



Mick's Musings

Rumours

No, I'm not talking about the 1977 multi-award winning album by Fleetwood Mac, but more, as the Oxford English Dictionary says; "A story or statement in general circulation without confirmation or certainty as to the facts".

Dangerous things rumours, and never more so as when Mr Rumour gets together with his good friend Mr Chinese Whisper! When these two chaps go for a night out, the truth (what truth?) goes out of the window. It reminds me of a famous reporter, who shall remain nameless, who declared "never let the truth get in the way of a good story". A Chinese Whisper, by the way, is defined as "information passed on in turn, often becoming distorted in the process", rather than perhaps what you were thinking - an oriental chocolate bar!

Anyroadup, back to the facts, which concern our attendance at a Leics Branch Inland Waterways Association social evening at The Gate Hangs Well pub at Syston. Now you may recall that a few months earlier, MOWS had staged an initial partnership meeting in Syston Council offices, which was attended by, amongst others, a representative of Everards Brewery.

Enter stage left Mr Rumour and Mr C Whisper ready to convert the reported facts from brewery HQ into gobbledegook for the masses. Apparently, the Everards man's PA told her husband, who told his brother, whose best friend's cousin is married to the sister-in-law of the drayman who delivers to The Gate Hangs Well ... apparently.

Now, back at the IWA social I was asked, mid-evening, via a friend of the landlord, as to whether the restoration of our waterway was beginning this week or next? Mr Rumour had struck again!

I was tempted to remain silent, but couldn't keep a straight face and had to admit it was a little premature – but a nice thought all the same. Any more juicy rumours anyone?

Mick

Mick Clowes

Up The (C)Wreake ... with a Paddle!

It is always gratifying to discover other groups who are as passionate about the local waterways as we are here at MOWS.



One such group of canoeists who proposed to camp at Birch Canoes at Hoby, recently contacted us to ask for advice on a proposed trip from their campsite to Melton on a Saturday, with the Hoby to Syston leg reserved for the Sunday.

Although the weather wasn't kind, and with high water levels, they managed to do the Saturday half, but abandoned the Sunday leg as the weather worsened.

As the photograph above shows, the recent storms have brought down a few trees and a substantial amount of branches and other vegetation.

Following on from this, another group has been in touch about a similar trip scheduled for later in the year. Albeit in a small way, the Melton Mowbray Navigation is slowly coming back to life!

There is a trip blog with many more photographs on the Song Of The Paddle website [SOTP](#).

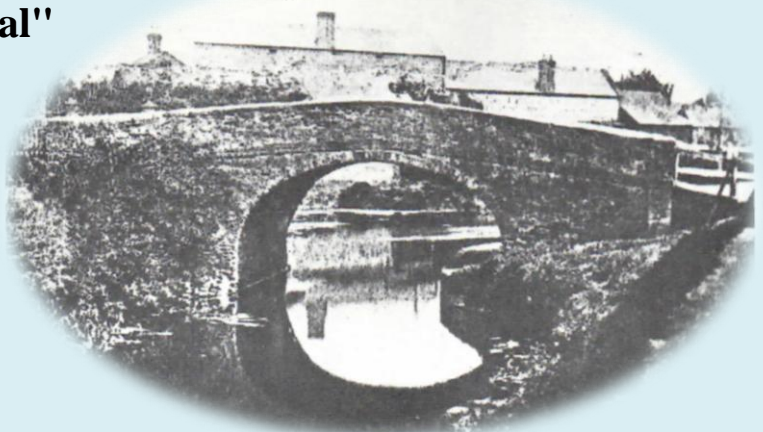


Song of the Paddle



From David Tew's Book: "The Melton to Oakham Canal"

The bridge at Melton over the entrance to the Oakham Canal. The first lock would have been close to where the photographer stood, but can anyone tell us whether the bridge carried a road or a footpath and what was the road's name?



Attention Walkers!



