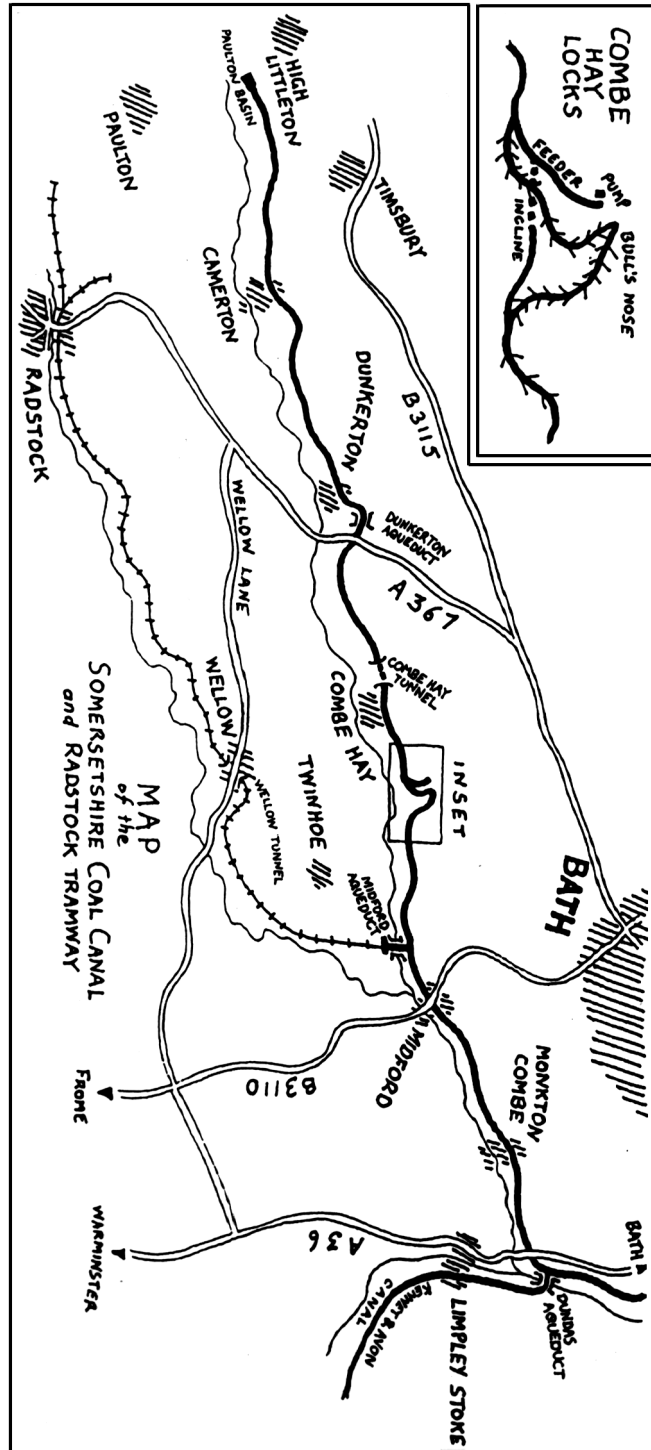


WEIGH-HOUSE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE COAL CANAL SOCIETY



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The Somersetshire Coal Canal Society was founded in January 1992 with the aim:

'TO FOCUS AN INTEREST ON THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE OLD SOMERSETSHIRE COAL CANAL'

The Society is aimed at those people who are interested in finding out more about the history of the canal, preserving what is still there and walking the parts that are still accessible to the public.

The Society aims to preserve the remaining structures of the canal (Midford Aqueduct, Combe Hay Locks *etc.*) and to protect the line of the canal from decay, dereliction and vegetation.

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MEMBERSHIP FEES

(as at 1st June 2003)

£7.50 (Family / Individual) £5.00 (Senior Citizen / Student)
£150.00 (Life) payable by lump sum or four annual instalments

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THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS MAGAZINE DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OR CONVEY THOSE OF THE SOCIETY

The Editor welcomes any letters, articles, photographs *etc* for inclusion in **WEIGH-HOUSE** and will try to include them in full, but reserves the right to shorten them if space is limited.

Please send articles and correspondence for the next edition of **WEIGH-HOUSE** to:

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Thursday 18th December — 19:30

SOCIAL EVENING — With a Display of Photographs and Artifacts by Roger Halse

Meet: The Radstock Hotel, Radstock.

