



Mick's Musings

Lore [*lawr, lohr*] noun

The body of knowledge, especially of a traditional, anecdotal, or popular nature, on a particular subject.

With the increasing likelihood of boats gracing the Melton Mowbray Navigation sometime soon (but don't hold your breath), I thought it may be useful to provide a very much tongue-in-cheek glossary of inland waterway terms in common usage, that I learned from my time cruising the canals and rivers.

Gongoozler [*gon-guz-lar*] noun, *slang*

An idle spectator, especially one who stares protractedly at something for a long time. Found standing furtively in groups at locks, particularly if there is a pub there too, the gongoozler offers much advice, glass in hand, whilst never lifting a finger to help. They become very vocal if things boating-wise go awry, but slink away disappointed when nothing untoward happens.



Butty [*buht-ee*] noun

Fellow worker or friend, usually coal miner. On the inland waterways this is wrongly attributed to an unpowered boat towed by another, this term in fact describes an unwanted bread-based projectile thrown from factory or office window into the canal. This leads to the apocryphal belief that a swan's favourite food is marmite on toast.

Gin Palace [*dzin pal-is*] noun

(Formerly) a drinking house. An extremely large white fibreglass boat, the size of which would be more at home in St Tropez than its home port of Wigan. Usually crewed by a red-faced man in white trousers, a woolly pully, captain's cap and blue and white yachting shoes, whose partner wears the obligatory uniform of hair-held sunglasses, flip-flops, pedal pushers and knotted gingham shirt.

Yardarm [*yahrd-ahrm*] noun, *nautical*

Either of the outer portions of the yard of a square sail. This is the part of a yacht that the owner stares at incessantly once moored for the night, until the sun's rays fall beneath it, indicating that the first libation of the evening can be taken. This does not apply of course, if you are husband and wife luvvies recording a boating travelogue for Channel 4.

“Where's your water skier mate?”

Jolly remark issued by a boater emerging from his cabin, where he has just watched his dinner slide off the table due to the excessive wash of a passing boat. The miscreant, rapidly disappearing in the distance, usually replies with a hand signal indicating that they believe their speed to be 2mph!

Mick

Mick Clowes



Oakham End Update

Sadly not much has changed since my last update as work has kept me out of the country. During one of my quick trips back to the UK, I gave a talk about the Oakham Canal to the Friends of Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle. Around 100 attended (a large crowd by all accounts), and it certainly seems to have helped to promote both the canal and our work. A couple of other talks to private groups are planned for later in the year. Our objectives for the Oakham Canal; Preservation, Accessibility, Conservation and Awareness remain our core focus. We continue to develop the "Green Corridor" concept to the north of Oakham based around the canal, support the work of the Oakham Angling Society, and consider the best ways to open up more access as far as Rocks by Rail.

We are not short of ideas, just willing pairs of hands! Please e-mail me at pdadford@yahoo.co.uk.

We're On Display - The Society will be putting on a display at the Oakham Museum from 15 October 2016 to the end of January 2017. Information boards with maps and photographs, plus the walk leaflets and the new membership forms will be available. Admission is FREE and their exact location and opening times are on their website (www.rutlandcountymuseum.org.uk).

MOWS 'Time Team' at Pile Bridge Farm

A few of the members/volunteers strayed out of Melton for a work party on Sunday 24 July at Pile Bridge Farm near Whissendine.

The owners, Sue and Mark, have a smallholding which incorporates a horse breeding and schooling facility. It also contains another feature - part of the Oakham Canal - and somewhere buried under their land are the remains of two locks.

Mark was the perfect host and ferried us around the site in his all-terrain buggy to see the canal remains, before dropping us off at the dig site.



A preliminary excavation had discovered a brick edge and increasing amounts of water. Our team cut back the grass on the opposite side to reveal a further brick edge and then measured between the two. At 14'4" this conforms to the exact width of a double lock! Further examination found the gate recess (pictured) and allowed us to estimate the closed position of the gates. Knowing that the locks were approximately 74' long it was a simple matter of laying out the tape measure to find the other end, where further toil with the spades found the ground paddle hole and the possible remains of a brick arched bridge across the lock chamber. All hard work in extreme heat, but well worth the effort. Promises were made to return when further clearing of the site has been done, but in the meantime we give many thanks to the owners for their superb hospitality.

Partnership Meetings

The inaugural meeting of the Eastern end Partnership meeting took place on Thursday 1 September at Sysonby Knoll Hotel. The turnout was not as good as it could have been, with only about a quarter of those invited actually attending. We will be arranging a follow-up meeting, but we also intend to contact those who did not attend.

Via the invitation to the Melton Lions, a representative from Santander also came along asking if a group of their volunteers could help with any projects. We will also be contacting them at a future date, once we have a list of projects they could undertake.

The first Western End Partnership meeting will take place on Monday 5 December at Syston Town Council Community Centre.

Committee Vacancies

We currently have a couple of vacancies on the committee. We number 10 at present and would like to bring this number up to 12 (or even more).



We meet every six weeks on a Monday night, commencing 7.30pm at Sysonby Knoll Hotel, Melton Mowbray. On average, the meetings usually last about 1½ hours.

If you could spare a few hours and think you might be interested, are curious about what it would entail, or are uncertain but would like to 'try before you buy' (so to speak), please contact the Chairman or Secretary (contact details below). Our next meeting is on Monday 7 November, so you could come along and see for yourself.

Alternatively, we will also bring a few nomination forms to the AGM (see details below), so you could talk to any one of our committee members at the meeting.

Grantham Canal - Discovery Day

The Society will again be attending the above event on Sunday 9 October. Looks like there's plenty to see and do. For further info, see flyer on the back page.



2016 AGM

The date for this year's AGM has been arranged for Saturday 12 November. As previous years, it will be held at Sysonby Knoll Hotel, Asfordby Road, Melton, commencing at 10.30am. For further details, see the official AGM Notice with this newsletter.

Society Contacts:

Chairman: Michael Clowes
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The Grantham Canal Society

DISCOVERY DAY

SUNDAY OCTOBER 9th 2016

10 am until 4 pm

FURTHER DETAILS www.granthamcanal.org



ROVIN RON

Favourites from the
50s, 60s & 70s

NARROWBOAT TRIPS

On The Three Shires



REFRESHMENTS

Tea/Coffee/Cakes
Barbecue

OFFICIAL OPENING BY
Nick Boles MP

CANOE RIDES

With Lincoln Canoe
Club



ACTIVITIES
FOR ALL THE FAMILY



MAIDS OF CLIFTON

SIDE STALLS

Hedgehog Welfare
Barn Owls



SUZIE SPARKLES
Radio Presenter
MC for the day



Featuring The **DIRTY DUCK** Race

AMPLE PARKING - FREE ADMISSION

Carpenter's Shop Depot - Woolsthorpe by Belvoir
Adjacent to the Dirty Duck Pub NG32 1NY

All proceeds towards the restoration & maintenance of the Grantham Canal