, who wrote hundreds of thousands of words for publication in the Eastern Daily Press and its sister papers across more than 50 years, had died aged 87.

Roy, who died on Monday 18th January, wrote angling columns and fishing match results well into his 80s. He tackled both standard 'biggest fish' stories, but also controversial and complex issues in the fishing world such as proposed otter culls, the theft of large quantities of silver fish as bait, and the declining numbers of rod licences. He was well known among family and friends for having strong views on these and many other topics, and was never shy of a vigorous debate, often at the bar of his local, the Crown in Smallburgh.

In 2004, at the age of 71, Roy's Wroxham Football Club reports gained worldwide fame when he was banned from the ground by the club after a disagreement, but continued to collate his reports from the top of a ladder in a friend's garden next to the ground, notebook and pen in hand.

The club and Roy resolved the dispute, but only after more than 200 days of Roy 'up a ladder', during which time he was the subject of international newspaper and television reports, and live radio coverage.

Roy was born in 1933 to Ernie and Joyce, in a house in Dilham, near North Walsham, with no electricity and no running water. He was brought up with a 'make do and mend' mentality which continued to serve him well throughout his life, despite success in various businesses.

His future football journalism days were preceded by being a talented centre half, despite his relatively diminutive height of 5 foot 8 inches. He played for Dilham Football Club, but was also offered a trial with Notts County and played RAF Representative football, which was a notable achievement in the 1950s, but particularly so as the only team member on National Service.

Roy's National Service days may have taken a very different turn when he was asked to join a special forces unit on the basis of various evident skills including his marksmanship, only to fall short of the relatively simple swimming test – because he was terrified of being in the water following a childhood water trauma.

Despite that fear of swimming, Roy's future fishing journalism days were based on a keen interest in angling. As well as being a talented fisherman, which saw him catch both for the table during wartime and post-war rationing, as well as latterly for sport, he became an administrator of angling matches.

His fishing interests turned into a niche and successful business breeding and distributing maggots to East Anglian fishing shops. He supplied outlets well known among the fishing fraternity, including leading regional tackle dealers Tommy Boulton and John Wilson.

Roy worked as an accountant for the Alexander family at Westwick. He was an astute gardener, proudly producing new potatoes every spring a month before most people thanks to various tricks, including rising at 2am on frosty mornings to spray his tender potato leaves with water to prevent damage from the cold.

He loved the green baize and enjoyed many successful evenings playing poker, Nap and dominoes. In the last few months of his life, he earned the mantle of author when some of his writings about growing up in rural Norfolk – particularly his fishing and wildlife adventures around the North Walsham and Dilham Canal – were turned into a book called *Adventures of the Boy Roy*, the first print run selling out within a fortnight. A second print run is currently being processed.

Roy was hugely grateful to the staff of Heron Lodge in Wroxham, the care home where he spent the last few weeks of his life, writing that "every person employed here displays a wonderful, unselfish attitude of undeniable dedication".

Roy is survived by wife Patsy, children Gay, Will, Tom, Charlie and Kim, and 10 grandchildren.

A private family-only funeral was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> February. And donations were be made to <https://roywebster.muchloved.com/> all being donated to the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust





The Boy Roy and his Old Man gently quanted their ancient weather-beaten wooden row boat through the lush green beds of rushes. Suddenly, they were there, in the open water of the once busy Dilham Staithe where small wherries once frequently traded animal and sometimes human foodstuffs via local water ways such as the NWD Canal, the River Ant and the ancient Dilham Cut long before road and rail transport became the dominant, cheapest and fastest means of wholesale delivery of bulk necessities. However, father and son were not there to admire the decaying ancient corn transporter abandoned in the overgrown Staithe moorings. It was the early evening of Saturday June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1945 - the first day of

a brand new peaceful fishin season following the Allies May 8th nationwide VE day celebrations of hugely relieved populations. And thanks to the Americans, Worldwide peace that year was also assured in the Far East and celebrated on VJ day, August 14.

Before the war the Old Man had spent many a happy hour in the staithe, boat fishing among heavy shoals of bream. Question was: after more than five years of deadly conflict throughout the northern hemisphere were those splendid specimens still there? Father and son clearly were mustering a family intention to find out.

During hostilities boat anglers were considered too easy a machine gun target for low flying enemy aircraft on daylight air raids, the strict advice was to remain on dry land where there was nearby cover. So for the duration of war the Old man and Boy visited the bank of fertile waters of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal where, for much of the year, leafy trees and bushes thrived from Dilham to Honing providing an ideal green camouflage canopy against the pilot of a low flying Luftwaffe Messerschmitt seeking to target human activity. But now, after a hopefully successful Saturday evening angling at the Staithe, the next big peace plan was to revisit to their favoured war time Canal hotspot, this time by row boat early on the Sunday morning.

Although trading had long ceased, the Dilham Staithe remained very much alive. Reed warblers flitted actively to and from one precarious water borne perch to another. Resident moorhens were muttering moodily at the human disturbance of the natural habitat they called home before a pair of swans with five freshly hatched cygnets in tow, paddled up targeting their unmistakable hissing displeasure at the human interlopers.

