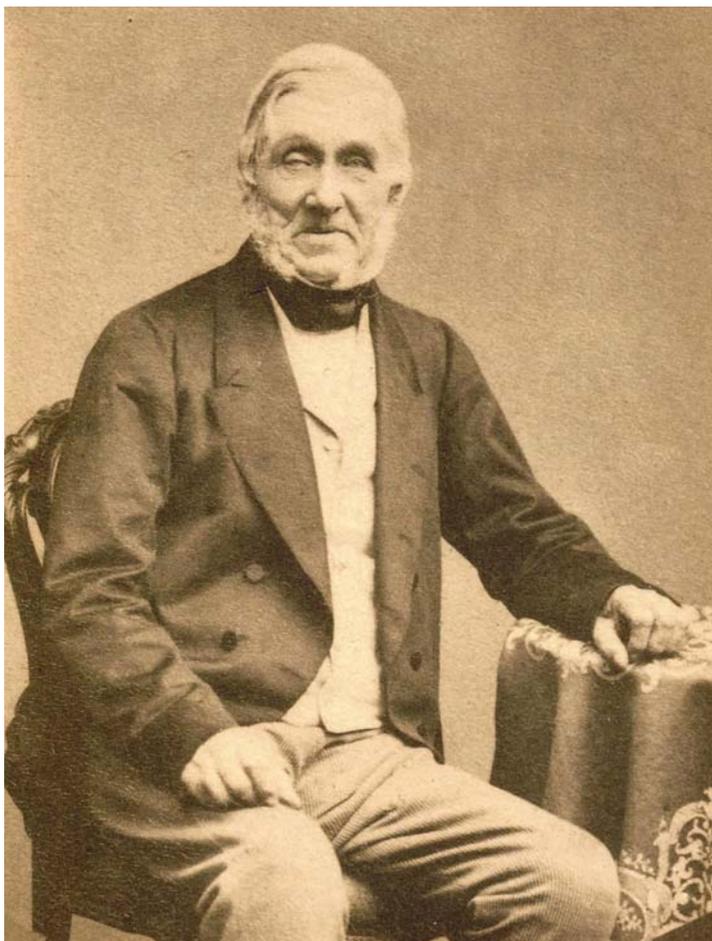


**DOUBLE NINE**  
**POCKLINGTON CANAL**  
**AMENITY SOCIETY**  
**BICENTENARY APPEAL ISSUE**



**SPRING 2015**

**No. 106**

# THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY

Registered Charity 500637 [www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org](http://www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org)

Patrons The Earl of Halifax Neil Edwards

ERYC Representative Councillor C G W Mole

Hon Vice-President Mrs Sheila M Nix MBE

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**Note:** Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Society, unless so stated.

## WELCOME

Apologies for the late arrival of the Spring issue of Double Nine. Our Editor has not been well so I have put this issue together in a hurry. It contains details of our forthcoming Annual General Meeting and the Bicentenary Appeal that PCAS launched in February.

2015 marks the 200th anniversary of the Act of Parliament authorising the building of the Pocklington Canal. While struggling to find a suitable photo for the front cover, I remembered that we have a splendid picture of George Leather Jr, the canal engineer responsible for the Pocklington Canal. This was kindly donated to PCAS by Martin Leather, one of his descendants.

In this issue, Paul Waddington, our Chairman, gives a roundup of past and forthcoming events and explains about the PCAS Bicentenary Appeal to extend navigation to Bielby, with the intention of completing the work by 2018. We very much have the support of the Canal & River Trust, which is hardly surprising because the restoration project had originally formed part of an unsuccessful Lottery bid developed in partnership and submitted by the Trust.

Dick Watson outlines what he and his group of working party volunteers have been doing during the past year. Refurbishing the weed-cutting boat has taken up a lot of time but hopefully it will be in good working order during the season, especially since we are expecting boats visiting in July for our first boat rally for years.

There are some old photos in this issue of Double Nine, together with a request to let us borrow any interesting photos you could lend to PCAS. The cover photo provides one example. Roger Bromley was given the photo and it has joined our collection of historic photos

The plan to redesign a swingbridge to make it look similar to what was there in the early 20th century is explained in this issue. This project forms part of the Lottery bid led by the Canal & River Trust and was inspired by another old photo, also included in this magazine. An earlier example of reintroducing a heritage feature was the installation of traditional wheel-operated paddlegear at restored locks, rather than using modern hydraulic paddlegear.

