

Sankey Canal Restoration Society

CANAL CUTTINGS

VOLUME 10 Number 3
Autumn 2022



Boats return to the Sankey

A novice prepares to climb into a Canadian canoe during the St Helens Rotary Club's Watersports Taster Day, held in July on the Sankey Canal between Standish Street and Corporation Street

Sankey Canal Restoration Society

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Founded 1985



**INLAND
WATERWAYS**
ASSOCIATION

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John Hughes, Cllr. Richard McCauley, Mary Presland,

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(Councillors from the three Local Authorities which own most of the Canal's line):

Steve Parish and Janet Henshaw (Warrington)

Paul McQuade (St. Helens)

Kevan Wainwright (Halton)

The Inland Waterways Association:

Colin Greenall (Chester & Merseyside Branch)

Sankey Canal Restoration Society

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VOLUME 10 NUMBER 3: Autumn 2022

Editor and Production: David Long
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The Chairman's Report—from Colin Greenall

Welcome to the Autumn issue of Canal Cuttings, after a summer of soaring temperatures and all the other upheavals we are currently experiencing on our canal. Unfortunately, once again, I must apologise for the late arrival of this issue—pressure of work being the main reason for the delay.

First, I would like to share with you our expression of sadness at the passing of Queen Elizabeth II earlier this month, and to offer our sincere condolences to the whole of the Royal Family.

The water supply situation at the Widnes end of the canal is likely to be with us for the foreseeable future, while Warrington Council continue to work on a solution to provide a more permanent supply of water.

I'm please to report that we have gained a new committee member. Steven Davies has joined us and is keen to support SCARS in any way possible.

I am very pleased to be able to announce that, after the long Covid-19 break, our Work Parties are up and running again, with successful outings at Bewsey Lock and Spike Island. Our Sales and Exhibition stand also made a return to the fray with events at Chester and the Newton Show

The Spike Island & Widnes Canal Restoration Group, has been working hard and gained lots of national publicity for their recent work rescuing fish stocks following the dramatic drop in water levels at Widnes (see their facebook pages). In appreciation of their work SCARS offered them affiliated membership of the Society, which I am pleased to say they welcomed. They have a particular interest in the wildlife on the canal.

Besides all the usual topics in this issue is an invitation to send in your picture for the “2023 Wild life of the Sankey Canal Calendar” They don’t have to recent shots— so scroll through your collection and see what you have on file.

It is with great sadness that we report the death of one of the waterways great campaigners, Tony Hirst, who passed away recently. He was a great stalwart of the IWA, being a Vice President, and was a founder member of the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. He was also the founding chairman of the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society. Tony and his wife Diane were always keen to support SCARS whenever we met them at the various events we attended. (His Obituary is on Page 19)

We also mark the passing of our friend Derek Bromley, the owner of the Winwick Maintenance Yard, who passed away without our hearing some time during the past year. Derek allowed SCARS to store tools and equipment in his yard for many years, and he even provided us with a shed at no cost to the Society. A sad loss, our belated condolences go out to his family and friends.

On a brighter note, SCARS congratulates Captain Dan Cross from the “SS Daniel Adamson Preservation Group” on being awarded the “Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service” (See more detailed report on page 21)

In 2023, St. Helens will become the Borough of Culture, and SCARS will be taking its place along with other heritage groups in providing a display of photographs relating to the history of the whole of the Sankey Canal and the role it played in the development of the Borough

Please remember this is your magazine, and contributions are always Welcome - be it articles, comments, or old photographs— do please send them in.

Enjoy the rest of the year.

Best wishes,

Colin Greenall

Events



Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st July: IWA Chester Boat Festival:

2022 saw the 250th anniversary of the opening of the Chester Canal, later to become part of the Shropshire Union Canal System. The Chester & Merseyside Branch of the Inland Waterways Association put on a spectacular display of over thirty canal boats, ranging from the traditional working narrow boats to fibreglass cruisers. It all added to the atmosphere of Tower Wharf in Chester. Although the weather was a bit unpredictable, it didn't stop people from turning out to see what was on offer at this wonderful event.