Despite a public right of way there was no visible sign of recent human activity on the staithe only frequent sounds suggesting civilisation was not far away. These indications, reverberating on the evening air, were repeated dull thuds suggesting wood was striking wood. The Old man responded instantly to the Boy's unsaid question. "The lads have started playing bowls again at the Cross Keys pub at the top of Mill road. What you can hear is one bowl crashing into another on route to the Jack. It is the welcoming sound of peace arriving in the village!"

After manoeuvring the boat to within easy casting distance to the clear weed free lagoon fringed by flat, fresh green lilies, the Old Man dropped anchor - a home-made contraption of concrete set in a rusty metal bucket attached to wagon rope. Aside from rolling and lighting up a best St. Julian tobacco cigarette and inhaling deeply he sat stock still while focussing the surface for signs of feeding fish as the sun sank lower towards the Western horizon tree tops.

Within minutes he had his answer. For where he had earlier ground baited clear swims with a rich appetising menu of hens layers mash and porridge oats laced with red worms and fly larvae, masses of pin head bubbles continued to surface, with no other explanation beyond the certainty that the bream were feed-

ing ravenously.

Baiting pre-war on catgut size eight hooks with lob worm tails, red topped float tackle was gently cast into the bubbling hot spot. It was instant action. Father and Son saw their floats quiver, lay flat and plunge from view, resulting in two sizable common bream being played almost simultaneously into waiting landing nets and carefully hoisted aboard. Both were transfixed by the wonderful, deep bronze quality of two four pound plus specimens with not a single scale out of place..

"We are not taking these two beauties home for the ferrets" declared the Old Man sternly, "They are going back in". Their total catch, all returned alive, that peaceful Saturday evening, amounted to a dozen quality bream, a massive bream/roach hybrid and a pristine solitary 2 lb red finned rudd that had seized a worm bait on the drop. Thus they had achieved and enjoyed a great start to a brand new season of peace and tranquillity.

Sunday, rising at sun up and bristling with unbridled enthusiasm, the pair had tackled up in their trusty old boat. By now the Old Man was rowing the vessel urgently from the Home Cut and into the NWD Canal leading to the ancient Tonnage Bridge where tolls were once levied on water borne traders. However, village rumour suggested the Army was in the vicinity, Saturday, dismantling and removing the defensive war time explosives that had been embedded in the foundations of local bridges. So, was the whole site, including the canal, currently out of bounds to civilians while the risky work was in progress?

As the outline of the bridge appeared through the early morning mist, the Old Man shipped oars and produced an ancient pair of binoculars recently purchased in job lot at the Stalham Tuesday auction market

"What's happening, Pop." enquired the Boy Roy in urgent tone.

"Well, as far as I can make out the Ack Ack gun is gone, some cement work has recently been done on the brick work just above the water line and, more to the point, there are no officials or warning notices in sight. We are going through", declared the Old Man confidently.

"But where to", wondered 12 year old out loud. He most certainly did not want to mix it with a herd of mooing visitors at a cattle drink bordering the grazing marsh.

"Do not concern yourself, young man" smiled the contented Old Man who had managed to escape intact from World War One service and remained eternally thankful he had missed the draft into World War Two by a mere 8 months and instead was recruited as night time village fire watcher

"We are going to fish the wide bend where the East Ruston Cut enters the Canal. There were usually massive shoals of fish there before the war".

That decided he headed for dry land and moored up to the trunk of a water side alder. "Today we are going to fish from the bank at the head of that bend" he responded to a quizzical frown from his son. "That way we will not scare the fish population to move off. Bring that bucket of ground bait please. There is a bit of flow so we will bait up at the head of the swim and cast downstream where the ingredients will settle. We are opting to fish bread, maggot or worm baiting size 12 hooks on three medium lead shot float tackle and note the response to learn which food the fish prefer. In addition we shall use the keep nets I made from that old discarded eel sett"

With the Old Man filling the upstream berth and dealing with a regular planned ground baiting strategy, angling hopes began to rise steeply when two skimmer bream were netted within minutes by Boy Roy. Then it was fish for fish hooked by the delighted, care free bream anglers whose senior correctly judged that releasing their catch well downstream every hour was a major contribution to course fish welfare and preservation. At the end of their eight hour new season, scintillating second shift, enjoying resumed peaceful piscatorial pleasures, interrupted only to munch down a carefully packed lunch, it was estimated their two day aggregate of mainly bream exceeded 100 lbs, all returned alive and well to their natural habitat and fit to fight another day.

Needless to say the anglers' oven ready Sunday evening meal had been simmering for more than a further two hours by the time they stepped ashore and deposited their fishing gear in the outhouse. For once the Old Man could not reproduce his age old excuse "I had a puncture in my back wheel!" He just kept mum... .. waiting! 🌀

## From the Chair - David Revill

Welcome to another edition of your favourite Canal Magazine! A good deal has transpired since the previous issue, and you will notice several changes have been made as regards names and positions. After nearly twenty years' work on the canal, I've been elected interim chairman. *Quagmire* editor Ivan Cane has also assumed some of the interim roles, and I truly thank him for his continued work on the canal and Trust's mutual behalf.

I must also express my heartfelt gratitude to those who have left their posts.

Firstly, Tom Carr, for his work as the Chair, and who carried us forward to this time. His very impressive knowledge of land issues has been a superb support to me over the years, and thankfully he says that he will continue in this role.

Then to Mark Shopland, Work Party Organiser (WPO), who came to us a few years ago with his outstanding practical awareness of site workings, and led the Trust into a more legally-appreciative state as we commenced construction work. Mark was also instrumental in raising many hundreds of pounds in his capacity as Grants Officer.

