

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 66

Winter 2013



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Forthcoming Events:

Sunday 23rd Feb Thirteenth BCHS AGM at the Falcon Hotel Bude at 2.30pm.
To be followed by a presentation by Peter Williams on the
Wilts and Berks canal.

Saturday 15th Mar Deadline for articles for inclusion in Tub Boat No 66 to reach
the editor Clive Horton on cshorton23@btinternet.com

Wed 1st April 2014 Publication of THE TUB BOAT No 67

August 2014 Coach trip to Falmouth Tall Ships Regatta

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment
to cshorton23@btinternet.com or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and send to
Mike Moore (Tel: 01288 361878) to reach him by 15th March 2014.

Trustees:	Acting Chairman	<i>Vacant</i>
	Vice-Chairman	Ralph Daniel
	Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
	Treasurer	Chris Jewell
	Events Secretary	Betty Moore
	Minuting Secretary	Pam Daniel
	Other trustees	Audrey Wheatley David Phillips,
	Membership Secretary	Mike Moore (<i>non-trustee</i>)
	The Tub Boat Editor	Clive Horton (<i>non-trustee</i>)

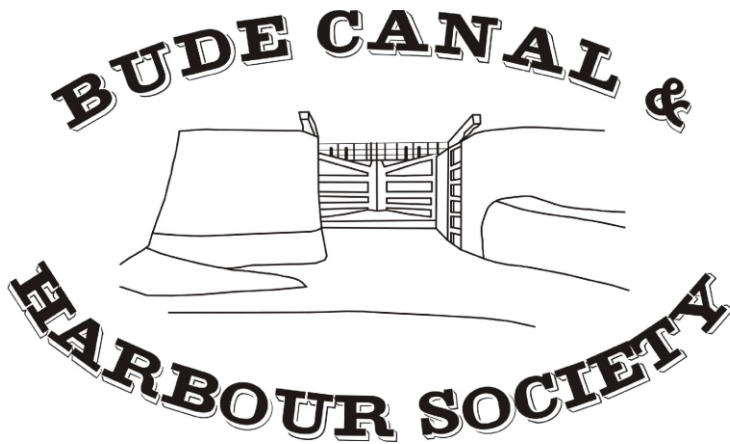
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Cover: Budehaven looking across to Compass point on 28th October
Photo: Mike Moore

Creaks from an empty Chair

Once again the society finds itself in need of someone to occupy the chair. Following Audrey Wheatley's retirement after long and valuable service at the AGM in February Anne Longley very kindly stepped into the breach as acting chairman but has had to step down for personal reasons. In addition to the position of chair the committee also needs a secretary as well as new committee members to help share the workload of running YOUR SOCIETY. Please carefully consider whether you can help.



Membership Report

We welcome the following new members who have joined since September:

Bob Abbott, Cheddar, Somerset

Valerie Adams, Brook Drive, Bude.

Bob is Chairman of the West Country Branch of the Inland Waterways Association and also non-executive chairman of the Somerset Waterways Development Trust whose main function at the present time is to oversee the maintenance and development of the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal in association with the Canal & Rivers Trust.

Many thanks to those members who have already renewed their

subscription for 2013/2014 and particularly to those who have given additional donations. However, some members have still not renewed. Would they please complete the enclosed renewal form by return to maintain their support for the Bude Canal & Harbour Society and receive future newsletters. Remember that only fully paid up members can vote at the AGM in February.

