

# DOUBLE NINE

THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE



June 2020

Issue 119

Lockdown special issue



In early May the Government relaxed “lockdown” restrictions for some people (*but alas not your editor!*). PCAS vice chairman Tim Charlson took an early morning stroll on a section of the canal, recording the scene as he went along. We can see some more images from Tim on pages 17 & 18.



## Editorial

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*Front Cover:* An unidentified boat approaches Gardham lock on the 13th September 2019.

*Photograph Tim Charlson*

*Rear Cover:* Passing Baldwin's bridge. A boat leaves the canal on the 15th September 2019

*Photograph by Malcolm Slater*

Welcome to the June 2020 issue of your PCAS magazine. You are probably wondering what the Covid-19 epidemic means for PCAS? It is not good! Inevitably there will be a big hole in our 2020 finances. PCAS has been following the Government's recommendations and had planned to open our season in April as normal. The committee has had no option but to cancel all the advertised events for the rest of the year. We are constantly taking note of the Government's advice and if the situation improves then we shall post our revised plans on our Website and Facebook pages. I am in the high risk category and expect to be one of the last allowed to go out again. I do have a couple of PCAS projects which have been on the back burner for some time and now in lock down I have started work on them again. The next magazine is due out in October and if we are still in lockdown I will really need all your help to publish it. Please send in any articles or images that you may have taken now or in the past for possible publication. In the meantime please take care and stay safe.

Malcolm Slater

*Double Nine* is published in  
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by the  
Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

### Copy Date October 2020 Issue

Closing date for articles etc for the October 2020 issue is the **3rd October 2020.**

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.

## From the Chairman

We had expected that works at Sandhill Lock would have started by now, but it will come as no surprise to our members that the current Coronavirus pandemic has caused further delays.

Indeed, it seems that it will be several months before work can start. Although we were having regular meetings with the Canal & River Trust (CRT), a new issue was raised at practically every one to hold up progress. Most importantly, CRT announced that to be accepted as the Principal Contractor under CDM Regulations for the project, the Society would have to go through an appraisal process, which involved filling in a long form and providing a lot of supporting information. We managed to submit this information, but we understand the matter has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Furthermore, another outstanding matter is the Listed Building Consent. CRT are insisting that they make the application for this, and the regulations do indicate that it is the property owner who should do this. Although we have supplied CRT with all the necessary information, we are told that the application has not yet been submitted, and the relevant staff at CRT have been furloughed, meaning that no work is being done on it. I can foresee this being the cause of several months delay.

In the meantime, the Society is getting on with one necessary preliminary action. We have purchased a secondhand welfare unit, and this will be put into good order ready for the start of works. Regulations require that there be a welfare unit on site throughout the works.

Another area of inactivity is, of course, the operation of our tripboat, New Horizons. It seems likely that New Horizons will have to remain tied up for all (or at least the majority of) the 2020 season. This will have a major impact on our fundraising, as will the cancellation of all the public events that we had planned.

I am looking for ideas for fundraising activities that do not involve people gathering together. Does anyone have any suggestions, perhaps involving the internet? If so please let me know.

Paul Waddington

Paul@gooleboathouse.co.uk

### Donations

The Chairman & the PCAS Committee wish to thank all the people who have given donations to the Society.

# Working Party Report

As per normal at this time of year, work has mainly been concentrated on bank repairs and the odd bit of tree trimming, as required. We have taken the cutting-bed refurbishment as far as we can. The work to the new roller bearings, stronger slats etc was halted by having to postpone any “collective” work until the shutdown ends. We now have the bed mesh to fit, to complete the repairs.

Unfortunately, the work party activities had to be temporarily suspended on March 17th, but we did manage to fit in a survey for the bypass installation at Sandhill lock and are using the “spare” time to consider the complete refurbishment schedule and source plant and materials. Indeed, as a lot of construction firms are at a standstill there is a lot of machinery for sale and we have taken advantage of this to purchase a good quality static welfare unit and we are now looking for mobile pumps etc.

We have had some comments lately from walkers etc, that there is a lot of weed and rubbish collecting against some of the lock gates. We are aware of this problem but, apart from looking unsightly, it is doing no harm. We can deal with this issue in due course.

