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50TH ANNIVERSARY CRUISE



On Sunday twenty-eight members gathered punctually at 10am at The Plough Inn, Fen Ditton to board the trip boat ROSIE for a cruise on the river Cam to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Association. After a short trip upstream to turn round, the boat cruised leisurely down to Baits Bite Lock, which we shared with another narrow boat. Then it was down past Horningsea, the Cam Conservators Depot, the Cambridge Motor Boat Club and the Cam Sailing Club to tie

up just above Bottisham Lock.

Here members had a chance to stretch their legs and walk the short distance to the bridge across the entrance to Bottisham Lode and to debate why the Environment Agency appears to deny access into the lode, albeit the navigation rights are extant. Admittedly most craft would only be able to navigate some $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a mile up to the site of Bottisham Stauch as this used to hold up a head of water to enable boats to reach Lode village, but today only canoes could use this stretch. And then it was back to the boat for the return cruise back to The Plough.





Our hard-working secretary Ivan Cane had gone to great pains to organise the lunchtime arrangements and everyone had made their preference before boarding the boat, and these had been passed on to the pub so as to be ready for 2pm. We arrived back at the pub punctually to find it very busy and the staff had provided only some of the tables needed for our party. By 2.40pm the management was apologising for the non appearance of our orders and were offering free drinks compensation, but even then it was not until 3.25pm that the

first meals began to appear. Remonstrations led to the bill being waived, but the episode put a damper on proceedings, with one couple being forced to leave without being fed.

Back on the boat the cruise continued up river through Chesterton and past many moored boats and the college boathouses. ROSIE then turned just below Jesus Green Lock and wended her way back to Fen Ditton. Thanks are due to Ivan for organising and to Liz Sheehan of CamBoats who told us much about the river en route and who served coffee and biscuits.



BREAK THROUGH !

For several years now the North Walsham and Dilham Canal from Honing Lock upstream to Honing Bridge has been impassable to canoes due to prolific tree growth, despite this supposedly being the main drainage channel of the river Ant.

Following the extensive work just upstream of Honing Bridge where a clear channel has now been created, the need to take action downstream of the bridge was becoming more and more apparent. The local landowner was approached and gave approval and on Sunday 15 June a strong team assembled and was divided into two with a small group going to Honing Lock and starting to work northwards on the left-hand bank and the main party of nine starting to work southwards from Honing Bridge on the right-hand bank.

The further the main party worked down river the worse the blockage became. Large trees had either grown right across the canal or fallen into it, whilst others had effectively taken root in the channel. And to get to the blockage, which covered well over half of the 450-yard distance between lock and bridge, an access to the canal bank had to be driven through equally dense growth. Marc Lines' small boat came into its own here as he could manoeuvre in amongst the trees whilst three members put their thigh waders to very good use. And despite great efforts there was still a long stretch remaining to be cleared before the end of the afternoon.

Eight of the team returned two weeks later and this time everyone was concentrated on the northern end, working down towards the lock. The first task was to improve access to the canal bank from the bridge, eliminating what had become almost a dry ski slope. This achieved, work resumed on the blocked section, again with three in waders tirelessly cutting and removing branches and whole trees from the water, with the other five on the bank retrieving and dragging the timber from the river, whilst hacking their way through the dense undergrowth. By working into the late afternoon break through was achieved hence re-opening this closed stretch of canal to canoeists. This is a magnificent achievement reflecting great credit on all concerned.



Left: Marc Lines in his boat "Marc 1" is watched by his hard-working colleagues taking a well-earned rest. Marc was the first to navigate the cleared section of canal between Honing Lock and Honing (Dee) Bridge, thus re-opening the section to navigation. Right: Roger Hopkinson, Chairman of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust, samples the water for himself. The picture gives an idea of the extent of the blockage the team had to deal with.

OTHER WORKING PARTY NEWS

Saturday 19 July: Early in the morning a lorry turned up at Honing Triangle, the nearest vehicular access point, loaded with a flat-pack bridge. This was unloaded and had to be manhandled down the track, across Weavers Way, and down to the canal. Plans for the erection of the bridge had been drawn up but the first decision was to decide at what height to erect it, as the water level will rise when the canal is restored. Work then started on the footing at the canal end followed by that at the



woodland end and then the first tread board. Meanwhile the course of the new footpath back to Weavers Way was cleared and improvements made to the existing section of the path. The bridge was completed in the afternoon with wire netting being laid and stapled onto its surface and the approaches being earthed up. The final task was to test the new structure, and it passed with flying colours.

