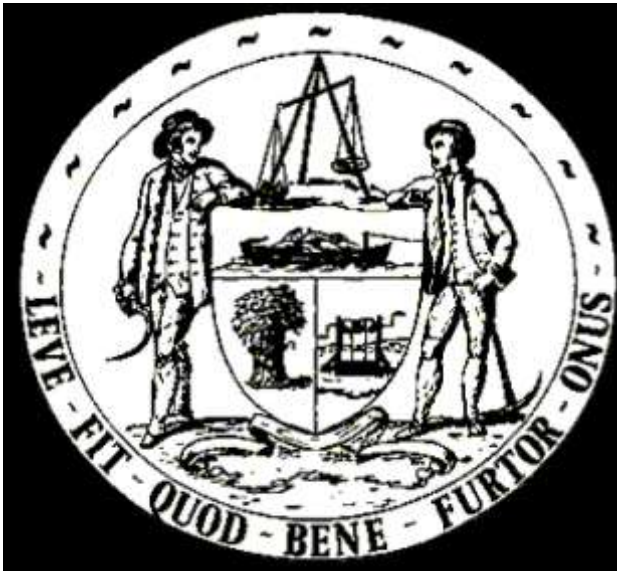


# SLEAFORD NAVIGATION TRUST



47

**Winter 2015 -16**

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## The Sleaford Navigation Trust: -

... is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales (No. 3294818)

... has a Registered Office at Island House, Moor Road, Chesham. HP5 1WA.

... is registered as a Charity (No. 1060234)

... has a web page: [www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk](http://www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk)

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## Aims & Objectives

The Trust aims to stimulate public interest and appreciation of the history, structure and beauty of the waterway known as the Slea, or the Sleaford Navigation. It aims to restore, improve, maintain and conserve the waterway in order to make it fully navigable. Furthermore it means to restore associated buildings and structures and to promote the use of the Sleaford Navigation by all appropriate kinds of waterborne traffic. In addition it wishes to promote the use of towpaths and adjoining footpaths for recreational activities.

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## Newsletters

To request an email version contact:

[sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com](mailto:sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com)

## Articles

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Articles and opinions in this newsletter are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily reflect SNT policy or the opinion of the editor

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Our thanks to Westgate Print of Sleaford for their help with printing

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## Editorial

Welcome to newsletter number 47

Well Christmas and New Year caught up with me last year and now it's mid January and the newsletter is only just underway.

Please keep the articles coming in - the deadline for the next issue, Spring 2016, will be 1st April, with all contributions being as usual most welcome. Full details of the AGM on 10th May will be in the Spring issue.

If you wish to receive your copy by email, please do let us know

*Debbie Scott, Editor*

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## **Changes in the Trust**

The end of the financial year marks a change in Treasurer for the Trust. Penny Carnell has done the job for many years and our thanks go to her for all her hard work. She has kept a sharp eye on our finances and addressed the issues of subscriptions, donations, grants and Gift Aid with cheerful efficiency. Some time ago Penny said that she would like to reduce the amount of voluntary work she did and that, although she was willing to stay on the committee, she would be happy to relinquish the post of Treasurer at such a time as someone else was willing to take it on.

We are very pleased to be able to announce that we have found that person in Becky Franks! As Dave and Yvonne Pullen's daughter, Becky has been a friend of SNT for a long time and we are delighted that she is joining the committee in her own right. I asked Becky if she would share some information about herself as an introduction to members and here it is!

She has been married to Andrew, who some of you will know from work parties, for six years and they have a daughter, Elizabeth, who is nearly five. They live in Heckington and run the Windmill Shop, a grocers, florist and gift shop. Becky does the book keeping and accounts for the business so is already well versed in matters financial!

She works part time as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner for a GP practice in Lincoln having worked in A&E, a GP practice in Louth, the prison in Boston, a GP Out of Hours Service and the NHS Walk in Centre since qualifying 18yrs ago.

Amazingly she still seems to have some spare time and tells me that she recently tried running and completed two 10ks in rather slow times, conquered her fear of down escalators by zip lining from 180ft across a large lake and found her all time favourite navigable river in the River Nene in summer 2015. She adds that she's a Strictly Come Dancing fan, loves reading, cross stitch and spending time with her family.