Debbie Smith, our Membership Coordinator, has included a request for members' current email addresses. It would have been useful if we could have contacted all members by email to let them know the date of the AGM and that the magazine would be later than usual. Email addresses will only be used by PCAS and not passed on to any other organisation.

I have reproduced some of the kind comments from the visitors' book we keep on our trip boat *New Horizons*. Boat trips restarted at Easter and we got off to a great start, thanks to good weather on two of the three days that the boat was running.

Details of the AGM are on page 19. Please come if you can and find out what is happening during our bicentenary year.

*Alistair Anderson*

## **CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN**

As 2015 is the bicentenary of the passing of the Act of Parliament that authorised the building of the Pocklington Canal, the society has planned a number of events to take place during this landmark year. One that has already taken place was a pie and peas supper held at Melbourne Village Hall on 6th February. Adrian and Rowena Lovett gave a wonderful presentation on their experiences with the Jubilee Sailing Trust. The event was much enjoyed by about 90 people and raised more than £600 for our Bicentenary Appeal.

### **BICENTENARY APPEAL**

Also in February, the society launched its bicentenary appeal. This is to raise funds to extend the navigable length of the canal from the present head of navigation at Melbourne to the junction of the Bielby Arm. The estimated cost of this project is £250,000, and the proposed works are described in more detail elsewhere in this magazine. The society has accumulated funds of about £80,000, and money continues to come in.

With a further £170,000 to raise, the society has a major task ahead on its hands. This is a far bigger sum than we have ever undertaken to raise before. We shall be spreading the appeal as widely as we can, in the neighbourhood of the canal, as well as seeking funds from charitable trusts and businesses. Nevertheless, I do ask readers to be as generous as they can in supporting this appeal. An appeal leaflet is enclosed.

### **HLF BID**

Our bicentenary appeal is designed to complement the scheme being promoted by the Canal and River Trust. Entitled, Pocklington Canal - A Gem in the Landscape. This is seeking to secure HLF funding and focuses on wildlife and heritage issues as well as making the canal more accessible to the public. Rachel Walker has been appointed as the Project Officer, and she will work on a number of reports and studies in readiness to submit the second stage of the application to HLF by November. The works will take place over a period of three years.

### **CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT SCHEME**

Within Natural England is a fund known as the Conservation Enhancement Scheme, to which sections within the organisation can bid for funds for specific projects. Simon Christian, their Conservation and Land Management Advisor, and good friend of our society, has been successful in obtaining £15,000 for weed cutting and bankside tree works in the Thornton to Melbourne pound. These works took place during February, using one specially designed craft to pull the reeds up by the roots and another to place them on the bank. The work was carried out by Aquatic Solutions of Rugby and the heavy duty amphibious machines can be seen on the facing page.

### **REED CLEARANCE BELOW TOP LOCK**

The two craft then transferred to the very heavily overgrown pound below Top Lock and spent a few days there removing reeds and creating an open channel. This part of the job was funded by the Friends of the Canal & River Trust, and supervised was by CRT themselves.



## VISIT OF WRG

The Waterway Recovery Group returned to the Pocklington Canal for a weekend work camp over the weekend of 13th to 15th February. Their primary task was to clear the bywash alongside Thornton Lock of reeds, and ensure that it is functioning before more major works start there. Some of the volunteers worked on this, whilst others worked near No 8 Swingbridge continuing the tree clearance that was started last winter. The purpose of this exercise is to let more light onto this section the canal, which should reduce shading and improve the biodiversity.

## BOAT RALLY

Arrangements are in hand for the Bicentenary Boat Rally to take place over the weekend of 25th and 26th July at Melbourne. The event is receiving enthusiastic support from the residents of the village, and we intend to involve them as much as we can. It is proposed that this event should coincide with a scarecrow weekend in the village of Melbourne. Anyone wishing to attend the rally with a boat should complete the application form which can be found on the society's website.

## GRAND BICENTENARY DRAW

Later in the year, we will be having a grand draw. Books of tickets will be distributed with the next issue of Double Nine.