Above: The towpath view of the assembled narrow boats at the Festival

Below: The view from the bridge over the entrance to Tower Wharf





*Above: Two of the IWA organisers of the Chester Festival take a break outside SCARS' Exhibition and Sales Stall
Below: Inside the Stall, while it was being looked after by volunteers Jamie Highton and Yvonne*



Saturday 6th August: Newton Town Show: The weather was perfect for the 2022 Newton Town Show held at Mesnes Park in Newton-le-Willows. Each year this show gets bigger and better, with more attractions, such as the Army, a fair ground, charity stalls, and, this year - a fly-past by an RAF Spitfire. SCARS sales did well and we met lots of interesting people wanting to talk to about their tales of growing up with the Sankey Canal as their playground



*Above: Panoramic view of the showground in the early morning
Left & Below: Our Stall attracted the passers-by, and had plenty of space around it for the display of the wide range of merchandise on offer*



Sunday 31st July: Water Sports Taster Day on the Canal in St Helens: After weeks of preparation and negotiations with St. Helens Council, St. Helens Rotary were able to organise a Water Sports Taster Day. It was run in conjunction with St Helens Canoe Club on the section of the Sankey Canal between Standish Street and Corporation Street in the centre of St. Helens. The event proved to be very popular, with both adults and children taking their turn to try out canoeing on the canal.



*Above: The event viewed through the art installation at Standish Street
Below: Novices being encouraged by a member of the Canoe Club*



Our Work Parties

Our Work Parties are now back on the job. Reports of their recent activities will be found on the following pages.

Work Parties are organised at the weekends—and mid-week if volunteers request it. All tools are provided (but you can bring your own if you wish).

Dates and venues may be found on our social media platforms (see panel below)

How to volunteer:



WANTED - Volunteers

Our Work Party is now back at work after the lockdown. If you're also wanting to tone up your muscles, why not join them? The work you put in depends on you and what you feel capable of.

Contact me at: colin.greenall@btinternet.com

Colin Greenall
SCARS Volunteerr Coordinator & Chairman

#525064

Follow SCARS on any of the social media platforms and keep up-to-date on our activities and news. Find us on:



Facebook

Sankey Canal Restoration Society

Twitter: Sankey Canal @scars567



Instagram: Sankey Canal Restoration: [sankeycanal1757](https://www.instagram.com/sankeycanal1757)

Work Party Reports

Volunteers have been out on Work Parties at various locations during the past three months.

June: Wednesday 22nd, Thursday 23rd, & Tuesday 28th: SCARS and Groundwork volunteers take advantage of some dry sunny weather to give Bradley Swing Bridge a fresh coat of paint. The week before Groundworks Ian Jones, had led a team of Prince's Trust Volunteers who had cleared the area around the bridge of unwanted vegetation.

Below: Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd: Volunteers began cleaning down the metal work in preparation for the primer and undercoat.





Tuesday 28th June: SCARS' volunteer Richard Corner puts the finishing touches to Bradley Swing Bridge

July: On the evening of Thursday 7th July SCARS Volunteers helped St Helens Rotary in their Clean-up event in preparation for the Water Sports Taster Day which was took place on the Sankey Canal between Standish Street and Corporation Street (*Below*) at the end of the month.



August: With so much interest being shown in various ideas of how to solve the water supply issues, the canal at Bewsey immediately springs to mind. The section of canal above Bewsey Lock has been dry since the then river authority in the 1970's diverted Sankey Brook into the bed of the canal where it passes through Dallam. It would seem to be the obvious solution just to reconnect it back to the brook and allow it to supply the canal with water once again.

However, this has several problems— not least of all that the brook now flows at a lower level than the canal bed to Bewsey Lock, plus a couple of large storm drains in the vicinity.

Our work party volunteers decided to look at Bewsey Lock, and its overflow system.

Sunday 14th August, Bewsey Lock Sluice

Seven volunteers turned out to clear away vegetation from the entrance to the sluice, some evidence of the sluice woodwork was found.

Right: Part of the woodwork for the sluice—which was located just in front of the footbridge, below.





Sunday 21st August;- Bewsey Lock overflow

Six volunteers cleared away the vegetation from the site of Bewsey Lock overflow, above, seen from across the canal.