Can I also remind those members who are taxpayers and who have not yet completed a Gift Aid declaration that they can obtain a copy from the Treasurer.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mike Moore

Bude 200 Years Ago in 1813

The following extract is from "Voyage Round Great Britain Vol 1" written by Richard Ayton in 1813 and published in 1814, six years before the first sod was cut on the Bude Canal. "This place is called Bude Haven, though at present only a sandy creek, where small vessels venture to ground, and are so exposed to the wind and sea, that they have a fair chance of having their bottoms knocked out by every returning tide. It was once a large and commodious port, all traces of which are now buried under the sand. The river Bude meets the sea here, and at its confluence formerly spread into a wide estuary, capable of receiving ships of great burden, but now runs to the sea in a shallow stream, navigable only for ducks and geese. The destruction of the haven is attributed both to the sand from the sea and the mud from the river; the first imbankment was of sand, which obstructed the mud in its passage to the sea, and co-operated with it in filling up the channel of the haven. But though Bude has at present no title to the character of a harbour, it is still frequented as a port, in consideration of what it was formerly, and greatly to the emoluments of the shipwrights. I saw several vessels moored on the sand, and was so struck with their evident exposure, that I could not forbear from expressing my opinion of their danger to some of the captains: but they all explained to me the cause of their situation by observing, and that too in a tone of justification, that Bude was once as good a harbour as any on the coast of Cornwall. I have never seen the game of follow-my-leader more desperately pursued. The village of Bude is very small but has some neat houses

in it, which are let out as lodgings to visitors, who go thither for the benefit of sea-bathing, though the place is not supplied with any conveniences that can render the act of bathing either comfortable or decent, particularly to the ladies. No bathing machines are employed, and consequently the ladies are reduced to the necessity of undressing themselves in the dark and dismal caverns hollowed in the cliffs by the sea, and of parading into the water not unseen. At the precise moment which they choose for their dip, some male starers are certain to be picking up shells at the water's edge, who, under this pretence, have an opportunity of seeing the whole exhibition. There is no circulating library or trinket shop at Bude, where the visitors can spend their money and their mornings, so that, in spite of the bracing effects of the cold bath, I think I discovered some symptoms of flaccidity about them, and a certain anxiety in their countenances which declared that they were seeking more than they could find. I have heard some seamen say that they preferred a storm to a calm, and I confess that beating hemp would be more to my taste than waiting three and twenty hours every day for a plunge in the sea. (An earlier "Tub Boat" gave an account by a lady of the difficulties of bathing towards the end of the 19th century, and another describing ships unloading at the Strand by Grenville's cottage in the 17th century but it was not clear that Bude was a "large port".) Lawrence Wheatley (The Tub Boat editor in 2003)

Box's Foundry

The Planning Application relating to Box's Foundry has now been refused and I understand that the applicant does not intend to appeal. Although we are pleased that this application was not successful as the proposals were inappropriate for such an historic building, it is now uncertain whether any work will undertaken to prevent any further deterioration of the building. It needs some tlc.
Mike Moore

Lower Basin, Bude

On 17th October 2013, a meeting between Cornwall Council, Councillors, Officers and users and interested parties took place at Bude, to discuss the issues relating to the use of the Lower Basin. A full and frank exchange of the recent problems and suggested

solutions took place. After further discussion, it was agreed that from 2014 all use of the whole in water canal by commercial activity providers would be dealt with through the Environment Service's local Ranger Gareth Cann. Where necessary, he would liaise with the Harbour Master, Mr Paul Vincent. In addition extra signage will be provided to advise all users that they need to be licensed. Spot check to be carried out to reinforce the policy of licensed usage, both early and late in the day. The code of conduct will be extended to cover the Lower Basin. Each year, before and after the 'season', this subject will be addressed at the meetings of Bude Valley Management Advisory Group.

Also, at this meeting, it was reported that the problem affecting the use of the Sea Lock had been resolved, following an inspection by divers. The leak through the cill had been caused by metal debris. The cill was not damaged and the Sea Lock is now operational. The gate paddles are due to be serviced before the year end.

This was a useful and productive meeting showing the value of proper communication between all parties. Indeed a lesson for all. BCHS are grateful for the support from the Community Network Panel for Bude, Councillor David Parsons and Guy Pessell, Hon, Secretary Bude Canal Angling Association in bringing this matter forward for a proper discussion which should have resolved this matter.

Chris Jewell

Barge Workshop, Helebridge

The work on the replacement roof should be carried out this winter, by the Bude Stratton Town Council;

The Heritage and Culture Committee has indicated that they wish to make better use of the premises as a venue to give interpretation to the collection of artefacts kept in the premises including the Tub Boat. It is hoped to have a project for 2015/16 which would seek funding for HLF to achieve this object and improve access to the site.

