

Calder Navigation Society
Newsletter July 2024



Summer is here at last. But just in case we get a rainy day, here is some reading matter to fill in that idle hour. I hope you find something of interest

So what has our chairman been looking into this time…..

Summer is here again though so far not much of one! Time again for a few words from me.



Savile is again very busy with plenty of bookings for this year. Nothing could be achieved without the help of our able and willing volunteers! Our insurance company are now insisting that we have records of competency and training in place and we are well on the way to achieving this with more RYA qualified skippers in the ranks.



I was asked recently if we had any plans for carrying out maintenance locally and we very much want to get on and refurbish the old stable block (storage building) at Cooper Bridge. After months of deliberation and head scratching our friends at the Canal & River Trust have finally come up with a colour scheme – black and white would you believe!

Ha'penny Bridge is still crying out for some TLC but there does not seem to be a lot of enthusiasm from the Canal & River Trust who own the bridge, time will tell.

With regard to the cottage at Salterhebble the Canal & River Trust have finally submitted a planning application for repair to the roof etc. We anticipate the cottage going on the market later this year.

As I mentioned in the previous issue of our very fine Newsletter, both Avril and I have taken the decision to step down from our roles after this current year, Chair Person, Savile Co-Ordinator, Social Secretary and Membership Secretary will all become vacant positions.

These roles do not necessarily have to be taken up by the same person or persons, they could be shared between four different volunteers. Please give some serious consideration to taking up a role because if no one comes forward we will be facing the probability of having to close the Society which will mean having to dispose of Savile. Surely after 55 years we can find a way to keep going?

That's about it for now, many thanks for your continued support of our Society.

Peter Davies
Chairperson



Crystal Ball Gazing – Looking to the future!

Your editor has fished out his crystal ball and asked it about the future of the Canal & River Trust, and the Calder Navigation Society. And here is what it revealed……

The Canal & River Trust

They are desperately short of money and things are going to rapidly get worse. *(some crystal ball this, a master of the blindingly obvious..but bear with me)* Like most other organisations in trouble they will concentrate on cutting costs,selling assets and putting up prices. Cost cutting starts with not cutting the grass, then removing litter bins, picnic tables, sanitary stations and ending all preventative maintenance. When something goes bang, put it back together on the cheap but if you think you can manage without it, do nothing. Within a couple of years there will be nothing left to cut apart from the locks and other essentials to navigation. When a major failure occurs on the busy sections of the waterways further South, the accountants will decide that much of their revenue from boaters depends on a functioning waterway and they will find the money somehow. But what will be the end result if it happens on Yorkshire's waterways where the numbers of leisure cruisers and hire boaters are already declining rapidly.

Meanwhile, the Trust's paying customers, the boaters will get more and more agitated. Why should they pay more and more for less and less? It is worse than Council Tax. They will protest and rubbish the Trust. Politicians will get on the bandwagon and allege that it is all the fault of the Trust who have far too many overpaid staff and spend far too much time being woke. *(I don't know what it means either)*. Meanwhile the number of residential boats will keep growing and as many have opted for life on the water because they are short of money and cannot afford to live on land, the Trust will have even less success in ensuring that they pay up.

The crystal ball is going cloudy now and all I can see is a muddy ditch overgrown with floating pennywort with one trapped boater wondering whether his much delayed six month voyage to Lancashire will ever be worth the £5000 he paid for his yearly licence.

(Oh dear, this is definitely a 'glass half empty' crystal ball….will it be half full when I ask about the CNS)



Moving along now, what can my crystal Ball tell me about our society?

The Calder Navigation Society

Nothing to worry us here, by the looks of it, a well maintained boat, money in the bank to keep her afloat and a keen committee steering the society forward. But now the images are getting murkier, team Davies have announced their retirement after several years of hard work to bring the society to the good position that we find today. Everyone else is looking the other way and without a Chairperson, Membership Secretary, Savile trips organiser and a Social Secretary, things are not looking good. Just when the society needs to fight even harder to save the navigation, it seems near to collapse. Without the aid of its members, the society seems doomed. Just as the image fades away I catch glimpses of Savile being auctioned off and solemn faced members at the winding up meeting for the society…….

