

# DOUBLE NINE

THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE



February 2021

Issue 121



*Reflections*

# Editorial

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Welcome to your February 2021 issue of Double Nine! The virus in 2020 has had a very severe impact on PCAS finances with very little income being generated from trips or events. At the time of writing it is looking very much like the first half of 2021 is going to be a repeat of last year. But never mind, we are now in February and the days are getting longer!

I have always tried to avoid "social media" but I have recently had to embrace it! The PCAS committee have obviously been unable to physically meet for their six - weekly discussions in Pocklington so we took the decision to use the Zoom app. I must say I have really enjoyed the experience.

As you read on in this issue you will see that it is proposed to hold our AGM in May, using the Zoom app. If you are new to this medium and are not sure how to download or use Zoom, please contact me and I will email you the PDF guide which has been prepared by the City of York Council's educational department. Try it - it's easy! My email address is on the inside rear cover of this issue.  
Malcolm Slater

*Front Cover:* CRT notified all owners who had their boats berthed in the Melbourne Arm that the canal was in full flood. The image shows that the jetty is almost under water as David Hogben attends to the boat **NUTWOOD** on the 24th January. *Photograph by Alison Hogben*

*Rear Cover:* Entering the canal in Cottingwith lock is the boat **BERESFORD** on the 24th July 2018. *Photograph by Malcolm Slater*

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## Copy Date June 2021 Issue

Closing date for articles etc for the June 2021 issue is the **10th May 2021.**

Submissions received after this date may be held over until the next available issue.

Opinions expressed in this magazine is not necessarily those of the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society, its Chairman or Committee.

# Chairmans Column

Looking back at my column in the last edition of Double Nine, I find that I described 2020 as being a disappointing year. Nothing happened in the final months of the year that would prompt me to change this description. Indeed, the disappointment seems to be continuing into 2021.

It seems that COVID 19 will prevent any working parties taking place before the Spring or early Summer, and that the start of the season for our tripboat, **New Horizons** will also be delayed again.

## Events

Although the committee has been thinking about events it wishes to hold this year, it has not been possible to make any firm arrangements or fix dates. However there are a number of proposals including a barbeque and an indoor meeting with a speaker. We hope to publicise these events at a later date. Hopefully we will be able to hold our customary pre-Christmas Sunday lunch in November.

## Committee

The committee did not meet for several months, but the members were able to keep in touch with one another by email. Towards the end of the year, meetings were resumed through the medium of Zoom. This proved a very satisfactory way of conducting business. All committee positions will come up for re-election this year, as there were no elections last year. John Lewis has indicated that he wishes to stand down as a committee member, so we shall be looking for a replacement. I would like to thank John for his service as a committee member over a period of many years, and I know that he intends to continue to serve the society in many other ways.

## Annual General Meeting

We decided not to hold an AGM in 2020, presuming that the pandemic would have eased sufficiently for one to be held in 2021. As things have turned out, an AGM in the form of a physical meeting remains out of the questions, so the decision has been taken to hold an AGM by Zoom in 2021, and details of the arrangements for the AGM appear elsewhere in this magazine. It will cover a period of two years.

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## Donations

The Chairman & Committee wish to thank everyone who has given donations to PCAS.

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# Chairman's Column

## Sandhill Lock

I regret to report that there has been little progress on the renovation of Sandhill Lock. Naturally, a detailed programme has to be agreed with the Canal & River Trust, and this has not been possible, because CRT furloughed many of their staff for much of the year. Also many of the arrangements that are required under the Construction and Design Regulations have been held up for the same reason. A starting point is the formal appointment of PCAS as both Principal Designer and Principal Contractor. At the time of writing, neither of these appointments has been made.

In addition, we are still waiting for CRT to apply for Listed Building Consent for the restoration works to go ahead. This is particularly disappointing, as we have been pressing for this to be done for more than two years, and have supplied all the necessary information.

We are very fortunate to have the services of David Hobson, who is looking after the administration of the project, and of David Gibson, who is giving us good advice on Health and Safety matters, and is writing many of the documents. We have also engaged a firm of consultants to undertake the design of the cofferdams, and to oversee the tendering of contracts. With such guidance, and with a good set of volunteers headed by Richard Harker, we are well set up to undertake the project.

