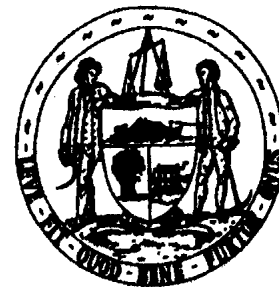


SLEAFORD NAVIGATION NEWS

SPRING 1994



Happy Birthday 200 Years Old

In 1794, the only means of moving goods around the towns and countryside was by horse and cart. The opening of the Sleaford Navigation from the town of Sleaford to the Witham allowed large quantities of commodities to be brought into and shipped out of the town relatively cheaply. It then became a simple matter to transport cargo to and from Lincoln, Boston and beyond. The prices of goods brought from outside the immediate area, such as coal, dropped, businesses expanded and jobs were created. The opening of the navigation was a major boost to the economy of the area and increased the importance of Sleaford as a centre of communication.

Two hundred years on, two-thirds of the waterway is open again and events are being brought together to celebrate this anniversary.

Slea '94 Celebrations

The celebration of 'Slea '94' culminates in a week of frenetic activity from April 30th to May 6th, amongst the highlights are:-

A 200th Anniversary Rally for boats and caravans which has been organised in South Kyme over the weekend of 30th April and the 1st and 2nd May. Boaters and caravanners wishing to obtain more information should contact Alan Woodhouse (0526-22438).

The unveiling in South Kyme of a commemorative plaque, North Kesteven District Council have created for the 200th anniversary.

A performance by Mikron Theatre Group of 'Threads of Revolution', a production written to celebrate the theme of Canals 200, and involving drama and music. This will be in the Village Hall at South Kyme on Saturday, April 30th, at 6.00pm. Many members will already be aware of the work of Mikron but for those who are not, the group spend much of the summer travelling the canals and waterways by narrowboat and present their productions at a variety of venues including the IWA National Rally. They are an established, nationally recognised and acclaimed company and we are delighted to have been able to book them for our rally. NKDC have generously helped to sponsor the production.

The Mikron performance will be followed in the Village Hall by a Ceilidh with 'Broadsword'. We are grateful to the people of South Kyme for organising this event.

A civic celebration on Friday May 6th, the official birthday, in Sleaford. This will start with a church service at 7.00pm in St Denys Church, Sleaford, followed by a civic reception to be given by North Kesteven District Council at the council offices. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend both the service and the reception afterwards.

Plaque At Bottom Lock

A commemorative plaque has been built on the island at Bottom Lock, to celebrate the opening of the lock and to remember our colleague Derek Taylor who represented Lincs & S.Humberside IWA on our committee until his untimely death. Pat Taylor and Sue Sowerby took over Derek's role and have become cornerstones of the Society.

Lincs & S.Humberside IWA have sponsored the plaque, which will be unveiled at an informal ceremony, the weekend before the rally, on 24th March at approximately 12.30pm. We would be pleased to see any members there. Please liaise with Steve or Chris Hayes, Tel 0522-689460, if you intend to come.

Feasibility Study - Haverholme to Sleaford

Binnie and Partners, consulting engineers, have been appointed by the society to carry out this study. The engineers started their study on February 1st and it is expected that they will have completed their work by the end of April. This will show what is necessary to make the canal navigable, what problems will need to be overcome and what the cost will be of doing so. The study will also investigate water depth, control and supply.

NKDC Working Party

Close liaison has been built up with the District Council's Working Party, with society members meeting with the committee on a regular basis. We are delighted that the District has offered to host a civic reception following the church service in Sleaford on 6th May.

Sleaford Footbridge

A proposed new footbridge over the Slea near Sleaford Swimming Pool has had the design altered following input from the society. With the feasibility study under way we needed the design to allow sufficient headroom for navigation. We have been told that this is possible and that NKDC will alter the plans to allow for navigation in the future.

Society Presentation To The District Council

The Society were invited to address the full committee of the Tourism & Economic Development Committee of NKDC in the middle of March. Martin Chapman and Sue Sowerby presented a resume of 200 hundred years of history using a slide projector AND an overhead projector. The presentation was well received, nobody fell asleep. Entitled, "On Sleaford's Doorstep" the presentation emphasised the potential of a restored waterway and the need to fund the next phase of restoration work from Cobblers Lock up to Haverholme Park.