With relation to old timbers stored at the premises the result of the dating examinations was inconclusive. However, the Heritage and Culture Committee have agreed to explore the possibility of carbon dating subject to costs. In addition, expert opinion is being sought as to what the timbers are reasonably considered to be.

This would allow the timbers to be displayed, probably at the Barge Workshop with appropriate interpretation as to their likely purpose and also the families involved in the late 16th Century.
Chris Jewell

Bude Canal Trust Report

August / September

For those that have ventured along the Dunsdon section of the aqueduct they will have found the 300yd Dunsdon Reserve section having been dredged out and the sluice gates completed, has now been partially re-watered to test for leaks. One leak which caused a large hole to appear in the footpath was kindly repaired by the contractor on site but there are a couple of other small leaks on the footpath side which will need to be kept an eye on to ensure a similar situation doesn't occur there.

The stonework and wooden rails of Gainsmoor Bridge have been rebuilt and repaired where needed. The original 3' dia. stoned culvert at the northern end of this section has unfortunately partially collapsed and silted up. This was backed up sometime in the past with a 12" concrete pipe. The heavy rain experienced last winter found this pipe to be inadequate and ditching work has now been agreed between all parties to cope with any repeated weather conditions.



Photos of the sluice and Gainsmoor Bridge

Vealand bridge reconstruction has now been completed as far as materials have allowed, three capping stones are unfortunately still unaccounted for. Excavation of the immediate canal section either side of the bridge would bring about the final touches as and when finances allow.



Vealand bridge

October / November & December.

There have been the regular weekly work days (now switched to Wednesday) keeping the footpath, hedgeline and canal profile vegetation trimmed back. This work has concentrated on the sections between Virworthy Wharf and Cape Horn, Dunsdon Nature Reserve and the Holsworthy Branch although the whole length from the Lower Tamar Lake and the aqueduct bridge over the River Tamar is accessible.

Some mesh has been provided from the Devon footpath team to cover the surface of the small footbridge where it has been found to be quite slippery when wet.

The ever present leaks adjacent to the sluice at Virworthy wharf have highlighted the problem of creating a permanent seal between concrete structures and the clay lining to the canal profile. The Trust is extremely grateful to the Devon footpath team for the assistance of the two outside workers providing the excavation work and backfilling of the eroded channels undermining the footpath plus some high quality clay to rebuild the canal profile.

The committee would like to express their thanks and appreciation to all the members of the BCT Partnership, local businesses and

volunteers for the financial assistance received, donations of materials and physical on site hard work without which we would not have been able to achieve any of the targets we have done during the last twelve months.

If anyone is in a position to assist the current small working group on the 2014 planned work days, Wednesdays (weekly) plus four Saturdays between January and March please send an email to budecanaltrust@gmail.com requesting further details. Thank you
Photos & text Mike Degnan.

AGM on 23rd February 2014

Please find enclosed your invitation to the thirteenth AGM of our society where you will hear what we have been doing over the last twelve months and have your opportunity to raise any queries with our trustees or make any comments. From reports elsewhere in the Tub Boat you will realise that we now have a vacancy for a chairman as well as the longstanding vacancy for a secretary to replace Bryan Dudley Stamp who resigned in 2012 so anyone who can help by joining our committee would be most welcome. I am sure you all appreciate the difficulties the committee face operating without a chairman and secretary so if you are interested please contact us for a nomination form or speak to one of our trustees at the AGM.

Following refreshments after the AGM, Peter Williams will give a talk on the Wilts & Berks Canal which ran from Abingdon on the River Thames through Swindon, Chippenham and Melksham to link with the Kennet & Avon Canal with a branch from Swindon to Cricklade on the Thames & Severn Canal. This canal formed part of a large network of canals in Wiltshire which will hopefully be brought back to life. This will be a fascinating talk not to be missed.

