

Mick's Musings

The Art of ~~Deception~~ Perception

One of the things that, not so much worries but more puzzles me, is how the society is perceived by the general public. Publicly stating the obvious that we are a charitable society run by volunteers seems to bring no clarity nor cut any ice with the man (or woman) in the street who seem to think we are a public service body, at the beck and call of anyone with a problem on any local waterway. Drawing a comparison would point toward a volunteer in a British Heart Foundation shop, being asked to perform triple bypass surgery! And it doesn't just stop there as one of our local councillors, who let's face it should know better, regularly forwards waterway queries from the public to yours truly, hoping for some sort of resolution!

Add to that, the regular occurrence of someone approaching our volunteers whilst they are working somewhere, asking if we can clear out the bottom of their garden or move this or that obstruction, further reinforces this theory.

Now don't get me wrong, we will always oblige wherever possible, given the constraints of time and location, but a bit of recognition for the job we do would not go amiss. Blowing our own trumpet for a minute allows me to say that recently we have removed three fallen trees from the waterway which, if allowed to stay, would have resulted in a build-up of rubbish and subsequent local flooding. If you were to wait for the relevant body (the Environment Agency) to do the same, you gentlemen, would probably have time to grow a full beard before it was even considered.

But hopefully my original title for this piece may be a little prophetic, so perhaps if we were to just act a little more authoritarian maybe the council will recognise the important work we do, back us to the hilt, and vast amounts of funding will come our way allowing us to restore the whole waterway and bring boats back to Melton once again ... and then I woke up!! Never mind.

Mick

Mick Clowes

Melton (Canal) Bypass

Although it was extremely short notice, our plea for members (aka protestors) to turn out on a (not so warm or dry) Saturday morning for a photoshoot at Lag Lane, did bring a good response. In case you haven't seen a copy of The Melton Times, dated 7 June, we just thought you may like to see the article. We may have only been a small group, but it was quite a big spread in the paper. If only the headline had correctly stated **Oakham Canal ... oh well.**

Our thanks to those pictured and our friends at The Melton Times.



Did You See?



Did anyone see the article on BBC Countryfile about the sewer overspill into rivers? Our society has long campaigned for this throwback to Victorian times to be rectified, having experienced it at first hand with the outflow from the Asfordby Road rainwater pipe. Thankfully the programme explained that things are now being monitored and we hope those around Melton are under surveillance too. We will keep you posted as things unfold.

Braunston Historic Boat Show

Over the weekend of 23 and 24 June, the society had our usual stand at the above event. As you all know, we had a simply glorious June and that weekend was no exception.

Dave, our Hon Sec, was the stalwart who manned the stand on Saturday. He wasn't quite Billy Nomates, as Mike, another committee member had an adjoining stall selling merchandise.

On Sunday, the stall was manned by Mick and Linda. Unfortunately, this was the day of the England v Panama match and so, as you would expect, it was very quiet.

Photo below ... Dave receiving cheque from David Suchet.



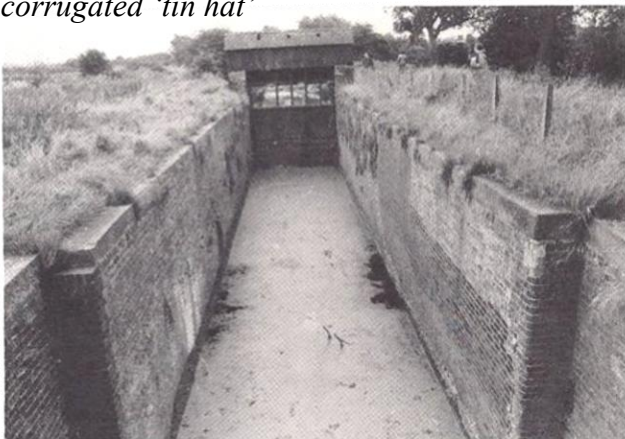
Boats galore!!



Eye Kettleby Lock

Further to our occasional feature, "Snapshot of a Life", we bring you two more photographs that may stir memories for our older readers. The guillotine gates were lifted regularly to draw out rubbish and stagnant water from the town. These were replaced by the present downfall of rocks which catch every piece of rubbish, including, at our last visit, a three-piece suite!

Below: Eye Kettleby Lock before the EA filled it in and removed the end gate and its corrugated 'tin hat'



Above: Guillotine sluice gate at Eye Kettleby Lock circa 1950s

Trouble @ t'Mole

Following years of trouble-free service our river clearance vessel "Mole" developed problems recently. Known as "Diesel Bug" the symptoms include poor starting, inconsistent tick over and frequent stopping.

The inclusion of bio fuel (which is hydroscopic) to modern diesel may increase the volume, but introduces water into the fuel over time, which in turn leads to the formation of the dark slime which causes the problems. The whole system, from tank to injectors had to be cleaned out, then bled all the way through, allowing clean fuel through to the engine. She now ticks over beautifully and we shall be using a proprietary anti-bug in future fuel supplies.



Many thanks to all who offered help and advice and in particular to committee man Dave and volunteer Mark who effected the final spannering.



f lippin' 'eck ...
we're still on
facebook

**Welcome to new
members and work
party volunteers ...**



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