

Calder Navigation Society
Newsletter July 2023

Summer's here and the time is right for sailing on the cut.



Occupying pride of place in this Newsletter are the sailors from Dewsbury. They said we could only use the photo if we put them on the front page, so here they are! They joined Savile for a day out and certainly dressed for the occasion. Do you think the Savile crews would look as good in sailor suits?

But now a message from our man in a boilersuit……..

Time for another Newsletter which means some comments from me, so I had better get on with it before our Editor gets on to me!

Yesterday, 13th July, I attended a "drop in" session to discuss the future of the Salterhebble Lock Keeper's cottage along with our Vice Chair John Smith. Quite a few suggestions were put forward, but the future is yet unknown. One thing that we do know is that the Canal & River Trust intend to put the cottage up for auction in early September unless a viable alternative is produced.

I have no doubt that we are all aware of the reduction in funding for C&RT as detailed recently in the Emergency Newsletter, I hope that EVERYONE has already



emailed your MP expressing your views and imploring the government to have a rethink. One alarming development is that apparently Mr. Parry, the top man at C&RT has stated that if the situation continues then it is anticipated that the norther waterways would eventually be abandoned! A bit alarmist but it seems that this is what he has stated or words to that effect. I would imagine that boaters would be targeted as an easy source of extra income so watch out for increased licence fees!

On a more positive note, CNS has been out in force on our local lock gate painting project, look at Battyeford Lock when you are in the area to see the result of our efforts. Our plan is to move upstream to the flood gate and then to Cooper Bridge but are currently being thwarted by the weather. It is not a good idea to apply paint to wet or damp wood!

Savile has been and is still very busy, more on this inside from Avril. Regarding the proposed charge of £114 per “event” introduced recently by C&RT, this was the cause of some alarm initially, but we have it in writing from the C&RT Leeds Office that it will not apply to our activities. We shall see what transpires next year when we more than likely will attend the Brighouse Market days and the 40’s Weekend. It was ironic for C&RT to propose charging us for actively promoting their waterway!

According to the published figures there are approximately 35,000 boats on the Inland Waterways and the IWA say about 80,000. C&RT claim that 7% of boats are unlicensed so using 35,000 and an average length of 45’ a simple calculation indicates that there is lost income of approximately £2.6M per year! From my experience as a Volunteer Lock Keeper, I have doubts over the 7% figure for unlicensed boats, I think that it is much higher. Shouldn’t C&RT be looking more closely at this issue?

On a lighter note, don’t forget that “Dolly” is coming to a joint venture concert at South Pennine Boat Club. If you haven’t got your ticket, then be quick as there are very few left. Contact Avril if you are interested. “Dolly” is in fact a Dolly Parton tribute act and having seen this lady I can assure you that you will be hard pushed to tell the difference between her and the real thing! I for one am looking forward to a fabulous evening. That’s about it for now, many thanks for your continued support of our Society.

Peter Davies - Chairperson



Editorial – Transpennine Distress

Crossing the Pennines is getting to be an increasingly frustrating experience for all of us. The failings of rail operator Transpennine Express have been well documented and the M62 is a never-ending source of horror stories. Another less well reported band of trans Pennine travellers is suffering equally from the challenge of crossing the Pennines. As each week passes, Brighouse Basin gets more like the base camp for Everest. Boaters pass through optimistically heading for the Rochdale Canal and the Summit, only to return dejected a couple of weeks later, pausing only to consider having a go at K2 (The Huddersfield Narrow). As that option is often closed as well, they have little option but to return to the lowlands and their more reliable waterways.

Almost every day, the Canal & River Trust's stoppage website details another problem on the Rochdale or Huddersfield Narrow canals. It is hardly surprising that fewer and fewer boaters are heading north to try out the scenic wonders of the northern navigations and canals. In the present circumstances it is hard to foresee any improvement. The Canal & River Trust has just received notice of Government funding cuts and inflation is eating away their funds as costs shoot ever upwards. Couple these two factors with the floods and droughts brought on by our changing climate and the future looks far from rosy. Local councils and other organisations supported by hundreds of volunteers brought the two Trans Pennine canals back to life only a couple of decades ago and they are not going to be at all happy if the Canal & River Trust cannot maintain them. Some suspect that the northern waterways are already entering a phase of managed decline and that it is only a matter of time before the closures become permanent rather than temporary. If the current position at Salterhebble is anything to go by, we are already on a downward slope.