(Things are not getting any better. This is a "three quarters empty" crystal ball. Let's give it a good shake and see if it can come up with a better future for the society.)

As I stare into the ball, to start with nothing changes from the last time I looked. A fine boat, money in the bank, but things are beginning to turn out differently. Keen members are wanting to help. A volunteer comes forward to take over the essential duties of a society chairman. Others decide that they can take over some of the other functions of Team Davies, looking after Savile, arranging bookings for her, handling the membership secretary's role and one even agrees to take on a new role to campaign for the waterways. With several members involved, the load is lightened for all and the society is refreshed and ready to undertake its main role of campaigning to keep the Calder & Hebble Navigation open.

(This one is much better, at last a 'glass half full' crystal ball and with your help, we can make this dream come true!)

Please give it some thought. Can you help our society to thrive and take on the challenge of fighting for the survival of our inland waterways? We don't need two people to take on all the work that Peter and Avril have done, the work can be spread between several members and anything you can do will be much appreciated.



Summer Boating – The story so far!



Brighouse Cruise Terminal – Forties Weekend

Savile finally got out and about in 2024. The weather wasn't very kind to us at the beginning of April and the first planned trip had to be cancelled at the last minute due to high river levels. We couldn't believe when, a week later, the sun shone brightly and Savile carried a group of CNS and SPBC members to Rawsons Pool. What a fitting tribute to our member, John Lord, whom we lost in 2023 for his sister, Anne, to scatter his ashes in a place he so loved. We were able to raise a glass to John in the dappled sunshine – it was really lovely.

Back to the rain a week later when we were unable to attend Brighouse Artisan Market – but a week after that the sun decided to show its face again at the open day hosted by South Pennine Boat Club. The crew were kept very busy providing trips every half hour from11 am until 4.30 pm. We were delighted to read some of the remarks answering the question "what did you enjoy most today?" to see that many of the children answered "the boat ride"! Well done Savile.
May continued with some private trips taking place in mixed weather but no-one seemed concerned if it rained, perhaps they were used to it by now!

June began with the Forties Week-end in Brighouse and the sun shone for us once again. Two days of hard work followed with full trips running every half hour from 10 am until 4.30pm. Over the week-end we provided trips for 300 people, a few canine



passengers as well and ended up with many tired crew members. I lost count of the number of times we were asked “can’t you have another boat”?
The month continued with more private trips including a short one for 9 little people under 5 years of age. I wondered about this one but needn’t have worried as they were so well behaved and really enjoyed themselves. The hour and a half was just about right as they did get rather excited but I’m sure they probably talked about it for days, “Five little ducks went swimming one day” truly came to life for them and they sang with gusto.

July and August are looking pretty busy and I personally am so grateful for the people who offer their time to crew. Without them the trips could never take place and all those passengers would be deprived of the pleasure they so obviously find in a day, or even a short trip on the water.

Let’s continue to do what we do – we seem to be able to make many people very happy.

Best Wishes
Avril





Culture comes to Happy Valley



Residents of the Calder Valley probably never realised that they lived in Culturedale but Calderdale Council aims to change that and to mark 50 years of Calderdale Council they are arranging a number of cultural events. One of them took place over the Spring Bank Holiday period when the narrowboat Opal's Comet sailed from Todmorden to Brighouse complete with a model galleon and a group of singers. Given the state of the local waterways, it was quite an achievement to complete the voyage and sing in the rain at the same time. The photos show the boat at Brookfoot and arriving in Brighouse.





The following morning, Opal's Comet could not be found in Brighouse but a very similar but much plainer Triumph was tied up in the basin. The spell had clearly worn off now that she had returned from the ball.