Below: Before and After the volunteers had done their work



News Round-Up Around the Boroughs

by Colin Greenall

HALTON

Water Supply Problems at Spike Island: The water supply problem in Halton continues to be the main topic of news, with the council promising a funding package of £500,000 to be spent on canal infrastructure repairs at £100,000 per year for the next five years. Work commenced on building a dam of concrete filled sand bags at the location of the former railway swing bridge, to prevent salt water from progressing up the canal on the predicted high tides that would flood the marina and float the boats so that they could escape out into the river. This idea work in so far has the boats floated and could enter the lock out into the river, but the outer lock gates could not be opened far enough because of the silt build up behind the gates, leaving two yachts stranded in the lock. *(Below)*



Above: As a result of the withdrawal of water being pumped from the former power station, the canal is almost dry in Widnes.



Our friends the Spike Island & Canal Restoration Group continue to work tirelessly to help rescue the wildlife and fish stocks and promote the restoration of the canal. SCARS volunteers have also been there clearing rubbish from the dry canal bed—seen *above*, beneath the new Mersey Gateway Bridge.

WARRINGTON



Fiddlers Ferry Power Station Development: Peel Holdings have acquired the Fiddlers Ferry Power Station Site and will take on the task of demolishing the cooling towers and clearing the site, which will begin in the next few weeks. Their plan is to develop the area for housing and commercial use. Peel Holdings have decades of experience developing waterside sites in the region—along the Bridgewater Canal, the Manchester Ship Canal, and Liverpool Docks—so we are hopeful that the Sankey will be viewed as a vital element of their development plans.

ST HELENS



Old Double Locks: The Canal and River Trust have begun work at the Old Double Locks, Blackbrook, with site clearance ready to admit heavy plant into the area where excavation of the wall and bank collapse have taken place

New Double Locks: St Helens Council have given themselves planning permission for work to commence at the New Double Locks at Pocket Nook for the installation of fencing around this Grade Two listed structure on Health and Safety grounds.

The application is for the introduction of a handrail along a stretch of the canal, adjacent to the lock, for safety reasons. The proposed scheme includes landscaping adjacent to the locks. (*Photographed, below, in 2000*)

From the Application: The handrail will be constructed from powder coated black tubular steel with decorative ball-end finials. The handrail will be positioned directly on the canal edge; however, it will be positioned on the tarmac footpath in certain areas to accommodate the balance beams of the lock gates. The handrail will have a height of 1100mm.

The supporting posts will be drilled into the stone block on the canal edging or root fixed into the tarmac as required. There will be approximately 92 number 2-metre handrail bays, which will stretch a total of 184 metres.





Sankey Viaduct: St Helens Council have given Listed building consent for the erection of two QR code plates on Sankey Viaduct. *They are pictured, above, below the recently-installed National Transport Trust Red Wheel Plaques.*



Rainford Brook Footbridge: The bridge was removed to be refurbished off-site, and has now been reinstated.

**What do you know about the trades,
the people, and the industry
along the waterways of Halton?**



**Phoenix Amateur Photographers, in partnership with
the Sankey Canal Restoration Society in a project to
produce a chronicled documentary about Halton's
waterways.**

**If you have ever lived or worked around these water-
ways, or have any knowledge to share, and/ or you
want to become part of the team, please contact:**

Barrie Davidson on 07776391196

Or email baznox45@gmail.com



In Memoriam

TONY HIRST

1937—1922

Tony Hirst, IWA Vice President since 2000, and Director of what was then known as The Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port from 1981 until his retirement in September 1999, died at the beginning of July.

Tony was born in Manchester in August 1937. In the late 1950s he served for 3 years in the RAF where he was engaged in the maintenance of the radar and defence system at the Changi air base in Singapore. Straight after his stint in the Far East, Tony joined Ferranti in Manchester as Head of Display and Test.

Tony and Diane married in 1961 and they were inseparable; Diane supported him and was with him, side by side in all his exploits.

He became involved with the museum proposed by the North Western Museum of Navigation (NWMIN) after attending Dr David Owen's night school talks on Industrial Archaeology and Inland Waterways in Manchester in 1972. David told Ray Woodland, who needed help with the restoration of the Worcester & Birmingham Canal tunnel tug Worcester, that he had a couple of 'likely lads' who were willing to help. Tony was one of these. From then on, he was completely involved in NWMIN's activities. He became working Party organiser in 1974 when work started at the derelict docks at Ellesmere Port. The Island Warehouse was secured from vandals, the top basin cleared, and the restoration of the Toll House was begun.