Avid readers may remember that last summer I walked the proposed Oakham Canal Trail from Oakham to Melton, the Wreake Valley Way from Melton to Syston, and continued on into Leicester through Watermead Park. At the time I said I was going to revise our current walk leaflets ready for this summer. Sadly, work commitments have, in part, prevented me from doing so, but there are also some developments in the Wreake Valley and to the north of Oakham which might impact both routes. In short, I am trying to work through these issues so that we can make sure our new leaflets are as up to date as possible.

Two things struck me though:

Firstly, this is a fantastic three day walk. Leaving Oakham fresh for a long day's walk to Melton on day one. A shorter walk on day two to Thrussington. Finally, a morning walk into Leicester on day three, with an afternoon return by train. As a group I think we should do more to encourage maintenance of the route, promote it and, if possible, have it properly signposted. Perhaps there are members out there who live local to the route and may be interested in "adopting" a section?

Secondly, the mobile media age is upon us. I have seen some great work by others where we could make more of this technology. From simple mobile versions of the leaflets, to links to geocaching sites, and interactive walks where we could add information about the history of the waterways at specific locations. If anyone is interested in working with me on such projects, or has experience in these areas, I would really like to hear from you.

If you or your family are interested in walking all or part of these walks in the summer, I will be running some guided tours, pointing out the sights and throwing in some historical detail along the way! To register your interest, or to simply find out more about the walks, get in touch by e-mail at pdadford@yahoo.co.uk and I will be happy to talk to you.

Paul Dadford

Volunteers Clean Up After Doris

Our society volunteers have been hard at work on the river around Melton in the aftermath of Storm "Doris".



On a regular Sunday work party in March, they discovered a blown down tree that was completely blocking the waterway. The tree had fallen in the Sysonby area and was causing a build-up of debris brought down by recent heavy rain. This was acting as a dam and, had it been left, could have resulted in higher water levels and local flooding.

The group set-to using "Badger", one of their workboats, to get close enough to start cutting the monster into pieces to forge a way past and release the build-up of pressure.

A spokesman for the group said that unfortunately sunken trees are likened to icebergs in that the majority of the structure is under the water and that the volunteers would have to return soon with their heavy-duty winch to raise the tree to enable further removal to take place.

Dates For Your Diary ...

SATURDAY 3 AND SUNDAY 4 JUNE 2017

Leicester Riverside Festival. Bede Park, Mile Straight, Western Boulevard & Castle Gardens. This FREE festival is a lively weekend of activities for the whole family spread across Bede Park, Mile Straight, Western Boulevard and Castle Gardens. This popular event is for all ages and offers boat trips, live music, displays and a variety of food stalls from around the world.

SATURDAY 24 AND SUNDAY 25 JUNE 2017

Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally. This is the 14th Rally & Canal Festival at Braunston Marina in Northamptonshire. There will be over 80 historic boats. Admittance is FREE, although there is a parking fee of £10.

SUNDAY 8 OCTOBER 2017

Grantham Discovery Day. Dirty Duck pub, Duck Lane, Woolsthorpe by Belvoir, NG32 1NY. Lots and lots to see and do!!!

Reminder!

Subscription Renewals 2017

Thank you to those who have paid promptly, but just a gentle reminder to members who have not yet renewed their subscription.

Also a reminder about the increase in the annual fee, which is now £10.00 for a single member.

So, for those who pay by Standing Order and have paid at the old rate, could you please pay the shortfall either by bank transfer or by sending me a cheque. If you've not already done so, could you also please inform your bank or amend the amount as soon as convenient. **Thank you.**

New Life Members ...

John Lawson
Gavin Simpson

Society Contacts:

Chairman: Michael Clowes
Tel: 01509 414140
e-mail: lindandmick@btinternet.com

Secretary: Dave Andow
Tel: 01664 562317
e-mail: daveandow@live.co.uk

Treasurer: Jan Dadford
e-mail: jdadford@live.co.uk

**Membership Secretary /
Newsletters:** Linda Hulme
Tel: 01509 414140
e-mail: lindaahulme@gmail.com

Website:
<http://www.meltonwaterways.org.uk>