Schools Pack

Steve and Chris Hayes have produced an excellent and comprehensive education pack for teachers in primary schools to use as resource material. The intention is to raise the awareness of staff in schools of the potential that the waterways, and the Slea in particular, have in education as a medium for the delivery of the curriculum.

The pack is to be published by NKDC, and will be available in the middle of April. If any members require more information please contact Steve or Chris (0522-689460).

Rural Development Commission Grant

The RDC have made an award of £7500 to the Society towards the engineering study being carried out by Binnie & Partners.

The RDC were one of the first groups to see our promotional video, and were keen to support us from an early stage. Whilst they could not assist in the 1993 budget our re-application in 1994 has resulted in success.

RDC also contributed money towards the rebuilding of Cobblers Lock.

Summer Work Camp

The Waterways Recovery Group have granted us a full week-long work camp for the 9th to 16th July. The group will work at Cobblers Lock and, if water levels allow, carry out tidying-up work at Coggesford Lock in Sleaford.

We are very pleased to have been selected for a camp as WRG receive many requests from all over the country.

Cobblers Lock

Although the major rebuilding work at the lock is finished there are many 'small' jobs to be dealt with. These include fitting a safety ladder, repointing brickwork and making and fitting straps for the coping stones.

The bywash weir requires piling and the old steelwork replacing, including designing a new paddle structure.

Backfilling, patching and repointing are required and then the dams need to be removed. Naturally this has to be done with consent from the NRA. All this work needs to be done, of course, when the

water flow is at a level that allows us to work; a problem that we have not had in the past!

Finally the surplus material and plant will need removing from the site and the compound and shed taken away, the job will be completed by any necessary landscaping.

Working Parties

You will see that there is still plenty of work to do and we are always pleased to hear from individuals and groups who would like to help. As with the work camps all levels of skill and ability can be accommodated. If you feel able to lend a hand do contact any committee member or, in particular, Neil Evans (0526-61049) who is our work party coordinator.

Frogmen On / Under The Sle

The Church Bend Bridge in South Kyme and, possibly, the footbridge closer to the village, will have the attention of a team of divers to clean out rubble. This is so that the visiting working boats will be able to get up to Cobblers Lock without a problem, famous last words! So if you see what you think is a rather large seal, with attached fire extinguishers.....have another drink!!

Quote of the month

A member of the Society had an unusual experience recently when showing his boat to a prospective buyer who had brought with him an 'expert adviser'. The 'expert' boarded the narrow boat, looked about him and uttered the immortal, critical words, 'It's not very wide is it?' No comment!

Change of status - Limited or Trust?

After some years of casual consideration the society is now seeking advice to formalise its status and has contacted solicitors who have previous experience in waterway matters. We have been advised that a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' is the route for us to pursue. As the size and complexity of the projects that the society is undertaking increase, it is felt that this will offer greater protection to members. The status will also provide outside authorities with a more formal group with which to deal. This is being pursued once the cash becomes available and will be brought to the AGM.

European Community Ruling

News has just been received of an EC directive which may well have implications for navigation on the Slea. All waterways not under the direct control of British Waterways will be subject to additional safety regulations. In addition to navigation lights vessels will have to have masthead lights at a minimum specified height of 4.75 metres above water level. Compass and charts of the waterway must be available for inspection, it has yet to be decided whether marine band radio will be mandatory. The directive will come into force on 01.04.94. Contact Martin Chapman for further details.

Society Merchandise

A wide range of quality products are now available from the Society. There are pens, pencils, mugs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, baseball caps, cross-stitch kits and lace plates on offer. They will be on sale at the Rally but can also be obtained from Pat Taylor on 0522 790652.

High Fashion In '94

Nobody, but nobody, will want to be seen without the 1794-1994 gold on green Sweatshirts and T-shirts. If you have not bought one or other, or indeed both, then contact Pat Taylor.

Don't forget the Bi-centenary mugs will be collectors items one day. Will your grandchildren forgive you if you don't have a set of six? You can, however, buy them singly.

IWA

Many of the Society's members will also belong to the IWA. For their information and for those who might contemplate membership, we include the following information from the IWA.

Membership of the IWA, in addition to helping towards the restoration of the waterways, now brings new benefits. Members will get:-

- *20% off entry to 5 major Waterways Museums
- *Members' Boat Insurance - 2 months free insurance plus a discount
- *50% discount on Weekend Breaks at Hilton National Hotels
- *Free entry to the National Waterways Festival
- *Discounted entry to the London Boat Show

Further details from IWA or Dave Carnell.