Right: The Boat Museum site in 1971, before restoration began.



Left: Volunteers at work clearing silt and rubbish from the top basin in 1975. (Pics: CRT)

The Boat Museum opened with an exhibition designed by Tony Lewery on the ground floor of the Toll House in June 1976. It was staffed by volunteers and open only at weekends. At the end of the summer, the museum closed for the season, but the restoration of the Toll House, and care for the collection of boats which had been brought to Ellesmere Port, continued. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited in November 1979.



In January 1981, the Boat Museum Trust, a partnership between NWMIN, the supportive Ellesmere and Neston Borough Council and Cheshire County Council, was established to administer the Museum and Tony was appointed Director. This relationship between the Museum and the two local authorities was crucial in ensuring that the Museum became firmly recognised as an asset to the local community.

New exhibitions were opened, and The Boat Museum won several prestigious awards, including the Council of Europe's Museum of Europe award jointly with the Museum du Vivant du Canal du Centre in Belgium for 1984.

Life was not always plain sailing however, and the museum's survival became more challenging in the late 1980s and 1990s, when competition for people's leisure time meant less income for running and developing. It was Tony's dogged determination, enthusiasm, administrative capability, contacts, and total commitment which saw the museum through these challenging times.

He was chairman of the Association of Independent Museums between 1990 and 1994 and held posts in many other waterways organisations.

Tony was awarded the OBE in 1995 for Services to Museums. He was honoured but he never ever pushed or promoted the fact and never used the letters after his name. He always said the award belonged to every single volunteer as much as him.

In the late 1990s much of his effort was concentrated on the formation of The Waterways Trust (TWT) in 1999. Fiercely protective of the Boat Museum, Tony was part of the team shaping the merger of the Boat Museum, the National Waterways Museum at Gloucester, and the British Waterways Archive under the management of TWT, as a charitable offshoot of British Waterways. This ensured the museum's long term financial survival.

Tony retired as Director of the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port at the end of 1999.

In 2004, the Daniel Adamson, the last remaining Manchester Ship Canal tug which had been moored in the lower basin at Ellesmere Port for some years, was under threat of being broken up. A group of enthusiasts and Tony formed the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society and became its founding chair until 2009. He then became its life president.

During his retirement, Tony continued as a great supporter of many waterways' organisations, including being a member of the Government's Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council and IWA's Awards Panel.

[Obituary prepared by Cath Turpin]

SCARS congratulates tug skipper Dan Cross on award of the Merchant Navy Medal



Captain Dan Cross, a long-time supporter of SCARS, has been awarded the highest medal of honour within the maritime sector—the Merchant Navy Medal.

The medals were instituted in 2016 for significant contributions to the maritime industry and nominations are made by colleagues, family, or friends. Dan was among 14 to receive the award at a ceremony on September 3rd.

Dan was given the medal for his years of work spearheading the restoration of the former Manchester Ship Canal Company's tug 'Daniel Adamson' (with which he is pictured above). Bought when thought to be only worthy of being scrapped, she now proudly steams around the Mersey, the Weaver (where she is based, at Acton), and the Ship Canal. He was also awarded the Transport Trust's 'Preservationist of the Year' award in 2017.

The tug was built in Birkenhead in 1903 for the Shropshire Union Railways and Canal Company, and named 'Ralph Brocklebank' after a Director of the London and North Western Railway, which owned the SURCC.

She towed barges of goods from the Potteries and Cheshire which were transhipped from narrow boats at Ellesmere Port, for onward transport on the Ship Canal and the Mersey to the Mersey docks. She also carried passengers between Ellesmere Port and Liverpool until 1915. (Right)



She was bought by the MSCC in 1922. She

was renamed Daniel Adamson in 1936 after major refurbishment and alteration to suit her new dual purpose role as tug and Directors' Launch. Retired from service in 1984, and towed to Ellesmere Port in 1986, she became an exhibit in the Boat Museum there. Although popular, maintenance, and cuts to funds to the museum and heritage sector, led to her becoming neglected. She also became a target for vandalism—being partly set alight on one occasion. She remained the property of the MSCC—and in February 2004 they decided to end her misery by having her scrapped. Dan Cross, at work with Svitzer Marine's tugs on the Mersey, heard about her plight, and helped by Tony Hirst (see his Obituary above), formed the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society. Svitzer agreed to help—offering to dry dock her and to survey her to assess her fitness for restoration. Encouraged by this, Dan bought the boat for the princely sum of £1—and the restoration campaign began in earnest.