Nigel Lloyd, District Councillor, took on the multi-faceted task of Administrator, which included giving talks about the Canal to local organisation and clubs.

Graham Eckersley, whom I have known since the 1970s through the IWA, looked after the agendas and meetings minutes in an exemplary fashion.

There are some changes in roles, too! The WPO will go, and is to be replaced with a Work Party Co-ordinator (WPC). Our several Work Party Leaders (WPL), who know the skills and capabilities of their particular group of volunteers, will initiate more of the work tasks, reporting back to the WPC. They, in turn, will assist diarying, procurement, gaining permissions, recording and reporting.

On the financial side, I thank Julie Kelleher (ICT) and Barry Mobbs (Treasurer) for their work in setting up the PayPal scheme for the Trust. This means that making membership and donation contributions will be more straightforward. Donations can already be made via a phone using the QR method at Ebridge.

Owing to the wonderful work of all concerned in presenting the canal to the general public far and wide, our Membership is increasing. At this point, I am very pleased to welcome back Andrea Lamyman as Membership Secretary. Through her diligence, her workload will, in one sense, be eased by connections through the PayPal scheme.

As incoming Administrator, I warmly welcome John Paul. John has already taken up the reins in a professional manner, and will, I am confident, be a real asset to the Trust. He is also taking up the post of Grants Officer.

Considerable efforts are made behind the scenes in, to me, the weird and wonderful world of the internet. Here, I thank Darren of Broadland Computers in Stalham for his expertise, assistance and co-operation with Julie Kelleher.

The Trust is always in need of more helpers! At the time of writing, we are looking for someone to undertake the duties of Work Party Co-ordinator on a more permanent basis, permitting the current interim holder - Graham Pressman - to continue his other work for the Trust. Any offers for these positions would be gratefully received and considered. Thank you, in anticipation!

In conclusion, I thank *you all* - our members, volunteers, Trustees and Officers - for your ongoing support of our cause to get the North Walsham and Dilham Canal fully useable once more. 🌀



## Nature Watch along the Canal with Suki, Stu & Tom

### 'Mini-meadow' Conservation at Bacton Wood Lock

In 2019 I wrote a short item in my Wildlife Officer's Report about a special habitat not found elsewhere along the Canal: it's what I call the 'mini-meadow', and lies just north-east of Bacton Wood Lock (Grid Ref TG 29903076) on some of Laurie Ashton's land. Laurie stripped this area of its topsoil a few years ago to use as fill elsewhere, revealing the sandy subsoil beneath; and this then developed an attractive dry-grassland type of flora. By 2019 it had become a delightful small species-rich meadow with Creeping and Common Bent, Chalk Knapweed, Sweet Vernal-grass, Meadow Vetchling, Lesser Stitchwort, and Germander Speedwell – several of which are species

I haven't seen in the rest of the Canal corridor. The site is fringed by Hawthorn and Bramble scrub, which adds to its value as a habitat; and its south-west edge borders the (currently dry) Canal bed in the form of sand 'mini-cliffs', which are also an interesting habitat in their own right. The dry-grassland, deep-magenta subspecies of Common Vetch – *Vicia sativa* ssp *nigra* - grows here, as well as Blue Fleabane. The 'cliffs' are also home to some unusual mosses, and to ground-nesting bees.

However, by late 2020 it was clear that the meadow part of the site was losing its species-richness due to the strong growth of Creeping Bent. It was also starting to be colonised by other competitive species like Cock's-foot, Broad-leaved Dock, and

Brambles. It therefore looked like it needed cutting and raking-off in order to retain some of its desirable dry-grassland character. So – with Laurie's kind permission to do this - I put out a call for help which was kindly answered by volunteers Chris Heath and Terry Willoughby; and on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 we cut-and-collected the mini-meadow with the Trust's robust DR rotary mower (Chris found a Lizard while removing a lump of concrete from the grass – nice to see). Over the coming growing season I'll monitor the site to see if this operation has subdued the competitive species and allowed the desirable dry-grassland ones to thrive. If it has, it should be worth while continuing to do an annual early-autumn cut in the hope that the meadow can retain some species-richness. 🌀

**Suki Pryce**



Sand 'mini-cliffs' with Blue Fleabane *Erigeron acer*



Sand 'mini-cliffs' with Buddleja and Tansy





## NW&DC birds Jan to Apr 2021

As I write this towards the end of April I've seen or been told of 71 species of birds on, along or above the canal so far in 2021. A list is below. There's probably been more that I've not heard about. I'd expect fairly common birds like red-legged partridge, tawny owl, red kite, fieldfare, yellowhammer etc. to have been sighted so if you've seen these or anything else along the canal let the committee know so their records are up to date.

The arrival of the spring migrants along the canal began with chiffchaffs in early March and sand martins followed at the end of the same month. Swallows began arriving in early April with blackcaps, house martins and sedge warblers being spotted from the middle of the month.

I've not seen or heard of any grasshopper warbler, willow warbler, common whitethroat, lesser white-throat or cuckoos at the canal yet, but they shouldn't be long as they're being reported elsewhere. Reed warblers will soon join the sedge warblers in and around the reed beds, and garden warblers will hopefully be heard singing from deep in trees and bushes, trying hard not to be seen. During May the first swifts will begin to join the martins and swallows hunting insects over the canal, or skimming the water for a drink. Listen out for their shrill 'screams'.