## OTHER BICENTENARY EVENTS

Amongst the other events that we have planned to celebrate our bicentenary year is an all day fete to be held at Melbourne Village Hall on Sunday 24th May. A number of craft stalls have already been booked in, and it is intended to combine this with a treasure hunt in the village. Further details are currently being worked out.

Also, we are planning to stage an exhibition the Pocklington Arts Centre in September. This will deal with the history of the Pocklington Canal and we are currently looking for suitable exhibits and pictures to display. We have been invited to transfer the exhibition to Melbourne Village Hall once it has finished in Pocklington. Finally, we plan to have another pie and peas supper in October and the usual Sunday lunch in November.

## WEST WOLDS RADIO

A new local radio station based in Pocklington will shortly be opening up. We have been in touch with the people involved, and have every expectation that the station will be helping us in a big way to promote our bicentenary year. We have had much help in the past from Radio Humberside and Vixen 101, which is based in Market Weighton. Having a radio station actually based in Pocklington should be even more helpful.

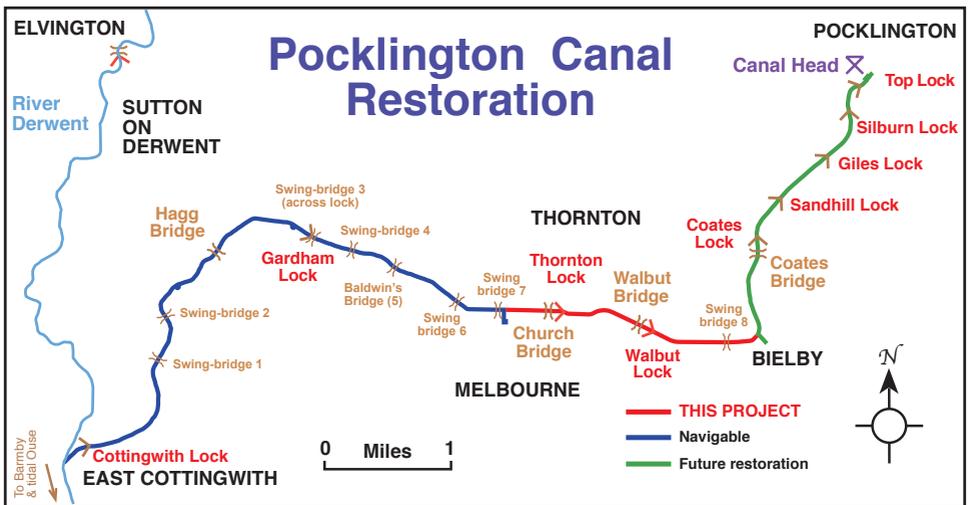
So there is a lot going on and we can look forward to a busy year. Anyone who would like to help out with any of these events is welcome to contact me. I am sure we will be able to find suitable jobs.

*Paul Waddington*

# MARKING THE BICENTENARY

Centenaries do not come around very often, so it is appropriate that we do something major to mark the Pocklington Canal's bicentenary. The building of the canal was authorised by Act of Parliament in May 1815, and the canal was completed and opened in 1818, so we have two opportunities for celebration, and we intend to celebrate them both. There will be a number of special events in both years, but we plan to have one major project that will span both dates.

This project, our Bicentenary Project, is to extend the navigable length of the canal from the present head of navigation at Melbourne to the junction with the Bielby Arm, a distance of about two miles. It will involve bringing Thornton and Walbut Locks into use, the provision of lock and bridge landings at three locations and a limited amount of dredging.



The length of canal to be restored is shown in red

Much work has been done at both Thornton and Walbut Locks since the society was formed in 1969. Thornton Lock was the site of many society working parties in the early 1970s and was worked on in the 1980s as a Community Programme scheme to help return young unemployed people back into work. Walbut Lock was restored largely by society volunteers in the early 1990s. Regrettably, it was not possible to bring these locks into use at the time that they were restored, because they were within Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and the necessary consents were not forthcoming. In recent years, Natural England has been willing to grant consents, enabling the society to develop the present scheme.

Although both Thornton and Walbut Locks were regated when they were restored, the lock gates have deteriorated to such an extent in the intervening period (about 25 and 20 years respectively), that the decision has been taken to replace them completely. The option of repairing them was considered, but it was not thought to be a

satisfactory long term solution. There are also some works, for example the provision of additional escape ladders, that are needed to bring the locks up to CRT's latest safety standards. Since the works will be necessary below water level at both locks, some means will have to be found of damming them off before the water is pumped out. Various methods are currently being considered, but, however it is done, considerable expense will be involved.