The working party members are keeping in touch, mainly by passing on amusing comments, anecdotes and some cartoons and videos that are circulating. We’re all frustrated that we can’t “get on” but of course our hands are tied. Having said that, as I write we are hearing that some restrictions are being relaxed, but social distancing still needs to be maintained and I am not intending to ask anyone to venture out if they don’t feel safe. By the time this is published, circumstances will have probably changed again so we will see what we can achieve then.

So, keep well and keep sane. See you all on the other side!

Richard Harker  
Working Party Supervisor



# Work Party Report



Early season working party members were busy along the canal until the Coronavirus lockdown in March. *Top two pictures* Richard and Tim work on one of the Coates lock mechanisms.

*Middle Left* CRT have installed mooring bollards at Coates lock.

*Middle Right and Bottom.* Preliminary work at Sandhill lock. Checking for underground cables and taking measurements for the bywash installation.

# Why - O - Why!!



Whilst most people obey the lockdown advice from H.M. Government, unfortunately some individuals take it upon themselves to commit mindless acts of vandalism. The above two images show the damage caused at Thornton lock. Information about this damage would be gratefully received.

Waterways condemned and this fixed bridge and the Canal Society to the task of reinstating the swing bridge had to be three metres wide of taking vehicles weighing it a much larger and the original.

Biology Department of York University for research purposes.

At the end of the Arm is an old water-mill which was used to mill corn until around 1940 but it has now been converted into a residence.

Woodhouse Farm

Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

A green ballpoint pen with a silver tip and clip, resting diagonally across the document. The pen has the text "Pocklington Canal Amenity Society" and a circular logo on it. The logo features a canal scene and the text "Pocklington Canal Amenity Society".

**New Line**  
See the sales page

## The new welfare unit

PCAS has recently purchased a "welfare unit", which is an essential piece of equipment if we are to continue carrying out major works on the canal. Here are the first images of the new unit. PCAS is appealing for donations to help offset its purchase.



## STOP PRESS!

*And just when we thought things could not get any worse... As I was finishing this issue of Double Nine, the Canal & River Trust closed the whole nine miles of the canal due to lack of water...*

🏠 (/) / Notices and stoppages (/notice...

### Pocklington Canal - Closed

#### Detail

**From Date:** 21/05/2020 12:15

**To Date:** On-going

**Type:** Navigation Closure

**Reason:** Water resources

**Is the towpath closed?** No

#### Location

**Closest waterway:** Pocklington Canal

#### Description

The navigation is closed full length due to lack of water caused by no significant rain fall in recent months.

We will update this notice in 2 weeks with further information.

These two pictures (right) show the low level of water in the Pocklington beck. The canal depends on the beck feeding water into it in order to maintain its levels.

*Pictures courtesy of Richard Woodcock*





## **POCKLINGTON CANAL: SUCCESS ON THE HORIZON**

**Only two miles remaining to complete the full restoration of this beautiful waterway.**

**Pocklington Canal Amenity Society**

**We need your help!**



**This is what our trip boat "New Horizons" might look like at Canal Head in the future. Please help us to make this a reality.**

**Wouldn't it be great to see this on the Pocklington Canal? The final chapter in an epic that will have taken over fifty years to complete.**

**We have two miles of the canal left to repair before our target of complete restoration is finally achieved. We were hoping to begin work at the dilapidated Sandhill Lock earlier this year but circumstances have decreed otherwise.**



**Please, please help us to undertake crucial repairs to a lock that has been abandoned for over a century.**

Our main source of income is from donations via our trip boat 'New Horizons' which operates every Sunday & bank holiday from Melbourne. It's unlikely to run at all for the foreseeable future so we have a large shortfall if we are going to restart our restoration work.

We urgently require £5,000 towards the purchase of a second-hand site welfare unit for the benefit of our volunteer workforce throughout the restoration.

PCAS is a volunteer-led organisation; we have no salaried staff; we do not pay expenses to our working-party members. We simply do it for the love of this wonderful waterway.

Every penny donated will be used to restore the canal.

