

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 56

Summer 2011



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Forthcoming Events:

- Saturday 16th July Annual coach trip to Bristol including a boat trip. £21 Some seats still available.
- Saturday 30th July Barbecue at Barton Gate organised by the Bude Canal Trust. Cost £5 each.
- Sunday 31st July Cornish Day at Adventure International organised by Terry Bale to raise funds for Stratton Hospital. Stallholders welcome
- Sunday 7th Aug Bude Stratton Heritage Day (formerly Canal Day). BCHS stall and display panels
- Saturday 20th Aug Bude Carnival with BCHS stall
- Saturday 27th Aug BCHS stall at RNLI Weekend
- Sunday 18th Sept Visit to Kelly Mine & Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre organised by the Rolle Canal Society. Cost £5.00 per person.

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to info@bude-canal.co.uk or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and sent to Mike Moore (Tel: 01288 361878) to reach him by 24th September 2011.

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

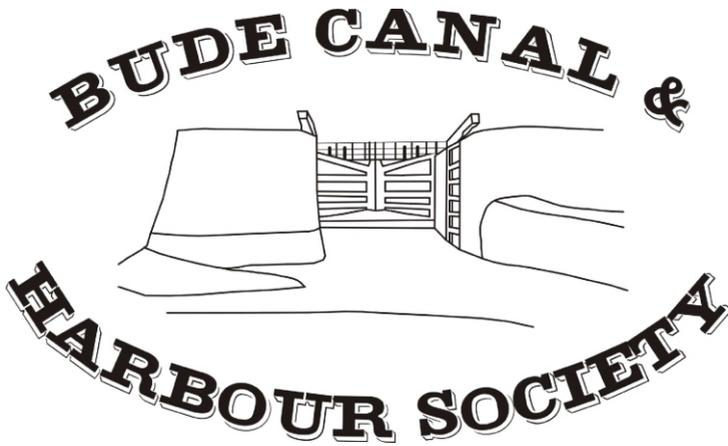
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Cover: The new Weir Coffee Shop, Bistro and Wildlife centre which is now open at Whalesborough
Photo: Mike Moore

CREAKS FROM THE CHAIR

It is always a pleasure to welcome back into the active circle, old members whom we may not have seen a lot of over the years. One such of these is Clive Horton who joined the old Bude Canal Society way back at the beginning when membership was a mere dozen or so, and he lived and taught in Launceston, travelling to Bude for meetings once a month after school. Then a long time ago Clive moved initially to Lincolnshire in 1996 then in 2000 to Orkney, which could have been outer space as far as we in Cornwall were concerned and we all lost touch, though not membership. Now Clive has kindly offered to compile and edit this magazine, albeit from a great distance, which is an irrelevance in our computer age I suppose. We are very grateful for Clive's offer and wish him the best of luck with the venture and hope that he'll carry on for a bit longer than this current edition!

In the same breath, as it were, thanks to Mike Moore who stepped into the breach and kept the flag flying with the production of last quarter's edition.

Thanks too to those who provide copy on a regular basis and keep their eyes open for promising material. There would be no newsletter without any of it. Please do send in anything you may think of interest - it will be very welcome.

Audrey Wheatley.

Membership Report

We welcome the following new members who have joined since March

Mr T Parsons, Leven Cottages, Bude

Mr S Cowling, Courtenay Insurance, Bude

Mr M Bullock, Trowbridge

Could members who have given us their e-mail addresses please remember to send any updates or amendments to info@bude-canal.co.uk so that we can continue to notify you when the newsletter is available on-line and for us to send any other notifications or booking forms etc. Thank you for your assistance and for your continued support.

Mike Moore

Bude Canal Trust Report

Works

Over the winter and spring a range of hedge-trimming and cutting back of overhanging branches on the towpath has been carried out. Some works have been undertaken by the Community Services team, others by volunteers.

In early February a hedge-laying course was held by the Devon Wildlife Trust on the canal which resulted in approximately 50 yards of hedge near Dexbeer Bridge being laid.

Further major hedge cutting and bank works have been completed between Dunsdon and Brendon Bridge by the Trust and volunteers.

In addition, the path surface is being regularly cut by the Trust using the new mower purchased with a grant from the Balsdon Trust in the winter.

The Devon Wildlife Trust has permissions in place to re-water a length of the canal through their Dunsdon Reserve. This will take place once they have finance in place, and the Trust looks forward to seeing the results of this project.