See the Society's website—www.thedanny.co.uk—for more about the boat and its history



St. Helens Historical Society Programme for 2022-2023

Monday , October 17th

NUNS, NURSES & WITCHES
Peter Harvey

Monday , November 21st

WAR IN UKRAINE
Charles Esdaile

Monday, December 12th

PRE-CHRISTMAS GATHERING (6.30 for 7.00pm)

2023

Monday, January 16th

MY UNCLE'S LIVERPOOL
Ken Robinson plus three SHHS Members

Monday, February 20th

GROWING UP WITH RUGBY LEAGUE
Alex Service

Monday, March 20th

OUR CANAL IS BORN
Peter Keen

Monday, April 17th

OUR CANAL EXPANDS
Peter Keen

Monday, MAY 15th

MARY MERRYWEATHER: PIONEER NURSE AND POLITICAL REFORMER.
Chris Jones

***All meeting will be held at the Friends Meeting House,
Church Street, St. Helens WA10 1AJ***

Commencing at 7.30pm

Sankey Canal Wildlife Calendar 2023

SCARS members are invited to send in their photographs of wildlife on the Sankey Canal. The thirteen selected pictures will obviously need to be taken showing features of the canal and depicting animals, amphibians, birds, insects etc. with scenes of winter, spring, summer, and autumn.

The photographs must be in a digital format and emailed to colin.greenall@btinternet.com also each entry must have a title i.e., “Swans at Fiddlers Ferry Marina, Summer” or “Frog at Sankey Bridges, Spring” As far as possible, entries will be grouped by Season.

We will need thirteen photographs—one for each month, plus the cover—the senders of the photographs used will each receive a free copy of the Calendar as their prize. Please include your address so that we can send you a copy if your picture is chosen.

The Deadline for entries is 31st October 2022.

Example:

“Gulls beside the locks at Spike Island, Autumn”.



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We put the fun in science

Catalyst is open Tuesday to Sunday offering a host of interactive exhibits, museum archives, historical galleries, family shows and hands on workshops!

Book your visit (essential) Donate



**INLAND
WATERWAYS
ASSOCIATION**

IWA Chester & Merseyside Branch Programme of Meetings 2022-2023

**All meetings will be held at 7.45 pm on the second Tuesday of the month,
in the Café at the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum, CH65 4FW.**

**A Fun Raffle is run at our meetings
Our sales and shop are available for Christmas Cards and Publications**

11 October 2022

Rob Dewey talks on 50 years and 5,000 locks
on his epic voyages on our canal system.

8 November 2022

Ray Buss talks on the history and heritage of the Chester Canal
- 250 years old and still going strong

The Industrial Revolution in 18th and 19th century had a major impact on life and work across the country. Everyone wanted to be part of the new transport network, businesses in Chester included. The project got the go ahead in 1772. This history of how the local waterways were planned, built and extended tell a story of the era and how important its heritage remains for canal users of today.

13 December 2022

Our Christmas Party with mince pies, sherry, and our bumper raffle
Gill Bolt talks on their adventures and voyages down the Canal du Midi

10 January 2023

Ian Wilson talks on the history and restoration
of the Kennet and Avon Canal

14 February 2023

Les Green talks on the Daniel Adamson, the restored Liverpool steam tug
boat now operating on the river Weaver

14 March 2023

Branch AGM
Speaker TBA

The Waverley

Society members will recall that, despite an extensive amount of restoration work being carried out, the Waverley paddle steamer was unable to return to service because she was missing an engineer with a steam qualification. It seems that a suitably skilled person has come forward and been appointed as Engineer. As a bonus, an additional helmsman has also joined the crew so sailings have recommenced. *Right: In her engine room when under steam, 2017*



Queen Elizabeth II



Her Majesty the late Queen Elizabeth touched the lives of many of her subjects including in the waterways world. She attended the reopening of the Kennet and Avon Canal (*Left*) in 1990, following its 40 year restoration project by the Canal's supporters. She sailed in the Kennet and Avon trip boat, the Rose of Hungerford, named after one of the towns through which the canal passes. The ceremony took place at the Caen Hill flight of locks in Devizes at the western end of the canal. On a more personal level Her Majesty invested Harry Arnold with the MBE for services to Inland Waterways. Harry was a long time member of SCARS, finding time for society activities despite

a busy life in other fields. He was an author of note, a waterways journalist and a renowned photographer and was always willing to provide access to his work for waterways organisations. His death in 2018 saw the loss of a great contributor to the success of the national waterways movement.