Of course there's always the chance another rarity will turn up like the Blythe's reed warbler of last year, or maybe one of the magnificent white tailed eagles that have been visiting Norfolk recently will make a fly by! 🌀

**Stu Buck**



Sedge Warbler 19 Apr 21 SB



Chiffchaff 4 Apr 21 SB

Barn Owl	Greenfinch	Pheasant
Blackbird	Grey Heron	Pied Wagtail
Blackcap	Grey Wagtail	Redwing
Black-headed Gull	Greylag Goose	Reed Bunting
Blue Tit	Herring Gull	Robin
Bullfinch	House Martin	Rook
Canada Goose	Jackdaw	Sand martin
Carriion Crow	Jay	Sedge Warbler
Cetti's warbler	Kestrel	Siskin
Chaffinch	Kingfisher	Skylark
Chiffchaff	Lapwing	Snipe
Coal Tit	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Song Thrush
Collared Dove	Lesser Redpoll	Sparrowhawk
Common Buzzard	Linnet	Starling
Common Gull	Little Egret	Stock Dove
Cormorant	Little Grebe	Stonechat
Curlew	Long-tailed Tit	Swallow
Duncock	Magpie	Treecreeper
Feral Pigeon	Mallard	Water rail
Goldcrest	Meadow Pipit	Wigeon
Goldfinch	Mistle Thrush	Woodcock
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Moorhen	Woodpigeon
Great Tit	Mute Swan	Wren
Green Woodpecker	Nuthatch	

## The Closed Season

The closed season for anglers is thought to be one of the longest running laws in British history. It is possible the idea was inspired by the Game Act 1831, which imposed similar restrictions on various breeds of bird. The law was introduced under the Freshwater Fisheries Act 1878 so fish could complete the "procreation of their species in peace and quiet" from March 15 until June 15. It's a common misconception that because it's a Canal, the closed season doesn't apply, but this is not the case for the North Walsham and Dilham Canal as it is connected to the River and the FF Act applies.

The annual close season helps to protect fish stocks across England when they are spawning by preventing fishing for coarse fish in rivers, streams, drains and specified canals, as well as the 'site of special scientific interest' (SSSI) stillwaters. The closed season causes a "great" debate amongst anglers and there is support in some quarters for it ending but a recent public consultation by the Environment Agency resulted with "Taking the available evidence into account, the Environment Agency has decided to retain the current close season". I for one support this, mainly because I feel there is something special about the glorious 16th June and the exciting build up to finally taking your first cast.

One of my first duties when starting as the Trusts Fisheries Officer was to introduce a lengthened pike closed season (March to September) as they are early spawners and despite its fierce reputation pike are incredibly vulnerable during spawning and the summer months with warmer water and low oxygen levels. The Trust was one of the early organisations to start this and its gaining further support following scientific research at the University of Hull and relating to the oxygen levels of the waters at different temperatures and many other waters and clubs are now starting to implement additional pike protections. 🌀

**Tom Webster**



## A SPRING WALK ALONG THE CANAL



On a walk along the Canal, in March, Stu Buck noticed both frog and toad spawn,



a large number of fish basking near Spa Common, a grass snake swimming and a single crayfish crawling along the stream bed. Three pike were also spotted, two near Spa Common - but most unexpectedly a third near to Pigney's Wood. 🌀



## Membership Matters

Whilst January was a little quiet on the new member front, we were delighted to welcome Sue from Norwich and Isabelle and family from Mundesley. By contrast, February was far busier with new members Steve and family from Shrewsbury, Richard and family from Harleston, Jane and family from North Walsham, Kevin from Marshgate, Roy from Mansfield and Kevin from Tunstead. In March we welcomed Pam from Colchester, John from Walcott, Polly, Stuart and family and Terry and Christine from North Walsham. So far, in April we have been joined by Jonathan from Marsham, Mathew and family from Stalham, James and family from Salhouse and Lyn from Tasburgh. As always we would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new members.

We are very close to launching our new membership platform. Please look out for an email in the next week or two, giving you a link to review your own membership data.

Please bear with us as we migrate across to this new platform. Every effort is being made to ensure the data is correct. Should you spot any inaccuracies or have any queries as to your membership record, please do not hesitate to email me at [membership@nwdct.org](mailto:membership@nwdct.org).

We hope very much that once the new Membermojo platform is up and running it will provide a more streamlined process both for new members and renewals, allowing application and payment to be made in one process. Since we started to offer an online membership application form, we have found, occasionally, that forms have been submitted but payment of subs has been overlooked. In recent months, a couple of new members have paid subs online but have not submitted a membership application form! This latter situation is more difficult to resolve as I have no contact details for these individuals! So, if you know of any friends or acquaintances who have recently joined by paying subs via electronic bank transfer to the NW&DCT, but have received no acknowledgement, *Quagmire* magazine or welcome pack, please do encourage them to email me, so that I can put this right! ☺

