

THE EASTERLING
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WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 44th Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on Sunday 18 May 2014 at 2.30pm in St. Mary's Church Hall in the town of March, in Cambridgeshire. The hall is situated on the Wisbech Road A.141 about half a mile north of the main Peas Hill roundabout in March, and is on the east side of the road in a district that is known as Westry. (Ordnance Survey Landranger Map No 142 – reference 400984). It would be helpful if members could advise our Chairman if they can, or cannot attend (see next page).

AGENDA

- 1: Apologies for Absence
- 2: Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting held on 11 April 2013 in Mildenhall.
- 3: To receive the Directors' Report for the year ended 30 June 2013 (this is set out on pages 4 & 5)
- 4: To receive the Accounts for the year to 30 June 2013 (see next page)
- 5: Election of Directors:

The Association currently has nine directors, and under the rules one third of them have to retire but they may stand and seek re-election. Alan Faulkner offers himself for re-election. Likewise so do David Mercer and Jeff Walters both of whom were elected as directors during the course of the year.

- 6: Election of Scrutineer. John Cordran offers himself for re-election.
- 7: Report on the North Walsham & Dilham Canal work parties.
- 8: Chairman's report on the year's work.

After the Annual General Meeting it is hoped it will be possible to arrange for either an invited speaker to address the gathering, or to put on a slide presentation about local topics before we have to vacate the hall by 4.30pm.

Prior to the meeting members will have the opportunity to take part in a visit to Fox's Marina for a conducted tour by our long standing member Mrs Paula Syred, one of the directors of this leading Fenlands boat hiring concern. To take advantage of this members will need to assemble no later than 11am at St. Mary's Church Hall where there is adequate parking and from where transport will be provided to the marina.

The business was founded by Charlie Fox in 1959. Having trained as a boat builder at Appleyard & Lincoln's yard at Ely he began by building small rowing boats and canoes before moving on to his first narrow boat in the early 1970s. The hiring out of narrow boats began in 1976 but stopped after a few years due to the economic situation. It was re-started by his daughter Paula in 1986 and currently hires out a series of narrow boat type cruisers all of which bear a version of the Fox name such as "*Silver Fox*", "*Urban Fox*" and "*Fox Tail*".

The business moved to its present location in 1980 since when the marina has been extended several times and can now accommodate over 200 boats. Charlie Fox was involved in the Association's Project Hereward campaign in the mid 1990s when he created the winding hole above Whittlesey Lock for us, using his own digger.

After the marina visit members are invited to partake of lunch at the Church Hall where there will be a choice of the main course being either roast pork with apple sauce or chicken breast in wine sauce, both accompanied by roast and creamed potatoes and a selection of vegetables. This will be followed by a sweet of either cheesecake or fresh fruit salad with cream, and the meal will end up with a cheese board and coffee all at a cost of £10.

Members wishing to attend the marina visit and the luncheon will need to book in through our Chairman, Roger Sexton, with their menu choices and with payment (£10 per person) before the end of April.

For space reasons the luncheon offer is limited to twenty people and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Special dietary requirements can be catered for, but please notify them to Roger. For late comers there are other food outlets nearby and in the centre of March.

And as before it would be helpful if those just wishing to attend the Annual General Meeting could advise the Chairman as soon as possible.

Cheques for the cost of lunch should be made payable to the East Anglian Waterways Association but will not be presented for payment until early in May.

Roger's contact details are: c/o 2 Bretton Avenue, March, Cambs, PE15 9EY, phone 01354 654434, e-mail oldtoad.martin@talktalk.net

EAST ANGLIAN WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30 June 2013

Incoming Resources	General A/c Unrestricted £	Restricted Funds £	2013 £ Total	2012 £ Total
Subscriptions & Donations	1297.50			918.50
Weeping Cross Fund	1250.00			750.00
Land Drainage Grant	-----			2000.00
Gift Aid	-----			306.25
Investment Income	31.77	<u>22.27</u>	<u>54.04</u>	55.92
Other income, AGM & sundry receipts	110.00			<u>282.50</u>
Total Incoming Resources	2689.27	22.27	54.04	<u>4313.17</u>
Resources Expended				
Costs of charitable activities				
Easterling Newsletter	183.27			418.22
Working parties insurance & costs	269.03			287.03
NW&DC Restoration Document	580.07			
NW&DC Restoration donation				1000.00
Management & Administration				
Rent of hall and AGM expenses	30.00			289.35
Postage & stationary	49.74			122.29
Company Registration Fee	13.00			14.00
Membership Leaflet	225.00			95.00
Scrutineer's fee, subscriptions &c	137.28			104.00
Total Resources expended	1487.39	----	1487.39	2329.89
Net Incoming Resources	1201.88	22.27	1224.15	1983.28
Total funds brought forward	7227.42	2881.51	10108.93	<u>8125.65</u>
	8429.30	2903.78	11333.08	<u>10108.93</u>