I'm not sure that the job of Treasurer will call on all those talents but I did think fleetingly that there could well be sponsorship opportunities in there somewhere! (Not a serious suggestion Becky, don't worry. ) We are delighted to welcome Becky as a co-opted director and thank her for agreeing to take on the post.

oo



Canal & River Trust

**Canal & River Trust Canal Day in Nottingham 10<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

The Trust was invited to have a stall at the CRT event in Nottingham to promote local waterways and make the public aware of the whole range of leisure activities related to the canals and rivers. Visitors could try their hand at angling and go on a trip boat to see how different Nottingham looks from the water. It was a very successful event and reached a wide audience of young and old alike. Steve introduced visitors of all ages to the delights of knotting dragonflies. I think he helped them make 40+ during the day. We were very grateful to IWA (WOW) for their donation of cord for the activity. There is no charge to participants although some do make a donation. Basically we see this as a promotional activity and it often leads to explanations about local waterways and the Sleaford Navigation in particular.

I understand CRT may well repeat the exercise and are considering a similar event in Lincoln later this year.

## Operation Water Vole

The morning and early afternoon of September 24<sup>th</sup> were spent carrying out a Water Vole survey in Sleaford with Fiona McKenna from Lincolnshire Rivers Trust and Tim Jacklin from the Wild Trout Trust. This was in connection with the works to improve fish habitat which are being carried out in the section of the river above Sleaford as part of the Sleaford Urban Opportunities Study completed last year.



Steve and I had been invited to take part so that we could begin to identify the signs that would indicate the presence of water voles. These include suitably shaped burrows leading up from the water level, grass cut at an angle where it had been bitten and evidence of vole latrines. The survey was mainly on the stretch of the river behind Electric Station Road and our presence occasioned quite a

lot of local interest. We didn't find any water voles during our search but, according to locals, they had been there in the past.



We are very grateful to Tim and Fiona for also carrying out a survey in the centre of Sleaford, by Riverside Green.

The search goes on...



Photos: Steve and  
Chris Hayes.

Local Residents  
shared their  
knowledge of the  
river



## Sleaford Museum

Back in 1977 The Sleaford Civic Trust established a small museum in Sleaford. Situated on the corner of Market Square and Carre Street, manned by Volunteers it ran successfully until 1983 when the Carre Street road widening scheme was abandoned.

With no home all the artefacts went into many stores around Sleaford.

In 1991 the Sleaford Museum Steering Committee was formed under the SLHA local branch, Sleaford History Group. This group was charged to look for new premises and funding.



Several locations were viewed but no real progress was made. In 1994 the committee was reformed as Sleaford Museum Trust. Later the Trust gained Charitable Status giving it more recognition.

From that time the Trust continued to search for funding and premises.

In 2007 with no home, an “on line” website was started which displayed many of the artefacts.

With little other progress a new committee was formed in 2011. To help move the project forward Sleaford Town Council identified a storage place for the artefacts. With the new store secured on a peppercorn lease all the long scattered artefact finally came together again.

The next move was to find a suitable building in which to house the museum. Once again Sleaford Town Council stepped into help with the offer of a long redundant toilet!

The next step was to get funding. Very early on we were advised to “aim high”. This we did which a conditional offer from Heritage





Lottery. Although they do not normally do this type of support, they liked the idea of building a museum in a toilet.

However one condition was that we provided local funding. This was an amazing task with virtually everybody we asked giving enthusiastic support.

With the funding finally secured, we placed the building conversion work with Carre Heritage who worked closely with us as part of the team. The interior design is very different from the traditional concept. This museum has a mixture of colours – even the floor is white.

From this....

The front of the building has a large picture window in keeping with the 1930s art-deco building. With changing displays, this draws the customers in. Once inside, again there are changing displays to encourage visitors to return time and time again.

SMT, besides running the museum, holds a series of four talks over the summer months.

...to this!

(Photos: SMT)

Sleaford Museum Trust is run entirely by volunteers who split into work parties to make sure the never ending work is kept up to date. A new website will be on-line in December showing a link across the Sleaford Navigation Trust.



[www.sleafordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.sleafordmuseum.org.uk) 81 Southgate Sleaford NG34 7RQ

## Waterways Seminar

The Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology held a seminar on the Canals and Waterways of Lincolnshire at The Source in Sleaford on November 14<sup>th</sup> 2015 and Steve and I were invited to speak about the history of the Sleaford Navigation and the achievements and aspirations of the Trust.

The event was very well attended and had an interesting programme including a history of trade on the Fossdyke, Humber keels and sloops and the background to the Caistor Canal, the Louth Navigation and the Grantham Canal.

Not all of the audience were local and many had travelled some distance to attend. We had many visitors to our display table and a great deal of interest in the plans and achievements of the Trust.

Dave Pullen also gave a presentation wearing one of his other hats as a member of the Canal & River Trust East Midland Partnership.