**Andrea Lamyman**

## Pennywort Update

The Internal Drainage Board and the Broad's Authority are continuing to monitor their specific areas, the IDB looking at the Wayford Bridge, Chapelfield and Broad Fen areas, with the BA sweeping the River Ant from Wayford Bridge to Barton Broad. The BA's Ant rangers are also recording any patches that they are finding and removing them where they can. April to October is the main growth time, with the peak around June. During this time the BA operations have put two days a month for monitoring and removal, in addition to the Rangers' work. Extra resources are to be deployed on identified key target areas. Reporting any signs that you see along the Canal, sokes or nearby rivers continues to be vital. Plus users of any parts of the Canal and Broads system must abide by the CHECK CLEAN DRY? Code. ☺



**REMEMBER, ALWAYS CHECK - CLEAN - DRY.**  
 CHECK YOUR RODS, BOATS, BOARD, PADDLES, AND KIT  
 FOR FRAGMENTS OR CREATURES THAT HAVE USED  
 YOUR KIT TO MAKE A NEW HOME.  
 CLEAN YOUR EQUIPMENT BY THE SIDE OF THE WATER  
 YOU'VE JUST BEEN USING IF YOU CAN.  
 DRY YOUR KIT THOROUGHLY BEFORE GOING ON AN-  
 OTHER WATERWAY.



Little Egrets 20 Feb 21 SB



Chaffinch 11 Apr 21 DC



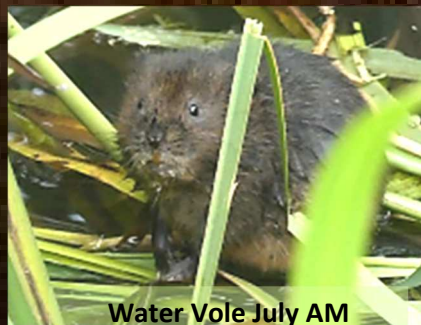
Peacock butterfly 19 Apr 21 AM



Common toad Feb 21 AML



Muntjac 20 Apr 21 OF



Water Vole July AM

The Canal & some of its inhabitants, with thanks to

Ebridge - Daryl Preston, 22 Feb 21. . Wildlife - Stu Buck, David Cossey, Trevor Hipperson, Olly Foster, Ann M

Quagmire





Buzzard 4 Apr 21 SB



Reed Bunting 4 Apr 21 SB



Pied Wagtail 20 Apr 21 OF



Red-eyed Damselfly June TH



Frogs 31 Mar 21 SB

# Boating News



Glennis Dillon

I can now say that we have *just* enough crew to run *Ella II* or *Sue B* for one trip on most days of the week. We would benefit from more people with either *Power Boat Level 2* or *Inland Waterways Helmsman* and *First Aid in the Workplace* certifications. If you do not have the First Aid Qualification, the Trust may be able to assist with training.

As you can tell, in the snowy scene above, *Ella II* has had some new woodwork along the sides, with thanks to David Burrell. She also has a brand new electric motor, with what seems to be a remarkably effective 'weedless' propeller. So far so good! If we need to do more than one trip each day, we will have to buy new batteries, one set of which is tired now. These have done three seasons for us. We're holding on to these for as long as we can, in order to defray the cost of about £200 for a new set. Any offers greatly appreciated!

The boat has had a general tidy up, is now awaiting a coat of white paint on the decks, and, maybe, some blacking round the hull. This is as I write on Wednesday, April 21st.

**Passenger boating started again on May 1st.** In order to comply with Covid rules and keep passengers and crew safe, we needed more space. A larger boat? I don't think so. We have two boats, shortage of



crew and only one of them is electric anyway! Solution? The same solution which E. C. Jones of Brentford came up with between 1948 and 1969. The *PUSHER* tug via a 'rigid push-tow'.

**BOOK Your Trip Now by Calling Graham on 07585 160 722**  
**Please see the website for full details.**



We had hoped to have *Weasel*, our dredger, (on lease from the OCC), by Autumn 2020. Much work was undertaken, but the circumstances of the year frustrated that hope, sadly. However, our volunteers are now back to complete the painting, inside and out. Other works - including the fitting of a different arm - are ongoing.

Is there anyone out there that would like the opportunity to paint a view of a weasel on the cabin side?

*Weasel's* work is much needed for the clearance of the silt at Spa Common, and enabling the trip boats to reach the Bacton Wood Lock.



GP



The *Weedeater* has been out of the water for the Winter, but is now back in. It's been used to rake up most of the floating weed around Ebridge Mill pond, which will most benefit the swimmers and the model boat owners.

*Sue B* is, as always, ready and able to run trips which include the need for wheelchair access for one person. This remarkable boat is flat-decked, so IS easy to board and depart in a wheelchair. At present, *Sue B* is powered by a petrol outboard, but with some sponsorship, she could be adapted to run an electric outboard.🌀

**Graham Pressman**



GP



## Archive Slot— Pleasure Boat Photo Album



Tonnage Bridge



Royston Bridge - W.Beauchamp



Edwardian group below Honing Lock



Wherry Elizabeth at Honing Lock -  
NWTArchive - Bob Malster



Unknown pleasure wherry at Bacton Wood Mill



Sailing canoe below B.W.Lock c 1907 -  
Sales Particulars.