Devon County Council has erected two people counters along the path, one near Virworthy and one near Vealand. Results from these counters are awaited.

An engineer from the Inland Waterways Association has undertaken a survey of the old stone culverts under the canal and some of the bridges. The Trust is now about to obtain some estimates for undertaking the recommended works prior to applying for grant aid.

As an aside, concerns have been raised by Trust workers and volunteers about dog mess being found along the path. Temporary signs are being erected, and for the sake of all our workers trying to keep the path in good order it is urged that all those taking their dogs along the towpath take their dogs' deposits home.

Events

The Trust attended an exhibition of James Green's canals (the engineer and designer of the Bude Canal among many others) at the Castle at Bude between 2nd and 17th April. Also, on 21st May, a Garden Party was held by the Trust, courtesy of Tim and Sandy Dingle, which was well attended and helped raise funds for the Trust.



Members of the BCHS committee enjoying their cream teas.
(Mike Moore)

On Sunday 26th June the Devon Wildlife Trust held an Open Day at Dunsdon Nature Reserve. While concentrating on the wildlife interest of the wider reserve, the Wildlife Trust invited the Bude Canal Trust to attend this event, as the Canal Trust's length of the canal passes through the centre of this National Nature Reserve. The Canal Trust took an exhibition of maps, photographs and leaflets to the Open Day and, in addition, Trustee Tim Dingle led a guided walk along the canal between Dunsdon and Vealand. This gave the Canal Trust the opportunity to highlight both the wildlife interest and the historical importance of this length of the canal.

Coming up on Saturday 30th July the Trust is holding a barbecue at Barton Gate Farm on the A3072 Holsworthy-Bude road at 6pm, entrance £5 per adult, children free, with table top sale and raffle and opportunities to meet the ponies, ducks and geese.

Steve Church, Chairman, Bude Canal Trust

The Barge Workshop, Helebridge

At the end of December 2010, BCHS wrote to the Bude Stratton Town Council expressing our concerns about the continuing poor state of the roof on the Barge Workshop at Helebridge, near Marhamchurch and that its replacement was not in the budgeted

expenditure for 2011/12. BCHS urged BSTC to re-instate the replacement of the roof as a matter of urgency. BCHS have £500 set aside as a contribution to this work on the basis that the premises is a former canal company building and it houses the Bude Canal Tub Boat, as well as other local heritage artefacts.

We also asked if BSTC could produce a simple information leaflet about the premises and its contents as a useful guide for visitors to the workshop when open to the public.

BSTC considered our request and it is good to be able to advise you that the council has decided to:

Re-roof the premises during 2011, using monies from the general reserves

Produce an information leaflet about the premises and the contents therein, by using the expertise of the Archive Volunteer Team based at the Castle Heritage Centre.

BCHS are really pleased with this conclusion and thank the Town Council for at last 'grasping the nettle' and agreeing to at last resolve this long standing problem.

Chris Jewell

Bude Valley Management Advisory Group

On the 4th July 2011 the group met for a two part meeting:

- a. 1pm a walk along the canal and through the marshes with the Ranger Service and other group members to discuss current issues and future plans
- b. 2.30pm formal meeting of the group. The main topics of concern were the low water levels which affects the fish stocks in the canal and the current excessive use of the canal by canoes. There are two reasons why this problem exists;
 1. The new licensing system does not start until October 2011. This system will reduce the numbers of canoes on the canal by the implementation of a stringent tendering process and enforcement of licensing conditions.
 2. The weir on the River Strat/Neet is down as it has been deemed in the recent Port Safety Review by Cornwall Council as a medium to high risk. This section between

the weir and the Rugby club area does not have canoes due to the lack of water depth. There is no charge/fee/licence needed to use the river. The operator/s who formerly used the river now use the canal, i.e. the length of canal between the Sea Lock and Falcon Bridge, without a licence.

This is possible because that section of the canal is part of the marine section of Cornwall Council's responsibility and there is no requirement for canoe operators to be licensed.

These extra canoes are having a knock on effect by causing overcrowding, upsetting residents, excessive noise and creating problems for anglers and other users.

BVMAG are asking the Environment Service of Cornwall to write to the marine section, urging them to licence the use of that section on the same basis as the section above Falcon Bridge, to reduce the usage or preferably to refuse such use in 2012 and into the future.

