



North Wales & Borders Volunteering Newsletter September 2017

As winter draws closer, we are turning our attention to winter works and diversifying some of our volunteering opportunities. Along with our annual hedge laying program, we are looking at training up some volunteers to help us with next summer's events, assisting with archiving at the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port, cataloguing patterns at Ellesmere Yard, assisting our supervisors with customer service inspections and many more. Details of these new opportunities will be spotlighted in next month's newsletter.

Speaking of upcoming events, we need your assistance with an event at Chirk Aqueduct this month.

International Duck Race

On Sunday 22nd October, we are hosting an international duck from Wales to England over Chirk Aqueduct and we are looking for volunteers to help on the day.

Set up for the day will start at 9.30am at Chirk Basin, registration of ducks will take place from 10.30-11.15am with the races starting at 11.15am by Vinnie the Vole, the Trust mascot.

Ducks will be launched at the entrance of the tunnel in Chirk Basin and swim from 'Wales', across Chirk Aqueduct and the winner will be the first duck to reach the 'England' sign on the other side of the aqueduct.

The event is being organised between the waterway & the World Heritage Site Coordinator, and we need your help with any of the following:

- Approximately 10 volunteers are required to be on key parts of the event:
 - o including 'set up',
 - o registering ducks to owners,
 - o collecting 'registered ducks' & preparing for launching,
 - o available at 2 locations for share the space and possible water safety?
 - o volunteer to be Vinnie the Vole for the launch & the prize giving
 - o water-based volunteers to collect ducks in England.

If you are interested please register your interest via e-mail to Ani Sutton ani.sutton@canalrivertrust.org.uk

If you could register your interest by 12th October we would appreciate it.

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Audlem Towpath Taskforce

By Derek Jones - 4th October 2017

Well here we go, yes two Canal & River Trust task force days have been held in September. The first on Saturday 9th and the second on Saturday 30th with a 10:00am start.

We were joined by members of the village 'Nicky Rutler, Rob Collins, David and Gareth Higham' who gave up their free time to support the Audlem Volunteer Lock Keepers.

After the safety brief given by Neville Preece of C&RT, the work plan was laid out, today we were working on repairs to the canal towpath between locks 12 and 11.

The day had been arranged through various meetings between David Higham and the C&RT management team.

10 tonnes of bulk grit / gravel (specialist material for redressing towpath walkways) had been delivered into the Shroppie Fly car park (thank you very much for this permission) 4 petrol driven bulk wheel barrows (capable of carrying a quarter of a tonne in each load) plus 2 vibrator compacters were also delivered.

With the extra volunteers, we had a total of 12 persons available and what a show we have made. The ramp up from the road bridge to lock 12 was fully repaired and redressed.

Our attention then turned towards lock 11 where almost half of the towpath length was repaired, also some pot holes were filled. This has now turned into a 'work in progress' job.

Weather against us

I am afraid that the weather and time beat us. We still have 3 tonnes of bulk bagged material in the Shroppie car park to move, with arrangements being made to re-hire the powered equipment.

Just to paint a picture of our work programme and enthusiastic approach to the powered wheel barrow — they began to fail through overheating, we had to rotate and rest them.

Also, another update, because of the enthusiasm and genuine commitment shown, we are thinking of shortening our name from the 'Audlem Volunteer Lock Keepers' (a bit of a mouth full however you dress it up) to the 'A Team'.... not sure what our C&RT managers view will be — watch this space!

As normal, tea and coffee was in plentiful supply, also the work group would like to thank the management team from the 'Shroppie Fly' a plentiful supply of hot bacon baps were supplied to the team, just at the right time, fantastic taste and a credit to the pub 'Thank you from the team for the hospitality shown to us'

Work in progress, as above the day ended on an upbeat note with the plans being put in place to carry on with repairs to the canal towpath.

Our next planned towpath task force day will be on Saturday 14th October.

Derek Jones

Volunteer Lock Keeper / Lock Ranger





Anderton say a big thank you to staff and volunteers

On the evening of 31st August 2017, Anderton Boat Lift had an evening of food and live music celebrating the hard work and achievements of both its paid and volunteering team.