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2013

Current Assets	2013	2012
Cash at Bank – Current Account	3750.67	4876.19
CIOF Charity Deposit Account	<u>9047.13</u>	<u>6993.09</u>
Total	12797.80	11869.28
Current Liabilities		
Sundry Creditors	191.72	395.35
Life Membership Fund	<u>1273.00</u>	1365.00
Total	<u>1464.72</u>	<u>1760.35</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>11335.08</u>	<u>10108.93</u>
Represented by Income Funds, General Account	8429.30	7227.42
Restricted Funds (Project Hereward)	<u>2903.78</u>	<u>2881.51</u>
Accumulated Fund	<u>11333.08</u>	<u>10108.93</u>

For the year ended 30 June 2013 the company was entitled to the exemption under Section 480 of the Companies Act 2006. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for (1) Ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with Section 386; and (2) Preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year, in accordance with the requirements of Section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to accounts, as far as is applicable to the company. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company's regime.

Alan Faulkner (Director).

EAST ANGLIAN WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Directors' Report for the year ending 30 June 2013

Results: Income exceeded expenditure by £1,201.88 on the General Account and by £22.27 on the Restricted Account, the position being influenced by several generous donations including no less than £1,250 from the Weeping Cross Fund. The figures do not include the usual Gift Aid Claim as this has been delayed so as to tie in with the end of our financial year on 30 June.

Expenditure at £1,487.39 included £580 for the cost of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal (NW&DC) strategy document which has been widely distributed in Norfolk in support of the restoration project. Other expenses have been modest, particular in the printing and distribution of "*The Easterling*" and this reflects the work of Ivan Cane who handles the printing and distribution of the journal. A growing number of members now receive "*The Easterling*" by e-mail and this has contributed to a significant drop in postal costs.

Principal Activities: The principal activity remained that of an Amenity Society, working to secure improvements to the waterways in Eastern England for the benefit of the general public. The company is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee (No 895405) and is registered as a charity (No 251382).

Fens Waterways Link: Planning on this project to create an inland navigable link between the rivers Witham, Glen, Welland, Nene and Great Ouse is continuing and the choice of routes on the South Forty Foot River southwards from Donington High Bridge has been narrowed down. The country's overall financial situation is not helping here and may also affect work on the proposed barrage across the Welland at Boston which would benefit the Fens Waterways Link. The Association continues to promote the overall scheme working mainly on the need to obtain the best value for money rather than the most prestigious alternative such as the elaborate entrance lock at Boston.

North Walsham and Dilham Canal: The Association's voluntary working parties, which are organised in conjunction with the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust (NW&DCT), have maintained their active involvement here, but have had to concentrate more on the section above Bacton Wood Lock, including the long derelict locks at Swafeld that are on the section that has been legally abandoned. This is due to the Environment Agency, under the European Directive 2000/60/EC known as the Water Framework Directive, serving a Stop Order on the Old Canal Company on 19 April 2012 preventing it from carrying out any further dredging work on the Ebridge pound.

In 2009, when the water level in the Ebridge pound was being maintained temporarily at a very low level as a flood protection measure, the Agency carried out an assessment of the canal upstream of the lock and classified it as a shallow stream up to two metres in width. Deposited silt had consolidated in places, forming berms which had become vegetated whilst the narrow channel encouraged a faster flow enabling it to become self cleansing and reducing the need for maintenance. In turn these conditions had apparently provided a habitat for various fish and invertebrates. It would appear the Agency gave no notice about this designation.

The closure of the sluice at Ebridge Lock, the subsequent restoration of the normal water level in the canal and the dredging work that followed significantly altered these conditions. Despite the obvious benefits that are apparent for all to see including the return of many forms of wildlife and the major benefit to flood protection the dredging technically constitutes an offence, and this gave rise to the stop order.

The Old Canal Company, with the full support of the Association and the NW&DCT, appealed and there was a public hearing at Hoveton in November. A strong defence was put forward but was not successful as it seems the powers of the owners under the Acts of Parliament and under which the dredging was carried out are now subordinated to the EEC's directive.

Subsequent negotiations between the parties to try and find a way forward have so far failed to reach an agreement but efforts will continue on this vital matter. Meanwhile the volunteers continue to carry out routine maintenance work at Honing Lock, Honing Staithe, and Briggate Lock but not at Ebridge.