Mike Moore

Car in the Canal

One Sunday afternoon in September, a car parked alongside the canal basin at Helebridge rolled into the water and came to rest

near the towpath on the opposite side of the canal. Chris Jewell and Lesley Moores, who were on duty at the Barge Workshop



nearby became aware of the situation at about 2.45pm and went over to check if there were any occupants in the car while a visitor called the emergency services. Fortunately they were soon able to confirm that no-one was in the car which floated for a while before sinking onto the bed of the canal. This all occurred while the driver (a visitor to the area) was enjoying a walk completely unaware of the fate of her car.



I arrived at the scene later and took some photographs of the recovery operation which involved a volunteer swimming across the canal to attach a harness to allow the car to be winched over to the bank near the car-park. It was then lifted out of the water and then on to the recovery truck.

Text & Photos Mike Moore

Winter Warmer Sunday 15th December.

This year's Winter Warmer went very well considering there were only a few people there and it was so nice to see some of our

original members supporting us. Mulled wine, apple strudel, mince pies and clotted cream and biscuits were served and enjoyed by all.



Although we all enjoyed ourselves, if we do not get more support from our members at these functions we will have to reconsider whether we continue with them. Please let us know what you think – do we need to reorganise the events either in a different format, on different dates, at a different venue or perhaps you aren't interested in these sort of social events? If you want us to continue with them please support us.

Text Betty Moore, Photos Mike Moore

Canal Cottage, Chilsworthy, Nr Holsworthy

During 2011, BCHS had some conversations and correspondence with the then owners of the above premises, Roy and Carol Smeeth, about the premises and its connections with the Bude Canal. Mr Smeeth sent BCHS some historical information about the premises and its occupants in the 1840's. Briefly, in the 1841 census the occupants of two cottages were Mary Rodd and her 5 children and a Richard Ellis, both were believe to be involved in the

operation of the Bude Canal. Adjacent to the cottage/s is the canal which crosses the Chilsworthy Valley on an embankment and turns the canal through 90 degrees as it progresses towards the outskirts of Holsworthy. It is also possible that this was the site of stabling for horses used on the canal and for other haulage purposes.



As you know I have been transcribing text from records books about the Bude Canal held by Bude Stratton Town Council in the Archives they maintain. During the past several months I have noted the following items about this premises:

1. Taken from 'The Canal Book of Reference re waste lands 1840-1841'
2. Taken from 'Bude Canal Works Information 1830-1843'

Both are hand written accounts of land or the working of the canal including tolls, wages, tonnage and stoppages.

In (1) above is recorded the following for plot 47 and 48. Plot 47 an area of land in the Chilsworthy Valley and rented by Richard Ellis at 15 shillings per annum.

Plot 48 – at the western end of the valley is a cottage built by the Canal Company for one of 3 labourers (Ellis), let at a rent of £3 per annum.

In (2) above, in the records of wages paid during 1840 commencing in June, are entries for labour which relate to the construction of this premises. In June it is shown a 'House at Chilsworthy - £1.5s 0d' and the following entries July to November 1840, it is shown as 'Ellis's House'. There are no other entries as to labour costs for this house and the total of wages for the six months was £26.12s.7d. There is no record of the cost of materials.

Nothing outstanding about this other than it relates to local persons living and working and probably having a better life with the canal than without.

BCHS thanks Bude Stratton Town Council for consent to use this information, as they own the documents and the copyright.

Text & Photos Chris Jewell

Tall ships Falmouth August 2014

We have had a good response with many forms returned showing interest in the coach trip to see the Tall Ships therefore we will be going ahead with the trip. We will decide which day and determine the price of the coach at our committee meeting in January. If you are interested in this trip and have not completed an Advance Booking Form, could you please do so and return your form to me by end January. This will give you priority when final bookings are taken.

Thank you for your support.