So what can we do to try and improve things? The Calder Navigation Society was formed as a campaigning organisation to fight for the local waterways and it looks as if we have another fight on our hands. The fundamental issue at present is the Trust's financial position and this can only be solved quickly if the government has a change of heart. It will certainly help if CNS members bring the position to the notice of their local MP, so if you have not yet contacted your MP… don't delay, do it today!

STOP PRESS – See the last page for more on this subject.



Managed Decline?

Salterhebble in 2023



The Sanitary Station at Salterhebble was closed in October 2021 due to a problem with the septic tank. The last update from Canal & River Trust was issued on 1st February 2022. It said that discussions were taking place with contractors, but that work would not begin before April 2022. In July 2023 work has not started.

The landing adjacent to the sanitary station is unsafe and has been fenced off. There is no indication as to when or if work will start to reinstate it.





After all the discussions about its future and subsequent vandalism, the plan for the lockhouse is to rebuild the roof without lead and to put the property up for auction. As it is a listed building planning permission is needed to replace the lead used on the roof
There is no evidence of any action yet.



This is getting a little depressing, time for a happier story……

Keeping up Appearances

The painting of the lock gates and fittings along the Navigation is one of the tasks delegated to the Canal & River Trust's dedicated team of volunteers. This is fine at locations with a resident group of volunteer lock keepers or a local task force, but some locks are short of friends. These orphan locks look neglected and do little to enhance the image of the waterway. They need foster parents to look after them and this is where CNS has stepped in to help.

Last year the Brighouse based team of Canal & River Trust lockkeepers painted both Kirklees Upper and Lower Locks, but the work could not have been done without the use of **Savile** to get the team and materials to the site. This year, CNS is going it alone and more locks are planned to get the full treatment…

Battyeford Lock Spruce Up

The campaign is well under way, and Battyeford Lock repaint is complete. Led by decorator in chief, Peter Davies, a small team of volunteers has laboured in the heat to brighten up the lock gates and fittings. Here they are in glorious technicolour.



If you want the world to know what a good job we do at CNS, you must tell them all about it.

So first erect the banner…….

And then get on with the job……..



Steve and Peter scrape the old paint off the handrails before applying the primer and white gloss coats.





Martyn puts the masking tape on the completed handrails before applying black gloss to the lower fittings.



Anne and Steven complete the lock beams with a high quality white finish.



The completed lower gate at Battyeford and the upper one looks just as good.

One down, two more locks to paint, so why not join the team for an hour or two to decorate Battyeford Flood Lock….you may even get decorated in our chairman's next honours list.