Compared with the work at the locks, the other components of the scheme are relatively straightforward, as they can be done with the water at its normal level. For most of the length, there is sufficient water depth for navigation, although there are lengths, amounting to around 100 metres, that will require dredging. Landings will be provided below Thornton Lock and at No8 Swingbridge.

Some of the works will be carried out by volunteers, and, by the time this article is published,

the Waterway Recovery Group will have completed some preliminary work clearing the bywash at Thornton Lock. Contractors will be used for other works. I am pleased to be able to report that the Canal & River Trust will be supporting the scheme and helping to keep the costs down by giving professional advice free of charge and providing other services at cost price.

Our estimate for the cost of these works is £250,000, and this figure has been verified as realistic by CRT engineers. The society has accumulated funds of around £80,000 that will be put towards the scheme, leaving about £170,000 to raise in the next two years. An appeal has been launched, which we have named the Bicentenary Appeal, and a copy of the appeal leaflet is enclosed with this magazine. I ask you all to give generously, and to encourage your friends to do the same.

*Paul Waddington*

## Restoration of the Pocklington Canal



**BICENTENARY  
APPEAL**  
**Target £250k**

**Further information about the appeal  
is in the leaflet sent with this magazine.**

## PCAS BICENTENARY BOAT RALLY

To commemorate the bicentenary of the Act of Parliament enabling the construction of the Pocklington Canal, a boat rally is to be held at Melbourne on the Pocklington Canal over the weekend of 25th/26th July 2015. This is the first boat rally to be held on the Pocklington Canal since 1987, when narrowboats from as far away as London took part in a rally to mark the extension of the navigable length to Melbourne..

The site is close to the village of Melbourne which has a short canal arm, but moorings will be in the main line of the canal , and so boats will require a boarding plank.

A range of low key events will be put on by the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society for boaters joining the rally, although it is thought that the main attraction will be pleasure of visiting a very quiet and rural canal at the extremity of the English canal system.

Boat owners interested in taking part in the rally can download an application form from PCAS's website, where further information is available. The entry fee for each boat is £20, which will include a brass plaque.

*Paul Waddington*



**A small boat rally at  
Melbourne Arm in 2003**

***New Horizons* made an  
appearance and started  
running regular trips the  
from the following Easter**

## The year's work on Pocklington Canal

The Working Party volunteers spent over 1200 hours helping the Canal & River Trust maintain Pocklington Canal. One major job was the towpath improvements between Giles Lock and Sandhill Lock, which involved working with the IWA Waterway Recovery Group for the first time for a number of years.

The other major achievement was the restoration and re-launching of the weedboat Sheila Nix. Unfortunately due to teething problems, not as much weedcutting as we would have liked got done, but boaters did say even a little made quite a difference, so the exercise was worth it. It is planned that the Canal & River Trust will complete the training of volunteers to operate the boat early in 2015.

We were helped with this project by the Stubbins family allowing us a site with electricity etc, which allowed us to progress quicker. A haulier helped transport it to Storwood and re-launch it at a very generous rate. We are again grateful to two local farmers for their generous help. Many other tasks were completed. Painting was neglected, so anybody keen on painting would be very welcome to join us in 2015.. The Canal & River Trust are reliant on volunteers, not having the manpower to keep the canal looking tidy and litter-free.

Volunteers have been trained to use strimmers by the Canal & River Trust and a horticultural tractor would be useful for working parties.

## 2014 at Canal Head

The site continues to be popular all week through winter and summer. The towpath improvements has seen more cyclists using this length.

Unfortunately the donations have been slightly down on last year but sales have improved slightly. We have also had more people volunteering to help man the Information Centre on Sundays and Bank Holidays. This is much appreciated.

*Dick Watson*

**The PCAS Information  
Centre at Canal Head  
reopens at Easter**



# *The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society*

**Chairman**

Paul Waddington, Church House  
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waddington@gooleboathouse.co.uk



Registered Charity 500637  
[www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org](http://www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org)

**Secretary**

Graham Ball, 5 Deans Lane, Pocklington  
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grahamball160739@hotmail.co.uk

Dear Member

## **KEEPING YOU UPDATED**

If you would like to receive regular updates by email – please can you confirm your email address by sending an email to the address below.