It has been necessary to revise our estimate of the cost of the project. Initially, we had expected that the works would cost £150,000. This figure has now been revised to £220,000, due to the cost of scaffolding, lock gates and consultants fees being higher than originally expected. The additional costs mostly arise out of the need to comply with regulations.

## Fundraising

We suffered a setback in our fundraising last year due to the tripboat not being able to operate, and the lack of events, which always bring in good revenue. However money does continue to come in from various sources, and we continue to apply for grants. The Sandhill Lock appeal now stands at around £95,000, and I am confident that the balance will be raised in time to fund and complete the works in three years time.

## Membership

Despite all the difficulties encountered during 2020, our membership continues to exceed 300. This is a healthy figure, and one that has been maintained through out my 40 years of involvement with the Society. Our membership also continues to come from a wide geographical spread.

Although many live too far away to contribute to the society in a physical way, or are unable to do so for other reasons, having a sound and broadly based

# Chairmans Column

membership is one of our strengths, and I am grateful to all our members for their support. I am of course especially grateful to those who serve the society in a more concrete way. I am thinking particularly of committee members, those who help at events, and boat crews, the working party members, fundraiser's and those who contribute to our funds. Without this wide base of support we would not have got as far as we have, and this level of support is needed if the restoration of the Pocklington Canal is to be brought to a conclusion.

Lets hope that 2021 will see further progress on the project.

Paul Waddington  
PCAS Chairman

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## Charles Huitson

It is with deep regret that we report the death of Charles Huitson. Charles lived with his wife, Yvonne, and family in Melbourne , and was active in the society in the early years. As a resident of Melbourne, he was frequently called upon to make arrangements for events in the village and be our representative in the local community.

Charles was also a leading member of the Pocklington Canal Boat Club, having a small boat moored on the canal. It was members of the PCBC who first occupied Melbourne Basin when it opened in 1987.

In his later years, Charles suffered from a debilitating illness, and with restricted mobility, he and Yvonne moved to live in Market Weighton.



Paul Waddington



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

# **Notice**

## **Annual General Meeting**

### **Pocklington Canal Amenity Society**

### **Wednesday 12 May 2021 @ 7.30pm**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 2021 AGM will be held on Zoom on Wednesday 12 May. All are welcome to attend and the link to the meeting plus all relevant paperwork will be sent out at the beginning of May.

If you haven't already given us your email address and would like to attend the AGM please get in touch so that we can include you in any updates. If you wish to vote but will be unable to attend, please get in touch to arrange a proxy vote.

You will find a nomination form included with the Agenda - if you or any other member would like to join our committee, please complete the form and send to Sue Dickins (address on nomination form) or email [pcas.treas@gmail.com](mailto:pcas.treas@gmail.com)

# Working Party Report

Despite having had to suspend activities for all of April, May & June and recently again due to the now more severe lockdown restrictions, we have actually managed to get a few things done.

The Welfare unit was given a comprehensive paint job, prepared for winter & is now ready to be taken across to Sandhill Lock when needed.

The refurbishment of the weed cutting bed was completed and it was refitted on to the boat in early August, the boat is now of course back in working mode.

Official signs have been erected, restricting (hopefully) the passage of unauthorised vehicles down the tracks at Melbourne Arm, Coates Lock and Cemetery Lane, East Cottingwith in an attempt to reduce environmental damage, nuisance and the need for frequent repairs.

The other available days have been used in painting lock beams, benches and picnic tables and generally tidying landing stages etc, as weather permitted.

Winter is of course now upon us, the canal banks and locks look a picture postcard with sharp frosts on them and thankfully there's not a lot needs doing until Spring, when perhaps all our volunteers, who are itching to get on, can get started on the refurbishment of Sandhill Lock.

So looking forward to a better year and hopefully back to "normal".

Cheers

Richard Harker

Working Party Organiser



# Working Party Report



*Above:* The PCAS welfare unit was moved from Coates Lock on the 16th October 2020.

*Below:* The unit will be transported to Sandhill Lock when restoration commences.



# Culvert Replacement

*Work to replace the culvert under the road leading into the Melbourne Arm was due to take place between the 5th and the 30th October 2020. Unfortunately the work had to be suspended and the equipment taken away because of too much water in the dyke for the pump to cope with! The work has now been re-scheduled to take place in May 2021.*



*Above:* Machinery on site ready to start the culvert renewal. The large culvert lining can be seen on the bank side and awaits its installation.