The bridge was funded by the new Canal Trust with EAWA contributing £500 to the Trust to assist with the matched funding requirement.

Sunday 27 July: This saw a return to Ebridge where the Trust's new "mowing" machine was put to good use in dealing with the heavily overgrown area to the west

of the lock and it did not take long to achieve a most satisfactory result. Other members of the team worked on clearing the mouth of the lock island and on clearing trees and obstructions from the canal bank on the north-eastern side upstream of the weir.

Sunday 17 August: This session at Briggate concentrated on the west (village) side and around the millpond. The new mowing machine cleared the lock side area and created an access path to the pond where a work area near the millrace culvert was created. Brambles were cleared from the roadside and several saplings were taken down, this all being a prelude to starting to clear the pond, which is littered with the remains of fallen trees and other litter. During a follow-up session on **14 September** a large amount of the brash cleared on the previous visit was burned and three new sites were set up on the pond bed to burn newly acquired brash next time. Meanwhile usable logs were piled up ready for collection. Now that it is visible over a fairly large area the pond bed was found to be in a fairly level and sound condition albeit many trees have rooted in it. The work has attracted much attention and favourable comment from passers by.

Sunday 30 September: A strong contingent of sixteen assembled at Honing Staithe including Tom Moore and his marvellous digger that made short work of clearing the mouth of the cut and then moved on to tackle the island that had to be left after the last session as it was out of the reach of the machine. This proved a tougher assignment but was successfully completed along with some clearing and levelling work. Meanwhile much of the site was mowed and improvements were made to the permissive path through the wood and back to Weavers Way.

The highlight of the day was the visit by Mr Norman Lamb, the Member of Parliament for North Norfolk, who not only has generously presented the Trust with a cheque for £150 but went on to cut the ribbon and officially declare the permissive walk open. Mr Lamb expressed a keen interest in the canal and hoped it would soon be improved so as to provide better drainage and prevent flooding.



Left: *The Member of Parliament for North Norfolk, Norman Lamb, presents his cheque to Roger Hopkinson, Chairman of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust, watched by David Revill, Work Party Leader, with Chris Black, Vice Chairman of the Trust, behind (it just happened to be Chris's sixtieth birthday and appropriate celebrations took place during the lunchtime break).* Right: *Norman Lamb cuts the ribbon to officially open the permissive path.*

EAWA ENTERS THE WWW

In our 50th year we now have a website, thanks to our member Peter Bendall, working from Germany. At www.eawa.co.uk you will find up to date information and news about our Association and of waterways in our area; copies of *The Easterling* with pictures in full colour; full work party reports, photos and plans and information about the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust. There is also the chance to have your say in the EAWA Forum.

However, our intention is that the website should be more than a mouthpiece for our Association. We want each waterway, past present and future in the area to be represented with a wide range of original articles contributed by members and others. Whether you have an account of boating on the Wissey in 1976; an interest in the history and present condition of the Bourne Eau; a live link to a webcam showing the building of the new Boston Link Lock; a pictorial voyage along the Stamford Canal today; pictures of entry to the Old Bedford in the 1970's or an account of users of the Crowland slipway gaining access to the Spalding Flower Parade* or any other gems tucked away in your loft or mind – then please send them in longhand or electronically to Ivan Cane, who will then prepare them for Peter to use his skills to add them to the webpage.

*All of these articles will be found on www.eawa.co.uk with thanks to our members Steve Machin, Peter Bendall, Richard Smith, David Revill and other contributors.

And this is what you will find if you venture onto the site:-



The screenshot shows the homepage of the East Anglian Waterways Association website. At the top left is a logo featuring a sailboat and a compass rose. To the right, the title "East Anglian Waterways Association." is displayed in a yellow box. Below the title is a search bar with the "PICO search" logo and a "Search" button. A navigation menu is located below the search bar, with links for Home, About Us, News & Events, East Anglian Waterways, The Easterling, North Walsham and Dilham, Work Party, Join & Donate, Directors, and Links. A banner below the menu reads "And now have your say in the [EAWA Forum](#)".

The main content area features a large heading: "The East Anglian Waterways Association celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year with a cruise and lunch on the narrow boat 'Rosie' on the River Cam in July." Below this heading is a sub-heading: "It also celebrates its anniversary by welcoming you to its new website." To the right of the text is a photograph of a narrow boat on a lock, with the caption "Cardington Lock Upper Ouse 29 Sept 1952".