For further details please contact:

Patrick Moss ☎ 07736 859882

Sunday 21st December — 10:00

WALK — William Smith's Tramway †

Meet: Tucking Mill

For further details please contact:

Mike Chapman ☎ 01225 426948

2009

Sunday 4th January — 10:00

WORK PARTY — Location to be advised

For further details please contact:

Bob Parnell ☎ 01225 428055

Sunday 18th January — 10:00

WALK — Braysdown

Meet: Radstock Public Car Park, Waterloo Road. (4 miles)

For further details please contact:

Mike Chapman ☎ 01225 426948



IF ALL ELSE FAILS, READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
Mike Chapman, Gerald Quartley and Paul Rossiter
attempting to assemble the frame of a coal tramway wagon

WEIGH - HOUSE N^o 51

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Since the previous Weigh-House, there have been so many changes which members need to know about that I have found it quite difficult to fit them all into one issue.

A new Chairman is the first and most obvious change. As well as shouldering the major administrative load of the Society, Patrick Moss has been persuaded to contribute an article on narrow locks which draws upon his wide experience of canals across the British Isles. The public face of the Society has also changed with the introduction of a new website, this gives members with internet access a quick and easy way of checking the most up-to-date information on forthcoming society events in a way which is not possible in a printed publication. An article on Page 8 describes the new website and gives details of how to find it.

By far the largest number of tramway plates ever collected has recently been purchased by the Society, along with numerous other artifacts and hundreds of photographs, The story of this remarkable addition to our resources is told on Page 12.

Starting at Page 14, Mike Chapman writes about a buried wall which was discovered during excavations near Caisson House and which may give us further clues about the alterations which took place around the time the Caisson was abandoned.

Finally, a change on the production side of Weigh-House. For a long time the Editor has also had the additional burden of addressing and posting copies of the magazine, a job which takes up considerable time. One of our newest members, Bob Barwise, has now volunteered to handle the distribution side of the process, so I would like to thank Bob in advance for taking on this task.

Adrian Tuddenham

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Welcome to the 51st edition of weigh house and my first as Chairman. Much is happening with the society and a new chairman is some way from being the biggest news in town at the moment: more on that later.

I'd like to start by thanking Mike Chapman for the hard work he put in during his tenure, without which the society would not be in the condition it is today. Mike remains on the committee as vice chairman and will be involved in the project for the locks at Combe Hay, and we could not manage without his experience and contacts in developing these proposals.

Before moving onto other news perhaps I ought to say a little more about myself as most Weigh-House readers will not know me. As a toddler I watched the working boats on the Trent and Mersey Canal from my bedroom window, and have been actively involved both personally and professionally more or less ever since. In my work I have advised many canal societies on preservation and restoration of their canals. Privately I am a member of the IWA and Railway and Canal Historical Society and Val and I also own a 62 foot narrowboat which is currently based at Saul Marina. Hopefully I can bring my wider knowledge of canals and their restoration to bear for the benefit of the society and the Somersetshire Coal Canal.

Which brings me onto the real news: at the AGM a motion was passed to change the constitution to allow the society to restore the canal as well as preserve it. I have just heard from David Chalmers that this change has been accepted by the Charity Commissioners and is thus now part of our legal constitution. Members and others can read the revised constitution on our new website www.coalcanal.org <<http://www.coalcanal.org/>> which is now online and being developed. Although our constitution now allows us to pursue restoration, it should be emphasised however that we will not be starting construction any day now with the aim of getting canal boats to Paulton as soon as possible. Indeed the committee haven't even decided what level of restoration the society should aspire to, and when we do, this will be put to the membership. This change does, however, allow us to consider our options.

We are also looking at ways to increase the membership base of the society. Some might ask (I have) "why change": unfortunately our membership has declined recently and this is a trend we need to reverse. The fortunes of the canal itself are intertwined with the society, and if we falter then the locks at Combe Hay and the rest of the canal would sink back towards oblivion where they were headed, and so we need to attract more members. To this end not only are we proposing to promote the society more but to offer a wider range of interest to people. One suggestion from the AGM was a social event in the winter: to this end we are trying to arrange a monthly series of evening meetings where members would be given a short talk on a topic of interest and then mingle afterwards. More details can be found on the opposite page and in "Dates for you Diary" on Page 21.

So, a revised constitution, new website, new Chairman and proposals for new activities: the committee have been busy, and we hope that you will all enjoy the results of our labours. If any member wishes to contact me about the society and these changes please feel free to use the contact details on the inside front cover.