(Editor's note: I was lucky enough to attend this seminar as a delegate - it was fascinating to listen not only to our own Chairman and Secretary's session and Dave Pullen on CRT which were both informative and entertaining as usual but also to marvel at the sheer depth of the research that had been carried out by local historians in such a wide range of aspects of navigation including the load by load analysis of cargo carried from records dating back to 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the mast by mast trot through sloops, keels and all manner of vessels that plied their trade on the Lincolnshire canals and rivers.

Most of the SLHA events are open to non-members at extremely reasonable fees see [www.slha.org.uk](http://www.slha.org.uk) for more details)

## Plans for the Top Pound

The Trust has recently been discussing a new focus of activity in the section of waterway in Sleaford. Meetings of the Sleaford Regeneration Group have frequently returned to the question of how to encourage a greater number of visitors to Sleaford and give them the opportunity to extend the duration of their stay. This has led to the consideration of extending the use of the top pound by having a 12-seater trip boat operating between Riverside Green and Cogglesford Mill. Not only would this provide an additional tourist experience for those on the boat but also for the visitors able to sit and watch the operation of the lift bridge and the passing of the boat.

Plans are still at an early stage but preliminary discussion has met with general enthusiasm from the public together with local and district councils. It's certainly a project to put forward for funding and could provide an income stream for the Trust in the future.

Watch this space for further updates.



*Keeping our waterways alive!*

## Annual Raffle

Thank you to everyone who bought IWA raffle tickets, especially those who nominated SNT to as their chosen restoration project. As we go to print we are waiting to hear the final totals but IWA is expected to have reached its target of £15,000 - great effort from everyone involved!

## Work Party Report

We were delighted to be joined at the work party on September 13<sup>th</sup> by a party of volunteers from RAF Digby. They were helping as part of their training and were very enthusiastic, saying that they had really enjoyed their day with us. They attacked the strimming of vegetation in Sleaford and helped move some of the coping stones at Cogglesford Lock ready for the next work party there.

At the work party at Cogglesford on November 11<sup>th</sup> several of those coping stones were moved back into position and concreted in place. There was some more brickwork to be done before the rest of the coping stones could be moved and this work continued into January when brickwork was taken down prior to replacement.

December saw us brick-cleaning, an activity slightly akin to the stone-breaking undertaken by Victorian ne'er-do-wells. At least we didn't have to carry a ball and chain and wear suits with arrows on!

One problem with the work at the lock is that when the coping stones were removed a few years ago those who removed them neglected to mark them for later identification. This has left us with a rather large and very heavy jigsaw puzzle. We think that we have it sorted but that could be famous last words!

Thanks to everybody, including the RAF, who turned up and strained to move some very heavy stones. Thanks too to those taking part in the chain gang. In case you were wondering about the photos from the November work party, Rob was not the only one to do any work, it was just that we stood back, left the skilled work to him and photographed him doing it.

If you would like to be involved in work parties please get in touch. There is a surprising amount of fun involved together with a real sense of achievement.



Oh dear.. one worker plus four supervisors equals...?  
Photos: S Hayes



## Many thanks to the Environment Agency

During last year we made a bid to SITA, a body allocating funds from Landfill Tax to environmentally friendly projects, to fund bank restoration work in Sleaford. As many of you will know, the bank between the slipway and the lift bridge has been undermined, partly by the sustained efforts of the many local ducks, and is in need of consolidation. We planned to work together with the Town Council to install coir roll and back fill to stabilise and protect the bank in that area. Sadly we were not successful in the bid. SITA explained that their current focus was on encouraging more people to visit areas of environmental interest and our proposal didn't satisfy that criterion.



We were loath to abandon the project and had been really pleased when Tim Jacklin of the Wild Trout Trust had agreed to conduct an environmental assessment of the site to ascertain if there were any reasons why we should not go ahead. He found no problems and also confirmed that the project would enhance the wild life habitat opportunities as well as helping to stabilise the bank. Fiona McKenna, then of the Lincolnshire Rivers Trust, and David Hutchinson, EA Catchment Co-ordinator, were both well aware of our plans and in support of the project. We had already discussed the need for bank protection to combat erosion in South Kyme in the meetings of the Lincolnshire Rivers Trust and were delighted when David proposed the two schemes together for EA. funding. If successful, £6K worth of materials would be paid for by the EA to be installed by the Trust together with Sleaford Town Council and the Sleaford Clean-Up Group, before the end of March.

Decisions were finally made at the end of 2015 and we were delighted to hear that the bid had been successful. We signed a partnership agreement with the EA in early January to purchase and install the coir roll, initially in Sleaford. The work in South Kyme will follow and we will be helped there by the South Kyme Volunteer Group.