At the bottom left is a photograph of a narrow boat on a canal. To the right of this photograph is a paragraph of text: "For fifty years the East Anglian Waterways Association has been campaigning for the preservation, restoration and good management of all inland and tidal waterways in East".

HERE AND THERE

CHELMER & BLACKWATER: On 13 June and in conjunction with Chelmer Canal Trust, Essex Waterways Ltd launched its new specialist work boat that will be invaluable in helping combat the menace of the floating pennywort weed. The multi-purpose aluminium boat was christened "*Buddy Buster*" was built by Liverpool Water Witch and can operate in as little as six inches of water. It provides a stable cargo and work platform and has a front ramp that allows it to transport plant and equipment. It cost just over £28,000, funded by the IWA, the National Lottery Awards for all Fund and Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund.

Work undertaken on the navigation in the first six months of this year in addition to normal day to day maintenance has included reducing the height of willow trees at Paper Mill to reduce the risk of bank damage if they were blown over; replacing the towpath bridge below Paper Mill lock; installing a new pump-out and shore power facilities for visitors at Springfield Basin and major work at Springfield Lock including new bottom cills, lowering the chamber floor and installing a safety ladder. New water points and shore power have been provided to the lower moorings at Hoe Mill; new moorings at Sandford; the first phase of shore-power at Heybridge Basin and dredging by the Environment Agency near Little Baddow.

Starting in November a major refurbishment is to be carried out to Stonhams lock with two sets of new gates, new cills, safety ladders and landing stages being installed. It is expected the lock will reopen in March. And new lower moorings with shore power are to be created at Sandford Lock.

RIVER STOUR: In mid July work resumed at Stratford St. Mary Lock, but this was only after considerable discussion owing to a shortage of funds. To try and combat the situation the River Stour Trust launched an appeal for £6,000 that was urgently needed to finance the season's work. The position was eased by a £1,000 donation from the Ipswich Branch of the IWA and from other donations whilst the Environment Agency loaned a large diesel pump which has made pumping much easier and much cheaper. Meanwhile the Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Partnership has been successful in its bid to restore the Trust's lighter JOHN CONSTABLE that is moored near the Visitor Education Centre at Great Cornard.

Over the weekend of 13 & 14 September over 250 craft took part in the Trust's annual event which sees canoeists paddling the 25-mile stretch from Sudbury down to Cattawade. The event was started over 25 years ago originally to safeguard the navigation rights that were then under threat, but after the statutory right to use the river was established the event is now more of a social occasion.

STEAM BOAT PRESIDENT: On Friday 27 June the historic steam-powered narrow boat PRESIDENT together with its butty boat KILDARE arrived in Upwell en route for the Great Ouse on its delayed tour of the Fenland waterways. The boats are owned by the Black Country Living Museum, are crewed by volunteers, and have a mission to promote both the museum and the waterways by touring the network. The boats stopped overnight at Upwell being helped on their way by members of Well Creek Trust. The pair had originally intended to attend last year's IWA festival at St. Ives but had to abort their plans due to delays encountered en route. They went on to

attend the Bedford River Festival on 12 & 13 July where they helped to promote the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway.

BEDFORD & MILTON KEYNES WATERWAY TRUST: Despite the failure of the Trust's bid for major lottery funding, progress is being recorded as next year could see the construction of the first major structure to form part of the waterway. The proposed A421 dual carriageway runs from the M1 motorway to Bedford, crossing the line of the intended waterway at right angles near Stewartby. The elevated road would cause a major barrier to the waterway but after careful negotiations a new underpass, in the form of a 30-metre tunnel has been incorporated into the design of the new road. Funding has been found from the Regional Growth Area Fund to secure this important development. The width of the canal through the tunnel is to be 5-metres and a 4-metre wide path and cycleway are to be included alongside.

This simplified list shows the route of the proposed new waterway as it passes through three local authority areas – Milton Keynes Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council and Bedford Borough Council.