Patrick Moss
September 2008

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2008

Sunday 21st September — 10:00
WALK — Writhlington & Foxcote (3 miles)
Meet: Radstock Public Car Park, Waterloo Road.
For further details please contact:
Mike Chapman ☎ 01225 426948

Sunday 5th October — 10:00
WORK PARTY — Location to be advised
For further details please contact:
Bob Parnell ☎ 01225 428055

Sunday 19th October — 10:00
WALK — Vallis Vale and the De la Bêche Unconformity
The industrial archaeology of the Mells Valley
Meet: By Village Hall, Great Elm
For further details please contact:
Derrick Hunt ☎ 01225 863066

Thursday 23rd October — 19:30
SOCIAL EVENING
with an Introductory Talk by Patrick Moss
Meet: The Radstock Hotel, Radstock.
For further details please contact:
Patrick Moss ☎ 07736 859882

Sunday 2nd November — 10:00
WORK PARTY — Location to be advised
For further details please contact:
Bob Parnell ☎ 01225 428055

Sunday 16th November — 10:00
WALK — Hill's Pit †
Meet: Tunley, outside the 'King William' public house.
For further details please contact:
Mike Chapman ☎ 01225 426948

Thursday 20th November — 19:30
SOCIAL EVENING & TALK
"Coal Canal Historians" by Mike Chapman
Meet: The Radstock Hotel, Radstock.
For further details please contact:
Patrick Moss ☎ 07736 859882

Sunday 7th December — 10:00
WORK PARTY — Location to be advised
For further details please contact:
Bob Parnell ☎ 01225 428055

Walks

These are all circular walks unless otherwise noted. You only need to arrange your transport to and from the meeting point.

Any walks marked † tend to be in the form of detailed explanations of short sections of the canal and its relationship with the locality; and, as such, are less suitable for young children.

Dogs are normally welcome (except where indicated) and must be kept on leads at all times.

Check the website for any last minute changes.
www.coalcanal.org

Work Parties

Venues may change at short notice, always check with Bob Parnell before turning up.



The Somerset Coal Canal locks at Combe Hay follow this pattern except for one detail which makes them all but unique: the single leaf top gates were hinged on the non-towpath side. This happened occasionally elsewhere, but the SCC was unique in adopting this as the standard for every locks on the canal. The question is why?



Photograph: Paul De'Ath collection

LOCK 16 OF THE S.C.C.

Showing the balance beam on the opposite side from the towpath

We need to start by asking why single gates were normally hinged on the towpath side in the first place. When the first narrow locks were built the single top gate was an innovation, it was almost unheard of for locks not to have a pair of mitre gates at both ends. Thus, until narrow locks were developed, the issue of which side gates should be fitted didn't arise. Probably Brindley placed the single top gate of the early locks on the towpath side because of easier access, he may even have seen broad locks being worked and noted the poor access to the non-towpath side.

But the SCC wasn't an early canal, and narrow locks had been around forty years by the time the locks at Combe Hay built, so the SCC committee may have had the benefit of seeing other narrow locks and noting that a gate on the towpath side fouled the towrope, especially given the twisting course of the locks at Combe Hay.

To be continued in Weigh-House 52

NEW EVENTS

Starting this Autumn, we are organising a series of events to give existing members the opportunity of meeting each other socially and to attract new members to the Society. Each event will be open to the public and will feature a talk on some aspect of the canal which we hope will encourage local interest.

The introductory talk will be given by our Chairman, Patrick Moss, in the evening of **Thursday 23rd October** at the Radstock Hotel (previously the Waldegrave Arms). The dates of subsequent talks will be:

Thursday 20th November
Thursday 18th December
Thursday 22nd January
Thursday 19th February
Thursday 19th March

See Page 21 for details of the first talks, others will be announced in Weigh-House and on the Society's website www.coalcanal.org when they have been confirmed. We look forward to seeing you there.

NEW CANAL EXHIBITION



**THE NEW CANAL EXHIBITION BY SCCS MEMBER DANIEL BROWN
WHICH HAS RECENTLY OPENED AT DUNDAS**

See Page 10 for further details

NAVYING NOTES

Transport by Water

Following our success at filling the pound below Lock 15 with water, we felt it was about time we tidied up the area round the pound itself. Looking back to old photographs of the area, it appears that the towpath was not on the side where the present-day footpath runs, but on the opposite side which is now choked by bushes and scrub. The growth on that side was obviously in need of some major cutting-back work; but bushes between the footpath and the pound had also got out-of-hand, so we decided to tackle both at the same time.

We established a bonfire site on the towpath side because that was where the majority of material for burning would be coming from; however, Richard Hignett decided that some substantial trees on the footpath side were also in a state that merited felling. The problem was how to move the felled trees from one side of the pound to the other without too much effort. The answer to the problem was obvious — although we hadn't seen it until Richard pointed it out — float them across on our newly-created lake.