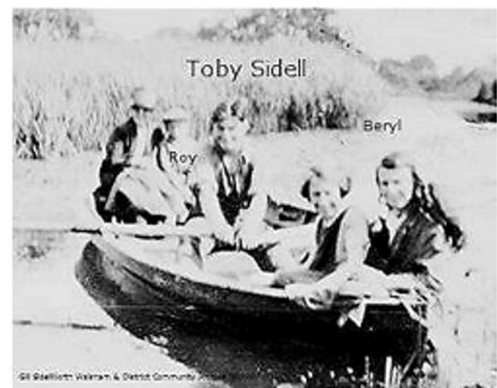




Sailing Boat Ebridge - Nigel Riseborough Woodhouse



Gran, Grandad and Uncle Sidney 1930 - NRW



Dilham Broad late 1920's - Gill Sidell



Cruiser 1930's Ebridge Reach, 1930's -NRW



Below Briggate, 1980's - Janetta Carlos-Lawrence



Ebridge Millpond 1930's - NRW



c1949 - Joyce Pycroft

## Work Party Report

Work Parties have resumed on the dates previously published. However, we'd like to be a little more flexible, by co-ordinating groups of up to six volunteers - all working at a safe distance under COVID-19 guidelines - with a Work Party Leader. The trickiest part of this is going to be organising these smaller groups, to address the reality of this appalling virus. Please would any volunteers with particular skills they'd like to put to good use, or with special areas of interest, drop me a line at [workparty@nwdct.org](mailto:workparty@nwdct.org), or on 07585 160 772. That way, your specific aptitudes can be used in the most effective way possible - I hope! These thoughts, feelings and preferences include every part of the project, from brick-laying, carpentry, electrical work, machine driving and operating, mechanics, grass-cutting, tree work, ditching and heavy labouring to directing the public away from, around or through risky works, managing the Units by way of tool maintenance, cleaning, organising, and lots more. You will know about this better than I do.

Trustees have decided to buy new and better equipment, as and when it is financially possible, so that volunteers have an easier time. Volunteer efforts are much appreciated. Please let us know of any, and all, equipment which is essential to these jobs, but which we don't have on the shelves. Anything from paint brushes and rollers to chain saws and brush cutters. Some of our existing apparatus is still 'in-date' and very serviceable, but some is embarrassingly out of date. We need to find a volunteer to keep our tools and equipment both sharp and serviced. You interested?

The culvert at Ebridge is nearing completion. The team have done a sterling job on it! Thanks must go out to all who have been involved. There's a lot more brickwork like that which needs to be done to complete the restoration of the canal. If you have those skills, please come and join us.

Path and bank maintenance are regular jobs undertaken by our volunteers. Grass has to be cut, weeds controlled, and special plant life encouraged and protected. Our little towpath tractor is a vital tool in this regard. More important than the tractor are its drivers. Countless hours are invested every season. I encourage the public to be alert as they approach any machinery on the bank, and for them to be aware that they are volunteer-operated by people who do this free of charge, giving of their own time. Be patient and be careful. It is as much the responsibility of the public to mind their own



*Frank, Jonathan & Callum taking a welcome break - Glennis Dillon*

safety and that of our drivers as it is for the operators to think of the public.

The operating gear on the bottom gates of Bacton Wood lock has now been fitted by Lake and Nichols of North Walsham. They've done a fine job. The original methods, casting iron to size and shape are long behind us now. They have used such original parts as Laurie has been able to save, along with modern methods to replace the lost parts. Yet another brilliant piece of engineering! All we need now is to demonstrate the capacity to retain water above the lock and allow it to fill. Does anybody want to buy us a nice bridge for the public to cross from Footpath 19 on the west side to the permissive path on the east? It'd be a cool £40k...approximately! 🤖

**Graham Pressman - Interim Work Party Co-ordinator**



*G.Pressman*



## ICT Notes

The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust is excited to advise that we have joined the 20<sup>th</sup> century using technology to help collect donations.

On our website – [www.nwdct.org](http://www.nwdct.org) – under the SUPPORT US section we have a DONATE button which opens a PayPal screen BUT you do not need a PayPal account to make a donation, you can pay using your own credit/debit card.

We're also looking forward to having an online membership system that will allow you make payments automatically, this is currently being managed by our Membership Secretary. Andrea tells you more about this on page 9.

If you have a Facebook account we have lots of information and photographs, many used in this edition of Q, from those that visit the Canal. Join us in our Facebook group by using the following link – [www.Facebook.com/groups/www.nwdct.org](https://www.Facebook.com/groups/www.nwdct.org)

Below is a 'How to' showing how make a donation using our new QR code ,which appears on information posters at Ebridge. Our thanks to all who have already used the code to donate during its first week of operation. Why not try it now?🌀

**Julie Kelleher**



Most new smart phones include a QR reader, if not you may download the app for your:

- Android device from Google Play
- Apple device from the Apple Store

After installation of the application point your smartphone camera at our new QR code, follow any prompts. This will initiate a PayPal window displaying:

**Donate to  
North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust**

**All donations go toward the canal restoration project**

**You may make a donation of**

**£3.00**

**£10.00**

**£20.00**

**or another amount**

You can make a 'donation with your debit/credit card' or pay via your own PayPal account.

*The Trust thanks you very much for your donation.*

**Press Date for the September 2021 edition of *Quagmire* is Monday 23rd August.**

**Please keep those articles and photos coming in, to: [qeditor@nwdct.org](mailto:qeditor@nwdct.org)**

## Waters Elsewhere - Ashby Canal

Although Millington was the NW&DC's Engineer, much of the structural design was thanks to the contractor, Benjamin Pashley. Despite the Canal being built on a modern, 19thC cut-and-fill model, the structures were distinctively 18thC. No platforms for the lock-beam pushers, nor towpaths under bridges, and an absence of stop plank provisions.