During the evening, awards and/or certificates were presented to all of Anderton's volunteers for a minimum of 100+ hours of volunteer time being given to the trust by each volunteer, 3 pin badge awards were presented as follows:

A Bronze Recognition Badge (500hrs) for Ros Ellison and Emily Norddahl-Payne, a Silver Recognition Badge (1000hrs) for Janet Hankey and a well-deserved Gold Recognition Badge (2000hrs) for Ted Thompson, who we all know has complete well over the 2000hrs mark, as he has been volunteering on the waterways since the early 1980's when the Anderton Boat Lift closed.

Janet & Emily, who were unable to attend the presentation, were awarded with their Silver & Bronze pin badges respectively afterwards.

Since hours have been recorded in ThankQ volunteers have given over 11,500hrs, of which 2654.75hrs have been recorded this year, towards projects and opportunities at Anderton with a few of the projects highlighted below:

Meet & Greet service for Tour Operators

Event Assistants/Stewards

Grounds Maintenance

Administration Assistants

Explorer Activities

Top of the World Tour Guides

If you would like more information regarding volunteering at Anderton Boat Lift please contact Carly Graham at carly.graham@canalrivertrust.org.uk or pop along to the Lift itself and enjoy this wonder of the waterways.

Anderton Boat Lift will be hosting their Annual Fireworks Display **Saturday 28th October** between **5:00 pm** and **9:30 pm** For ticket and more information please see the Canal & River Trust website or [click here](#)

They would like to put a call out for volunteers on to assist at our fireworks event. We need help to staff the car parks, grounds stewards, sales and bar staff.

For more information or to express an interest in volunteering on the night please contact **Graham Wood** – graham.wood@canalrivertrust.org.uk





Paul Mills

As mentioned in last month's issue of the NWB Volunteering Newsletter, Paul Mills sadly passed away on 6th September and I am sure we will all miss his contributions both professionally and personally. Paul has been a volunteer with us for many a year now and was justly rewarded for his efforts earlier this year when it was announced that he had won the Towpath Talk's Volunteer of the Year Award, a fitting award for all that he had accomplished over the years.

With his passing, I thought it would be appropriate to feature again an article from earlier in the year that was supplied by Brian Holmes and John Riley about Paul and his love of volunteering.

"Paul Mills coaxed and cajoled members of the Shropshire Union Canal Society twice a year for many years into standing at Cholmondeston Lock on the Middlewich Branch throughout the Spring and August Bank Holidays working the lock and selling donated items along with homemade marmalade.

His enthusiasm for fund raising rubbed off on members and a great deal of camaraderie sprung up resulting in many long-term friendships. His preparation for the Lockwinds and his organisation of Nantwich and Ellesmere Rallies was meticulous and monies raised was outstanding.

Paul used this money to secure match funding for enhancing the canal system for example creating moorings such as Coole Pilate and the continuing restoration of the Montgomery canal.

He has organised the installation and maintenance of over 149 picnic tables, seats and other items.

Even though ill health has reduced his amount of volunteering he continues to organise Small Tasks Team work parties in and around the North Wales and Borders canal system for us geriatric navvies, ensuring that equipment and tools are at hand for the many and various tasks that we undertake under The Small Tasks Team Volunteers

Without his enthusiasm and drive, the canal environment would be much poorer.

Paul's enthusiasm is so infectious that he regularly has over 20 volunteers attending the work parties, he arranges a fund-raising stall at Aqueduct Marina twice a year, Ellesmere Festival and the Whitchurch Rally including the operation of the Trip Boat courtesy of Canal and River Trust.

Paul was a Qualified Funeral Director & Embalmer before he retired.

He twice took an active role in Operation ERIC, (Exhumation, Recovery and Inhumation of Casualties) in 1982 and 1983, the repatriation of hastily buried bodies (both British and Argentinean) after the Falklands War giving our fallen heroes the chance of a British burial by their families at home.

On a voluntary basis, he is a Vice President of the Shropshire Union Canal Society and was Fundraising and Projects Officer for several years."

(words and pictures courtesy of John Riley & Brian Holmes)





Find your local Towpath Taskforce Event

Towpath Taskforce - Anderton Boat Lift

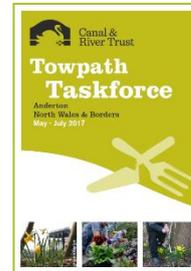
Meet: Anderton Boat Lift at 10am every first Wednesday in the month.

Tasks: Light physical work, some manual handling.

Within Anderton Boat Lift Grounds - Weeding of beds & borders, painting, litter picking, mowing/trimming, planting and shrub clearance, towpath clearance, customer enhancements

Ideal opportunity to meet new people whilst enhancing the Anderton Boat Lift grounds and surrounding area.