The timescale is rather tight but we feel that, with the offered help, it is achievable and are very grateful to the Environment Agency that our suggestions have been adopted and funding has been forthcoming. Once Land Drainage Consent has been granted and the coir roll delivered, we will be able to start work

## **South Kyme Boat Gathering 2016**

We are proposing to hold the Annual Boat Gathering in South Kyme on the weekend of April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>. More information will be available later via our website and Facebook page but if you wish to attend by boat please contact us by email [sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com](mailto:sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com) or by phone on 01522 689460.

Boats normally gather on Thursday or Friday but if your boat is more than 40' in length and you don't intend to travel up to Cobblers Lock to wind, it makes sense to make arrangements to travel with another boat in a push me/pull you arrangement. If you let us know we will try to put you in touch with another boater.

As yet we have no firm details of events in the village but I have no doubt there will be the usual scarecrow competition and tabletop sale. If you want lunch in the pub on Sunday it is essential to book and there may well be other activities there over the weekend. There is normally an informal BBQ near the boats for SNT members and friends on Saturday evening.

Hope to see you there over the weekend!



## **Sleaford Navigation Trust Annual Meal**

The Barge and Bottle in Sleaford once again laid on an excellent meal for our Christmas get-together and the evening was spent generally reminiscing on journeys from years gone by, bemoaning 'elf 'n safety and swapping notes on boats owned, long gone and aspired to. It was good to meet SNT members from around the county.

2016 Christmas event? Watch these pages - if you have any ideas of where to go or what to do, please let us know.



### **Sleaford Navigation Trust Annual General Meeting 2016**

#### **Advance Notice**

The AGM will take place on Tuesday 10th May at the David Williams Pavilion (Sleaford Rugby Club)

The business of the AGM will be followed by a talk on Sleaford Museum. All welcome



## Mentions..

1. A couple of months ago Andrew Denny, the assistant editor of Waterways World visited Sleaford. Accompanied by Steve Hayes, he toured Navigation House and explored the navigation along the Slea and the Kyme Eau. As a result we featured in his article in the November edition, which is still available on their website to download for a small fee [www.waterwaysworld.com](http://www.waterwaysworld.com)

2. Did you see our mention in the article in the Tillergraph (January 2016) about the Fossey and the Witham?

*‘A rather more meandering section of the river leads past Dogdyke and Chapel Hill, where the Sleaford Navigation heads off south. Under restoration by the Sleaford Navigation Trust, it is currently open for seven miles through South Kyme to the tail of Cobblers Lock and worth a detour’*

The Tillergraph, Towpath Talk and the Canal Boating Times are all available free of charge from Navigation House (and other reputable waterside locations), please do drop in and pick up a copy. Navigation House is open weekends throughout the winter from 12 noon to 4 pm, free admission. From 1st April the venue reverts to summer opening times 12-4 daily, 11-4.30 at weekends.



## Accessing the past and present.

In the past, access to the archive of newsletters has been limited to members who have requested passwords. This system has been cumbersome and not very effective. We have decided to remove the need for a password and, instead, have put the past newsletters in the archive section of the website, accessible to all.



We do not have all the early newsletters in that archive. You will see many omissions. If anyone is in possession of some of the missing copies we would love to hear from you and arrange to scan the newsletters to include them in the archive. This might be the time to check those boxes in the loft!

If, as a member, you prefer to receive the most recent edition by email rather than by post, please contact Steve Hayes at [sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com](mailto:sleaford.navigation@ntlworld.com) and he will email it directly to your email address.

**New Members** : If you are thinking of joining please do get in touch or pick up a membership application form from events or Navigation House in Sleaford. You can also download a membership form from the website [www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk](http://www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk). If you are already a member and would like to upgrade to paying by Standing Order please contact Jenny Osborne on 01526 832256. The saving in postage for reminders and trips to the bank will be much appreciated by the Trust and helpers.



As seen on facebook, Dave Pullen and Andrew Franks, both work party regulars, at the Christmas Meal 2015. We think they have just shared the news that Andrew's star Christmas present was going to be a pair of waders.

Photo S Hayes

SNT Work Parties go on throughout the year, usually on the second Sunday of the month. Contact Mel Sowerby (01522 856810 or [sowerbys@ntlworld.com](mailto:sowerbys@ntlworld.com)) for details of upcoming dates and activities

## Committee Contacts

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Director / Work Party Organiser	Mel Sowerby Tel: 01522 856810

## Membership

Membership Secretary	Jenny Osborne, Bank House, Ruskington Fen, Billingham, Lincoln, LN4 4DS Tel: 01526 832256
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Sleaford Navigation Trust is a member of the Sleaford Sports Partnership (SSP)

All SNT members are automatically SSP members, and are welcome to join in any of the SSP events, which are all held at the David Williams Pavilion, Sleaford Rugby Club, Ruskington Road, Sleaford.