Many thanks

Kind regards

Debbie Smith

Pocklington Canal Amenity Society Membership Coordinator

14 Kilnwick Garth

Pocklington

York

YO42 2RQ

01759 306070

**[dejaysmith@btinternet.com](mailto:dejaysmith@btinternet.com)**

## WANTED – OLD PHOTOS



These photos are from an interesting collection of slides belonging to Sheila Nix MBE, our Honorary Vice President. We are grateful to PCAS member Graham Rollason for converting them to digital images. **Do you have any interesting slides or photos that we could borrow to make copies?**



The photo on the left is captioned: *Lock House Canal Head 1908/09 Walter, Alice (later Mrs Gray of Bielby) and Mrs Hutchinson (Hutchinsons had Lock House before Richardsons and it was pretty basic).*

Under this is a photo showing young men swimming in the canal above Silburn Lock in 1915. I recall Sheila explaining that residents of Pocklington learned to swim in the canal, despite this being against the regulations, as it is today. At the time, the lock-keeper lived in the Lock House at Canal Head, whereas Silburn Lock was out of sight.

The photo below is much more recent, dating from 1974, five years after PCAS was formed. By then the Society had done a lot of work to clear scrub at Canal Head, which has is now a popular picnic site. The photo shows a new notice drawing attention to the Pocklington Canal, but what makes the photo interesting is the much older sign saying NO PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY. Thankfully we have moved on.

Photos do not have to be old to be interesting. If you can let us borrow any photos that PCAS can use in display and talks, in Double Nine and on the website, please contact me or any of our Committee, whose contact details are inside the front cover of this magazine. Digital photos are welcome too, but please send large files if possible.

*Alistair Anderson*



**Canal Head in 1974 (Photo: Sheila Nix)**

## **New Horizons**

Our tripboat has remained at its mooring in Melbourne Arm over winter since no major work was needed this winter. With little to report about trips since the last issue of the magazine, it seemed a good opportunity to share some of the many kind comments our visitors have written during the 2014 season.

*To put PCAS on the international map: we planned this trip since last year! We liked the canal and liked the idea of a trip on it. Excellent. G. Goedheer G.D. de Jong The Netherlands*

*I loved it when we got to steer the boat. Jemima Beamson. Loved it thank you. (7 years)*

*Great trip. Great Experience. Steering not easy. Sid & Jackie Browne, Sydney Australia*

*Very big, goes slow. I loved all the wildlife. I loved steering the boat! Love the boat ride. Daisy Watt*

*Great ride, steered the boat, great fun! Isabella Frieling, Antigua, West Indies*

*Booked for family birthday celebrations. Relaxing, friendly and an excellent alternative day out, with lots of wildlife to spot. Thank you! Brilliant day, shared a lovely picnic with the fabulous crew. Tina, Geraldine, Stephen, Jack, Martin and Ella Spooner*

*Excellent trip. Don't let this canal disappear. Mario Cerchione, Halifax.*

*First time on a canal boat. Enjoyed steering it. Even my dad had a go. Higgins, McLaughlin & McInnes*

*Awesome! Milly (10) Super cool! Joey (9) Queensland, Australia*

*We love the idea of looking after this piece of history! Thanks for the hospitality - couldn't be better. Good luck with all your endeavours. "Coasters Australia", Adelaide*

*It was lovely. We saw a dragonfly. It was big. Annabel, Sam, Simon & Holly*

*Lovely trip, we thoroughly enjoyed it. Is this the first time a blind person has steered the boat? YBPSS*

The final comment was on behalf of a blind lady who 'steered' the boat. YBPSS is the York Blind and Partially Sighted Society.

Some of the quotations in our visitors book are from children and include hearts, kisses and more. Have a look when you come for a trip.

The photo shows members of 'Coasters Australia', a group of cycling enthusiasts touring in the UK, who booked the boat for a trip in September and wanted to have their logo on our website with their photo. The first of the comments above was made by a member of their group. Thanks to Ivor Nicholson for the photo. There are numerous other group photos from our booked trips on our website.



In 2015, we are celebrating part one of the bicentenary of the Pocklington Canal, as explained elsewhere in this magazine. Please come along for a short trip or contact Bob Ellis to book a special trip for up to 12 people.