Anderton Lift Closure.

A flotilla of narrow boats unexpectedly found themselves stranded on the River Weaver, having arrived after paying a visit to the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port. Unfortunately the Anderton Lift was declared unsafe and promptly closed. It seems that a broken component was found on one of the top gates which played a vital role in holding up the gate in the event of the breakage of the supporting cables.

The boaters had intended to access the Trent and Mersey Canal from which they could reach the national canal network. The Canal and River Trust's customer service team arranged that the boats should sail along the Manchester Ship Canal, accompanied by a qualified pilot, to reach their various destinations.

The problem was that since the lift is a unique structure, replacement components are not readily available 'off the shelf', therefore each had to be designed, manufactured, tested and installed, all time consuming activities. This means that the lift will be closed for the remainder of the boating season. But it should be pointed out that the Anderton Visitor Centre remains open, and boat trips are still available along the Weaver.

Membership Subscription



Charity No: 702571

I wish to join SCARS - my subscription is as detailed below.

| Individual (at one address)* | | Donation** | TOTAL | Gift Aid** |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-------|------------|
| General | Unwaged | | | YES / NO |
| £15.00 | £10.00 | | | |
| * Please indicate as appropriate | | ** Please indicate your wishes | | |

| | | |
|------------|----------------|------------|
| Name: | Address: | Post code: |
| Telephone: | Email address: | |

The Sankey Canal Restoration Society
Registered Charity 702571

Gift Aid Declaration

Please help us to reclaim a further 25% by ticking the box below

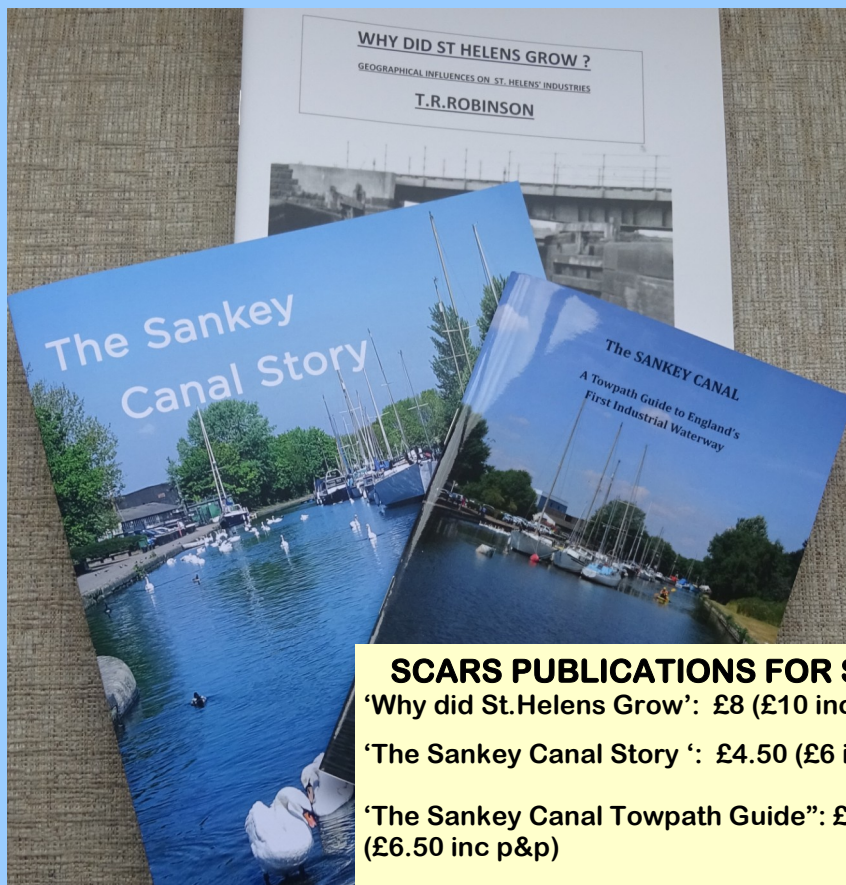
I want to Gift Aid my subscription and/or donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to the Sankey Canal Restoration Society