Thank you.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/httpwwwpocklingtoncanalsocietyorg>

**Flexible funding – this project will receive all pledges made by 10th July 2020 at 4:30pm**

THANKING YOU ALL IN ANTICIPATION





## Trip manager with no trips



When I offered to take on the role of trip and crew manager for New Horizons, I anticipated a role which would require some organisational and diplomatic skills, taking up several hours each week but helping the fundraising effort for the ongoing restoration of our beloved Pocklington Canal.

With considerable help from Bob Ellis, the outgoing manager, I got up to reasonable speed with spreadsheets and communications with skippers and crew. Even before Christmas I was taking some preliminary bookings and by the end of February had a good number of booked trips on the spreadsheet.. I had started cajoling the skippers and crew into giving me their availability and lining up for the early trips, including the busy Easter Weekend.

In mid March the threat of the coronavirus spreading from China via Italy and other countries became a reality. Decisions needed to be taken about the future of our boat trips. Before lockdown was imposed people started to contact me expressing doubts about their trips and cancelling their bookings. The committee took the decision to postpone the start of the season on the basis that we could not ensure the safety of passengers or crew as it is impossible to keep away from people on a boat. Then the government imposed lockdown rendering any trips impossible.

So my first season as crew manager has got off to a flying start! I have failed to run a single trip, raise a single penny or attend a single committee meeting. As I write this there is no specific end in sight to the lockdown. Once it ends and some sort of activity is permitted we will need to consider very carefully if and how to operate trips. Clearly the canal will have become very weedy in the absence of boat movements or maintenance activity by Richard and his willing crew of weed cutters. Once working parties can meet again and tackle that issue, and that presumably take some weeks, we will then need to see how we can ensure crew and passenger safety. Many of the skippers and crew, and probably a fair percentage of our passengers, are in groups which may be required to continue some sort of isolation once business activity restarts. There could be issues with locks given the lack of use so we may depend on CRT getting back up to speed as well. All these factors make a start to a cruising season very difficult to predict!

Concluding, I am very grateful to Bob for his help in taking on this role and to Alistair, Ed and Dave (and probably others I don't know about) for ensuring the boat was ready for the start of the season. Maybe we will get to run it this year!??

Steve Ashby

## **Canal & River Trust working on the canal**

*Before the lockdown came in March, Canal and River Trust contractors were busy weedcutting between Coates and Sandhill locks.*

*The contractors also cut down several self-seeded trees near Thornton lock.*



The amphibious cutting machine is shown clearing the winding hole above Coates lock. Now this work has taken place it is hoped that CRT can re-open the canal between the Bielby Arm and Coates lock. The lock was restored to working order some 20 years ago, although a boat has yet to pass through it.

## ***Canal & River Trust working on the Canal***



On the 5th March contractors are shown removing self-seeded trees between Church Bridge and Thornton lock.



# Working Party Memories 1970 - 1972

By Paul Willey

*In a conversation with your Chairman, Paul Waddington about short term moorings on the Pocklington Canal I mentioned I had taken part in working parties on the canal in the early seventies. He asked me if I would write an article for Double Nine..*

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I was in school in York from 1967 - 1972 and we had our first hire boat holiday in 1967. I had heard about the fight to preserve and restore the canal and thought that to do some physical work to help would be my contribution so I and another friend, John Gatenby got involved.

A recent boat trip from Newbury to Melbourne reminded me of the work we did and some of the people involved.

At Cottingwith Lock I remember we had some enormous bonfires, usually started with waste oil or diesel. David Thomlinson was the Working Party organiser who had been involved in the restoration of the Stourbridge Canal in the 1960's. He was a MOD policeman based in the Shetlands and every month he came down from there to organise the working parties. At a local level Eric and Doreen Lount, who farmed at Thornton did a lot of local arrangements. Somehow or other all sorts of kit were borrowed to support the working parties. Henry Richardson, British Waterways lengthsmen was a very useful guy who I am sure must have turned a blind eye to a lot of things he saw, particularly health and safety which was virtually non-existence - no method statements that had to be approved, hard hats were optional, competencies were you have to have operated a barrow hoist before! The Parkes family were regular attendees and there is the memorial to them at Cottingwith Lock. If my memory serves me correctly, they did a lot of the brickwork repairs and fund raising.