*Below:* The pump which was to be used to divert the dyke water around the work site.



# Culvert replacement



*Above:* A small bridge with steps was provided to maintain public access to both the canal and the Melbourne moorings.

*Below:* CRT staff replace fencing on the 22nd October after the job was cancelled.



# Black Dyke No2

## Dredged and cleaned 30th October 2020

*Environment Agency contractors were busy dredging and cleaning out Black Dyke No 2, to help improve drainage.*



*Above: Before and after images of Black Dyke 2, near to Swingbridge 6, which flows around the Melbourne Arm. The spoil from this section was taken away using a dumper.*

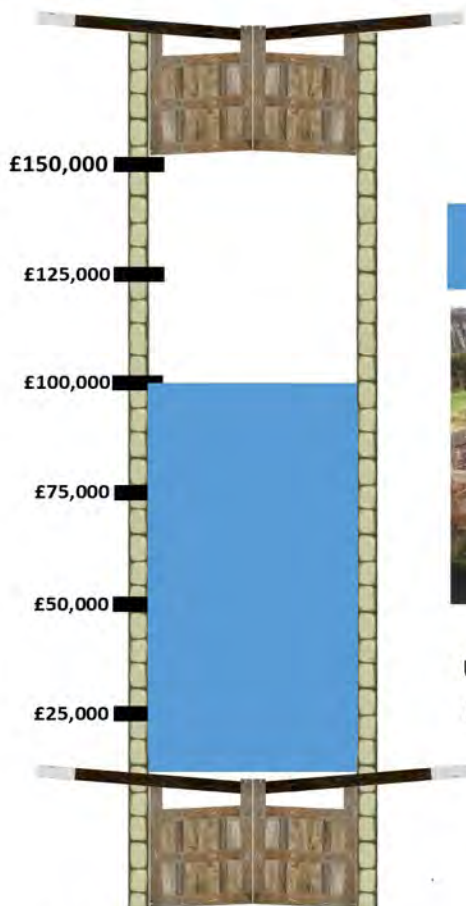
*Below: The Foss Internal Drainage Board's machine clearing the dyke above Swingbridge 6.*



**POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY**

## **RESTORATION APPEAL**

# **SANDHILL LOCK**



**£150,000**

**Required to restore**

**Sandhill Lock**

**Work Starting 2020**



**PLEASE DONATE BY**

**Using canalside donation boxes**

**Direct into PCAS Bank Account**

**quoting SANDHILL**

**SORT CODE— 40-37-01**

**ACCOUNT NO—20674451**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE - [www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org](http://www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org)**

# New Horizons

*Trip boat manager Alistair J. Anderson reports*

After 16 years of successful boat trips, the 2020 season was a disaster thanks to Covid-19. We have been unable to run our short public trip because social distancing is difficult on a small narrowboat. Steve Ashby, who took over the role of handling booking and crewing trips for the 2020 season must be very frustrated, but he managed to run a few trips for family groups at the end of the season.

The Canal & River Trust offered Waterways Charity Appeal grants to societies to help compensate for lack of income due to coronavirus and we were awarded £500. Thanks to CRT for this contribution which has been used to fund repainting and other maintenance work on the boat and the engine.

Normally we struggle to find the opportunity to do painting because the boat is in frequent use during good weather. That was not a problem in 2020, when we could get on with painting and other jobs. I would like to thank the group of crew members who have helped with this work. At the end of the “season” the boat was taken to Goole, where the hull was pressure washed, scraped and painted. As many of you know, Paul Waddington is retiring and selling the Goole Boathouse. Hopefully we will be able to continue to use the marina for winter maintenance in future but that remains to be seen.

We are determined to run boat trips in 2021 if it is safe for our passengers and crew. Information will be posted on our website and Facebook.

Stay Safe

Alistair Anderson



# New Horizons leaving the canal

*Our trip boat **New Horizons** was moved down the canal and onward to Barmby on the Marsh on the 22nd October. The boat locked out of the Barmby Barrage on the 24th to complete its onward journey to Goole Boathouse for its annual winter maintenance.*



*Above: **New Horizons** journeys down the canal on the 22nd October. The boat left the canal and entered the Derwent the same day to continue onward to Barmby Barrage. Below: Having locked out of the Derwent the boat passes Long Drax and down the river Ouse towards Ocean Lock in Goole.*



# Along the canal by Melbourne

The unprecedented impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic has made many people appreciate and think more deeply about the benefits of the wider countryside. We are lucky to have the Melbourne and Thornton Ings Nature Reserve and the canal on our doorstep, to realise just how important these natural havens are.