As usual, we have set aside some days for anyone who does not have a group, making these trips ideal for individuals, couples and small families who would like a longer trip:

Saturday 16 May, 10am GARDHAM LOCK (3 hours)

Saturday 13 June, 2pm HAGG BRIDGE (4 hours)

Saturday 18 July, 10am EAST COTTINGWITH (6 hours)

Saturday 15 August, 3pm GARDHAM LOCK (3 hours)

Saturday 19 September, 10am GARDHAM LOCK (3 hours)

Please book early because we can carry a maximum of 12 passengers.

*Alistair Anderson*

## Dredging below Cottingwith Lock

The Pocklington Canal joins the River Derwent near East Cottingwith and the Derwent connects with the tidal River Ouse at Barmby on the Marsh. The River Derwent has been non-tidal since the construction of Barmby Barrage in 1975 to allow more water to be extracted for mains water supplies. Despite being non-tidal, the water level in the Derwent varies, which is why there is a floating pontoon below Cottingwith Lock. In winter, the Derwent can flood and the lower end of the Pocklington Canal can be inundated and unusable for navigation.

The length of canal between Cottingwith Lock and the River Derwent is the responsibility of the Environment Agency rather than the Canal & River Trust. Soon after the Environment Agency was informed that it had become difficult to take boats on or off the canal they brought in an enormous machine and removed a considerable amount of silt, as can be seen in the photograph below. The silt has been spread on the bank leaving a strip of grass between the canal and the excavated material.

This is the first time for years that this full length of canal has been dredged, though the Canal & River Trust often do spot dredging when bringing their maintenance vessel *Gawburn* onto the canal.



**Dredging below Cottingwith Lock (Photo courtesy of the Environment Agency)**

*Alistair Anderson*



**Below Cottingwith Lock, where the beck joins the canal (Alistair Anderson)**



**Another view of the the dredging below Cottingwith Lock. (Debbie Smith)**

## **HLF Project *Pocklington Canal – A Gem in the Landscape***

The Canal & River Trust was successful in receiving funding for the development phase of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid. Natural England, the East & North Yorkshire Waterways Partnership and PCAS have had significant input into the bid. These organisations will continue to work together and the plan is to submit the full bid for about £500k in November 2015.

The main documents required to support the HLF bid are a Conservation Management Plan and a Visitor Interpretation Plan that sets out all the ways we plan to engage with the public, including volunteers. Until recently, Jane Thomson of the Canal & River Trust has been doing most of the work but she has been joined by Rachel Walker who will work full-time on the project. Rachel will be giving a talk about the HLF project – see the Events page.22.

The most costly part of the project will be to do work on the canal for the benefit of wildlife. This includes tackling the overgrown state of the non-navigable length of canal between Melbourne and Canal Head and tackling the problem of tree shading. Both have resulted in a substantial decline in the Site of Special Scientific Interest. Though done for the wildlife, clearing vegetation will be beneficial for future navigation.

Conservation work is planned for Church Bridge, which is as old as the canal itself. It is a skilled job to carry out repairs on a 200 year old structure. Bricks must be matched to the originals and lime mortar used where needed.



This delightful photo dating from 1909 shows No.7 Swingbridge near Melbourne Arm. It is planned to modify the existing bridge so that it appears similar to the bridge in this historic photo. The redesigned bridge will add to the heritage interest of the canal.

*Alistair Anderson*

**Pocklington Canal Amenity Society  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
BLACK HORSE, SEATON ROSS  
THURSDAY 14 MAY 2015, 7.00pm**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of 2014 Meeting
4. Chairman's Report
5. Presentation of Accounts
6. Election to Committee (1 vacancy)
7. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner
8. Any other business

Any members of the Society wishing to stand for the Committee should make themselves known to a member of the Committee. All candidates must indicate their willingness to stand for election. Please send in any nominations, duly proposed and seconded, to the Secretary: Graham Ball, 5 Deans Lane, Pocklington YO42 2PX

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**Pocklington Canal Amenity Society  
Annual General Meeting, Thursday 14 May 2015  
Committee Nomination Form**

**Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Secunder:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Under Church Bridge. Thanks to Debbie Smith for this and the photo of swans on the back cover of this magazine**

Our local Waterways Partnership has developed a range of waterways projects in the region, encouraging all interested parties to work together and seek funding for projects. We had a head start on the Pocklington Canal since we have been doing this for years.