From the Grand Union Canal to the south-east corner of Willen Lake	1,500m
Willen Lake to Atterbury and on to Broughton Brook crossing	4,500m
Broughton Brook to Eagle Farm, Wavendon and on to the M1 crossing at Junction 13	4,300m
M1 and the Ridgmont Bypass to Brogborough Hill	1,900m
Brogborough Hill to Brogborough Lake and on to the Forest Centre	3,600m
Forest Centre to Stewartby Lake (A421) and on to the new A421 structure	3,050m
The new A421 structure to Berry Wood Farm and on to Wootton	2,500m
Wootton to the Great Ouse at Kempston	3,100m
	24,450m

The Great Ouse is navigable from Kempston downstream, albeit some dredging will be required and the problem of the two low railway bridges will need to be overcome. Downstream from Bedford there is another low bridge that formerly carried a railway and both Bedford and Cardington Locks have width restrictions. Likewise major challenges, such as at Brogborough Hill remain, but the A421 agreement represents a very important step forward.

The waterway could also benefit from the plans for the Marston Vale Eco-Town that is being promoted by O&H Properties (Marston Vale) - a major land owner between the M1 and the outskirts of Bedford. The plans include linking the series of existing lakes together, which could then form the new waterway, and a district centre at the eastern end of Brogborough Lake. As with several of the other eco-towns, there is considerable local opposition to the overall plan.

GREAT OUSE: There have been a series of restrictions to the navigation at the old railway viaduct downstream of St. Ives Lock that is being rebuilt to accommodate the Cambridge Guided Busway Project. On 18 & 19 June a dozen bridge beams were lifted into place and overnight on 7 & 8 July the new bridge was installed. Some restrictions continued through September and will go on into October to enable the construction works to be completed.

Elsewhere through much of August the navigation was closed overnight at Tempsford to enable repairs to be carried out to the southbound carriageway of the

busy A1 (Great North Road). And starting from 26 August a programme of repairs has started to the Little Eye sluice gates on the tidal side of the structure at Denver, these being planned to last for nearly two months, whilst in the last three months of this year work is being carried out on the lock guillotine at Denver.

GREAT OUSE BOATING ASSOCIATION: This Association was formed in the autumn of 1958, just a few months after EAWA, and celebrated the occasion with a major 50th Anniversary Event staged on Sunday 2 August at Noble's Field, St. Ives that was attended by a large number of boats.

LITTLE OUSE: The creation of the new mooring facility at Santon Downham is taking considerably longer than ever envisaged, mainly due to delays in completing the necessary paper work. In the meantime the Environment Agency plans to create new moorings at Hockwold, between the Cut Off Channel sluice and the viaduct. The site is very muddy and will have to be piled.

DENVER SLUICE: In July the Denver complex was open to members of the public and several hundred people were shown round the site. The good news is that the smaller sluices – the Little Eyes – are being cleared of nearly 15-feet silt which had piled up against them when dry weather over several years and corresponding low river flows were inadequate to wash the tide-borne silt away. The gates are being plated with marine ply and aerators are being installed to help disburse the silt. The tide comes in faster than it goes out which means the silt settles up against the sluices and on the bed of the river. The six-mile stretch between Welmore on the New Bedford River and Stow Bridge, north of Denver, is particularly badly affected.

KING'S LYNN: The multi-million pound project to build a 250-berth sea-going marina at Boal Street in King's Lynn is set to go ahead after the local council purchased a vital piece of land. This is all part of a major regeneration project for the waterfront. Whilst the marina will be seaward facing it is still hoped it will eventually be linked to the inland waterways network.

BLYTHBURGH: It is good to be able to report a further location where unsightly overhead electricity power cables are being removed. This time it is at Blythburgh Marshes where a new underground network has already been installed and is serving the area. With this in place and now the bird nesting season is over, work has begun on removing 40 pylons over a two mile stretch across the river Blyth valley, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

RIVER GIPPING TRUST: In August the Trust produced an attractive and highly professional vision document setting out its long term plans for the river, which include improved access for walkers and cyclists, improved angling facilities, improved boating facilities and ecological enhancements. The document was launched at a public meeting held in Mid Suffolk District Council's offices in Needham Market's High Street on Friday 26 September.

FENS WATERWAYS LINK: The work on the new lock at Boston is going well and by the beginning of June the cofferdam had been sealed and 55-tonnes of steel reinforcement had been placed prior to the base slab being concreted. From the

beginning of July work also started on the adapting the nearby cottages that are to contain a café, small shop, exhibition area and office space.

LINCOLNSHIRE: New moorings planned for Brandy Wharf on the river Ancholme are to include water and power points; they should be completed by the end of this year as will the new floating moorings at Hubberts Bridge and Swineshead on the South Forty Foot River. On 12 May the new linear moorings were opened at Lincoln, which incorporate a full range of amenities including toilets, showers, a laundry and waste disposal facilities. An improved pedestrian access has been created along the Fosdyke, whereas previously boaters had to walk through the British Waterways operational yard.