Please contact Carly Graham – carly.graham@canalrivertrust.org.uk



Towpath Taskforce - Audlem

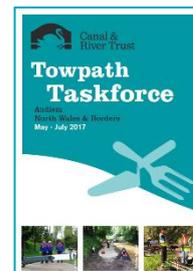
Meet: Outside Shroppe Fly, 10am every second Saturday in the month.

Tasks: Light physical work, some manual handling.

Litter picking, towpath clearance, customer enhancements, painting of lock flight, access improvements, vegetation management, etc...

Ideal opportunity to meet new people whilst enhancing the Audlem Lock flight and surrounding area.

Please contact Neville Preece – neville.preece@canalrivertrust.org.uk



Towpath Taskforce - Chester

Meet: Northgate Locks at 10am every last Saturday in the month.

Tasks: Light physical work, some manual handling.

Litter picking, towpath clearance, customer enhancements, painting, access improvements, vegetation management, etc...

Ideal opportunity to meet new people whilst enhancing the Northgate Locks to Cambrian Road Bridge area.

Please contact Steve Maguire – stephen.maguire@canalrivertrust.org.uk



For further information about any of the above taskforce events please refer to our [Volunteering in North Wales & Borders](#) page and select the appropriate Diary for the event.

Or visit the Canal & River Trust website for details of all of our [Towpath Taskforce](#) events.



Upcoming Events

October 2017

- Wednesday 4th **Towpath Taskforce Anderton** – Meet at Anderton Boat Lift Reception at 10am on the first Wednesday of the month. Working in and around the Anderton Boat Lift, duties to include painting, vegetation and planting, litter picking. Contact Carly Graham on carly.graham@canalrivertrust.org.uk
- Saturday 14th **Towpath Taskforce Audlem** - Meet outside the Shroppie Fly pub at 10am every second Saturday in the month. General tidying and painting of locks and surrounding area. For details please contact Angela Barnett – angela.barnett@canalrivertrust.org.uk
- Saturday 16th **SUMBA** - Meet at 9.30am at Aqueduct Marina. Finishing works at Sykes Hollow, including installation of the new interpretation board. For further information, contact Graham Russell - sumbacanal@btinternet.com
- Sunday 22nd **Chirk International Duck Race** - we are hosting an international duck from Wales to England over Chirk Aqueduct and we are looking for volunteers to help on the day. Please contact Ani Sutton ani.sutton@canalrivertrust.org.uk for more details
- Saturday 28th **Towpath Taskforce Chester** - Meet at Northgate Lock Hut at 10am. Light physical work, litter picking, painting towpath clearance, vegetation management.... Please contact Angela Barnett – angela.barnett@canalrivertrust.org.uk
- Saturday 28th **Anderton Boat Lift Firework** - Annual Fireworks Display between **5:00 pm - 9:30 pm** For tickets and information please see the Canal & River Trust website or [click here](#). To volunteer on the evening please contact Graham Wood – graham.wood@canalrivertrust.org.uk for more details

Monthly Ongoing...

Gnosall Parish Council Adoption - Meet on most Saturdays 10am at Navigation Inn, Gnosall. Carrying out light vegetation works, minor towpath repairs, litter picking and painting. Please contact Barry Witts barry.witts@gmail.com for further details.

Montgomery and Llangollen Canal Volunteer Group - Friday group meeting each week to complete a variety of tasks along the Llangollen and Montgomery Canals. Contact Roger Birch – roger.birch@canalrivertrust.org.uk for more details each week.

Welshpool Adoption Group – The Welshpool Adoption Group meets 9.30am every Thursday by the slipway at the bottom of the Church St Carpark in the centre of Welshpool. For further details, contact Pat Ward - patward@intonet.co.uk

Save the Date...

NWB Volunteering Thank You Event – Tuesday 31st October 2017 (location to be confirmed)

This newsletter is also available via the [North Wales & Borders Volunteering Webpage](#)



Please follow us on Twitter @CRTNWalesBorders

If you wish to be added to the list to receive this newsletter and other volunteering information, please contact **Jason Watts – Volunteer Support Team Leader** – jason.watts@canalrivertrust.org.uk

North Wales & Borders Volunteering

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Charity number 1146792

Feedback:

Got any stories or suggestions for our next issue?
Please contact us