Some members of the group see the solution of this problem as being the re-introduction of the use of the weir. Personally, I would be and am against such a move. The river at Bude is a tidal river and there is a public right of navigation on the tidal river section, which cannot be extinguished by the obstruction caused by the weir when raised. Secondly, the artificial retention of water to provide a facility for use by canoes on the river seems to be against the natural course of the river's environment. To retain river water which stagnates between the occasions when spring tides overflow the weir and clean the river beyond seems foolish to me. The retained water acts as a disguise for all the debris that is accidentally or deliberately deposited in the river and which then, in its own right pollutes the river. This action seems even more foolish when the weir is owned and controlled by the Environment Agency, who, as I understand it are responsible for the well being of our rivers.

In my view, there is only one solution to the fair and effective use of the canal. That is a rigorous licensing system, which is enforced and which thus reduces the now excessive usage of the canal by commercial users. This is a view that BCHS has long held and

expressed. The river at Bude should be allowed to be what it is, a tidal river, free from artificial hindrance, to the benefit of the environment of the Bude Valley and Bude.

'Friends of Bude Valley'

The aim of forming such a group continues with the following events.

1. 7th August 2011 at Bude Stratton Heritage Day. To raise awareness of the need for such a group to protect the valley and work with Cornwall Council to achieve this.
2. 6pm, 5th October 2011. A public meeting at Falcon Hotel Bude, to seek to set up a steering group to form the 'Friends Group'. Will include displays by local groups who have an interest or use the valley.
3. Spring 2012. Formal AGM and launch of the 'Friends of Bude Valley'.

Chris Jewell

The Weir

Following my article in the last Tub Boat about the replacement for the Woodland Tea Rooms, the new building has now been completed and it opened as "The Weir" on 11th June.

As mentioned in the previous article, "The Weir", which overlooks the new lake at Whalesborough is a wildlife interpretation centre with tea rooms/restaurant. A new junction has been built on the A39 giving access to ample parking and those walking along the canal towpath from Bude should keep to the right before crossing the A39 at Helebridge.



The Weir is open daily from 9.30am for breakfasts serving hot foods until 2.30pm followed by cream teas until 5pm. They also have an evening Bistro from 6.30pm from Tuesday to Saturday (tel 01288 362234 for bookings). We wish the new venture every success and hope it will be as popular as the original tea rooms.

Mike Moore

Social Evening 19 May

This occasion was arranged to mark the tenth anniversary of our society becoming a registered charity and coincidentally acquiring a new name. There was sparkling wine on offer with which we toasted ourselves liberally, a splendid cake, decorated in our green and white livery and later in the evening, a showing of canal regeneration pictures on our newly acquired digital projector. This gave Mike Moore our IT guru the opportunity to show off his skills as well as giving everyone else an excellent film show.

A pity, therefore, that the trustees almost outnumbered the other society members present; indeed, had it not been for our Town Council representative marshalling the other council members along at the termination of their meeting, we would all have been reeling home with indecently large wedges of cake!

Later in the evening we had a quiz compiled by Chris Jewell which was so hard that only the know-alls on the committee got more than one or two right with the added embarrassment of one of us winning the prize. (I don't think Chris did it deliberately.)

In the event, it was a very pleasant evening and enjoyed by all there despite the low numbers and gave Mike a wonderful excuse to play with his new toy.

Thanks to Betty and Chris for the organization and to all who donated the various goodies.

Audrey Wheatley

Up the river to the Rolle Canal

On 11th June eight members and friends arrived at Appledore Quay ready to board our small boat "Cheeky Monkey" for our trip up the River Torridge under the new and old bridges at Bideford. It was a beautiful sunny day with a cool wind at times but this did not spoil the trip. Dave, the Captain, pointed out interesting wildlife and buildings along the banks of the river including information about the local history of the area.



The Cheeky Monkey being prepared for our trip up the river Torridge. (Mike Moore)
The boat went as far as Annery where the entrance to the Rolle Canal is situated. Adrian Wills, owner of the tidal lock, was there to acknowledge us. We then returned to Appledore having a very enjoyable trip.

Looking towards the dock gates at Pentewan during our visit on 15th May.
Mike Moore



Old Bideford Bridge :Mike Moore

Any members and friends who would like to do this trip should contact "The Sea Chest" telephone number 01237 476191 for further information.

