

SLEAFORD NAVIGATION SOCIETY **HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS!**

For once that isn't just a form of greeting, it looks as if it could well be a Happy New Year as far as the future of the Sleaford Navigation is concerned.

First of all, apologies for the brevity of this communication. It is more of a newsflash than a newsletter. The reason lies in the rather frantic activity before Christmas which involved the Chairman and members of the Committee and which took precedence over the preparation of the usual newsletter.

SLEAFORD PRIDE

You may be aware that a series of meetings have been held in conjunction with members of North Kesteven District Council about the possible future development and restoration of the Sleaford Navigation. As a result of these meetings and the forward thinking of NKDC, the restoration of the top pound of the Navigation, together with Cogglesford Mill Lock, was included in the "Sleaford Pride" bid for a single regeneration grant put forward by the District Council.

We were delighted to hear, shortly before Christmas, that this bid had been successful and all the funding applied for had been granted. Not only does this mean that plans can go ahead for work on the top pound and lock but that Navigation House can also be saved from collapse and restored. The house would be saved through a partnership with Boston College, the Museum Society, Heritage Lincolnshire, the District and County Councils creating a base for a museum and archaeology centre. What better place to house the Handley Cup!

MILLENIUM RESTORATION

In early December the Society applied to bid for Millenium Funding from the National Lottery in order to restore the remainder of the Slea to full navigable standard. This 'application to apply' is a very important stage in the process as only projects which fill the criteria are allowed to proceed further to a formal and detailed application. Many projects fail at the first hurdle or, more properly, never leave the horsebox to get to the starting line!

To continue the racing analogy, our Chairman has weighed in, donned his racing silks and is now being led, somewhat apprehensively to the starting line. If that image is too much to imagine, put very simply, we were successful in our initial request and have now been invited to carry on to the next stage and submit a formal bid for the funding of our project by the Millenium Commission. This is indeed an exciting if rather breathless time for the Navigation! The potential for restoration is greater than any that has existed before in the history of the Navigation Society but much work has to be done in preparing the bid to a satisfactory standard.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The Society has booked Daystar Theatre Company to perform their "Christmas Cruise" on Saturday, January 13th at The Lion Hotel in Sleaford at 7.30. Tickets will be available at the door at a cost of £3 for adults and at a concessionary rate of £2.

Daystar Theatre are well known on the canals and their style of theatre is 'unique, funny, thoughtful and informal'. The show is centred on a Christmas cruise by narrowboat but involves reminiscence as well as a few problems. It should be an entertaining and enjoyable evening and we hope that members will come and bring their friends. Sadly, recent social events have not been well supported and it is disappointing to organise activities only to achieve a poor turn out. Let's give Daystar the audience they richly deserve!