As an important part of our campaign for the restoration of the NW&DC Ivan Cane has been appointed as our archivist and he has already collected a large amount of relevant documentation which is proving extremely useful in the on-going negotiations about the waterway.

The Broads: We continue to hold a watching brief over the navigation area and are represented on the Broads Forum by our member Brian Holt. It is encouraging that some of the arrears of dredging are being tackled as part of a scheme involving funding from the European Union. We are also supporting the work of the River Waveney Trust and the Bure Navigation Conservation Trust.

Elsewhere: The Association continues to maintain its watch over its widespread area, taking action where necessary, giving help and advice where it can, and supporting the activities of like-minded bodies with whom we are linked, such as the Chelmer Canal Trust, the River Stour Trust, the River Gipping Trust, the Well Creek Trust, the River Sleas Trust, the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust and the various branches of the Inland Waterways Association.

A major problem brought about by the uncertain weather conditions have been high river flows at times which in turn have caused heavy silting in many of the East Anglian waterways. Several locks on the Great Ouse, such as Castle Mill Goldington, Godmanchester and Hemingford have seen shoals build up giving rise to restrictions and the on-going difficulties remain below Denver Lock and at the entrance to Salter's Lode Lock, despite the Environment Agency's continued efforts.

On the Sleas boats were prevented from attending the annual Spring Gathering at South Kyme due to silt blocking the channel below the first lock. The Association is giving its full support to the Sleas Trust in their efforts to deal with the situation and restore navigation to the waterway.

There has still been no progress over restoring the lock at Welches Dam, and this may now have to wait until the plans for the Fens Waterways Link in the area have been finalised as this might well be one of the options for the new route.

Directors: The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 11 April 2013 at The Bell Hotel, 28 High Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk.

The directors who served during the year were: - Christopher John Brian Black, Alan Henderson Faulkner (Treasurer), John Hodgson, Michael Lyons (lapsed 28 August 2012), John Raymond Mayhead, David Edward Revill and Roger George Sexton (Chairman).

None of the directors receive any remuneration but can be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses.

On behalf of the Board

Alan Faulkner (Director)

SCRUTINEER'S REPORT

To the directors of the East Anglian Waterways Association Limited.

As described on the balance sheet you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2013 as set out and you consider that the company is exempt from audit and a report under Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

In accordance with your instructions I have compiled these unaudited financial statements in order to assist you to fulfil your statutory responsibilities, from the accounting records, information and explanations supplied to me.

J. P. R. Cordran (Scrutineer)

10 September 2013.

HERE AND THERE

NEW DIRECTOR: We are pleased to be able to report that Jeff Walters was appointed as a new director of the Association at the Council meeting on 10 October last year. Jeff is Chairman of the Middle Level Watermen's Club and has been actively involved in creating the club's new moorings in March. His address is 99 Fleetwood Close, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 9NB, phone 01354 660156; mobile 07785 787875; e-mail jwalters53@hotmail.com

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: Following the launch last June of a Challenges & Choices presentation, the Agency is to be re-structured following Government funding cuts. By October 2014 staff numbers are due to be cut from 11,400 to 9,700; they were 13,200 in October 2011. At present the agency is structured into three areas – National, Regional and Local – and the plan is to move to a two tier organisation by removing the regional management but enabling the Agency still to engage with local communities. Winter storms and heavy rainfall have highlighted the problems over sea defences and inland flooding. The latter in particular has been attributed in many quarters to the major cut back in dredging the rivers and the failure to clear fallen trees and other blockages. And the high river flows have again caused major problems with heavy silting in many places.

DENVER SLUICE: The bad weather that did so much damage on the east coast with properties literally being washed into the sea such as at Hemsby also affected the Great Ouse, where a combination of high tides and high river flows led to Denver Sluice being over-topped at one stage. This is the first time this has happened since the 1953 floods. There were also fears for Salters Lode sluice but this held although the lock keeper was reported as taking steps to move some furniture upstairs in the lock house in case of flooding.

WITHAM CONNECTIONS: David Tomlinson's trip up Timberland Delph off the river Witham has prompted interest in the other drainage channels in the area. There are a series of channels south-west of the main river including Branston Delph (OS 710090 - 1.95 miles long, straight); Nocton Delph (O/S 125655, 2.9 miles long, straight); Metheringham Delph (O/S 156652 – 3.45 miles, straight); Timberland Delph (O/S 179610 – 3.25 miles, straight); Billingham Skirth (O/S 915566 – 2.75 miles to Billingham); Kyme Eau (O/S 210540 – River Sleas, 12.5 miles to Sleasford); South Forty Foot Drain (O/S 327428 – 20.9 miles almost to the River Glen)

The entrances to some, like Nocton, are guarded by pointing gates. These are normally left open and as the water levels are the same, craft should be able to enter. If the level of the main river should rise, however, the gates are designed to close automatically to prevent flooding of the enclosed land and this could then trap an unwary visiting boat.