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify SCARS: if you want to change this declaration; change name or home address; no longer pay sufficient tax

Please forward to:

Mike Harrison - the Treasurer / Membership Secretary
4 Darvel Avenue, Garswood, Ashton-in-Makerfield, WN4 0UA



SCARS PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

'Why did St.Helens Grow': £8 (£10 inc p&p)

'The Sankey Canal Story ': £4.50 (£6 inc p&p)

'The Sankey Canal Towpath Guide": £ 4.80
(£6.50 inc p&p)

Order from Colin Greenall:
16 Bleak Hill Road, Eccleston, St.Helens,
WA10 4RW

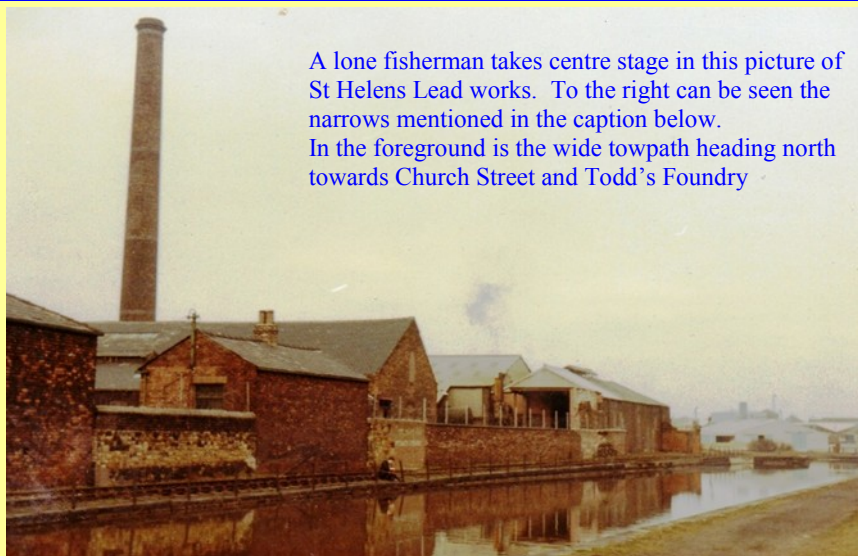
WANTED—More Volunteers

Our Work Parties are perhaps our most visible volunteering opportunity—but there are other roles we need volunteers for. Maybe you could help out on our exhibition and sales stand when we attend events around the area from late Spring to early Autumn; or perhaps you have a personal skill, for instance in communications or the media, which you could put to use to help promote the Sankey and our Society—even if it's simply visiting the canal every now and again, taking photographs, and putting them up on our social media sites, or carrying out research into aspects of the canal's history, or of its associated communities or industries. But don't let yourself be limited by my imagination....

To offer your services, choose a contact from page 2 of this magazine.

The Sankey Canal in 1972

We continue displaying the collection of archive photographs, taken by Wilf Britch in 1972. Our thanks to him for sending these interesting images of a bygone time along the Sankey within the St Helens area



A lone fisherman takes centre stage in this picture of St Helens Lead works. To the right can be seen the narrows mentioned in the caption below. In the foreground is the wide towpath heading north towards Church Street and Todd's Foundry

Below: Looking north towards Church Street, Todd's Foundry centre right, in front of which is a signal gantry on the St Helens Junction line, there to protect the junction with the Liverpool to Wigan line leading into what was then St Helens Shaw Street Station.

Behind the sleeper fencing on the right lies Lyons Yard sidings. The original St.Helens and Runcorn Gap Railway crossed the canal at the narrows, leading into the former St Helens Station which was located opposite the Friends Meeting House in Church Street.

Beyond the narrows can be seen the site of the swing bridge (now a permanent crossing)of the former line to St Helens Junction built accommodate the new Wigan to Liverpool line in 1858 at which time the old station was relocated.

On the left are the tracks leading to Daghlish's Foundry with a branch leading off to the left into the St.Helens Lead Works, *above*.