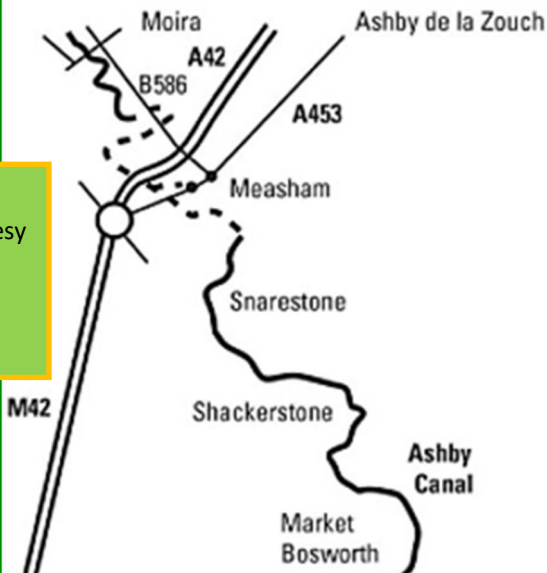
Stop planks have two main functions, to stank off a section of canal or lock for maintenance pur-

poses and to lessen damage in times of a breach. As such, the Trust has installed stop plank grooves at the top ends of Bacton Wood and Ebridge locks, with the bottom ends still to do. In the case of BW, the planks, positioned one by one, will allow the refilling of the pound to be staged.

The top eight miles of the Ashby Canal, over in the Midlands, were closed in the 1960's. The Ashby Canal Association had been working closely with Leicestershire CC and others, to re-instate the length, with a mile restored at Moira, and a

length with a new terminus linking to the C&RT Canal at Snarestone.

Map courtesy Ashby Canal Assoc.



In 2016, the LCC had contractors install a culvert along this new length. On November 29th, 2020, the culvert breached - putting thirty-six miles of canal wa-



ters at risk of being emptied over the surrounding countryside. Fortunately, a resident lengthsmen, with the help of volunteers, some paddleboarders and the local farmer, were able to install stop planks. By 2pm, the flow of water from the canal had been stemmed. Repairs were expected to start on April 6th.

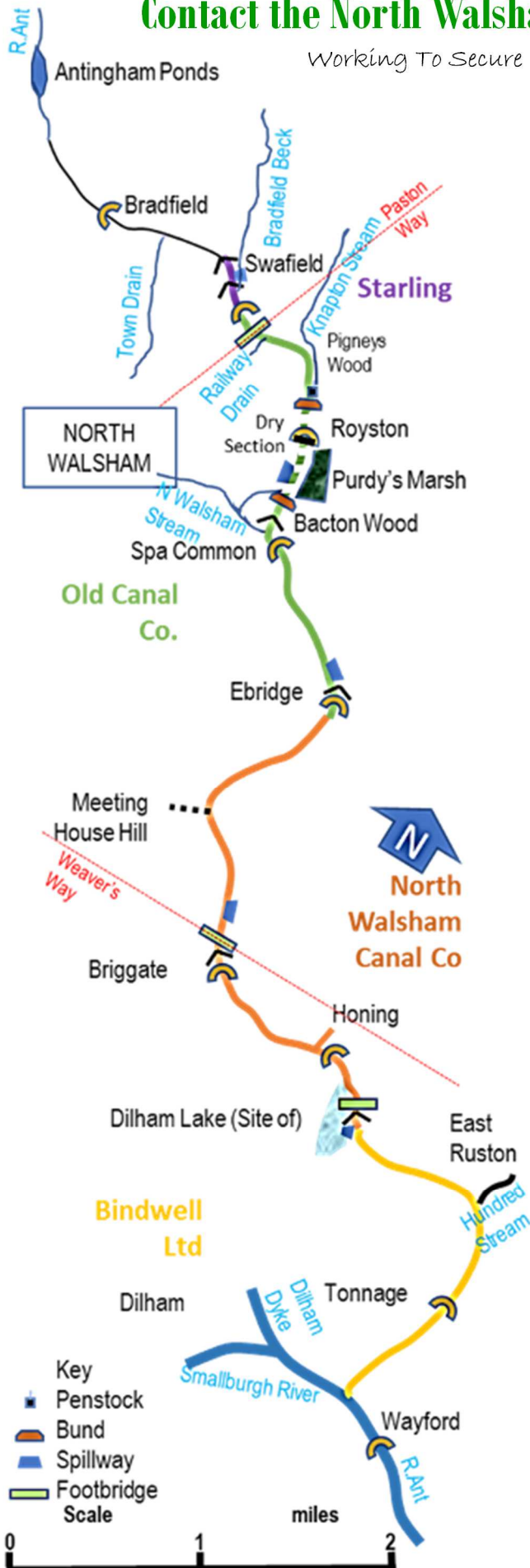
**With thanks to the Ashby Canal Association ([ashbycanal.org.uk](http://ashbycanal.org.uk)) and Michael Wooding. Dramatic footage can be seen on Michael's FB Pages for November 30th.**





# Contact the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust CIO

Working To Secure Norfolk's Canal Heritage



**North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust CIO**  
**Unit 4 Bacton Wood,**  
**Anchor Road,**  
**Spa Common,**  
**North Walsham,**  
**NR28 9AJ**