Similar connections on the north east side of the Witham include Barlings Eau (old course of the Witham, O/S 104770 below Bardney Lock); Former junction with the Horncastle Canal (O/S 194572 – closed off); River Bain (O/S 209555 from Horncastle, Coningsby and Tattershall); Entrance to the Witham Navigable Drains (O/S 300474 via Anton's Gowt Lock); Maud Foster Drain (O/S 335430 – via fixed sluice in Boston); Hobhole Drain (O/S 366398 via sluice into the tideway)

RIVER SLEA: After the problems experienced last year the Slea Navigation Trust has launched an appeal for funds to help it carry out important dredging work to enable boats to reach the first lock. At its meeting on 10 October our Council has agreed to contribute £1,000 towards this appeal and these funds are available just as soon as the work goes ahead. The Environment Agency which should be doing this says it lacks the necessary funds but it will provide guidance into how the work is to be carried out. Meanwhile the Trust has been making enquiries with local farmers as some may have equipment that could be used towards carrying out the work.

The Trust has had plans to improve the facilities at South Kyme by providing moorings for some considerable time but the project was been delayed by problems over the ownership of the land involved. Sometime ago EAWA donated £1,000 towards the project but so far it has not proved possible for these funds to be used. Council has now agreed that our donation can be re-directed through WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited) to enable it to qualify for matched funding.

RIVER GIPPING: During the dry weather last summer when the water level was low volunteers from the River Gipping Trust were able to install the new sluice gates at Baylham Lock without having to the dam off the area. The new timbers easily slotted into place and the work was completed in just a couple of visits. Work was then concentrated on creating the new mathematical bridge for installation at Pipp's Ford Lock. Rumours abound that the original bridge, linking the two sides of Queen's College in Cambridge, was put together without the use of nails, screws, or nuts and bolts but was held in shape by its mathematical design. In practice it is no such thing. The Pipp's Ford bridge will be a great achievement – sadly few people will see it as the lock is down a private road and can only be reached by a footpath.

BEDFORD & MILTON KEYNES TRUST: In its first ten weeks the *John Bunyan* trip boat operated 23 charters and 55 public trips carrying over 2,000 passengers and raising £13,000 for the Trust. And on a forward looking move, three project groups have been set up to consider (1) Extending the navigation on the Great Ouse through a new lock and up to Box End Park where the canal across to Milton Keynes is likely to start; (2) Creating a link from the Grand Union Canal to Willen Lake as the first section of the canal at that end and where planning permission has already been granted; (3) A community dig on a flat section yet to be identified somewhere along the route of the proposed new canal.

FENLAND LIVES & LAND: Starting in September 2013 this is a celebration of the extraordinary landscape of the East Anglian Fens. Exhibitions and a dramatic film will tour the area having started off at Ely Museum, Ramsey Rural Museum, Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey and Chatteris Museum last autumn. A list of venues to be visited up to the beginning of September 2014 can be found on www.fensmuseums.org.uk Topics include Constructing the Past, Trading Stories, The Wild Fens; Living on Land & Water; Bread or Blood.

GREAT OUSE: Towards the end of last summer heavy machinery was brought in to both Castle Mills and Godmanchester to dredge out the several hundreds of tons of silt that had built up on the approaches to both lock sites. At the same time a major dredging scheme was carried above Hermitage Lock and on the Hundred Foot River so as to reduce the risk of flooding. During the autumn and winter works have been

carried out at Godmanchester Lock (refurbishment and work on lock gates), Brampton Lock (work on guillotine gates); Brownhill Lock (mechanical issues); 100 Foot River near Sutton (de-silting work by Jackson contractors).

RIVER NAR: The Norfolk Rivers Trust has been awarded £1.3 million from the government's catchment restoration fund to carry out schemes in the county and particularly on the river Nar. In 1759 the Nar was made navigable from West Acre for 15 miles down to King's Lynn but the upper 2½ mile stretch between West Acre and Narborough soon fell into disuse. On the lower reaches navigation had finished by 1884 apart from on the final one mile tidal stretch.