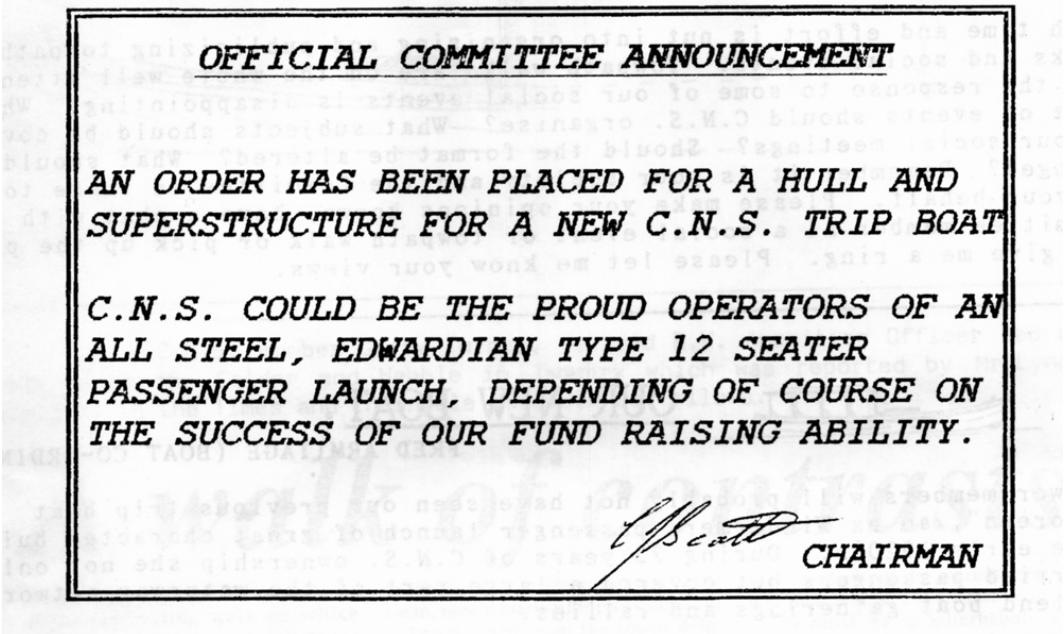
The Savile Summer Supplement

Beauty & the Beast



February 1995 – ‘Moving Road’ reports.

Before the arrival of the digital age, CNS published a regular newsletter for members. In the February 1995 issue of ‘MovingRoad’ the committee were pleased to announce a major development…….



OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT

AN ORDER HAS BEEN PLACED FOR A HULL AND SUPERSTRUCTURE FOR A NEW C.N.S. TRIP BOAT

C.N.S. COULD BE THE PROUD OPERATORS OF AN ALL STEEL, EDWARDIAN TYPE 12 SEATER PASSENGER LAUNCH, DEPENDING OF COURSE ON THE SUCCESS OF OUR FUND RAISING ABILITY.

CHAIRMAN



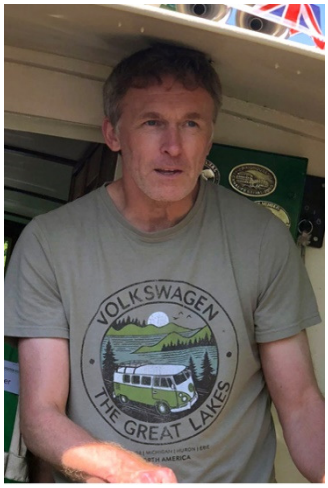
CNS's first boat had served the society for 23 years, but it was time to move on and in early 1995 an order was placed with Tayberg Steel Boats at Brookfoot, Brighouse for a new launch with a promised delivery date of July that year. The society had enough money in the bank to pay for the steel shell but a period of intense fund raising was about to start to ensure that the rest of the major essentials including the engine, gearbox, sterngear, windows etc. could be purchased.



The fundraising was obviously a success as Savile was completed and has now served the society for over 25 years.

Tayberg Steel Boats closed down some years ago but the building shed where Savile was constructed is still in place. Here it is alongside the Navigation at Brookfoot.

May 2023 - A Boat Trip to Brighouse



In May this year Steven Parker brought a party of friends to Battyeford for a cruise on Savile to Brighouse. Steven is a keen canal enthusiast and he reported on his day on Facebook. He is also an excellent photographer and he has not only allowed us to put the article and some of his photos in this newsletter, Steven and Anne have joined CNS. So here is his story



"I woke up last Saturday with a spring in my step such was my excitement about travelling along the historic Calder and Hebble Navigation aboard 'Savile' a most elegant vessel owned and operated by the Calder Navigation Society (CNS). On arrival at South Pennine boat club in Battyeford, Mirfield, we were met by enthusiastic volunteers from the society who made us feel most welcome. With everyone safely on board 'Savile', we left the boat club and started our journey up the navigation towards Brighouse. Travelling along this most beautiful waterway was



an absolute delight and the contrast between canal and river sections only added to the enjoyment. With flood gates left open, we glided up the river passing through a lovely landscape of open fields, wooded sections and urban environments.



Whilst ascending the upper lock at Brighouse, I was intrigued by the numerous stone masons' marks inside the stone chamber that could be found. After a splendid dinner at Blakeley's Fish and Chip Restaurant, we had a quick look around the market before returning to the boat for the journey home. I couldn't resist taking a good few photos and videos of the many interesting sights along this historic waterway.