Work Party Members

Our work parties draw on a pool of regular members who nearly always attend, and they are backed up by another group who can only turn up less frequently. In addition to this, we sometimes get newcomers who arrive to give it a try; a few don't come again, but the majority find they have enjoyed themselves, and decide to become regulars. When Patrick, who is now our Chairman, joined us, he was so enthusiastic that he persuaded Val, who was then his fiancée, to accompany him the following month. We were fascinated to discover that she was keeping a 'blog' (an open diary on the internet) and that we featured in it. With her permission, we repeat an extract below, in the hope that it will encourage other members to come along and give work parties a try.

Vertical Gardening

Patrick and I are members of the Somersetshire Coal Canal Society, and we help keep the old canal looking beautiful by turning up to work parties and removing any plant growth that might be covering the locks or hiding them from view, get a bit of water flowing through some of them, etc. Hence 'vertical gardening'. Bob is in charge of the work parties and Richard is the chief tree-feller, whilst Adrian is chief fire-starter and tea maker!

This Sunday we were clearing away trees around the bottom lock at Combe Hay so that there could be a nice view from the footpath up the flight towards the Bull's Nose. The work was quite hard, involving dragging felled branches across the newly-filled bottom pound, but was worth it for the final result - a stunning view, of which Adrian and Patrick took quite a few photographs. A few of us were resting on our laurels (no pun intended!) after a hard afternoon's work when we noticed that a tree overhanging the footpath was rustling and inching downwards. We carried on talking as the tree inched downwards a little more, then Richard advised us to get out of the way as the tree was about to fall! The tree fell across the public footpath, and Richard set about chopping it up for firewood. Bob went to inform the landowners, who were only too pleased to have the problem dealt with and receive some firewood for their stove.

Later, as we chatted about our near miss, we noticed a tiny baby fieldmouse by the gate. He seemed totally unfazed by the huge humans standing around making cooing noises - perhaps we were just far too big for him to comprehend. Eventually he disappeared back into the undergrowth. Aww!

Quite eventful for a vertical gardening session!

that the top of the lock could all be worked from one side: the towpath side. A ground paddle is necessary at the top of the lock as, unless the lock has only a small rise, the top gate is clear of the water when the lock is empty, and opening a paddle in it would risk swamping the boat. Once the level has made up, then opening a gate paddle speeds the operation.

At the bottom however ground paddles are not necessary, as the base of the gate is underwater and in any event boats can be kept well away. So gate paddles were fitted, saving the cost of constructing and maintaining underground culverts.



Photograph: Patrick Moss

NARROW LOCK BOTTOM GATES ON THE ASHTON CANAL

Note double gates taking less room, paddles hidden underwater.

It seems that two gates were favoured over one because the gates open into the lock chamber (lock gates "face" upstream, that is they swing open in an upstream direction, so that water pressure keeps them closed) and the area that the gates need to swing into must be kept clear, thus adding to the length of the lock: A single gate needs just over seven feet to swing whereas a pair needs only about four feet. This extra length adds to the volume of water needed to operate the lock and thus pairs of gates use less water.



NARROW LOCKS by Patrick Moss

The narrow lock as known to most canallers is almost unique to England and Wales, few countries built waterways as small as our narrow canals and only Austria actually copied them. Most canal users, whether they are walkers or boaters can recognise the standard narrow lock, two gates at the bottom, one at the top, paddles (the sluices that let water in and out of the lock) are mounted on the gates at the bottom end of the lock, and on the bank at the top where they let water in to the lock via underground tunnels known as culverts. This pattern is widespread across the canal system and also copied on the slightly wider and shorter locks of the south Wales canals.

No one recorded why designs were adopted in the early years of canal construction. The earliest narrow locks in the country adopted this standard design: The locks on the Trent and Mersey, Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, and the Birmingham Canal main line were built to this pattern with only minor detail variants such as a paddle mounted on the top gate in addition to ground paddles.



Photograph: Patrick Moss

A TYPICAL NARROW LOCK ON THE SHROPSHIRE UNION CANAL
Note the double bottom gates and single top gate with the beam on the towpath side

Although we don't know why so many canals standardised on this layout, there are common sense reasons for it. At the top end of the lock, a single gate is cheaper to build and easier to operate than a pair of gates. Some canals went further and had one ground paddle and one gate paddle, meaning



THE POND BELOW LOCK 15 IN WATER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EIGHT YEARS



VAL HAVING FUN AT LOCK 15

THE NEW SCCS WEBSITE



THE APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST PAGE OF THE NEW SCCS WEBSITE

Setting Up

Many years ago, long before most members of the SCCS Committee even knew what e-mail was, one of our members, Richard Stevens, suggested that what the Society really needed was a website. It was his forward-thinking which made sure that information about the Somersetshire Coal Canal was distributed to the world by the very latest technology — and he ran the website himself in his own personal webpage.

