

# SLEAFORD NAVIGATION SOCIETY

NEWS LETTER

MAY 1996

## Millenium Bid

The Society's bid for Millenium money was not successful. We were told that we had failed to pass to the next stage because we had not shown we had 50% partnership funding. This was because we did not have it! A letter has now been sent back to the Commission asking whether, if we had been able to show 50% funding, we would have got through to the next round. They seem reluctant to provide this information which is frustrating as it would at least provide some feedback for the many hours spent in putting the bid together. We are still pursuing this.

## Heritage Bid

It was suggested that, if the Millenium Bid was not successful, we should approach the Heritage side of the Lottery funding. We are exploring this. Hopefully, much of the work we have done for the Millenium Commission will come in useful.

## Future Progress

The Millenium Bid has been a major experience and we have been gratified by the words of support we have received from many quarters. It is clear that we need to keep building on the contacts we have made and create with them a formal plan to complete the restoration project. We need to look beyond the physical restoration of the Sleas and see the benefits it will bring, or can bring if properly managed, to the area.

Is there a member of your family who will be looking for a job? Can the Sleaford area currently provide one? Could it be possible that the attraction of a restored waterway might cause more people to visit the area by car thus creating extra jobs within our existing businesses? Possibly new employment areas, boat building, engineering, marina, etc. might be direct spin offs. Do we have anything to lose by trying to improve our own environment and regenerate the area for future generations? The cost? Well, £4,000,000 but we were rather hoping the Millenium Commission was going to help us towards that. We must keep plugging away. This is a major asset for you and your families and we all need to be encouraging our Councillors to put a time scale on its completion.

## Sleaford's Successful Regeneration Bid (SRB)

We were delighted to hear that the North Kesteven District Council were successful in the Sleaford Pride Bid. An enormous amount of effort went into delivering the Bid and they are to be congratulated. Included is the relining of the river bed in Sleaford to minimise leakage and restoration work at Cogglesford Lock. Navigation Wharf is to be brought back into use by the public and the future of Navigation House looks secure. The Society is working with NKDC and looks forward to seeing the project develop over the next few years.

## Environmental Agency (EA)

We were pleased to hear that the EA is looking to improve canoe access along the Sleas (and other waterways). Their enquiries are at a preliminary stage but form part of the Catchment Plan. Landing platforms are one option under consideration.

In our early days, the Society used to organise sponsored canoe events along the river. Indeed, one year, as part of the British Canoe Union event, we carried a message of greeting from the Mayor of Sleaford to the Mayor of Boston by water. Norman Osborne had the front seat of a double canoe and seemed to examine most of the waves on the River Witham at close quarters. He muttered something about being like a submarine. Seemed okay in the back!

## South Kyme Rally 25/26 and 27 May

All the plans are in place and the boats are coming. We are acting as Host to the Inland Waterways Association's 50th Anniversary Celebration and there are many events taking place in South Kyme over the weekend. Details of the Rally are enclosed and you will see that we have been fortunate enough to book Mikron Theatre who will be visiting us, by road unfortunately, to present their new production, 'A Woman's Place' which traces the struggle for votes for women at the beginning of this century. Those of you who already know the company will realise that this topic will give opportunity for the Mikron 'mix' of humour, song and thought-provoking drama.

The IWA campaign to save this country's waterways system is probably the country's biggest environmental success story. Countless numbers of people enjoy our unique network of canals and rivers. Every derelict canal now has a society looking to restore at least part and some of the stalwarts are suggesting that the 21st century will see the next phase as new canals are built to link existing ones as the demand for waterspace and leisure increases. Sleaford to Grantham by water?????

We should be delighted to see members and their friends at any or all of the events detailed but please note that we hope to have boat trips available for the three days as a fund raiser and also to get as many people afloat as possible. This is thanks to Sileby Mill Boatyard who have offered us a discounted price on the use of one of their Day Boats and Sleaford Car Care who have arranged to transport from Loughborough and back again at minimal cost. Do come and have a ride.

## Northern Canals Association

June 2nd sees us hosting the meeting of the Northern Canals Association. This is a forum for canal groups to meet, exchange ideas and views and share practical experiences of restoration management. We will provide a brief history of the Navigation and the Society and hope NKDC will talk on those aspects of the SRB bid which relate the Navigation.