CNS volunteers kindly showed me how to use the wooden 'hand spike' to operate the paddle gear which is a unique characteristic of the locks on the Calder and Hebble Navigation. They even allowed me to steer the boat along a river section which was an absolute pleasure. As we approached a flood lock situated on a blind bend and without warning or blast from it's horn, a rather large fibreglass vessel suddenly appeared and made for interesting manoeuvring in Savile to avoid a possible collision!



Making good time, we soon arrived back at South Pennine boat club and it was time to leave the boat and say our good-byes. I would personally like to thank all volunteers from Calder Navigation Society for making our day such a lovely experience and can thoroughly recommend a trip aboard Savile for anyone with an interest in this splendid waterway."

Steven Parker
15/05/23 — with William Paschalis.



July 2023 – Savile's Travels

As Savile co-ordinator, the Society is at its busiest time regarding the boat trips. We could refer to it as a "seasonal hazard," as far as the organising is concerned, but when else would anyone want to take a boat trip apart from "summertime". From the initial booking enquiry and up until the trip date there is plenty to do which all culminates in a party of happy people enjoying a cruise on Savile.

This summer we are helping to contribute to Birthday celebrations, family re-unions, corporate events, and anniversary celebrations. We have welcomed groups from the Oddfellows, and the Women's Institute. We are in receipt of many messages thanking us for giving them a day to remember. Below is a typical example:



A big thank you to all those who volunteer to help crew Savile. You are all so important in making the Society the success which it is. It doesn't matter how often you can crew, be it once per season or on a more regular basis – you are all important. I try to allocate all the people some of the time and not some of the people all of the time! Without a crew the boat can't cruise – and I don't like turning people away. **If there is anybody out there who would like to be included on the crew list, who isn't already, then please let me know asap.**

We have closed the books now regarding more bookings for this year. When we get to the end of the season (final trip 2nd September) we will have been out on 26 occasions so I think we shall more than cover Savile's expenses for another year and at the same time certainly do our bit to promote the waterway.

We are currently formulating a plan in its initial stages to take Savile to clear the large amounts of waterborne litter and rubbish from the long cut down to Dewsbury – watch this space!

Thanks to all who get involved.
Avril



Summer 2023 - Waterway Art

Glancing in Harrison Lord's gallery window in Brighouse the other day, I was surprised to see a painting of **Savile** passing through Brighouse occupying pride of place in the centre of the display. Closer examination revealed that our chairman was at the wheel. For an asking price of just £695, you can have this magnificent picture on your wall. And just to give you an idea of the painting by Gavin Macaulay, here is a photo taken through the gallery window. The photo is affected by reflections in the glass so if you are interested, you do need to see the real thing.



From the Archives – Our archivist reports

Earlier this year we received an enquiry from Ireland asking if we could find a picture of Greenwood Lock in our archives. Extracts from the email are as follows:

"I am writing in the hope that you might be able to help me. I now live on the West Coast of Ireland, but almost sixty years ago I lived in Walker Street, Ravensthorpe. I spent many a happy hour playing in the local area, and despite my parents' warnings, would often be exploring the towpath along the canal, watching the occasional Hargreaves Barge carrying coal passing through the locks.

I particularly remember riding my bike down the access track from the bottom of Walker Street to Greenwood Lock. In those days there was a lockkeeper's cottage there, occupied by a Waterways Employee and his family. His name, I recall, was Gordon Greenwood, although I have now forgotten his wife's and children's names. I remember thinking what a coincidence being called Greenwood and living at Greenwood Lock. I occasionally would go and play with the children, and Mrs Greenwood would give us fizzy pop and sandwiches.

After leaving school in 1976, I joined the Royal Air Force serving 34 years in total. It was many years before I was to return to Walker Street and Greenwood Lock, by



which time everything had changed, with development taking over the field next to the canal, and that idyllic environment that I used to play in had vanished forever.



With the passage of time, one's memory does play tricks, and I recall that Greenwood Lockkeeper's Cottage was demolished long before we moved, possibly in the late 60's. This afternoon, for absolutely no reason whatsoever, I found myself on the internet looking at old photographs of Ravensthorpe. I was trying to find a picture of the cottage at Greenwood Lock, which led me to your Website. The reason for me writing is to ask if you have, in your archives, an image of the old cottage at Greenwood Lock that you might share with me?