For John & I working parties involved cycling from York to Cottingwith and back both ways. Invariably there was an easterly wind to contend with and there were segregated cycle paths. Fifty-six miles of cycling and two full days of working kept us fit.

At Gardham Lock we cleared the lock chamber of 40 years of mud. The chamber was pumped dry by using a British Waterways diesel pump and then all the mud was barrow hoisted from the lock. We got absolutely filthy.

On our recent trip to Melbourne we saw the reed cutter named **Sheila Nix**. She was an absolutely amazing person who was a full-time school teacher and brought up a family as well as acting as Secretary for the Canal Society. She did a massive amount of lobbying to save the canal. Her homemade wine was also amazing!

## Working Party Memories

My apprenticeship on the Pocklington Canal served me well as I went on to working parties at Aston in 1972, the Montgomery Canal, the Droitwich Canal, the Stourbridge Arm and Well Creek on the Middle Level. Bringing our boat, **Sowena** to Melbourne brought back some wonderful memories.



*Above:* PCAS working parties in 1970 at one of the Syphons. The man standing wearing a flat hat is PCAS's first Chairman, Eric Lount.

*Right:* Tons of mud and silt had to be removed from the Thornton lock chamber, all of which had to be shifted by hand!



# Can you help the PCAS archives?

***Have you any negatives, pictures, cinefilm, video or any anecdotes that you could share with us?***

While we are all in lockdown there can be no better time to have a look through all those old photograph albums and drawers.

Do you or anyone you know, have any old or recent pictures of the Pocklington Canal? Does anyone have a story to tell about anything or anyone connected with the canal?

Every single picture is of interest to us!

If you do have any material could we copy and return it to you?

We will obviously take the greatest care of anything that you send us.

PCAS is always interested in acquiring pictures, film and video to add to our archives.

Finally, most importantly, we are always interested in receiving articles for possible inclusion in Double Nine magazine!

Please send any material to: [malcslater879@gmail.com](mailto:malcslater879@gmail.com)

## 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.

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

## **New additions to our merchandise stock** ***Ideas wanted!***

We are hoping to increase the range of items that we can offer for sale. Do you have any thoughts or ideas for new items that we could add to our existing merchandise?

This could be postcards, note pads or bookmarks. What do you think?

If you have any ideas please contact Tim Charlson (his contact details can be found on page 28 of this issue).

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### **A Calendar for 2021?**

What do you think about the production of a PCAS Calendar for 2021. Would you purchase a copy?

Contact Debbie with your views at [deajsmith@btinternet.com](mailto:deajsmith@btinternet.com)

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The Canal Head Information and Sales centre plays a very important part of the PCAS fund raising effort.



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Ball point pens at 50p are the latest addition to the PCAS sales shop. Every purchase generates income for PCAS restoration projects.



## The Canal in May 2020



Restrictions on lockdown were eased in early May allowing people to go out but to still keep social distancing - some PCAS members took advantage of this and headed straight for the canal! Here are some of the images taken on the 20th May by Tim Charlson and Karen Woodcock.



## The canal in May 2020



*Top & Middle:* Wildlife and fauna are still thriving whilst we have been away. Karen Woodcock took both pictures on 13th May.



*Below:* Tim Charlson took the bottom picture looking towards Church Bridge from Thornton lock on the 20th May.



## Hagg Bridge Repairs Start



After several false starts, contractors have at last begun repairs to Hagg Bridge. Although closed to traffic, the bridge, towpath and canal remain open to cyclists and pedestrians. The road to Church Bridge at Thornton is also closed in order to stop motorists taking short cuts back to the main A1079 because of the Hagg Bridge repairs.



## Hagg Bridge Repairs



*Above:*  
Scaffolding erected at Hagg Bridge.

*Below:*  
Concrete barriers at Church Bridge block the way to motor vehicles.



# *A look back through the Archives*

*Compiled by Malcolm Slater*

We take a look back at one of the canal's nine locks and the next to be restored to full working order, Sandhill Lock. This will prove to be the most challenging restoration of all the locks repaired so far.