That sinking feeling…

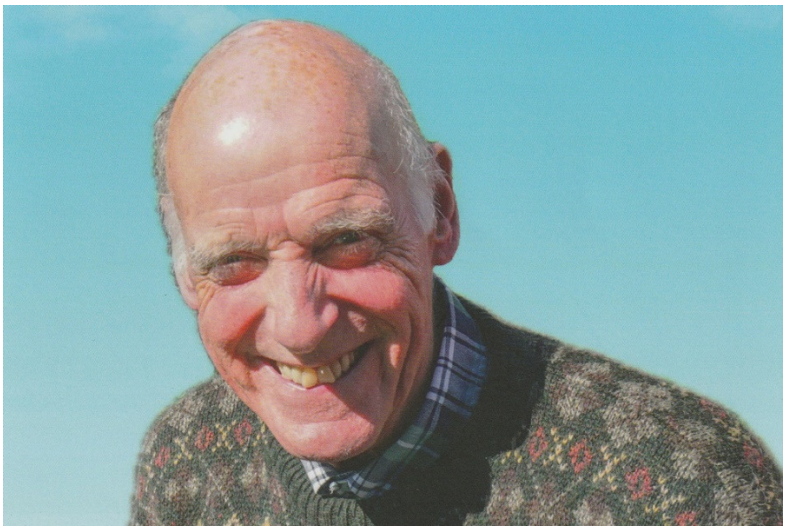
Spare a thought for the Canal and River Trust manager when he gets the message, a boat has sunk in the navigation. And the questions he has to answer.



Who owns it? Will he pay to refloat it? How do we get him to pay for it? If he does not sort it, can we get a crane to the towpath there? How much does crane hire cost?.....and finally, can my reduced budget stand it?
This one is at Fall Ing on the visitor moorings.



Malcolm Webster



On the 15th of May, we gathered to celebrate the life of Malcolm, who sadly passed away on the 30th of March. Many of his friends and colleagues came together at SPBC to reminisce about Malcolm and his achievements, his generosity, and the fact that he was regarded by all who knew him as a true gentleman.

Malcolm was born in Ipswich in 1942 and was a very keen supporter of CNS. He and Sue were members from the early days of the Society, and during the Doreen years, he was much involved, particularly when it came to the mysteries of the engine department. Malcolm and Sue were dedicated boaters who travelled the British Waterways for over 40 years on their beloved boat, Yorky, always with a cat. Yorky was their pride and joy, starting off as a smaller boat which was eventually extended. The front part of Yorky was even used by the boatbuilder to make a small boat! Sue was always painting; at one point, a “wet paint” sign was humorously hung on Malcolm’s back!

Sue and Malcolm were founder members and Life Members of the South Pennine Boat Club and were instrumental in the early work parties. They helped with the building of the pound, and Sue even assisted with the welding of the jetties!

Malcolm will be sadly missed, and our thoughts and condolences go out to Sue and the family.

Thanks to Avril & Derek Bedford for their input on this tribute.



Daniel Adamson – The Weaver Navigation's Trip Boat



Approaching Eastham Locks to enter the Ship Canal on 22nd June

As we all know, there is not a charity owned trip boat on the UK waterways to compete with **Savile**, but I have to admit that one vessel is a serious challenger. That vessel is the tug/inspection vessel **Daniel Adamson**.

She dates from 1903 when she was launched at Tranmere on Merseyside for the Shropshire Union Canal Company. At her launch she was named **Ralph Brocklebank**, after a director of the company, and she spent almost the next 18 years towing barges between Ellesmere Port and Liverpool. She also carried passengers on that route. By 1920, the canal company had lost much of its cargo traffic to the railways and in 1921 she was withdrawn from service and sold.

After purchase by the Manchester Ship Canal Company, she joined their fleet of tugs assisting ships sailing between Eastham and Manchester. In 1936, the directors of the Ship Canal company wanted a vessel they could use on their tours of inspection in addition to daily use in the tug fleet. The Ralph Brocklebank was chosen and fitted out in the Art Deco style. On completion of the refit, she was renamed **Daniel Adamson** and entered service in her new role. Daniel Adamson was the Manchester engineer and businessman who was the founding father of the Ship Canal.

By 1984 she was no longer required and after a period laid up at Runcorn, she was transferred to the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port as a static exhibit.The museum



was unable to keep up with the maintenance required and in 2004 she was sold for breaking.



At Liverpool in 2006 after restoration had begun

It was at this point that her fortunes began to improve.A group of enthusiasts started the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society and were able to buy the vessel for just £1. She was towed to Liverpool and restoration work began. Despite having help from many enthusiasts and local businesses, the volunteers working on the vessel struggled due to the lack of money but eventually a Lottery Fund grant was obtained and the restoration was completed in 2016.