Today the river has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest partly because of its progression from a chalk river to fenland. It flows roughly westwards for 26 miles rising in the chalk hills east of the village of Tittleshall and passes down through Litcham, Castle Acre, and West Acre to Narborough where it becomes a lower fenland river. A major project is now in hand to restore the river to its natural state mainly upstream of Narborough. A 600-yard stretch at Litcham has already been completed and work is in hand on a 1½ mile stretch downstream from West Acre. It includes removing or modifying obstacles such as weirs, cutting back overhanging trees, narrowing the channel to speed up the flow, introducing traditional meanders in the channel and encouraging vegetation to start to grow which is good for fish and good for invertebrates.

RIVER WISSEY: This was the scene at Wissington, a village on the A.134 road halfway between King's Lynn and Thetford where the Grange Farm Moorings are situated, overseen by Roger Warner who sent in this picture.



Ivan Cane, the Association's North Walsham & Dilham Canal archivist, keeps his boat "NAV1" at Grange Farm and here it is being backed into the slipway, by Ivan and fellow EAWA member Darren Cooke, prior to being slipped out for the winter.

NORTHAMPTON: At the beginning of last October plans by the Environment Agency to increase the number of residential berths in the Becket's Park marina near the town centre were approved by Northampton Borough Council. This represents a significant increase on the current figure and will go some way to reducing the waiting list for these residential moorings.

BROADS NOTES AND NEWS

MUSEUM OF THE BROADS: 2013 was a successful year for the museum boosted by a series of ten special event days. The first, organised by curator Nicola Hems, dealt with the “Lost Railways of the Broads”, and featured the story of the Midland & Great Northern Railway, or the Muddle and Get Nowhere line as some detractors would have it. Meanwhile the steam launch “*Falcon*” that gave such great service for the members attending our Annual General Meeting in 2011 is now enjoying a well-earned rest and has undergone a thorough maintenance check during the winter. She will be back in service when the museum reopens in March. Amongst her duties last year was a trip down to Yarmouth in very cold and unpleasant weather in May to pick up a barrel of Lacons beer for delivery back at the museum.

Her place was taken by “*Esox Lucius*” (Latin for North Pike), the pike fishing boat that had been the pride and joy of Ken Latham, founder of the well known store at Potter Heigham. The boat has been painstakingly restored by museum volunteers and was re-launched on 14 July at a ceremony at the Stalham Staithe museum.

WORKING WITH NATURE: The Broads Authority’s innovative restoration of the reed bed at Salhouse Broad has won international recognition as a pioneering way of re-using dredged sediment. To mark this, the authority has been awarded the UK’s first “Working with Nature Certificate of Recognition”. The restoration met the certificate criteria by being developed through stakeholder engagement, with no net loss of biodiversity, by using natural processes and with sustainability at the heart of the project. The awarding authority received many applications but relatively few got through, the certificate not proving easy to obtain.

Dredged sediment from the nearby River Bure was used to create 7,000 square metres of reed bed. Turfs were scraped from reed beds on the Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve at Woodbastwick and planted on the huge geotextile bags used in the restoration while the seed of common reed and reed mace was scattered by hand over the bare sediment. The aim was to restore the eroded reed bed as it was 60 years ago. Less than a year after the work began 30 plant species, several of them rare, are now colonising the restored reed bed.

CANOE TRAILS: An Integrated Access Strategy was adopted by the Broads Authority in May 2013 and this identified the increasing demand for canoe access to the Broads and the need to improve the information available to the public on access to the navigation area. Working in conjunction with the Broads Canoe Hire Network a series of four canoe trails have been created. These cover the Barton Broad area on the river Ant, the Salhouse area on the river Bure, the Geldeston to Beccles reach and the Bungay loop on the river Waveney. All are based on canoe hire centres and have been well received and new trails are being considered for the upper reaches of the rivers Waveney, Yare, Thurne, Ant and Bure which will result in most of the areas that are appropriate being covered. As part of the Upper Waveney Canoe Trail and in partnership with the Environment Agency and a local landowner a canoe launch point is being considered immediately downstream of Ellingham sluice. On completion the River Waveney Trust will maintain the structure.

GREAT YARMOUTH: On 27 September last year the historic railway bridge over the river was officially opened by Miriam Kikis who has led the campaign to have it restored. Originally built in 1852 it is now grade II listed and serves as an important footbridge. The campaign to restore it will continue as phase one only dealt with the eastern wrought iron span, the work costing some £630,000 with about half coming from the Fair Shares National Lottery.

LODDON: Diggers working on a stretch of flood bank along the River Chet have unearthed an ancient boat that has been remarkably preserved in the peaty soil. Archaeologists estimate the boat is between 400 and 600 years old making this an extremely rare and important find. It is thought it was used to carry light farm produce such as chicken and vegetables. Once fully excavated the boat will be moved to Peterborough or York where specialists will study the wood for more details about its history.

