



Pocklington Canal Project Newsletter #3: July 2017

Church Bridge Update

A huge thank you to the 20 volunteers who collectively spent over 600 hours of their time helping to restore Church Bridge during April and May. The team, under the training and supervision of Terrence Lee Conservation, carried out work to replace damaged bricks and to replace cement mortar with lime mortar in the worst affected sections of the bridge. Cement mortar is now widely recognised as being detrimental to heritage brickwork due to its inability to 'breathe', which effectively forces moisture through the bricks causing the faces to crumble ("spall"). Lime mortar, more typical of the era of the bridge's construction, will allow moisture to pass through and so will help conserve the original bricks. Damaged bricks were replaced with closely matching handmade bricks to match the originals. The volunteers have learnt the skills required for full restoration process, from chipping out to re-pointing, mortar mixing to the hanging of wet hessian which helps the mortar to slowly cure to its strongest potential.



Above: volunteers working during the road closure; Below (L to R): Brickwork before work started; A section of damaged brickwork removed; the newly repointed inner parapet wall.



Join in with the Canal Head Archaeological Dig!

Jon Kenny Community Archaeology will be leading a fortnight long excavation at Canal Head starting on 21st June focusing on the site of a former 19th century warehouse at Canal Head. We're looking for people to form part of the core dig team, who will spend a few days volunteering learning how to record an excavation site and process any finds that we may uncover. In addition to this volunteering opportunity, people of all ages are welcome to have a go during the drop in weekend sessions between 10am and 3pm on Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th June, and Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd July. You'll find more details at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer.



Balsam Bash Volunteers Wanted

We're looking for volunteers who would like to spend a morning helping to tackle Himalayan Balsam along the canal. The pink flowers of this non-native plant are an increasingly common sight, so by tackling a dense hot spot of this invasive invader near Coates Bridge we hope to help stop the spread by cutting it off at an upstream source. The first morning working party is on **Friday 23rd June** (in partnership with Friends of Pocklington Green Spaces and the Inland Waterways Association) and the second on **Sunday 2nd July** – to join in please email lizzie.dealey@canalrivertrust.org.uk or call 07789 934871.

Upcoming history exhibition

This project includes the development of an exhibition about the canal's past, which will be displayed at the Pocklington Arts Centre in June 2018. One of our Research Volunteers recently visited Kew Archives to gather materials which will help shape this exhibition, and if anyone else would like to help with collating this information it would be much appreciated. We are looking to organise a short project to gather oral histories of the canal, which will complement existing recordings, so if anyone does have memories of the canal that they would like to share they would also be appreciated. There will be more information on this in the next project newsletter in September, but in the meantime please contact Lizzie with any ideas.

Interpreting the Canal for Visitors

The project partners are collectively developing a new informative signage scheme which will be installed along the canal in spring 2018. The idea is to give visitors a greater understanding of the canal's natural, built and community heritage with a number of interpretation points, but still ensuring that the rural feel of the canal is not spoilt. An expanded history will be made available online which will complement the physical signage on the ground.

Find our events listings at www.pocklingtoncanal.eventbrite.com

Event highlight: Help create a life-sized willow sculpture

Whilst the canal was in operation, willow coppices were maintained to provide materials to weave products such as eel traps and baskets. Whilst there are no willow coppices today, this enjoyable tradition is a part of the canal's history and so in the run up to the bi-centenary we will be asking people to come along and help create a life sized willow sculpture to help reflect the canal's past. All ages are welcome to join us for a morning or afternoon between the dates of 11th and 14th August.

Event highlight: Take part in our wildlife weekend

On Saturday 22nd July the Yorkshire Dragonfly Society will be leading a guided walking search of these beautiful insects. On Sunday 23rd July the Yorkshire Mammal Society will be leading a morning small mammal event looking at the canal's furry residents, whilst in the afternoon the Canal & River Trust and Natural England will be running a drop in event with a barn owl theme - with people invited to come along and find out more about these beautiful birds and help build barn owl boxes.

Contact

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working in partnership