IWA Press Cuttings Appeal

Until recently the IWA has employed the services of an agency to supply waterways based press cuttings. This service, however, has had to be discontinued as an economy measure. Therefore, the IWA are asking everyone to look out for any such press cuttings. The cuttings will help the IWA to carry out three tasks, to help the association to respond to events covered by the press, to measure the press coverage that the association receives, and to help John Gagg write his articles for 'Waterways'.

Any articles requiring urgent action should be sent direct to IWA headquarters. Non-urgent material should be sent to, John Gagg, Ladybarn, Back Lane, Blakeney, Holt, Norfolk, NR25 7NP.

Lincs & S.Humberside IWA

On 21st April Dr Simon Pawley is presenting a slide show and talk entitled, "The History of The River Slea". For those interested the meetings are held at St Mary Le Wigford Church Hall, Lincoln, and will commence at 7.45pm. Those that have heard Simon talk in the past will know that his lectures are always interesting.

Canal Craft

The Canal Craft boat brokerage have recently informed us of an offer to Canal Societies and restoration groups.

The offer is as follows:- Any member of the society who lists their boat through Canal Craft will be offered a reduced brokerage rate of 5.5% (no sale, no fee). In addition, when a sale is completed, a commission of £100 will be paid to the society.

The Company Crest

The Society crest is often admired and members might appreciate an explanation of the badge and the motto.

The Navigation Company enjoyed the patronage of Sir Joseph Banks who was interested in waterways as a means of transport and as a form of drainage.

Banks designed the crest for the new Company and on it depicted those concepts that made the Navigation so important. The two supporters of the shield are, on the left, a farmer and, on the right, a coal miner. The motto of the waterways was the familiar, 'Coal in, grain out.' Coal was important not only for industry but for the private householder. It was a cumbersome commodity to carry by land and the Navigation ensured a reliable, regular supply for domestic heating. Easier transport naturally widened the market for local agricultural produce and the fruits of local industry. In the original draft for the crest, Banks had included a drawing of a pit-head, so important was the inclusion of coal.

The reason for the presence of the boat is self-explanatory as is the cargo, the sheaf of grain. The well-head, however, requires some explanation. It does not indicate a water supply, as might be expected, but, rather, the drainage aspect so near to Banks's heart.

The motto, a quotation from Ovid, 'Leve fit quod bene furtor onus,' can be translated as, 'The heavy burden, correctly carried, becomes light.' The scales at the top of the shield may well be an indication of correctness. Interestingly, Banks obviously quoted from memory in his first draft drawings and missed out the verb. In a later version it was corrected for him!

SLEAFORD NAVIGATION 200th ANNIVERSARY RALLY

SOUTH KYME

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS.

Friday 29th April

Boaters and Caravanners arrive and socialise - Hume Arms.

Saturday 30th April

Morning	Judging of entries for a) The best turned out boat and for b) The best kept engine, Derek Taylor Award.
2.00pm	Official party leave Church Bridge aboard N.B. Wigford. Lafford High School Band play in village, Village Hall if wet.
2.30pm	Official party unveil 200 th anniversary plaque on riverside. Stalls and sideshows.
6.00pm	Mikron Theatre - "Threads of Revolution", Village Hall.
8.00pm- 12 midnight	Ceilidh with "Broadside", Village Hall.

Sunday 1st May

Morning	Judging of entries for a) The best turned out boat and for b) The best kept engine, Derek Taylor Award.
10.30am	Commemorative Church Service, South Kyme Church.
12 noon	Kesteven Morris Dancers, Hume Arms forecourt. Sunday lunch, reservations only, Hume Arms.
2.00pm	Loading of Timber Baulk into working boat.
2.30pm	Boat cruise to Cobblers Lock.
7.00pm	Carpet Bowls competition, S.Kyme v Boaters / Caravanners - Village Hall.
9.00pm	Music entertainment, Hume Arms.

Monday 2nd May

Morning	Rally plaques available from 'Canals 200' tent.
11.00am	Charity mixed football match, S.Kyme v Boaters / Caravanners.
Afternoon	Vintage vehicles, from Boston, arrive in the village.

Throughout the weekend - River Sleas based Treasure Hunt for caravanners and all other visitors by car, bike and on foot.

Friday 6th May

7.00pm	200 th Anniversary celebratory service, St Denys Church, Sleaford. The service is followed by a civic reception at NKDC offices.
--------	---