MARTIN BROOM: We regret to record the death of Martin Broom at the beginning of October aged 79. For many years he had been a regular supporter of our Association and was involved with the family company, Broom Boats. This was founded by his grandfather in 1898 and Martin took over from his father in 1963. He went on to become vice chairman of Blakes Holidays, served as a board member of the Yarmouth Port & Haven Commissions, was a long-serving member of the Broads Society and was awarded an MBE for his services to the marine industry and Broadland in 1991.

RIVER WAVENEY: As reported in our last issue the author and comedian Griff Rhys Jones duly opened the River Waveney Study Centre at Earsham near Bungay on Saturday 19 October. It was appropriate that Griff, accompanied by three members of the River Waveney Trust, all arrived at the site in two canoes.

RICHARDSONS: Following encouraging trading last summer and autumn this Stalham based business, which is the Broads biggest hire boat operator, is investing £1m in six new boats for 2014. This includes two completely new models – a 38ft boat which is a “baby” version of their successful 45ft Broadlander, and a flybridge cruiser on a 45ft hull. Other operators are also looking to expand – Broom Boats of Brundall is building five new boats at a cost of £750,000, Silverline at Brundall is planning a new cruiser and Norfolk Broad Direct at Wroxham is building two new luxury cruisers.

TOM MOORE: Our member Dr Tom Moore has done absolute wonders on the North Walsham & Dilham Canal at places such as Honing Staithe and Briggate Mill pond by using his own digger to clean out sections of the waterway after years of neglect. But his contribution is not confined to the canal as he has served as a volunteer doctor with the East Anglian Air Ambulance for 12 years and has received an Eastern Daily Press “Stars of Norfolk” award. The award is sponsored by the Broads Authority and included a trip on the authority’s electric Eel boat. Tom moved to Norfolk in 2002 and regularly sails on the Broads. We can only add our belated congratulations for this well deserved award.

CANTLEY SUGAR BEET FACTORY: The Cantley factory hit the headlines on 17 December when two large sugar evaporation towers and a pre-scolder to heat up the

raw beet were delivered to the factory's waterside wharf. The equipment was carried on board a 216-foot long 37-foot wide Dutch barge that was towed up the river Yare by two tugs – the “*Ems Surveyor*” in front with the “*Suffolk Spirit*” controlling the rear. Two Broads Authority's patrol boats were also in attendance. The barge was almost certainly the longest that has ever been seen on the Yare and it managed to squeeze through the Reedham railway swing bridge en route.

Cantley is the oldest of the British Sugar Corporation's processing factories having first opened in 1912 but was shut down soon after. It re-opened in 1920 and has stayed open ever since. It used to receive much of the sugar beet by wherry but has not been served as such for many years; instead it has been totally dependent on road transport. It had been hoped it would resume its use of water transport to deliver South American raw cane sugar imported into Great Yarmouth and it appears this could still be a possibility.

RIVER LAUNCHES: The Broads Authority is selling off two of its traditional Thames launches that have been patrolling the Broads for 40 years. Both were built in 1975 and are 29-feet long, 7-feet in beam and powered by 38hp Nanni diesel engines. They have wooden cabins and have undergone refits in most years meaning their condition is extremely high for their age. “*Thurne*” was initially based at Irstead by the then Great Yarmouth Port & Haven Commissioners and passed to the Broads Authority in 1989 where she has been mainly used in the Wroxham area whilst “*Barton*” has always been based at Ludham. They are replaced by the heavy weather vessel “*Spirit of Breydon*” that patrols Breydon Water and a new generation launch with a hybrid engine that patrols the Yare.

NARROW BOAT WISPER: Maffett Cruisers who are based in Chedgrave are fitting out a 40-foot long narrow boat and plan to have it available for hire by Easter. It is hoped the attraction of having 125 miles of lock free cruising will attract some traditional narrow boat hirers away from the canals to the Broads.

SOTSHOLE BROAD: It is good to be able to report that agreement has been reached between the Broads Authority and David Pooley, the owner of this broad, over the restoration works that were carried out without specific planning permission (see “The Easterling”, June 2013, page 10). Mr Pooley has agreed to make some changes which will satisfy the authority and enable them to give him retrospective permission.

HADDISCOE CUT: [From a newspaper cutting about 1955] “*After a private discussion at the meeting in Norwich yesterday, the Land Drainage Committee of East Suffolk and Norfolk River Board agreed to recommend the Board to petition against the section of the British Transport Commission's Bill proposing to close Haddiscoe Cut. A written report by the Chief Engineer (Mr K. E. Cotton) stated that the effect of damming the Cut would be a rise of about 11 inches in the level of the River Yare and Waveney downstream.*”

Fortunately the cut is still with us today and remains well used. It would have been a disaster if the British Transport Commission had had their way.