Now that websites are much better known, indeed — almost ubiquitous — the Committee decided that it was high time the SCCS had its own ‘domain name’ and took a fresh look at the possibilities which a web presence could offer. As well as just a website for the public, it is possible nowadays to transfer a lot of a society’s administration and archives to the Web in a way which gives paid-up members free access to far more information and facilities.

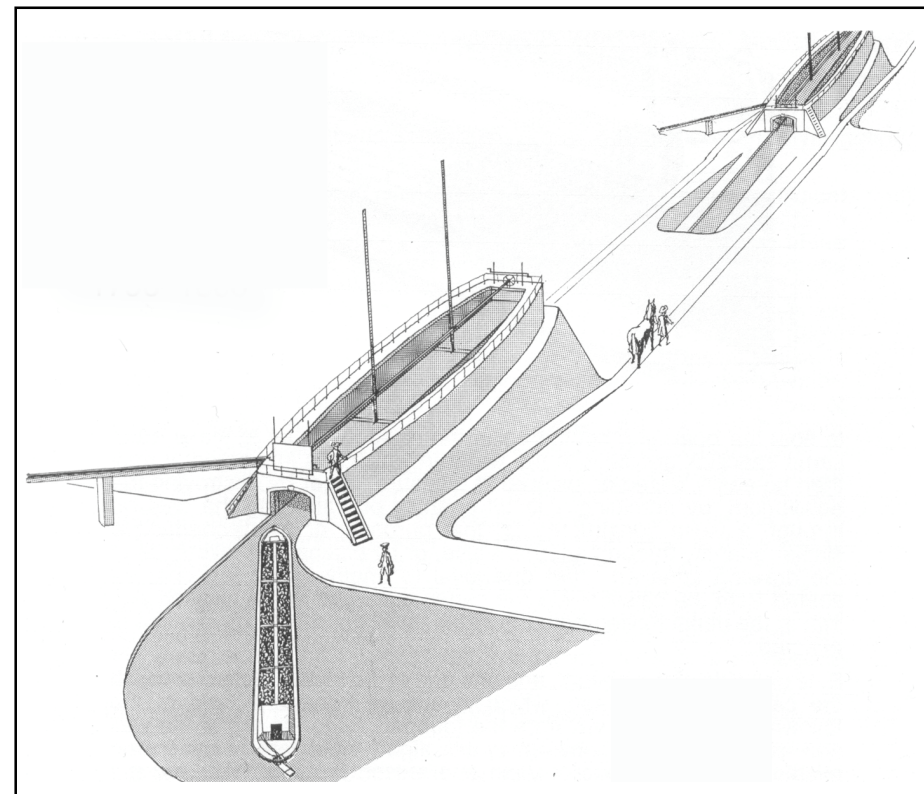
We initially hoped that the ‘domain name’ (the part of the Web address which identifies the website owner) could be based on the letters “SCCS”, but discovered that the Sutton Coldfield Choral Society and Skunk Creek Computing Services had beaten us to it. Eventually we decided that “coalcanal” was a succinct and easily memorised name — and nobody else had a prior claim to it. Thus our full website address has become:

<http://www.coalcanal.org>

If you type that into the address space (URL) of a ‘web browser’ program, you should see a page which looks a bit like the one above.

Layout

One of the key features of the new website is accessibility. No matter how old or new your computer, the website should still work. It will obviously look a bit different on a nine-inch screen compared with a twenty-one-inch screen, or even a mobile ‘phone screen, but it should still work and the basic information should still be accessible with the minimum of time-wasting decoration. A lot of thought was put into how the information needed to be laid out so that users could ‘navigate’ around the site and not become lost. The website deals with two basic subjects: The Canal and The Society, so