Betty Moore

Federation of Old Cornwall Societies Summer Festival

On Saturday 2nd July 2011, the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies held its Summer Festival at Bude, Cornwall. This was a double important day as 2011 is the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Bude-Stratton District O.C.S. Representatives from OCS's all over Cornwall attended this event.

BCHS were asked to do a guided walk of the canal in the afternoon, as part of the events programme.

A group of 30 OCS members were escorted over the canal from the Sea Lock to Peter Trustcott's Bridge to return to the event. BCBS also had a small display of archive photographs and a sales stand at the event that was well received. The OCS groups throughout



Society Festival on Saturday 2nd July. (Mike Moore)

Cornwall preserve and collect items and artefacts of Cornwall's heritage.

Chris Jewell

Virworthy View

You may have wondered why there has been no Virworthy View for some months! Well, I have just had a break after ten years trying to write something of interest. I thought that no one was interested anymore but having received a number of requests I have decided to continue to bore you with the mundane activities at Virworthy.

Much has happened since I last wrote - the weather of course has been very wet and then very dry which meant the Wharf was almost devoid of water. There was just enough for the nesting moor hens but with no throughput of water the canal soon dried up.

There have been a few incidents with the animals. One of the ducks was taken by a fox and also one of the peahens who was sitting in a hedge. We try to get them into secure housing but this one evaded our search. Recently one of the peacocks took a trip to the Lower Lake and stayed away for nearly a week. I think he got homesick and came home on his own! Only one peahen, the white one, has produced chicks this year with only three.

We have had a number of swallows again this year. One pair returning to an old nest in the shippon (next to the house) raised a brood early, but disaster struck! The nest on the beam gave way with four fledglings in it! Unfortunately none survived; perhaps the cats were in the vicinity at the time. As it was an old nest it had perhaps got too dry and could not support the weight. - Anyway, the two parents had a 'site' meeting and discussed the options for a full ten minutes then they decided to rebuild the nest which they did and have now produced another clutch.

Talking of nesting birds, there have been rooks nesting in the Wharf building as well as swallows.

Those of you who knew Emma - one of our dogs, will be saddened to know she died last year. We have replaced her with another rescue dog called Polly - she is described as a 'corgi with long legs'! Totally different in every way from Sally the blue Merle but they get on together.

The walk from the Lakes to Burmsdon is becoming more and more popular with visitors from all over the country. Perhaps the message is getting out.

Each year I say the vegetation and greenery cannot get any better but I could be wrong! Even the canal is sporting a good crop of

weeds and there are signs that the hedgerow fruits are going to be abundant.

A sign of getting old! I have developed osteoarthritis in one knee which is considerably restricting my walking. I think I will get a mobility scooter with four wheel drive and off-road tyres!

Geoff Lowe



New arrivals: Geoff Lowe

Bude Cornish Day on Sunday 31ST July 2011 in aid of The League of Friends of Stratton Hospital £1m Appeal

The day will start at 10.45 a.m. in the Triangle with Rob Tremain – Launceston Town Crier, Merv Davey – Cornish Piper and Tavistock Versatile Brass Ensemble.

At 11.30 a.m. the procession to Adventure International will be led by Bagas Porthia (Cornish Marching Band).

The official opening (in and around the marquee) will be at 12 noon and the main event will be bouts by the Cornish Wrestling Association for under 10s, under 12s, under 14s, under 16s and under 18s; the Lightweight Championship of Cornwall (for the championship belt), and will conclude with an open competition for over 16s at all weights.

During the afternoon (12 noon to 5.00 p.m.) there will be varied musical entertainment; trade stalls and activities for children – anything to make the atmosphere like a busy village fete.

There will be pasties/sandwiches; a bbq; cream teas and ice creams for sale.

At 7.00 p.m. in the marquee there will be an evening of Cornish entertainment.



BCHS trustee, Ralph Daniel's WW2 Kubelwagen on display next to BCHS Stall. 5th June

Another Tub Boat Canal

When BCHS members visited Pentewan on 15th May 2011, for a guided tour with Mr R Evans, he circulated some information about a 'tub boat' canal in the St Austell area, connected with tin mining. This is Parnall's canal, which was constructed in the early 1700's probably 1720, in connection with the Carglaze Tin Pit near Scredda, north of St Austell. This canal is referred to briefly in Charles Hadfield's 'The canals of South West England' page 165.