EAWA WEB SITE and EVERY CLICK



The Association's Web Site was set up several years ago on the initiative of our member Peter Bendall and not only did he put much of the material together he also generously covered the setting up costs and the annual fee. Peter lives out in Germany at Kaltenkirchen with his wife Christine, who suffers from multiple sclerosis.

The arrangements under which Christine was being cared for have been withdrawn with the responsibility now falling back on Peter. At the same time Peter's eldest daughter Helen has been diagnosed with cancer meaning the couple will probably have to move back to England – possibly to either Reading or Plymouth.

In these circumstances Peter felt he had no choice but to relinquish his role as Web Master. We are profoundly grateful for all that he has done for us and to mark his record of service the Council decided at its meeting on 10 October to make him an Honorary Member of the Association.

To take his place we are fortunate to be able to announce that the web site will be looked after in future by directors John Hodgson and David Mercer. They would welcome having any comments or suggestions from members - jhodgson@rivouse.fsnet.co.uk and djm@djmercer.co.uk .

Another service that Peter has done for the Association is to introduce us to "Every Click" and the first payment from that charity was received recently. Every Click operates under the slogan of "*Give as you Live*" and the Association has now signed up to the scheme which enables thousands of stores to donate a percentage of every purchase made on line by supporters to their chosen charity without charging them a penny more.

Most national stores are involved including Amazon, Argos, B&Q, Boots, Clarks, Currys, Debenhams, Harrods, Home Base, House of Fraser, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, Next, Sainsburys, Selfridges, Tesco and many more besides.

To register members need only to go to www.giveasyoulive.com and follow the simple process that includes inputting the East Anglian Waterways Association.

Via Every Click funds can be raised for the Association in a particularly painless way.

Thank you, Peter

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL

At its meeting on 10 October EAWA's Council agreed that the organisation of the voluntary working parties on the canal would now be taken over by the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust. This transfer was facilitated by the Trust now having suitable insurance cover arrangements via the Inland Waterways Association. EAWA's own cover with the IWA has now been lapsed; instead Council has agreed to continue to support the Trust by assuming responsibility to pay the annual insurance premium – for 2014 this amounts to £371.

For the record the Association's first working party was held on 17 December 2000 at Briggate Lock and was led by Graham Brown and Alan Faulkner when a small group made an impressive start of clearing the lock site. Further sessions followed but work had to be suspended in February 2001 due to the Foot & Mouth Disease precautions. Instead, on 24 June 2001, the first session was held at Bacton Wood Lock which was outside the area covered by the precautions. Sessions resumed at Briggate on 5 April 2002 when large trees on the lock side were removed.

The first working party at Honing Lock was on 29 September 2002 when a start was made on clearing the lock side and a month later two very large trees growing on the were cut down. On 25 January 2004 the lock was visited by a large contingent from the IWA's Ipswich Branch and the remaining tree stumps were laboriously winched out transforming the appearance of the site.

Ebridge saw its first session on 3 July 2004 and on 29 October 2006 the first of several sessions was held at Honing Staithe. Moving north clearance was started at Royston Bridge on 15 November 2009 and the clearance of Swafield Bottom Lock started on 5 May 2013. The Trust is fully committed to carrying on the work which has achieved so much since 2000.

Recent sessions have seen a considerable clearance carried out on 13 October at the Paston Way canal crossing where a large amount of brash was shredded and much of the heavier timber was piled up. On 27 October another session was held at Swafield Lower Lock where a further clearance was made and most of the lock structure has now been uncovered of years of invading growth.

There was a return to Briggate Mill pond on 10 November where growth on the chamber island was cut back, reeds growing at the mouth of the lock and alongside the road were cleared and the site was generally tidied up. Follow-up sessions on 8 December and 26 January saw further progress here. Two sessions at Honing Staithe Cut (24 November & 12 January) brought about major improvements to the path through the wooded area with many barrow loads of chippings being used to build up and stabilise the surface whilst repairs were carried out to several fences.

Meanwhile attempts to find a solution to the Ebridge impasse continue and a meeting was held on 16 December with Dr. Charles Beardall who is the Environment Agency's head man in East Anglia, to try to move matters forward. Equally important was the opportunity to discuss plans to divert the water back into the canal above Bacton Wood and hence to the water mill there.

WORKING PARTIES IN ACTION



Honing Staithe Walk: On 12 January 2014 many barrow loads of chippings were laid on the path through the wood to consolidate the surface for walkers. When it was created the path had to be routed through low lying land that was liable to flood and building up its surface will make for a much firmer surface in future.