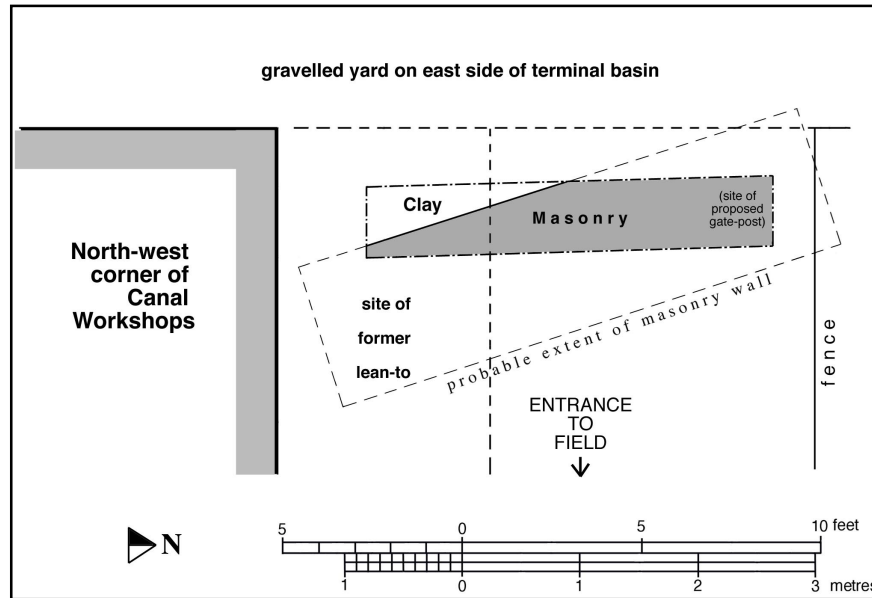
Drawing: Mike Chapman

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF HOW THE CAISSONS WOULD HAVE LOOKED IF THEY HAD BEEN COMPLETED AND PUT INTO OPERATION The recent excavation took place in the area of the top entrance which the boat is about to enter

This is also indicated by the short length of the wall. The gap in the basin would not need to be much more than seven feet wide, to allow the standard narrow-boat to enter the entrance tunnel of the Lock cistern. The wooden Caisson itself is actually recorded as being ten and a half feet wide, although the thickness of the walls on each side of the tunnel would have made the overall width somewhat larger.

These findings nevertheless leave many questions unanswered. It is still possible that remains of the Caisson itself survive on the outer side of this wall, perhaps at a greater depth, and information is still required about features on the inside of the wall, particularly the mysterious short tunnel in the north-eastern side of the basin, facing the site of the Lock.

Mike Chapman
August 2008



DETAILED PLAN OF THE EXCAVATION

that they were built entirely without foundations on undisturbed base clay, the only unusual feature being some buried masonry found lying against the northern wall when the lean-to was removed - evidently the end of the present wall. It was also known that no masonry of this magnitude extended out into the yard towards the entrance drive of Caisson House, as an excavation had already been made there some years ago for service pipes. It is reported that although some walling had been found below the surface, this was of a fairly insubstantial nature, and lying at a completely different angle. Therefore, between these limits, the present wall could be little more than the 15 feet [4.5 metres] length which lay exposed.

Below the present gravel surface, about seven inches in depth, an earlier surface of coal ash and earth could be seen, about six inches thick, below which was the upper course of the wall. Although only the western face of the wall, towards the basin, could be seen, this revealed that it had been embedded up to the top course with clay packing.

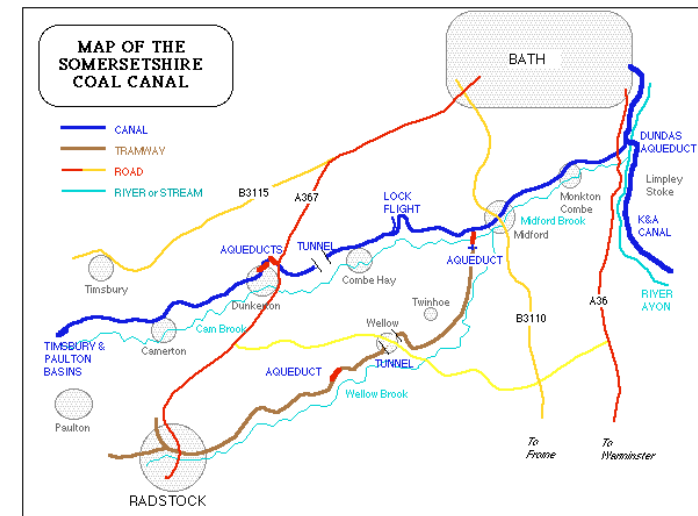
Conclusions

By far the most likely reason for a wall of this kind, in this particular location, would be in connection with the removal of the Caisson Lock. The entrance to the Lock itself, from original maps, is shown just beyond this point, in Caisson Field, accessed through an opening or gap on the eastern side of the basin. It would therefore follow that when the Lock was removed, this opening would need to be blocked off with a substantial 'dam', to prevent a burst or loss of water from the basin. The present wall, packed with clay, would be most suitable for such a purpose.

the main subject headers are grouped into one or other of those categories.

Every main subject page is headed by a version of the table in the picture opposite which gives links to all the other major subject pages, thus allowing quick, easy and logical navigation between your chosen subjects. There is also an alphabetical index (a rarity on websites nowadays) which gives quick links to more obscure information.

For casual users or members of the public looking for a quick introduction to the canal, the front page contains a sketch map; but this is a map with a difference. Each zone of the map corresponds to a page dealing in depth with that part of the canal — by clicking the computer mouse on a feature on the map, you are taken directly to the relevant page with a more detailed map, descriptions and pictures. You can even take a trip along the canal by clicking the margins of each detailed map to move to the next one.



