



Registered Charity No 1078752

MOWS Newsletter

Spring 2011

Mick's Musings

We can all well remember those pivotal moments that mean so much. A child's first steps, for instance, or the freedom felt when riding our first bike are personal memories, meaning little to anyone but ourselves. But in world history, and on a far greater scale, happenings such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, take on a new significance when one sees the bigger picture.

Well, in the history of *this* society, 2011/12 should see a similar pivotal moment, with the rebuilding of Junction Bridge. I am not suggesting for one moment that the rebuild compares evenly remotely with world changing events, but I am sure that in *our* small world this sole achievement will become something of a landmark.

The "bigger picture" that the bridge rebuild will create, sees far-reaching economic, social and community benefits for all, as it will act as the catalyst for the opening up of the whole river corridor. The regeneration thus afforded will attract walkers, anglers, cyclists, wildlife lovers, boaters and will, in turn lead to increased tourism spend and a knock-on economic upturn for the region. Shops, pubs, hotels and transport links, etc will get more use, whilst waterside property prices and development opportunities soar.

But trawling through official minutes and reports from various meetings concerning the area does not make for enlightening reading, as it seems that the aforementioned bridge rebuild does not even enter the psyche (at least at the moment) of any of the leading players at waterway, parish council, county council or government level.

It is up to all of us, whether a MOWS member, someone who lives locally, or just an interested party to push the advantages and benefits that this new gateway will surely bring to a somewhat jaded Wreake Valley economy.

Now is the time to build (or should that be re-build?) bridges with those who can help our cause in the months to come.

One thing's for sure, the next year should prove an interesting time in MOWS history.

Mick Clowes
Chairman

Melton Navigation Memories

Last month we received a wonderful e-mail from a man who, although now lives in Germany, as a young lad had once navigated some of the River Wreake and took some wonderful photographs at that time. Joe has given the society access to his collection and permission to publish his e-mail and writes:

I remember writing to the Grantham Canal Newsletter (The Bridge) in the early 1970s that it would surely be easier to restore the Melton Mowbray Navigation to Navigation, than it would the Grantham Canal, because almost all of their bridges have been lowered. The theoretical estimate at the time was £18,000 per bridge for a rebuild to navigable standards.

I took many black and white photos of the MMN around that time and I am currently scanning all of those I can find. You are welcome to copies as soon as they are completed.

There used to be an old photo of the Melton Basin hanging in The Boat Inn in Burton Street. There was also a painting of the canal and river junction in Melton, possibly showing a pre MMN Flash Lock. The picture was on loan to Leicester Newarke Houses Museum, but I believe that it was reclaimed by the Melton Charity which owned it. I may have donated some photos to Leics CRO, but can't remember if I did or I didn't.

My prize possession is a rope worn bullnose brick from Hoby Lock (see photo right), the bottom brick of three. When I returned the other two had disappeared and now the lock has been infilled and the bridge, which had no surviving parapet when last I saw it, is now demolished.



What happened to Birmingham Row in Melton? Maybe your mystery building is beneath Pedigree Petfoods?

At 59, I hope I live long enough to see the MMN back in full use, though I can't help much, practically or financially, as I have lived in Germany since 2006 and have no forward plans to reside in England ever again, though I do still visit my family in Sileby and Leicester.

The Wreake Valley is lovely I agree. I have cycled many times from Sileby to Frisby, on the North side of the river and have canoed from Play Close to Rhubarb Island, and around Hoby - where I was bullied and moaned at by anglers who complained "We have fishing rights" - with a "I know my Rights!!!" attitude. They were silenced when I showed them the papers I had from Severn Trent and the riparian landowners, granting me Navigation Rights, but not wishing to start a fight, my friends (who had been following by car) and I retired to the relative peace of the Blue Bell.

Good Luck in your endeavours. You will succeed I am sure.

Best wishes,
Martin Joseph ("Joe") Wain

MOWS Member David Voted New Young Mayor 2010/11

Voting took place during Local Democracy Week (11-14 October 2010) at several local schools and colleges. Three candidates chose to stand, each with a strong manifesto but it was MOWS member, David Downing, who was duly elected Young Mayor for 2010/2011.

David, from Asfordby, chose to stand to give something back to the community. The Young Mayor represents the views of young people and works closely with the Youth Council to improve services, have a say on local issues and promote a positive image of young people today. An official ceremony took place at King Edward VII School where the chain was handed over.

At the official count on the 14 October 2010, David said "I'm really up for being Young Mayor and looking forward to starting my new role and being the voice of the young people of the Borough. I really want to make a difference."

We would like to congratulate David (albeit a little belated!) and wish him the best of luck for his remaining time in office.



MOWS WILL BE HAVING A CHARITY BRIC-A-BRAC STALL ON MELTON MARKET ON SATURDAY 2 APRIL. PLEASE COME AND SAY HELLO AND SUPPORT OUR CAUSE.

Help MOWS While You Internet Browse or Shop

The Melton and Oakham Waterways Society is now a registered beneficiary of a new fund raising scheme, whereby members who are internet shopping can opt to have donations from participating internet sellers directed to their chosen charity. For example, if you were internet buying a £100 lawnmower from B&Q (who donate about 2%), you can select MOWS to receive the £2 thus generated. Other participating stores include: John Lewis, Tesco, Sainsburys, Amazon, plus many more, who will donate up to 2.5% or more of the value of your shopping when you use it. It's absolutely free to you and what's more, they will send you a confirmatory email once the participating retailer has processed your transaction, letting you know how much has been donated to MOWS on your behalf.

MOWS unique **easyfundraising** URL is <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/mows>. This is the link you should use when you register to support the society.

easyfundraising
.org.uk

Also, why don't you take a few minutes to have a look at the **easysearch** page. Every time you search the web with **easysearch** instead of Google, you will raise funds for MOWS. Each of you could raise around £20 a year for MOWS just by searching 10 times day. Your unique **easysearch** page is at: <http://mows.easysearch.org.uk/>. Just look for the MOWS logo.



Dates For Your Diary ...

SUNDAY 27 MARCH 2011

The official launch of the new river clearance vessel, "Mole", will now be held on the above date (a change from that originally arranged) at 11.00am.

See press release or website for further details.

SATURDAY 30 APRIL AND SUNDAY 1 MAY 2011

Loughborough Canal and Boat Festival. <http://www.loughboroughcanalfestival.co.uk>

SATURDAY 4 AND SUNDAY 5 JUNE 2011

Leicester Riverside Festival.

SATURDAY 25 AND SUNDAY 26 JUNE 2011

Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally.

FRIDAY 29 TO SUNDAY 31 JULY 2011

IWA National Festival on the Trent & Mersey Canal at Shobnall Fields, Burton-on-Trent.



Welcome To New Members ...

Donald Cottingham, Phil Sharpe, Derek Simmonds and David Tucker, who has become a life member.

Existing members who have become life members:

Mrs E M Williamson, Elizabeth Maddocks and Linda Hulme.

Very many thanks to all those members who have sent subscriptions and donations recently. If your subs request is still in the 'in' tray a reply before the end of March would be much appreciated.

Work Party Dates

A Joint Work Party with Oakham School will be held on Saturday 19 March 2011 at 10.30am



On the Oakham canal, at the area known locally as 'Springfield'. Please see website for directions or ring Ron Francis on 01664 564028 for further details.

Hard hats, bibs and tools will be provided, but please wear stout shoes/boots and protective gloves.

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