Brigate Mill Pond. Despite the dramatic clearance made months ago nature seems to be fighting back. Reed growth in particular is a major feature notwithstanding the dredging that was carried out. On 8 December efforts are directed at clearing some of the growth to reveal clear water once again.



Swaffield Lower Lock. This shows water flowing through the lock chamber and the truly dramatic clearance that has been made on this long abandoned structure. Our picture shows the position as at 27 October 2013 – a scene unrecognisable from only a few months ago.

Pictures by Alan Bertram and Ivan Cane

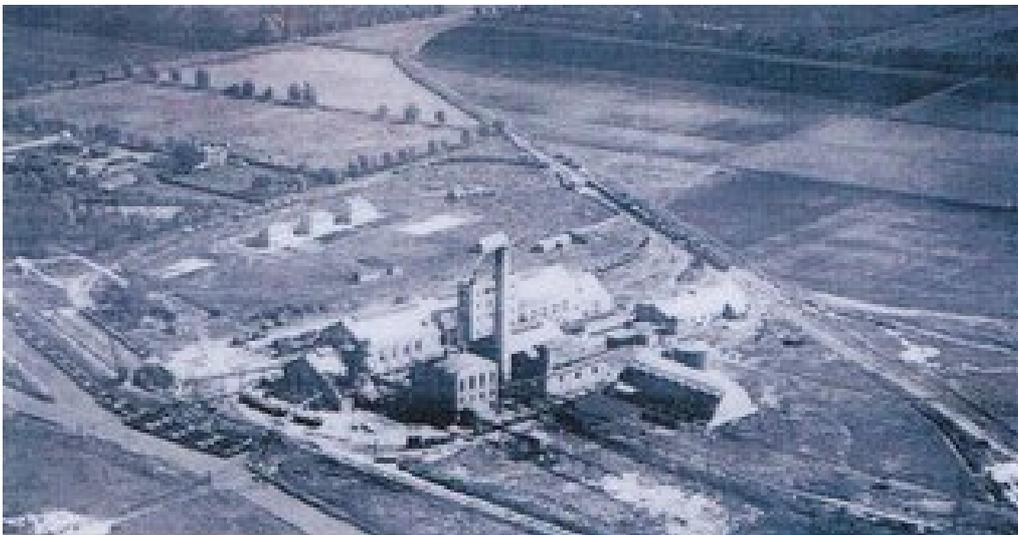
MYSTERY PICTURE



This picture purports to depict a scene on the River Witham. It appears in a book called "Tractors at Work. A Pictorial Review. 1904-1994" by Stuart Gibbard and is credited to Stuart Green. A Fowler engine is shown surrounded by many of Fowler's management on what appears to be a specially constructed barge. There have been suggestions that

this might not be on the Witham at all, but could be on one of the waterways further north such as the Aire & Calder Navigation. At one time many parts of the Witham were virtually inaccessible by land and there would have been plenty of scope for equipment such as this to carry the engine around the navigation and off load it at suitable places using the folded back ramps at the back of the barge. We would be glad to receive any views or comments about the picture.

WISSINGTON SUGAR BEET FACTORY



Thanks to our member Roger Warner we can include this historic aerial view of the Wissington Sugar Beet Factory that was built in 1925 beside the river Wissey. Until after the Second World War there was no road access to the factory; instead it was served by the Wissington Light Railway that had been opened in 1906 to serve farms in the Methwold Fens and by water with a small fleet comprising three diesel tugs and 24 steel barges. The latter are shown moored neatly alongside the wharf in threes and singly along the river bank. Water transport was discontinued in 1943 after one of the tugs was bombed and sunk in King's Lynn docks.



“En route to Honing Lock”. *Martin Redding, Assistant Engineering & Environment Officer for the Witham Fourth Internal Drainage Board, canoed with his family up to Honing Lock last summer. He reported the canal was only just navigable in places with some stretches being very narrow, some very overgrown and some littered with fallen trees.*



And this is where they were heading. This picture of Honing Lock was taken last summer and shows a group of canoes that had paddled up the canal to the tail of the lock.

(The picture is produced courtesy of Alan Bertram, who attends the work parties very regularly and who photographs much of the work in progress.)



Honing lock on 31 August 2003 after some preliminary clearance had been carried out by the working parties. The stumps of two large trees on the left were still to be dealt with. The picture was taken from the bows of a motorised work boat that had been used by a group of EAWA directors to inspect the state of the canal up to the lock and to view the progress of the lock clearance work. (Picture from the Editor's collection)