In this modern age, with all its advantages, and disadvantages, it's very pleasant to sit back in the evening, with a glass of Single Malt, and remember those happy carefree times, many years ago, when things were very different. I can still vividly remember Mrs Greenwood's chunky doorsteps of bread and cheese, washed down with a glass of Dandelion and Burdock!

I of course have elected not to remember the energy shortages, miners strikes, petrol rationing, and all the other stuff that as a young lad I wasn't interested in.

Thank you for taking time to read the ramblings of an old Yorkshire Codger and hope you can help."



After much searching through boxes of archive material I was pleased to find and be able to scan a photo to send to our correspondent. Unfortunately there is no information about the photo or when it was taken. I have asked him to enlighten us if he can with what he recollects of the lock cottage and it's environs. Perhaps readers of this edition of the Newsletter also have information they can add. If so we would be pleased to hear from them.

John L Smith - CNS Archivist

The Bingley Arms is back.

One of the pleasures of inland navigation is to tie up close to a canalside pub for a well-earned rest and a glass of refreshing ale. At least that used to be the case all along our Navigation until the twin threats of cost increases and flooding forced businesses to close. Now, at last, one business has come back from the dead. The Bingley Arms at Horbury Bridge closed in 2019 but was soon purchased by the Ossett Brewery. The epidemic then struck and the planned refurbishment had to be put on hold. It was beginning to look like the end for yet another pub, but the brewery has at last been able to complete all the necessary works and the Bingley Arms has reopened for business. It is proving to be a huge success judging by the traffic chaos in the area. We may even get traffic jams on the canal as all the thirsty local boaters head for Horbury.

Our Membership Secretary, Avril, reports

The Membership stands at 132. We would like to see this number grow as support is vital for the Society to continue. The higher number the members, the more we are listened to by the powers that be. Personally, I do not favour the word "Member". I prefer "Supporter", as support is what we do when we join the Society. If you know anyone who would like to show their support, please contact me for a Membership form! £8.50 per couple or £6 Single.

And with her cowboy hat on, our social secretary reports

We are pleased to be holding another social event together with South Pennine Boat Club on Friday 6th October 2023. This is a very special event when "Dolly" will be coming along to entertain us. At the time of writing, I have 4 tickets left so if any of you would like to bring along a friend or relative then please contact me for the tickets (07870 423194). They will be sold on a strictly first come first served basis.

Western dress is optional – enjoyment is compulsory!! All your tickets are numbered (I know what they are) and will be used in conjunction with the raffle. We look forward to seeing you there. Yeehaaa! Avril



Spot the Waterway



Last time, our mystery waterway was the Amsterdam – Rhine Canal. According to the Dutch authority responsible for inland waterways in the Netherlands it is the busiest canal in the world with an average of 100,000 barge movements along it each year. It runs from the port of Amsterdam via Utrecht to join the Waal near Tiel. It is 72 km long and was built to replace the Merwede Canal. Government approval for the new canal was gained in 1931 but due to the Great Depression and the Second World War, construction was not completed until 1952. Since then the waterway has been improved and can now carry 4 barges pushed by a tug as shown here.

This time our mystery waterway may not be quite as busy. But never mind, here it is.





Where can I find more CNS news?

This Newsletter is just one of the ways members can keep up with what is happening in the society. If you want to know more, check out our website at:-

https://www.calderns.org.uk/

We are also on Facebook, and our posts can be found by searching for Calder Navigation Society.

Articles & Photos for the Newsletter

Our aim is to publish the newsletter every three months, but sometimes we are a little short of both news and imagination. If you would like to write something for the newsletter or have ideas as to what we should be covering ….please get in touch. I can be contacted at:-

editor@calderns.org.uk

That is all for now, the next Newsletter should be out in the autumn.

STOP PRESS – **We have just discovered an excellent short film on YouTube where Richard Parry, the top man at the Canal & River Trust, explains the likely effects on the waterways of the government's plan to cut funding.**

The film is entitled "Every canal enthusiast needs to watch this video" and as we are all canal enthusiasts, I think we should do just that. The film is in the series "Cruising the Cut" and can be found on the internet at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpSudyrlNmA