



NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Column and Bits 'n' Pieces

2006 Annual General Meeting

Welcome to all our members attending the Society's 39th Annual General Meeting. The agenda and all supporting documentation, including Officers' reports and the 2005/06 accounts, were published in the last Newsletter.

September Meeting

Next month our President, Brian Evans, will be showing 'Early Canalling Days' on Standard 8 Cine, a medium not seen very often these days, since the advent of video tape and camcorders etc.

Society Outing to the Wey & Arun Canal

Regarding the Society outing to the Wey & Arun Canal on Saturday 7 October, just a reminder that Maureen

will be collecting money for the trip at the 27 July and 7 September meetings. Full details of the outing were published in the June Newsletter.

September Newsletter

Due to holidays of key individuals concerned with input to and the publication of the Newsletter, there will not be an issue next month. All copy will be held over to the October issue.

Refreshments

A reminder that we have just started a new volunteer rota for our monthly refreshments. Can you please see Gill at any meeting and add your name to the list. Thank you.

Paul Herbert

The Wey & Arun Canal push ahead at Dunsfold

Dunsfold Park Ltd have agreed with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust to fund development of a three-dimensional computer model of an important section of the canal. The Trust will use the computer model to develop an engineering design that can accurately assess the quantities of silt to be removed, establish the original towpath, reinstate the long forgotten 'Compasses Wharf' and restore the canal to a navigable standard.

The section of the canal between the Compasses pub at Alfold and Tickners Heath has lain largely untouched for decades, gradually filling up with leaves and silt. There was also some unwelcome infilling during the Second World War, when there was a need to move vehicles and aircraft across the canal. The canal provides a haven for wildlife, so any future proposals will have to include wildlife habitat surveys and a managed approach to preserving ecological assets. An adjoining section, between the Compasses and Fastbridge (the A281) was dredged by British Aerospace in 1992 and since then the Trust have restored Farnhurst Bridge and kept the canal clear.

The computer modelling software, which is normally used for roads but easily adapts to canal design, supplies computer generated drawings, using licensed Ordnance Survey maps. It accurately calculates quantities and cross-sectional data, in such a

way that the exact amounts of material to be dredged and removed are known.

This is the essential first stage of a design process that will enable the section to be fully dredged and restored, with Trust volunteers putting together the engineering design and solutions. When the day comes to carry out construction, it is hoped that Dunsfold Park will be able to process the silt removed from the canal, keeping it on their land as useable composting material, thereby avoiding the need to remove spoil by road.

Long before the canal becomes fully navigable, it is hoped that with the co-operation of landowners such as Dunsfold Park, the canal towpath will be available for public use.

The section near Dunsfold Park forms part of the summit level of the Wey & Arun Canal on its 23-mile route from the River Wey at Shalford, near Guildford, to the River Arun near Pulborough. The summit level (162 feet above sea level) runs from Rowly, near Cranleigh, to Sidney Wood, near Dunsfold. The Wey & Arun Canal Trust's objective is to restore the whole of the historic canal route, which is part of the only inland

waterway link between the River Thames and the south coast.

Wey & Arun CT Press Release - 12 June 2006



The Wey & Arun Trust Poddles to £10,000

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust's 34th annual sponsored walk ('The Poddle') started from Godalming, Surrey this year (on 11th June). 172 walkers took part in brilliant sunshine. The Trust's Treasurer, Jim Phillips, said: 'It looks as if the Poddle has raised at least £10,000. This is an excellent result and the Trust will spend the money on gates for the new lock that Trust volunteers have constructed at Loxwood. We are grateful to walkers and supporters for an important contribution to the Trust's most ambitious restoration project ever. When we have restored the road crossing in Loxwood, we will be one big step closer to rebuilding London's Lost Route to the Sea. When we

have crossed the road we will have removed the greatest obstacle to extending this section to the Surrey border and beyond.'

Wey & Arun CT Press Release - 23 June 2006

Editors Note: Those going on the Society Boat Trip on the Wey & Arun Canal in October will be able to see the works in progress to enable the canal to pass under the B2133 at Loxwood. The new lock, on the "upstream" side of the road, should be substantially complete apart from the gates. The rise of Brewhurst Lock "downstream" of the road is being reduced and the level of the canal between the two is being lowered. Construction of the new bridge should start next year.

Daventry Canal

Daventry District Council have proposed building a canal arm to their town from the Grand Union Canal east of Braunston Tunnel.

Daventry has been identified in the developing Milton Keynes – South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy as a ‘sub-regional centre’. As such it is likely that the town will increase in population from 23,000 to around 40,000 by 2021.

The Daventry Town Centre Vision, adopted by the District Council in May 2004 includes proposals for the provision of a new canal arm linking the town centre with the Grand Union Canal, about 2

miles to the north.

The Council seem to be very keen that the arm should be built and although it's construction has not yet been authorised, new development in the area is taking the canal into account. However, these things take time to come to fruition so don't plan your trip just yet.

Thanks to Ray Brooks for sending a copy of the document below to the Editor.



May 2006

Daventry Water Space Daventry Town Canal Arm

The construction of the canal arm will be funded by grants, development profits and contributions. Its future maintenance will be funded by income from the marina and waterside development, **not** from the Council Tax.

Facts and Figures

3.2 km (2 miles) long with a 16m height difference from end to end.

Around 9m wide and 1.5m deep.

6 locks or a single boat-lift.

The branch obtained Royal Assent on 30th April 1793 but was never constructed.

England's first destination branch canal since 1882.



Blue line indicates approximate route of canal.

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Visit www.daventrydc.gov.uk/atoz/daventrydevelopment for more detail on the canal arm. Any comments, questions or suggestions can be directed to;

Development and Property
Daventry District Council
FREEPOST MID22586
Daventry
NN11 5BR OR e-mail canal@daventrydc.gov.uk

Waterways Diary

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. Hopefully you can find something to interest you. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the correctness of this information, please check with the listed

contact who will be glad to confirm and supply further details of that event.

If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then please contact the editor.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 27 July 2006 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual General Meeting followed by waterways DVD. NB: this is the "August" meeting! Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Sun 30 July 2006	Kennet & Avon CT	Newbury Waterways Festival. Victoria Park, Newbury.	Graham Smith: 01635 580356. Email: grahamv.smith@virgin.net
Sun 6 Aug 2006 10.00am	Wey & Arun CT	8.5 mile guided walk near Loxwood with picnic break or a pub lunch at the Onslow Arms. Meet in Forest Enterprises car park, Sidney Wood. Grid ref: 026351. Donation to Canal Trust of £2 each gratefully received.	Brian Crossley : 01737-843192
Sat 12 Aug 2006	???	Fox and Hounds Boat Rally. Canalside pub boat gathering with boats moored along the Basingstoke Canal in Fleet and craft stalls on the towpath.	01252 663674
Sun 13 Aug 2006 10.00am	Wey & Arun CT	8.5 mile guided walk. Details given above (see Sun 6 Aug 2006).	Brian Crossley : 01737-843192
Sun 20 Aug 2006 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - The Somersetshire Coal Canal in Bath. Meet outside west door of Bath Abbey.	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948
Sat 26 - Mon 28 August 2006	Inland Waterways Assn	2006 IWA National Waterways Festival and Boat Show on the River Thames. Beale Park, Pangbourne, near Reading.	IWA Head Office: 01923 711114. Website: www.waterways.org.uk
Thu 7 Sept 2006 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Early Canalling Days on Standard 8 Cine" with Brian Evans. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Sat 9 Sept 2006 10.00am	Chichester Ship CT	Walk the Portsmouth & Arundel Canal. 4 mile walk from Barnham Court Farm, Church Lane, Barnham to River Arun at Ford. Bring packed lunch. Allow 4 hours for walk. Frequent trains from Ford back to Barnham.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sat & Sun 9 & 10 Sep 2006 2.00 to 4.30pm	Wey & Arun CT	Heritage Open Day at Brewhurst Mill, Loxwood. Please park in the Trust's car park located behind the Onslow Arms pub on the B2133 main Loxwood road and then it is a short walk to the Mill.	WACT Office Tel: 01403 752403 Email: publicity@weyandarun.co.uk Website: www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sun 10 Sept 2006 10.00am	Chichester Ship CT	Guided walk from Salterns Lock to Chichester Basin. Meet at Salterns Lock, Chichester Marina.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sun 10 Sept 2006 10.00am	Chichester Ship CT	Poyntz Bridge will be swung. Last survivor of the original seven swing bridges. Couple hundred yards south of Chichester Basin.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sun 17 Sep 2006 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - Combe Hay Lock Flight. Meet in "The Avenue", Combe Hay	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948
Thu 21 Sept 2006 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	George Fleming, a local historian, talks about The Royal Military Canal.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841. Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: ronmyra.glover@virgin.net
Sun 24 Sept 2006	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Beaulieu River Cruise - Buckler's Hard to Beaulieu Quay.	Peter Boyce: 07729 139765 Email: pete@greensleeves.freereserve.co.uk
Fri 29 Sept 2006 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	River Thames - speaker Chris Cove-Smith. Turnham's Farm Scout Hall, Little Heath Road (close to the junction with City Road), Tilehurst, Reading	John & Pam Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: johns@360swift.com or pams@360swift.com
Sat 30 Sept 2006 7.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Talk on the Dorset & Somerset Canal by Derrick Hunt. Devizes Wharf.	Tel: 01380 721279
Thu 5 Oct 2006 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"A Calendar of British Wildlife" with Dennis Bright. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Sat 7 Oct 2006 10.30am	Southampton CS	Society boat trip on the Wey & Arun Canal at Loxwood, Sussex aboard the 'Zachariah Keppel'.	Maureen Greenham: 023 8040 6951 Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com
Thu Nov 2006 7.45pm	Southampton CS	London's Waterways with the expert, Chris Cove-Smith. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Thu 7 Dec 2006 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Inter-society Waterways Quiz. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
29-30 Jul, 26-28 Aug, 30 Sep, 1 Oct 2006	Kennet & Avon CT	Crofton Pumping Station - Steaming days 2006. Open from 10.30am to 5.00pm. Adults £5.00, Seniors £4.00, Children £1.00, Children under 5 free, Families (2 adults & 2 children) £10.00.	Phone: 01672 870300 Website: www.croftonbeamengines.org Email: eq01ntz9@CroftonBeamEngines.org
14 Apr - 1 Oct 2006. 10.30am to 5.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Crofton Pumping Station - Non-Steamng days: Adults £3.00, Seniors £2.50, Children £1.00, Children under 5 free, Families (2 adults & 2 children) £7.00. Open 7 days/week.	Phone: 01672 870300 Website: www.croftonbeamengines.org Email: eq01ntz9@CroftonBeamEngines.org