Now based near Weston Marsh Lock, she offers trips on the Weaver Navigation between Marsh Lock and Acton Bridge, with occasional trips on the Ship Canal and the Mersey to Liverpool.

On the River Weaver moored next to the Anderton Boat Lift





The skipper's nightmare.



Skippers of passenger carrying boats everywhere are kept awake at night by the prospect of engine failure with a full compliment of passengers aboard. Proceedings on the Daniel Adamson were dampened on 22nd June when she suffered a damper failure approaching Eastham Locks and had to be assisted into the locks by a nearby Liverpool tug. Fare paying passengers got some extra excitement but a shortened outing as she had to be towed up the canal to Ellesmere Port instead of her planned destination on the Weaver Navigation.

Orde Wingate – A Brief Introduction to The Boat and The Man



The **Orde Wingate** has featured in these pages before, but our archivist has delved more deeply into her history and that of the man she is named after. Here is his report.



Spotted recently, moored at Horbury Bridge, was an unusual vessel to be seen on the Calder and Hebble Navigation. It was the **Orde Wingate**. Intrigued by the strange boat and name I decided to investigate further.



The boat is a 36' Historic Motor Cruiser with an interesting history, according to sales information when she changed hands in January 2021. The Classic Yacht Brokerage stated that she was used in the D Day Landings of 06/06/1944.

Built in 1942 by Lady Bee Ltd at Shoreham, she was designed by the Admiralty who had a number of these Naval Pinnaces built.
The new owner said in a news article that they found out that she was used by No 4 Commando in the 'D' Day landings and the article featured a photo showing her being carried aboard a larger naval vessel to the landings. Being a pinnace, she presumably would have been used to ferry troops or supplies from the larger ship to the shore.

She is named after Major General Orde Charles Wingate, considered by Churchill to be "one of the most brilliant and courageous figures of the Second World War". Born in India in 1903, he was educated in England, and, amongst other important military actions, he is credited with creating the Chindits who made deep penetrations into Japanese held territory during the Burma Campaign. Interestingly, he was appointed Adjutant of the Territorials 71 st (West Yorkshire) Regiment in 1935. He died in an aircraft accident in 1944 after giving, against the pilot's advice, a lift to 2 journalists when the aircraft was already overloaded. He is buried in Arlington Cemetery in the USA along with the remains of the American flight crew who were re-patriated after the war.
John L Smith - CNS Archivist

John is also working on an article on the dry dock at Battyeford. He already has one foot in the graving dock, but you will have to wait until the next Newsletter when he should be fully immersed in the subject.



Grand Autumn Entertainments

The South Pennine Boat Club has two events planned this Autumn at the Boat Club and CNS members have been invited to attend both. Thanks very much SPBC!

So here are the details…



WELCOME BACK

SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

From 4pm

Locally sourced meats, veggie options, salads & breads will be on offer.

All food is provided in the ticket price. There will be a bar to purchase drinks.

Family, Friends & CNS Members are all welcome.
Tickets: Adults £5.50. Children £2.75

Please contact Peter Davies for tickets on 07891 624612





MIKRON will be revisiting SPBC on SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER @ 7pm With their Common Ground Performance

This event is **FREE**

All welcome incl. Family, Friends & CNS

Donations to Mikron will be welcomed on the night.

There will be a Bar available before, in the interval & after the performance.

Please let Peter Davies know if you would like to attend. 07891 624612



Let's go with social media

When our society was set up 55 years ago, the government plan was to close the Calder & Hebble Navigation totally. We were formed as a campaigning organisation to make the case for the Navigation. That campaign was a great success, but the Navigation is once more threatened as the Canal and River Trust slowly runs out of cash.

Our boat trips and social media help us to spread the word to try and get more people involved but we need to get the message across to far more members of the public. And this is your chance to help us out.