Work needed

Now all this has taken a great deal of work just to get the basic framework up and running; a lot of the detailed work has yet to be completed, so don't be too disappointed if you come across the odd blank page — just think how you could help fill it. There is a large picture gallery, just waiting to be filled with interesting photographs. Roger Halse is already working on providing us with as many historic pictures as he can find which are free from copyright restrictions, but we also need current pictures to show people across the world what the canal looks like nowadays.

We also need methodically-minded people to look after other sections of the website, to keep a check on external links or update the Alphabetical Index.

The Future

The website has been designed in a flexible way which should cope with our basic needs for a long time to come and will allow us to use it for the administration of the Society if we expand to the point where that becomes necessary. There are, however, new trends and inventions coming along at a rapid pace, especially on the internet, which we don't have the manpower or resources to follow-up. One such recent innovation is 'Google Maps' and 'Google Earth', which allows you to see the canal from the air. Richard Stevens is once again ahead of the game; he still runs the original canal website and has already linked it to Google Earth in such a way that suitably-equipped computers can give you a virtual tour along the canal using a combination of satellite photographs and maps. If you want to try it out, just follow the link from the new front webpage.

THE RE-OPENING OF THE CANAL CENTRE AT DUNDAS

The evening of Friday 27th June 2008 was a time for celebration at Brassknocker Basin when the Canal Visitors' Centre was re-opened after a period of closure. Work by the Highways Agency on the nearby road viaduct had resulted in prolonged closure of the A36 and severe disruption of businesses in the area.

Tim Wheeldon, owner of the Canal Centre and a founding member of the SCCS, had taken advantage of the closure period to refurbish the premises and have SCCS exhibition updated. With the re-opening of the road, local business and people associated with the venture were invited to celebrate at the "Back to Business Barbecue".

As well as the re-opening, Tim Wheeldon pointed out that there were a number of anniversaries which also merited celebration or remembrance:

- 200 years since the full opening of the S.C.C.
- 110 years since the closure of the S.C.C.
- 100 years since the construction of the Camerton branch railway line
- 50 years since the demolition of the Camerton branch railway line
- 20 years since the full re-opening of the restored section of the S.C.C.
- 20 years since start of boat & bike hire
- 10 years since the opening of Angelfish restaurant
- 10 years since the opening of Visitor Centre and S.C.C. display.



COUNCILLOR DAVID BELLOTTI PERFORMING THE RE-OPENING CEREMONY

of the Two Tunnels project will open up yet another cycling route which will connect with Route 24 and bring even more visitors to Brassknocker.

Councillor David Bellotti, chairman of B&NES Council, accompanied by his family, performed the opening ceremony and joined in the celebrations with enthusiasm, despite the pouring rain which has characterised this year's Summer. At an appropriate point in his speech, a narrow boat entered the basin bearing the "Brassknocker Pig" on its prow.

The Brassknocker Pig is one of many similar model "Bladud's Pigs" which have been sponsored by businesses all over Bath. Each one is uniquely decorated and, at the end of the season, they will be auctioned to raise funds for the "Two Tunnels" project. This is particularly appropriate to the Brassknocker Basin because it is on Cycle Route 24 and a lot of trade comes from cycling visitors and cycle hire. The completion



Photograph: Mike Chapman

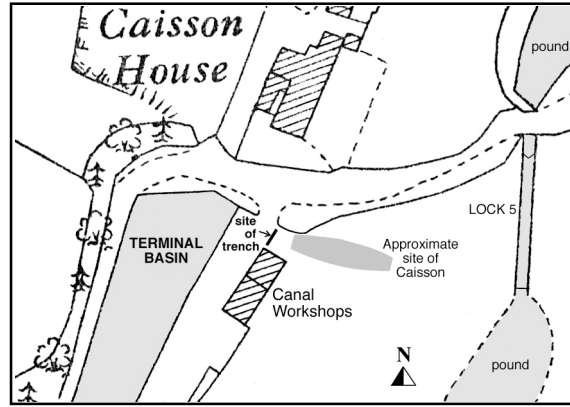
THE EXCAVATION BESIDE THE OLD CANAL WORKSHOPS ADJACENT TO CAISSON HOUSE

NEW FINDINGS NEAR CAISSON HOUSE

As mentioned in 'Chairman's Notes' in the last issue of Weigh- House, we were recently alerted by Mr.Felix Pole to the discovery of buried masonry near Caisson House following the restoration of the old canal workshops. Mr.Pole kindly allowed us to examine and record these remains which accidentally came to light whilst excavating a hole for a gate-post.