Corrections

Your editor offers his apologies for several errors in the printed version of the Newsletter for July which were not spotted until the issue had "gone to press". The version available on the website and sent to those members who have the Newsletter emailed to them

has been corrected.

The heading for the report of June meeting erroneously referred to the May meeting. There were also errors in the paragraph numbering in the minutes of last year's AGM.

SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY

Established 1967

The objectives of the Society are to foster interest in canals and inland waterways, to assist in their preservation, restoration and development, and to give practical help on waterway projects.

Meetings:

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm. (See Waterways Diary.) Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.

President:

Brian Evans.

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<http://www.whitenap.plus.com>

July Meeting

George Fleming – “Waterways at War”

Following our talk on “Idle Women” at our June meeting, members might be forgiven in possibly thinking that it would be the same theme again at our July meeting, but how wrong they would have been.

In an often ‘quick-fire’ delivery George Fleming took us through the history of canal building around the world from the military aspect. Whilst the building of the Panama and Suez Canals were obviously strategically vital for trade they had far more important military value. For example, the Panama was purposely designed to accommodate the largest warships then afloat to give them quick access between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, whilst similarly the Suez allowed much faster transit of warships to protect Britain’s interests in India and the Far East. The Suez was itself closed to the allies from 1940 to late 1943 due to the Axis forces and was again closed in 1956 when Egypt took the canal into its ownership leading to the military conflict involving that country, Britain and France. The dimensions of the Panama Canal are now inadequate to allow the passage of the current large liners, super tankers and bulk carriers and there are proposals to rebuild that waterway to also accommodate the size of warships currently in use.

Turning to British canals, whilst the scale of the canals as built were adequate for the needs of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, they proved to be far too small for the countries subsequent needs, particularly in times of war. Exceptions were the Forth & Clyde and Caledonian Canals in Scotland, which were built to a much larger scale. From the beginning, there was military motivation in the building of those canals. For example, the F&C was designed to accommodate small frigates of that time whilst the Caledonian could take 36 gun frigates.

In the 1840s there was massive growth in railway development. By that time Britain’s Royal Navy ruled the waves, in due course steam warships had been developed, and there was no longer the need to use canals to quickly cross the country. So, there was no

requirement to keep our canals up to date and rebuilt to accommodate our larger warships. In contrast, across the channel, Germany had been developing its waterways and railway systems specifically for military purposes. The decline of Britain’s waterways is common knowledge so, as space is limited, I will not dwell on that part of George’s talk.

George did briefly refer to the ‘Idle Women’ but concentrated mainly on other aspects of our canal system in time of war, particularly their use as lines of defence in case of invasion, and referred to the multitude of ‘pill-boxes’ and other fortified strongpoint constructed alongside canals, railways and important roads – many of which still exist today, such was the strength of their construction.

Another aspect he referred to was the use the German Luftwaffe made of our canal system – using the canals as navigation aids on their night-time bombing runs. An attempted ruse to counteract that was to spread coal dust onto certain canals making them appear as roads from high flying aircraft. However, that led to different dangers when the population thought they really were roads and tried to walk across them or even drive down them, with obvious dramatic results!

Moving to the continent, George described the uses the allies made of Europe’s canal systems during both world wars, and the troops who were used to man the barges etc and operate those waterways. He told us of a fact that none in the audience appeared aware of and that was the hospital barges for injured allied troops and we were shown illustrations of a number of these.

It was a fascinating talk by George which kept the audience ‘spell-bound’ and we are grateful to him for allowing us to share his in-depth knowledge of ‘Waterways at War’. It is likely that he will be making a return visit to us in due course as he is currently working on another presentation – but more about that in due course.

Paul Herbert

Wilts & Berks Canal

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust has announced that the Duchess of Cornwall has agreed to be patron of the Trust. The Duchess has a long association with Reybridge Mill near Lacock, Wiltshire, which is adjacent to the line of the canal and close to the newly restored section at Naish Hill. Prince Charles is patron of the Cotswold Canals Partnership, which aims to restore the adjoining Thames & Severn Canal and the Stroudwater Navigation.

BW Wildlife Survey

British Waterways has launched its wildlife survey for 2006. This year BW has given particular emphasis on reporting sightings of water voles. BW would be grateful for as many waterway visitors to help by completing as many surveys as possible. The survey is available online at:

www.waterscape.com/features/wildlife/wildlife_survey_2006

IWA Head Office Bulletin - July 2006