It would seem that some sections of this former canal still exist. Maybe an exploratory visit should be arranged to seek out what was the earliest known canal in Cornwall? Mr Evans will be the speaker at our AGM in February 2012.

Chris Jewell

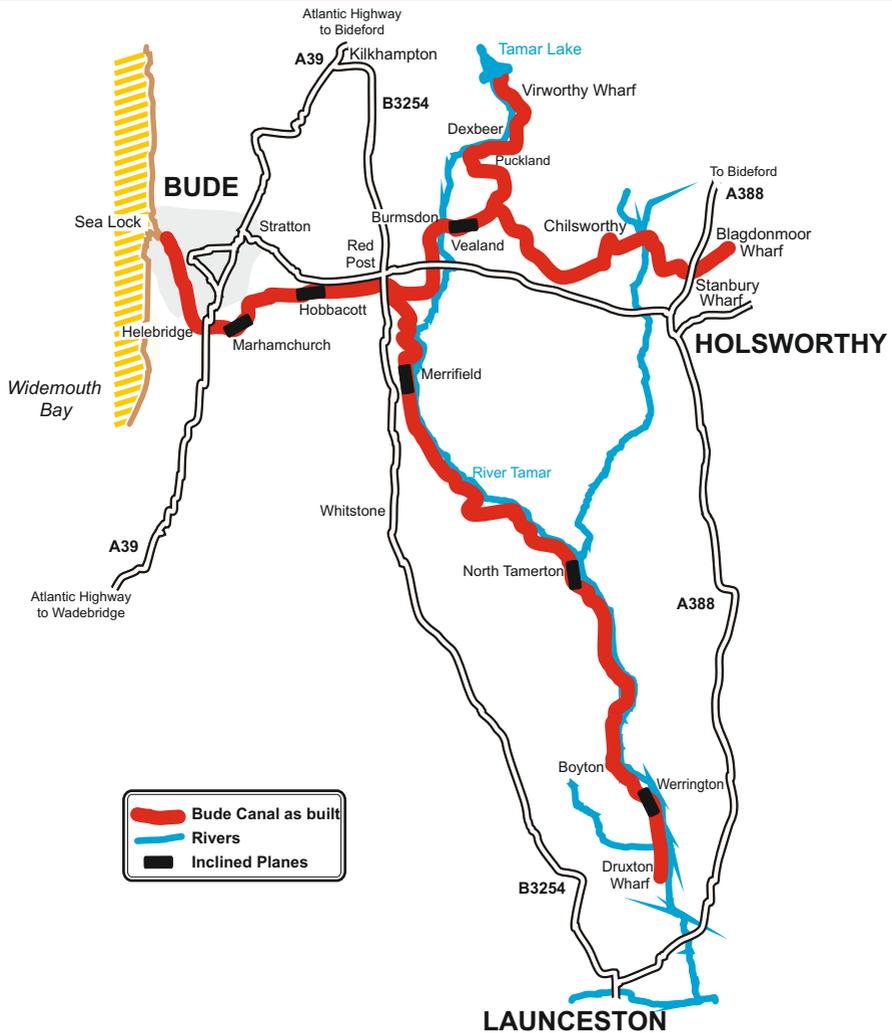
Visit to Kelly Mine & Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre

A guided trip to the Bovey Tracey area has been arranged by the Rolle Canal Society on Sunday 18th September 2011 to which our members and friends are invited. We make our own way to Kelly Mine in the morning for a visit where guides will be available. As vehicles for the mine visit need to be kept to a minimum, we will first meet at the Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre at 9.30am which is on the site of the old railway station in Bovey Tracey. Travelling on the A382 from Moretonhampstead turn left at the roundabout for Bovey Tracey into Station Road then immediate left into St John's Lane. Turn left at the end of St John's Lane and left again and the entrance to the Heritage Centre is straight ahead. We will then organize ourselves into as few vehicles as possible for the drive to Kelly Mine where our guided tour will start at 10.00am. Please wear old clothes and boots and note that there are no toilet facilities available at the mine. Following lunch at a pub in Lustleigh at about 12 noon, we then travel back to the Bovey Tracey Heritage Centre for a guided visit starting at 2.00pm which probably last about 1½ hours. The cost for the day will be £5.00 per person. If you are interested in this visit please complete the enclosed booking form and return to The Membership Secretary, The Rolle Canal & Northern Devon Waterways Society with your remittance.

Mike Moore

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