Betty Moore
Events Secretary



View from the North

The older I get the more new experiences/ventures I seem to get involved in. For the past two years since retiring as Headmaster of Shapinsay Community School my wife and I have run a tearoom as well as me being Treasurer of Orkney Arts & Crafts Association which is a group of over 100 crafts men & women who make and sell crafts to both visitors and locals, plus Chairman of the national Charity the SS Uganda Trust, plus RSPB pin badge coordinator for Orkney West Mainland, plus Scottish Tourist Guides Association Green Badge Guide taking visitors and cruise ship passengers around the sites of Orkney. Oh and not forgetting Editor of your Tub Boat magazine. However, 2014 sees me now also becoming a tour operator after the purchase of Wildabout Orkney www.wildaboutorkney.com which will involve me in organising bespoke holidays and tours for clients from all over the world. So I'm hoping that someone reading this will have the confidence to volunteer to take on the chairmanship of BCHS. You certainly won't be without support from a dedicated committee within Bude and as a former vice chairman of the Bude Canal Society I'm willing to give advice by e-mail to you whoever you are.

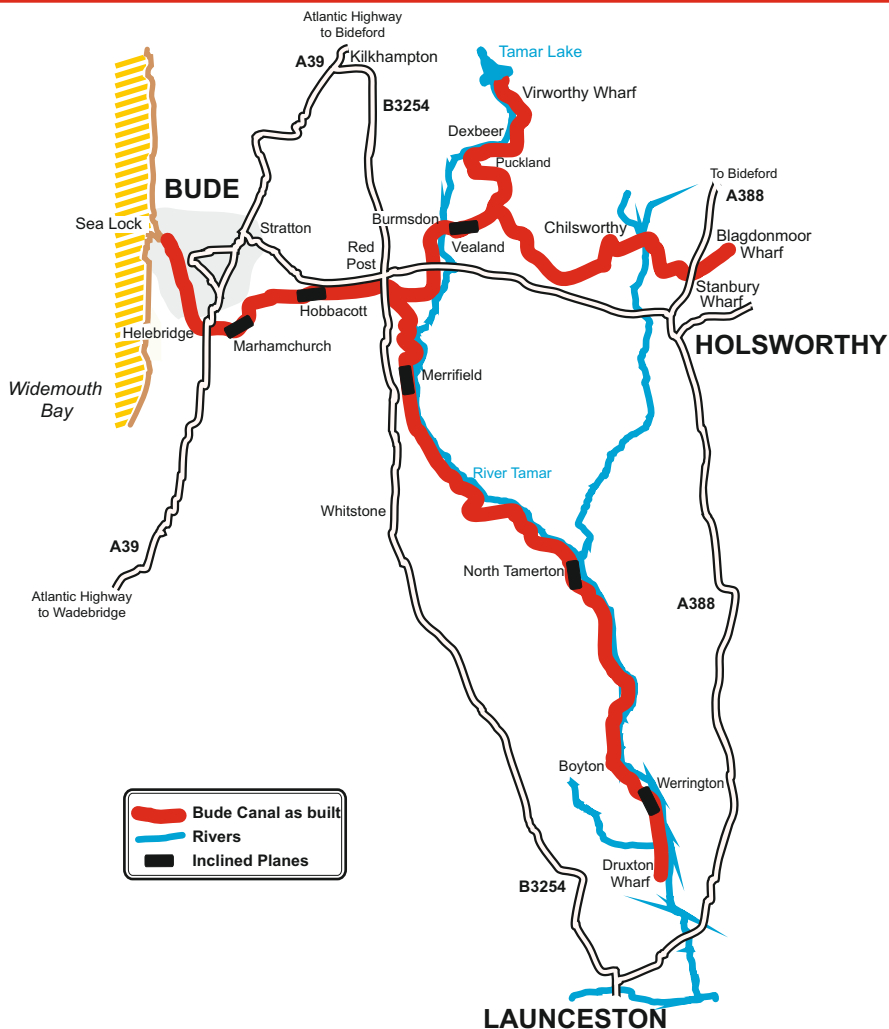
Wishing you all the best for 2014.

Clive Horton

Photo is looking south towards Bude with Hoy Hills in background.

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