At the same time work is now in hand to complete the final section of the Lincoln to Boston cycle and footpath – the Water Rail Way. This is from Langrick Bridge down to Anton's Gowt where it will join up with the existing path to Boston. The path will be completed this autumn and a grand celebration is being planned for early next spring to celebrate the completion of the route.

RIVER GLEN: On Thursday 21 August the Environment Agency officially opened its new slipway at Surfleet. The event included a "canoe-taster" which allowed local people to try out canoeing and make use of the new facility. Over 70 people attended and 30, mainly youngsters, had a go at canoeing. The site is now available to all licensed users with a standard navigation key and has plenty of space for parking and room to manoeuvre trailers and incorporates a picnicking area.

RIVER SLEA: The lift bridge to replace the fixed crossing at Sleaford is now being fabricated and could even be complete by the time you read this as installation was expected to begin towards the end of September. The Sleaford Navigation Trust intends to arrange an appropriate celebration as soon as the work is complete. Meanwhile planning permission has been granted for the slipway and winding hole in Sleaford and work is now in hand.

Work is also well in hand on the Bottom Lock where the balance beams on the old bottom gates were sawn off and the gates were then craned out of the chamber. New ones are being built and are due to be installed in October. Landing stages have also been ordered and again the Trust is planning a special boat gathering in South Kyme next May to celebrate the improvements at this lock.

WANTED URGENTLY

An Assistant Secretary to work with our Secretary, Ivan Cane.

This would mainly involve helping out with the arrangements for meetings including taking the minutes and dealing with follow-ups. The person would not need to become a member of the Council, although they would be most welcome to join, but would be expected to attend the three meetings year, one being the Annual General Meeting. The others, around November and July, are normally held at Mildenhall.

If interested, or would like further information, please contact Ivan on 01328 862435 or [eawa.ivan at btinternet.com](mailto:eawa.ivan@btinternet.com) . Age is no barrier – in fact Ivan started with the River Stour Action Committee, as secretary, at the tender age of fifteen.

BROADS NOTES AND NEWS

THE COST OF DIESEL: The scrapping of the reduced rate of excise duty on red diesel from 1 November under a European Commission ruling could be a major blow to all boaters and particularly to the hire boat industry. At present Broads hirers are charged about 90p a litre for the diesel used, but that will rise sharply with increases of the order of £50 for a week's boating on a small boat and £70 for a larger craft. Hire companies have no alternative but to pass the cost onto hirers and on top of other price rises, this could lead to some going out of business.

SMALL BOAT SLIPWAYS: The Broads Authority has been investigating the existence and state of small boat slipways with a view to producing a development strategy. The work included reviewing the location and status of all current slipways, assessing their suitability and potential for improvement, and identifying potential sites for new ones for angling and small boat use. A marking system was adopted covering six categories - availability, times accessible, parking availability, physical constraints, current condition and information availability with scores ranging from 1 for the best to 5 for the most constraints. After adding up the scores a list was produced ranging from Sutton Staithe that achieved a fine score of 9 only being marked slightly down for the parking and information facilities to 23 for Ormesby St. Michael Staithe that is for parishioners use only and in poor condition.

Martham Boat Dyke is the most important site for a new slipway on the Thurne but parking needs to be improved in Thurne village. On the Bure a good slip exists at Wroxham Broad but a new facility is needed in the Wroxham/Hoveton area whilst either access needs to be improved to that at South Walsham or a new slip is needed. On the Yare additional facilities are needed at Norwich, Whittlingham Country Park, Postwick Wharf, Carey's Meadow and Cantley.

YACHT STATIONS: At Norwich security gates have been installed together with CCTV and as a result the number of late night "incidents" has been greatly reduced. A disabled access ramp has also been built. At Great Yarmouth roof and plumbing work has been carried out and replacement of the fendering began in July whilst the tourist information facilities are being upgraded.