The traditional harbinger of Spring, the cuckoo, arrived slightly earlier this year with the first calling bird logged in on April 6th. Previous records show they are normally expected a week later. The canal side vegetation and Thornton Lock reed bed soon began to fill with migrant warblers. Whitethroats, lesser whitethroats, reed and sedge warblers all filled the air with their songs of warmer days. Despite the human imposed restrictions, the natural world was gearing up once more for a time of rebirth and the weather was obliging.

During the Summer months the weather turned, just when the breeding cycle was at its height. More rainy days would have impacted the migrants refresh rate, but our resident avifauna will have taken full advantage of the warmer, drier spring weather to brood earlier. Blackbirds, song and mistle thrush all benefited from the warm weather, but there was a downside as well, because the dry ground was less amenable to giving up the invertebrate food these species needed to feed their young.

Overall some species were winners, while others ended up losers as weather increased disturbance on the Ings and canal banks from people seeking leisure opportunities, impacted on breeding capabilities.

Later in the year, the Cetti's warbler that had taken up residence between Thornton Lock reed bed and Walbut Bridge, re-appeared after being elusive for the Summer. It is still not clear whether this male mated or if he is a lone pioneer for the species on its northern range expansion. Another pleasing find was a female otter with cub, happily feeding on a sizeable fish in the lock bywash during early November. It was good to connect with this species as it had been a couple of years since my last sighting in the canal. Mother and cub were seen cavorting in the vegetation a week later heading west near Church Bridge.

It is clear the Pocklington Canal and Ings offer nature a very good chance to thrive. And this year it may have helped many people reconnect with their local environment like never before. This surely shows how valuable such areas are, and the efforts of all those involved in their preservation must be applauded.

**Neil Cooper, Bird Recorder for Melbourne & Thornton Ings NR**

# Membership Matters

It is good to find most members are renewing by standing order. Paying in cheque's or cash has become very difficult with many bank branches closing and lockdown making it problematic for travelling.

For those of you still receiving email reminders from me our bank details are

Sort code 40-37-01

Account No. 20674451

Always reference your payment with name & subs so it can be identified.

Any queries about membership or payments please contact me.

Roger Bromley  
Membership Secretary

## Membership

	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Life</b>
<b>Individual</b>	<b>£15</b>	<b>£150</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>£20</b>	<b>£200</b>

Please send all new memberships & renewals to the membership secretary:  
Roger Bromley, 40 The Dales, Castle Park, Cottingham, Hull, HU16 5JS.

Sort Code 40-37-01

Account No. 20674451

**Please notify the membership secretary if you change your address.**



# What the papers say..

We take a look at how the newspapers see the canal and the work that PCAS is doing to restore and maintain its nine miles.

Our thanks go to Phil Hutchinson from the Pocklington Post and the Hull Daily Mail who have allowed PCAS access to their archives..



*Above:* During the 1970's PCAS held several canoe and dinghy cruises along the canal. This undated photograph was taken by the Hull Daily Mail.

*Below:* CRT staff making bird & bat boxes for sale at a PCAS Summer event in 2018. Image taken by the Pocklington Post.



# What the papers say..



*Above:* John Thorpe and Frank Firth were photographed hedgelaying in this image from the Pocklington Post archives.

*Below:* Another image from the Pocklington Post taken at one of the many events held at the Melbourne Arm. Manning the PCAS stall are Debbie Smith, Ros & Eddie Sibley.



# What the papers say..



*Above:* The Pocklington Post recorded the opening of Swingbridge No 8 in 2014. The bridge is adorned with bunting before the official opening.

*Below:* CRT Chief Executive Richard Parry performed the official opening ceremony. Others include (L to R) Phillippa Baron, Martin Walton, John Horsfall (all CRT) Gill & Dave Forth, Alistair Anderson, Dick Watson, Roger Bromley and personnel from the contractors who rebuilt the bridge and PCAS Chairman Paul Waddington.