The Waterways Partnership has helped secure LEADER funding for three projects on the Pocklington Canal, the installation of landing stages at locks and swingbridges on the navigable section being the most obvious. Funding was also obtained for the excellent consultation study by Marion Blockley, which helped secure the first stage of Lottery funding. There is more about progress with the Lottery bid elsewhere in this magazine. An extensive study and recording of the structure of Sandhill Lock was also funded.

More about our local Waterways Partnership in the next issue.

*Alistair Anderson*



***New Horizons* boat trip returning from Cottingwith Lock (Bob Ellis)**

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## **POCKLINGTON CANAL BICENTENARY FETE**

**SUNDAY 24TH MAY – MELBOURNE VILLAGE HALL**  
**11am - 4.30pm**

**CRAFT FAIR STALLS/REFRESHMENTS/TOMBOLA/CAKES**

**Come and meet members of the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society and the Inland Waterways Association, and staff of the Canal & River Trust**

**Thursday 14 May – PCAS Annual General Meeting – see page 19**

**Friday 15 May – Pocklington Canal - A Gem In The Landscape**  
**Methodist Church Hall, Hallgate Cottingham HU16 4BD 8pm - 10pm**

Rachel Walker, Pocklington Canal Development Officer will talk about the development phase of the Heritage Lottery Fund Project to develop the Pocklington Canal, and how Canal & River Trust are working with their partners PCAS and Natural England. She is highly likely to show you some pictures of her beloved narrow boat 'Ethel Rosina' too!

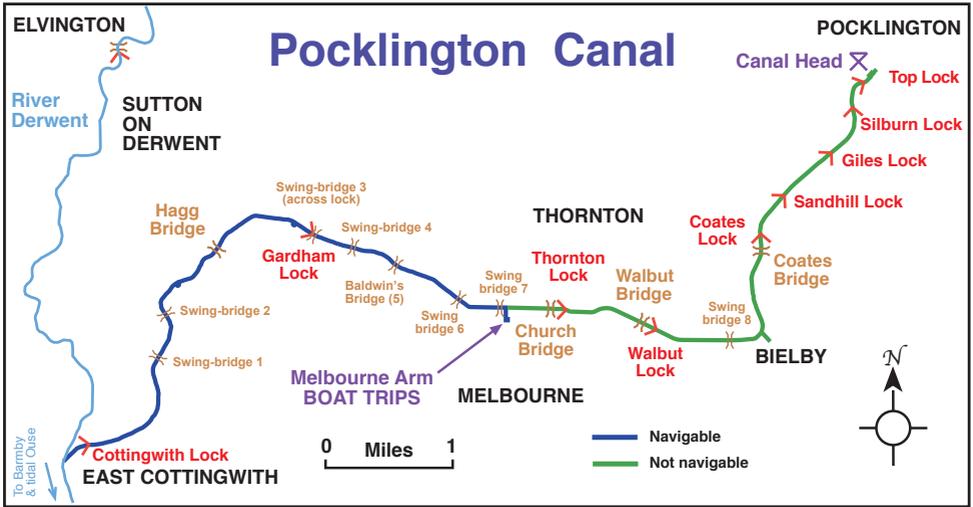
*This event is organised by the East Yorkshire Branch of the Inland Waterways Association. £2 admission, refreshments provided.*

**Saturday/Sunday 25/26 July – PCAS Bicentenary Boat Rally**

– see page 9. Please contact Debbie Smith or see the PCAS website for further details if you are interested in bringing a boat.

**Sunday 29 November – Annual Lunch**

Our Annual Lunch this year will again be held at the Oaks Golf Club & Spa, Aughton, York YO42 4PW Full details will be in the next issue of Double Nine and published on the PCAS website.



## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership subscriptions run for 12 months from the date of joining PCAS. Please pay your subscription if it is due. If you pay by Standing Order, please update your payment as shown below.

### Membership subscriptions –

	Annual	Life
Junior (up to 18)	£5	-
Individual	£10	£100
Individual – over 60	£10	£60
Family	£15	£150
Family Concession	-	£90

Please notify the Membership Coordinator if you change your address



# Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

Registered Charity 500637 [www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org](http://www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org)