CANOE CAMPING: Two members of the Broads Canoe Hire Network Association launched camping canoe trails this year and seven other centres are due to be set up next year. Canoeists can use existing camp sites, such as Oby and Clippesby Hall or camp "rough" where the landlord's permission has already been sought. Canoes can be hired from

Outney Meadow Caravan Park, Bungay – 01986 892338
 Rowan Craft, Geldeston – 01508 518208
 Waveney River Centre, Burgh St. Peter – 01502 677343
 Salhouse Broad – 07795 145475 or 01603 722775
 Sutton Staithe Boatyard – 01692 581653
 Bank Dayboats, Wayford Bridge – 01692 582457
 Barnes Brinkcraft, Wroxham – 01603 782625
 Whispering Reeds, Hickling – 01692 598314
 Martham Boats – 01493 740249

SWING BRIDGES: It is sad to have to report fresh problems have arisen over all four of the railway swing bridges that cross the Broadland rivers. They are at Trowse and Reedham over the Yare, Somerleyton over the Waveney and at Oulton Broad. For instance early in September it was reported that the Oulton Broad bridge had had restricted access for vessels for no less than 168 days whilst Trowse had been closed completely for 100 days due to an obsolete computer system that prevented it from opening to shipping.

Of all the bridges that at Trowse is by far the busiest in railway terms as it carries the electrified main line from London into Norwich. The restrictions have caused major headaches operators like Southern Belle Broads cruises that have had boatloads of passengers sometimes being stuck on the wrong side of Reedham Bridge. Network Rail, which is responsible for maintaining the bridges, claims they are complicated ageing structures but there is an ongoing programme to upgrade them and their reliability. We rather doubt that this will be the last we shall hear of this matter.

SAIL THE BROADS: Between Saturday 2 August and Thursday 11 September members of the public were given the chance to step back in time and take a sail aboard the Edwardian wherry HATHOR. Starting from How Hill on the Ant HATHOR travelled to Ranworth, South Walsham, Upton, Great Yarmouth and then up the Waveney to Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Beccles and Geldeston Lock before returning in stages to Wroxham on the river Bure. The wherry is owned by the Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust which gained much valuable publicity and support in its work to maintain not only HATHOR but also NORADA and OLIVE.



Anyone interested in helping by becoming a Friend of the Trust should phone 01493 751773 for details.

WATER PLANTS: The latest plant survey carried out by the Broads Authority has revealed that this summer water plants have been flourishing, causing the water to become crystal clear in places and encouraging a great diversity of aquatic life. Barton Broad, the scene of the Authority's millennium restoration project, is improving year on year. Wroxham is showing early signs of improving water quality and the Bure up to Coltishall has clear water. Cockshoot Broad on the Bure, which was restored in 1982 is clear, as are Cromes Broad at How Hill and Hassingham Broad on the Yare and the Trinity Broads are also doing well. The Broads restoration project is set to continue, being funded by half of the extra £1.3m national park grant that has been provided by the government over a three-year period.

SHIPMEADOW: A new mooring on the river Waveney is to be created on Shipmeadow marshes near Beccles. It will incorporate two fishing platforms, a launch site for canoes and a new path that will link up with the existing public footbridge over the river.

REED & SEDGE CUTTERS: On 24 September at Haddiscoe Island a second batch of five new trainees launched out on an 18-month Heritage Lottery funded course into a wide range of countryside skills that will equip them to become commercial

reed and sedge cutters. They will work not only with members of the Broads Reed and Sedge Cutters Association but also with the North Norfolk Reedcutters Association to give them experience of coastal reed beds. The theoretical side of the course will be covered on one day a week at Easton College.

BROADS AUTHORITY BILL: There have been rumours about escalating costs of the Bill, but as often happens in such cases, the amounts quoted have tended to get somewhat inflated. The true costs are that £320,000 has been spent to date and a further £80,000 is in the budget for this year. Most of these costs have been funded from the Authority's General account, but £50,000 came from the Navigation Account in 2007/2008 with a further £40,000 budgeted this year.

Meanwhile the Bill will be passing through the Committee Stage in the House of Lords in October and it is anticipated it will receive the Royal Assent at the end of the year.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BROADS AUTHORITY: At present membership of the Authority comprises ten members appointed by the Secretary of State, nine by the eight constituent local authorities and two, appointed by the Authority, from the Navigation Committee – giving a total of twenty-one. The Secretary of State's appointees are chosen, after consultation, to represent the interests of boating, conservation, farming & landowning and land-based recreation.

However three factors have arisen that require the Authority to consider an alternative size and composition.

Firstly the Norfolk Association of Parish and Town Councils has petitioned against the Broads Authority's Bill seeking to replace two of the Secretary of State's appointees with parish or town councillors.