# Flooding near Church Bridge

*In past issues of the February Double Nine magazine we have usually featured images of the canal in flood. These images have mostly been taken between Cottingwith and Hagg Bridge. Alison Hogburn has kindly sent us a series of images of the canal in flood near Church Bridge. Images taken on the 25th January 2021.*



# Flooding in the Melbourne Arm 2021



*Image by Alison Hogben.*

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## Are you sure that I'm the father?



*Photograph by Malcolm Slater*

# Hagg Bridge - the saga continues..



*Above:* Work was progressing well with the £900,000 re-build at Hagg Bridge until it was discovered that some of the materials used were not up to the correct specification.

*Below:* Work began to remove the defective concrete in early November. Traffic lights have now been installed and it has been announced that the bridge is likely to reopen on the 11th March. We shall see..

*Images by Tim Charlson & Malcolm Slater*



# *A look back through the Archives*

*Compiled by Malcolm Slater*

*In this edition we look back at one of the canal's nine locks, Silburn. This lock received cosmetic attention in the early 90's when the Waterways Recovery Group & PCAS worked on it for several weeks.*

*Photographs from Sheila Nix MBE collection - PCAS archive collection - Tim Charlson & Richard Woodcock.*



*Above: Silburn lock from the air, taken on the 17th August 2019.*

*Below: The lock as seen in 1999.*



## *A look back through the Archives - Silburn Lock*



*Above:* Working party members clear scrub and remove the trees that are growing close to the chamber wall.

*Below:* Members of the Waterways Recovery Group and PCAS working party members are obviously deep in thought deciding which is the best way to remove the offending tree stumps..



## *A look back through the Archives - Silburn Lock*



*Above:*

Waterways Recovery Group & PCAS members set to work cutting back the overgrown vegetation at Silburn Lock on the 3rd September 1989.

*Below:*

The results of their labours!



## *A look through the Archives - Silburn Lock*



*Above:* Working party volunteers backfill behind one of the wing walls at Silburn lock - the culvert at this lock is still in need of attention..

*Below:* The remains of a flat-boat which may have been used for maintenance on the canal.



## *A look through the Archives - Silburn Lock*



These images of Silburn Lock were taken on the 1st October 2020. At first glance the lock looks in fairly good condition but the brickwork requires a great deal of attention and it will be several years before PCAS will be able to undertake repairs.



## PCAS sales



Thank you to all those who purchased a PCAS calendar! The 50 copies sold out completely by the middle of December. Many thanks to Malcolm Slater who (being too modest to acknowledge) managed to have the calendar printed at no cost to PCAS therefore the £341 banked is all profit and goes directly to the Sandhill Lock Restoration Fund. Many thanks to him and to you, the purchasers. Sales of PCAS merchandise have been understandably somewhat “slow” over the past year. We have a variety of lines for sale from mugs & plaques to pens & key-rings; all of these can be hand-delivered if you’re anywhere near York or Pocklington

### Key Rings

Two new key rings are now available:  
Design No1 features New Horizons on one side and on the reverse the PCAS logo.  
Design No2 Features Church bridge and on the reverse an image of the canal.



**Ball point pens  
50p**



**Every purchase generates income for PCAS restoration funds.**

### Books Books Books!

The Yorkshire Ship Enthusiasts Group donated a large collection of new and pre-owned books to PCAS. We also have many pre-owned books both fiction and non fiction at our information point at Canal Head. Every book is on offer for a donation to PCAS.

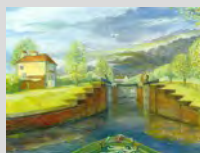
# PCAS Sales



**Pens 50p**



**Canal Guide £5**



**Canal Head Cards £1**



**Fridge Magnets £3**



**Pin Badge £3**



**Brass Plaques. Head of Navigation.  
50th Anniversary. Bicentenary 1818 - 2018.  
£7 each**



**PCAS Mugs  
Five Designs Available.  
£4 each**

## ***Please Note:***

Postage and packing must be added to all postal orders.

For details please contact the sales officer,

Tim Charlson 07926 910717 email: [tcharlson58@gmail.com](mailto:tcharlson58@gmail.com)

All the above merchandise and selected pre-owned books are available from the Canal Head Information Centre.

# **The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society**

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

Patrons: The Earl of Halifax Neil Edwards

## **PCAS Committee**

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**New Horizons trip boat Bookings & Enquiries:** [book.newhorizons@gmail.com](mailto:book.newhorizons@gmail.com)



## The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

One copy free to paid up members