The Site

The area surrounding the terminal basin of the upper level of the canal adjoining Caisson House is of particular interest, as it was near here, on the east side of the basin, that the upper entrance of the Caisson Lock was once located. Unfortunately this is a very complicated area owing to various alterations



A MAP OF THE AREA SOUTH OF CAISSON HOUSE WHERE THE RECENT EXCAVATION TOOK PLACE

Recently however the old workshops have been restored, providing the opportunity to observe any indications of earlier works on that side of the basin. Although the original outline of the building was not affected, a small lean-to or compound attached to the northern wall was removed to allow wider access from the workshop yard into Caisson Field below, and it was during the excavation of a post hole for a gate across this gap, about five metres from the corner of the building, that the present discovery was made.

The Findings

Finding stonework impeding the excavation of this hole only a foot or so below the gravel surface of the yard, a two-foot wide trench was continued towards the workshop in order to find a more suitable site for the post. Instead, it was found that the stonework continued as far as the workshop wall, forming a massive wall or barrier over four feet wide, aligned at a slightly different angle to the workshop wall, and consisting of large of large lumps of limestone roughly coursed in very hard coal-ash mortar or cement.

However, this wall was not very long. It had been found during the restoration of the workshops →

to the perimeter of the basin that have been made periodically throughout its history, so any information that comes to light is bound to be welcome. By 1805 for instance, when the Lock Flight was completed and the Caisson Lock filled in, the outlines of the basin were completely modified for the extension (with over-bridge) along the back of Caisson House which led to the pumping engine in Engine Wood to supply the new locks. The engineer's workshops along the outer (east) side of the basin were probably added soon after this time. Further alterations were made when the feeder arm was itself stopped up and the engine removed to Dunkerton, possibly in the 1840s.

This particular pig was decorated by Daniel Brown, who runs the "Bath in Time" website [follow the link from the new SCCS website] and who was responsible for the refurbished SCCS exhibition. The exhibition display now contains a new layout of panels which include photographs of the canal which Daniel has only recently discovered; and it will do a great deal to raise the awareness of the SCCS on the only section of the canal which is currently in water.



Above:
THE BRASSKNOCKER PIG ARRIVES IN STYLE



Left: COUNCILLOR BELLOTTI MEETS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE S.C.C.S
Left to right: Cllr Bellotti, Val & Patrick Moss, Tim Wheeldon.

Below: THE BACK TO BUSINESS BARBECUE



THE PAUL ROSSITER COLLECTION

When Gerald Quartley, a long-standing member of the SCCS and the co-author of a definitive paper on the tramways of the SCC rang the Committee to say that he knew the whereabouts of a large collection of tramway relics, we could hardly doubt his word; although such a statement coming from anyone else would almost certainly have heralded a wild goose chase. The improbability of such a find was further reinforced by the fact that very few artifacts relating to the tramways have ever been found. Part of a tramway waggon wheel was unearthed at Midford Basin a few years ago, but nothing else significant ever seemed to turn up.

The collection, which had been put together by Mr. Paul Rossiter of Frome over the course of several decades, turned out to be by far the largest assembly of SCC-related artifacts that has been seen since the founding of this Society. As well as a quantity of cast-iron plateway rails, crossings, chairs, fish-bellied rails and waggon parts, Mr. Rossiter also wished to dispose of over one hundred photographs of the SCC and other local industrial relics, many of which show views and structures which have long-since vanished.

We estimated that there was nearly a ton of ironwork to be removed from the premises, and several journeys with a large estate car were needed to collect it all. The photographs were carefully

numbered and listed by Mike Chapman, but the metalwork presented a problem. Mr Rossiter had preserved each item against rust with a grease and blacklead compound which resists markers or paint of any kind, so we have been unable to label the items for cataloging.

We have now temporarily returned the photographs to Mr. Rossiter who is in the process of identifying each location and making a list of exactly what each one shows. We hope to publish some of the most interesting pictures in future editions of Weigh-House.

Mr Rossiter was also a keen researcher into early tramways and had collected a large amount of material relating to them. He has donated this comprehensive collection of papers to the Society and it is already proving extremely useful in identifying parts of the collection. It also includes copies of many original and difficult-to-find documents which are valuable source material for further research.

The photograph below shows the extent of the metalwork in the collection, which includes examples of every type of tramway rail known to have been used to feed the canal. Amongst the other items are enough parts of one particular style of tramway waggon to give us a good idea of what they must have looked like [see photograph on Page 22]; and various wheels which match the pattern of wear on the rails. Mr. Rossiter even managed to find some chairs for the fish-bellied rails and some stone sleeper blocks for the plateway.

The Society was unprepared for such an amazing discovery and the Committee is still considering what we ought to do with it. One suggestion is to construct a short length of tramway for display purposes and perhaps even reconstruct an example of a waggon to run on it.



PART OF THE PAUL ROSSITER COLLECTION