We are planning to update the website and Facebook pages far more often than in the past to try to spread the word. This will be far more effective if society members can share our posts with other groups that they belong to. **So please don't hesitate to share our posts with every group that may have an interest in preserving our local waterway…….**

The Brighouse Flood Alleviation Scheme

Work has now started on the scheme at Brighouse which is designed to protect the town centre from flooding. The area liable to flood includes the canal basin.

As well as improving flood defences along the Calder and Clifton Beck, the plan is to divert flood water from Clifton Beck, which joins the Calder just downstream of Brighouse River Lock, into a flood storage area in Wellholme Park. This should slow down the excess water and prevent it overtopping the banks of Clifton Beck to flood the town centre. At present much of Wellholme Park is fenced off but it should reopen after the works are completed.

It remains to be seen what the condition of the park will be after a flood event, I suspect that it will be covered with several inches of mud.

And where is the IWA contribution this time?

Missing I'm afraid. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find the email address of my contact who offered to supply IWA information for the Newsletter. I have tried to contact them through their website contact system, but they have not replied. My guess is that the contact we had at the IWA has left the organisation.



Canal & River Trust – High Speed Action

Salterhebble Lock Cottage

On 24th June, following a bat survey that failed to reveal any bats, the Canal & River Trust finally applied to Calderdale Council to undertake repairs to the lock cottage at Salterhebble. This is what they had to say in their application, which runs to just 64 pages; -

"Following an incident of metal theft in 2022 where most of the lead flashings and the lead lining to a box gutter were stolen repairs to the building are required. These include repairs to the stone slate roof, replacement of the flashings and the lining to the box gutter. To allow replacement of the flashings some of the existing roof covering will need to be removed and then re-laid. Significant collateral damage occurred to the building as a result of the theft, many of the stone slates were damaged as they were carelessly removed and thrown to the ground to allow access to the lead. Stonework was damaged, traditional timber guttering was damaged. Damage to the roof allowed water ingress to the property. Despite subsequent temporary repairs and roof coverings water ingress has proved difficult to stop leading to internal mould, fungus and damage to the lime plaster ceilings. Anecdotal information suggests that the theft occurred in daylight hours. Due to the vulnerability of the building, it is proposed to repair the building using terne coated steel instead of lead. This will dramatically cut the risk of damage to the building in future as there is no incentive for thieves to risk stealing it. All other details/materials would remain the same. As much of the existing stone slate would be re-used, where required new stone slate will be procured from the local area to match."

We can only hope that planning permission will be granted quickly and that building work goes ahead before next winter. On past form this may prove a trifle optimistic.

Cooper Bridge Stable Block

It will come as no surprise to learn that very little has happened concerning the proposed colour scheme. One view at the Trust is that all the paint should be removed to reveal the original brick building. Others feel that the standard "Black & White" colour scheme is appropriate. The volunteers from CNS are not impressed by the prospect of trying to remove several layers of paint as it would be both time consuming and back breaking. And after all, our offer was to repaint it!



Spot the Waterway - Results



Well, it does not look much like a British waterway, so it must be somewhere in Europe. With such a wonderful array of church towers, it looks very much like a German town. Yes, you are right it is a view of the River Trave in Lubeck, which was once a major port for the Hanseatic League. It boomed when most seagoing trade was with the Baltic ports, but Hamburg replaced it as the major north German port when North Atlantic trade became much more important. The Trave is navigable for sea going ships from Travemunde on the Baltic coast up to Lubeck, but most of the traffic on the upper sections is carried on inland waterway vessels that travel to Lubeck on the Elbe-Lubeck -Kanal linking the Trave with the Elbe and the rest of the European inland waterway system. **Hanseatic** shown below heading downstream on the Trave is typical of the 1000 tonne barges used on waterway.





Spot the Waterway – The next challenge.



So where on earth could this be? It is definitely not a Hanseatic League port.

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 the **Calder Navigation Society.**

Articles & Photos for the Newsletter

Thanks to John Smith and Jim Souper for providing photos for this edition.

Our aim is to publish the newsletter three times a year, in March, July and November. Any articles or photos for the Newsletter should reach me by the first day of the month in which the Newsletter is published. If you would like to write something for the newsletter or have ideas as to what we should be covering, then please get in touch. I can be contacted at:- **editor@calderns.org.uk**