Secondly in July the Boundary Commission published draft plans for Norfolk to become a unitary authority taking in the existing county of Norfolk and the Lowestoft area of Suffolk. For Suffolk it is proposed there should be a unitary authority covering Ipswich and Felixstowe and another covering the rest of the county apart from Lowestoft. If these are adopted it would leave just two constituent local authorities – the large unitary authority covering Norfolk and Lowestoft, and a small part of the rural Suffolk one to make appointments to the Broads Authority.

And thirdly the government is undertaking an open consultation to seek views from its stakeholders to explore whether directly-elected members would aid, or hinder, the decision making process and the functioning of National Park and Broads Authorities.

The Broads Authority and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs are now seeking views both on the size of the Authority and its composition and particularly covering the issue of direct elections, where several local Members of Parliament earlier this year had petitioned against the Bill.

This will be one of the main topics for discussion at the next meeting of the Broads Forum and comments can also be made direct to DEFRA by 28 November.

THE NEW SLIPWAY AT CROWLAND



Over the 2008 May Bank Holiday weekend, two of our members joined several other trail boaters to make use of the new slipway at Crowland to gain access to the River Welland, in order to attend the Spalding Flower Parade. Four Wilderness Boats joined another trailboat and a Spalding Water Taxi; for the parade day itself they were all dressed overall to fit the occasion, and cruised the river to Fulney Lock and back – receiving many friendly waves from the banks. They then gathered at the Environment Agency mooring in Spalding for the duration of the parade itself.

That evening the boats moored at the Yacht Club then on the Sunday several boated down the Coronation Channel to take advantage of mooring by the Springfields Outlet Shopping Centre for some retail therapy. Also over the weekend most boats



tackled the trip upstream to Peakirk Pumping Station. This side cut was surprisingly deep and clear but when the boats tried to continue upstream past the Peakirk Junction, a combination of shoals and the current from the Maxey Cut prevented navigation to the Deeping railway bridge and beyond, which was a disappointment. Several attempts were made by different routes – but all to no avail.

Resorting to shank's pony two members walked the river to the remains of Low Lock in Deeping St James – the start of the Stamford Navigation – and felt that a Wilderness boat might have managed to voyage thus far.



The EA moorings at Crowland were also used to visit the Abbey at Croyland and the village, plus the hospitality of Ye Olde Bridge Inn. On the Monday at least two other boats were using the slipway and their families enjoying the river.

Over this one weekend the new slipway enabled visiting boats access to Welland adding to the economy of the area, as well as



Ivan Cane, Darren Cooke (NAVI)

reminding the community of their local boating amenities and opportunities. The event was very successfully organised by our member Richard Fairman, who is always willing to help any members wishing to visit or cruise the Welland or Glen rivers. Our website www.eawa.co.uk has a virtual tour of the Stamford Canal, today, by our member Steve Machin.

MORE ON THE CLEARANCE AT HONING STAITHE



Top: Tom Moore's digger at work clearing the main canal immediately to the north of the cut into Honing Staithe. Bottom: Honing Staithe cut has now been cleared. It would have taken a small army of volunteers many days to achieve this result without the digger. Prior to clearance this whole site was completely overgrown and virtually impenetrable with several trees growing in the canal. Nature is rapidly repairing the short term scars of the dredging into a delightful local amenity area.

NEW RIVER MAPS

In our February issue we reported that the Environment Agency had issued two free guides – they covered the Great Ouse and the Nene. We are pleased to report that a further three guides have now been issued covering the Stour, the Welland & Glen, and the Ancholme.

All three follow have the same format as the original two being folded sheets measuring 8¼ inches (21cm) by 5⁷/₈ inches (15cm) before opening out to show the detailed courses of the rivers. Different scales have been used – for the Ancholme 0.8 inches to the mile, the Welland at 1.125 inches to the mile and the Stour 1.25 inches to the mile.

The Ancholme guide includes enlargements of the South Ferriby entrance lock area, the town of Brigg and the Brandy Wharf Leisure Park. The Stour guide will be particularly useful for canoeists as there are enlargements of the 24 sites where portaging may be necessary. They start at Brunton Mill upstream of Sudbury and include intriguing names such as Wiston Weir, Nayland Autogate and Langham Flumes.