The lock did receive cosmetic attention in the early 90's when the Waterways Recovery Group held a canal camp.

Photographs from the Sheila Nix MBE archive collection.



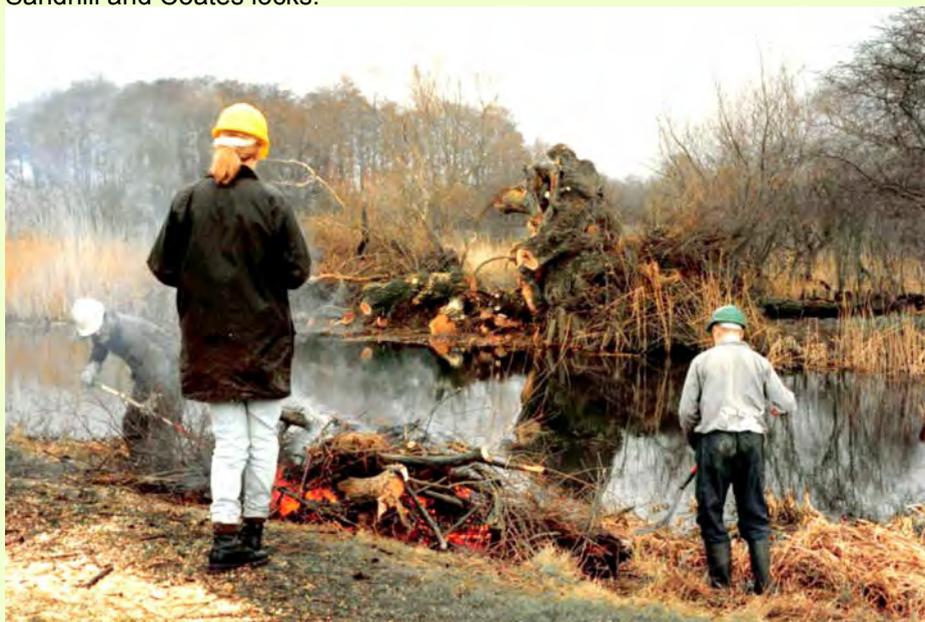
*Above:*  
Fisherman at Sandhill  
in December 1967,  
two years before the  
birth of PCAS!

*Left:*  
A swan animates the  
scene at Sandhill lock  
in 1970.

*A look back through the archives - Sandhill Lock*



*This page:* Members of the Waterways Recovery Group at the canal on the 17th March 1991. Work concentrated on clearing trees and shrubs between Sandhill and Coates locks.



*A look back through the archives - Sandhill lock*



Top picture: Members of the WRG removing trees and shrubs from the side of Sandhill lock.

Lower picture: Time for a break? Recovery Group members take a break during clearance operations at Sandhill lock on the 17th March 1991.



*A look back through the archives - Sandhill Lock*



*Above:* Stabilising supports were installed in the lock in 2010.

*Below:* The lock wall in 2020.



**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)**

## A Trip on the Canal

Over the weekend of the 25th June 1999 PCAS celebrated its Thirtieth Birthday and the canal's restoration. *New Horizons* was out of commission that year whilst having a steel roof fitted, along with many other jobs. Colin Scott of the Calder Navigation Society kindly offered the use of their trip boat *Savile*. PCAS accepted this very kind gesture and transported the official party on the Saturday morning. *Savile* gave visitors trips along part of the restored canal during the day.



Above: The Calder Navigation Society's tripboat **Savile** berthed in the Melbourne Arm.

Below: Visitors leaving the tripboat **Savile** on the 25th June 1999.



## A Trip on the Canal



Above: The Calder Navigation Society's tripboat **Savile** takes VIP Guests along the canal on the morning of 25th June 1999.

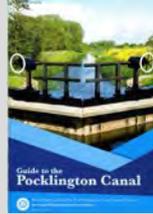
Below: Boats of many sizes were to be seen over the celebration weekend.



# PCAS Sales



Pen 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

Patrons: The Earl of Halifax Neil Edwards

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## **The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society**

**One copy free to paid up members**