Registered Charitable Incorporated  
 Organisation No 1180474

## Email the Trust's Officers:

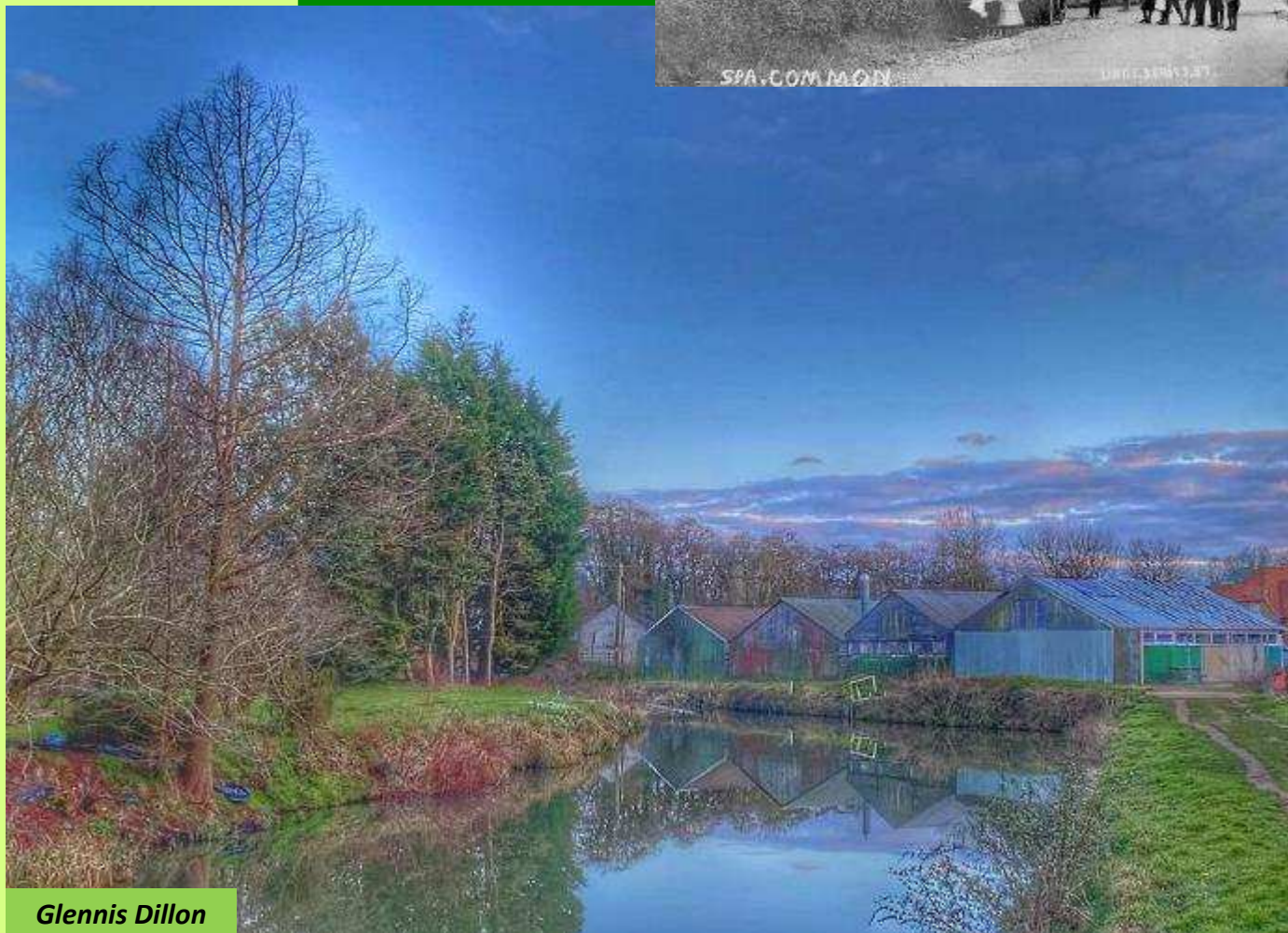
Chair - David,	chair@nwdct.org
Membership - Andrea,	membership@nwdct.org
General Information,	secretary@nwdct.org
Boat Trips - Graham,	boating@nwdct.org
Fishing - Tom,	fishing@nwdct.org
Grants - John,	grants@nwdct.org
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Treasurer - Barry,	treasurer@nwdct.org
Media - James,	press@nwdct.org
Archivist (EAWA) - Ivan	archivist@nwdct.org

## A3

**For copies of the Trust's Access Map of the Canal - showing access points, car parks, pubs etc on one side, and an O.S map with enlarged sections showing the locks, on the reverse, e-mail the editor - £1 + £1 p& p.**

# Bacton Wood Units

c1918 - Wayne Beauchamp



Glennis Dillon



*Unit 4, Bacton Wood*, has now become the registered address of the Trust. The units are not always seen as the prettiest of sights, but Glennis' photo has, here, shown them in a different light.

As we can see from Wayne's c.1918 image, the units have been around for well over a century. They were apparently used as a silo for the mill - hence their address - although, being on Anchor Road in Spa Common. Note the wherry's mast behind the unit.

Unit 1 still has the remains of a gantry reaching over the Canal. 🌀