Perhaps the most interesting guide covers the Welland and Glen and this is the least known river and it covers the entire route from Stamford to the Wash. The head of the navigation is marked at Hudds Mill, rather than the more logical Stamford Bridge, where the Great North Road used to cross over, before being bypassed to the west of the town, but the mill was the

starting place of the old Stamford Canal, much of the course of which has long since disappeared. (Our picture of the bridge was taken from EAWA's website). Further down river there is an enlargement of the section through Spalding showing the series of bridges and giving their headroom.

These are well produced guides giving helpful navigational information. Through Ivan Cane, several members with detailed knowledge were able to have an input into drafting the guides and correcting errors before they appeared in print.

Along with the guides the Agency has produced two booklets – “*Enjoying Safer Boating*”, staying safe on Anglian Waterways and “*Boating The Right Way*”, covering the Recreational Byelaws. All these publications are available from the Agency's Regional Office at Kingfisher House, Goldhay Way, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, PE2 5ZR – telephone fax 0807 8506506.

SOUTH FORTY FOOT DRAIN

Also known as THE BLACK SLUICE DRAINAGE AND NAVIGATION

DISTANCE TABLE

Location	O/S ref TF	From Boston	From Guthram
Junction with the River Witham tideway	327428	0 0	21 245
London Road Bridge (formerly A.16) & entrance sluice (Alongside the Black Sluice Pumping Station)	327428	0 35	21 210
Road Bridge. A.16 Spalding Road (On the site of the former railway line to Spalding)	325429	0 210	21 20
Footbridge	322430	0 585	20 1420
North Forty Foot Drain enters from the north	314432	0 1520	20 485
New Hammond Beck enters from the south-west via a pumping station	307433	1 500	19 1505
Wyberton Fen Bridge – A.52 Grantham Road	304434	1 815	19 1190
Hubbert's Bridge – B.1192 Horncastle Road	270437	3 1145	17 860
Clay Dike enters from the north	249436	4 1595	16 410
Skerth Drain crosses (north and south)	229432	6 335	14 1670
Swineshead Bridge – A.17 Sleaford Road	218429	6 1610	14 395
Drain enters from the west via pumping station	207427		
Great Hale Drain enters from the west	193409		
Bicker Fen – access roads to both banks	187398	8 405	12 1600
Helpringham Dike enters from the west	180393	10 1390	10 615
Helpringham Fen Drain enters from the west	178375		
North Ing Fen – access roads to both banks	178374	11 545	9 1460
Railway Bridge – Sleaford to Spalding line	177371	11 845	9 1160
Swaton Fen Drain enters from the west via a pumping station	175365		
Drain enters from the west just north of Donnington High Bridge	174357		
Donnington High Bridge – A.52 Grantham Road	173356	12 580	8 1425
Horbling Fen Drain enters from the west	171347		
Billingborough Drain enters from the west	169340		
Billingborough Fen Drain enters from the west	167333		
Sempringham Drain enters from the west just north of Neslam Bridge	166325		
Neslam Bridge – Billingborough to Gosberton Road	166324	14 175	7 70
Pointon Fen Drain enters from the west	164318		
Millthorpe Drain enters from the west (opposite Gosberton Fen Farm)	162307		
Aslackby Fen Drain enters from the west	162303		
Dowsby Fen Drain enters from the west just north of Bottom Fen Bridge	163293		
Bottom Fen Bridge – B.1397 Dowsby to Gosberton Road	162293	16 1370	4 635
Rippingale Fen Drain enters from the west	163284		
Rippingale Drain enters from the west (just north of Casswell's Bridge)	165276		
Casswell's Toll Bridge (closed to traffic) Former Gosberton to Dunsby Road	165275	17 1755	3 250
Casswell's Toll Bridge (closed to traffic) Former Gosberton to Dunsby Road	165275	17 1755	3 250
Dunsby Fen Drain enters from the west	166271		
Farm accommodation Bailey Bridge	166262	18 1315	2 690
Haconby Fen Drain enters from the west	168258		
Black Hole Drove Pumping Station (built right across the waterway)	168251	19 825	1 1180
Farm accommodation bridge	169238	20 510	0 1495
Dyke Fen Drain enters from the west	170236		
Engine Drain enters from the west	171225		
Guthram Gowt Bridge – A.151 Spalding to Bourne road	172225	21 245	0 0

There are sometimes variations in the names of some of the "tributaries" feeding into the main drain - for instance Pointon Fen Drain can be Pointon Lode and Swaton Fen Drain can be Swaton Eau.

Landranger Maps: 130 - Grantham & Surrounding Area, 131 - Boston & Spalding.