



Chairman's Column

August 2014

What glorious weather! It allows us to enjoy outdoor life at home and boating on the canals is wonderful if just a little warm working the locks.

There is **NO** August meeting as the hall is closed for maintenance.

July Meeting

The 2014 AGM in July, was attended by 18 members.

Our Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer & Membership Secretary read out their respective reports, as detailed in the July Newsletter.

Two items on the Agenda to note:

1. After a discussion it was decided that there will be no change in the Annual Subscription Rates for next year i.e. from April 2015 at £27 per couple and £16 single.
2. Gill Herbert has been our Treasurer & Membership Secretary since 2010. During this time Gill has worked hard to bring the financial side of the Society up to date, producing up to date accounts at each of our Committee meetings and the end of year accounts. Plus she has spent time booking the Hall, sorting the Insurance for the Society and keeping the membership details updated.

After some fifteen years involvement with the Society, including time on the Committee, Gill informed the Committee before the 2013 AGM that she was finding it difficult to get to all the meetings because of other interests and would not be seeking re-election at the AGM in 2014.

May I, on behalf of the Committee and all the members, give a "Special Thank You" to Gill for her

dedication, help, support and enthusiasm given to Southampton Canal Society.

Aelred Derbyshire, a Committee member who during the last year acted as Treasurer when Gill was away, has kindly offered his services as Treasurer & Membership Secretary and was duly elected. We welcome him into his new role.

September 4th Meeting

This will be a two part evening.

First Eva Drinkwater with a talk and photos of the old days of the Society, showing restoration work and other involvement in the IWA.

Secondly, while at Foxton over Easter, we obtained from Mike Beech, the curator of the Foxton Canal Museum, a presentation (on a memory stick) showing the history of Foxton Locks, the inclined plane and the surrounding area.

Chichester Canal Cruise

This cruise will be on Tuesday 23rd September 2014 - see the article below for details. Please contact Aelred to book your place.

October Meeting

On the third of the month, we will welcome back Geoff Watts with his talk about "Memories of the Great War" in our area, taken from archives, letters and postcards.

November Meeting

November 6th will see Day-Star Theatre visit us again. More details later.

In the meantime, enjoy the summer break

Alan Rose

Barging around Britain ITV series

FORMER BBC TV political correspondent John Sergeant is undertaking eight canal journeys for an ITV series "Barging Around Britain" which will be screened later this year.

He will be examining the history of the canal he travels on and will include canals in Somerset and the Crinan in Scotland.

A spokesman for the production company said the identity of the canals would not be disclosed until all filming had been completed.

Company controller Richard Klein said: "Britain's canal network is a true national treasure, full of great characters and rich in history."

Towpath Talk - August 2014

Cruise on the Chichester Ship Canal

As reported in the July Newsletter, the Society is organising a cruise on the Chichester Ship Canal on 23 September. We have chartered their wide-beam trip boat *Richmond* for a two hour cruise from the Canal Basin, starting at 2:00 pm. The cruise will include a talk on the wildlife and history of the Canal and a Cream Tea (tea or coffee, scones with jam and cream and a selection of sponge cakes). The cost will be £16 per head.



minutes past each hour, with a journey time of about 60 minutes.

There is no meeting this month because the Hall is closed, but there will be a last chance to decide and pay at the meeting

on 4 September, after which we have to pay the cruise operator and tell them the final numbers.

The cruise will only accommodate a maximum of 28 people so, if you have reserved a place but not yet paid, or wish to reserve a place, and are not planning to attend the meeting in September, please email us on aelred.d@virgin.net or call us on 01794 512920 and we will sort out how you can get your payment to the Society.

Aelred and Sue Derbyshire

Waterways Diary

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. 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.

OS grid references and/or postcodes are shown (where known but not guaranteed) to aid location of the event.

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

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Sat 2 Aug 2014 3.00pm	B&NES Allotments Association	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." This is an outdoor show with shelter. Bring a picnic, chairs and blankets. Refreshments available. Collection after show. Bloomfield Road Allotments, Bear Flat, Bath, BA2 2AB. (ST745637)	B&NES Allotments Association: 07867 532512 Web: www.banes-allotments.org.uk
Mon 4 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Goring Lock, Goring, RG8 9AE. (SU596808) Bring your own chairs and picnics. We'll perform under the bridge if it's wet! Collection after show.	Mikron Theatre Office: 01484 843701 Web: http://www.mikron.org.uk
Tue 5 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Oxford Science Park	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Indoor show. The Oxford Science Park, Heatley Road, Oxford, OX4 4GE. (SP539021) Tickets £11.00 (£9.00 concs) on weekday mornings from Sadler Building Reception Tel: 01865 781 300 or on the door. Refreshments available 5.30pm - 7.15pm and in interval.	The Oxford Science Park: 01865 781300 Web: www.oxfordsp.com/news-mikron.asp
Wed 6 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Waterfront Café	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ. (SU613916) Tickets (£12) must be booked in advance. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show.	Waterfront Café: 01491 835631 Email: info@waterfrontcafe.co.uk Web: www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk
Thu 7 Aug 2014	Southampton CS	There will be NO August Meeting: Hall unavailable.	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Thu 7 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Plough Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Collection after show. The Plough Inn, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, OX14 4QH. (SU545937) Food and drink available.	The Plough Inn: 01865 407738 Web: http://www.theploughinnlw.co.uk
Fri 8 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Plough Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." This is an outdoor show with shelter. Food and drinks available. Collection after show. Plough Inn, Wolvercote Green, Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8BD (SP495098).	Plough Inn: 01865 556969 Web: www.theploughoxford.co.uk
Sat 9 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Queens Head	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show with shelter, bring chairs and blankets. Collection after show. The Queens Head, 17 Queen Street, Eynsham, Witney, OX29 4HH (SP434094).	The Queens Head: 01865 881229 Web: www.thequeenshead.net
Sun 10 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Jolly Boatman	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." This is an outdoor show with shelter. Food and drinks available. Collection after show. The Jolly Boatman, 216 Banbury Road, Kidlington, OX5 1JU (SP479154).	The Jolly Boatman: 01865 377800 Web: www.jollyboatman.com
Tue 12 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Boat Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show. Bring chairs and blankets. Collection after show. Food and drink available. Boat Inn, Canal Road, Thrupp, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1JY (SP480158).	Boat Inn: 01865 374279
Sun 17 Aug 2014 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk: Bathampton Inclined Plane. Meet: Entrance to Hantone Hill housing estate off A36 Warminster Road, BA2 6XD (ST777659). (Please be considerate to the residents when parking).	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Thu 28 Aug 2014 9.30am	Wey & Arun CT	4½ mile circular guided walk along canal towpath and through village of Loxwood to include visit to Southland and Gennets Bridge Locks. Cost £5, limit of 20 walkers - please book. Canal Centre, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 ORD (TQ041311)	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Tue 2 Sep 2014 7.00pm	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Bat talk & walk. Bat Expert James Emmett will give a talk and slide show about bats at the outset then lead the group on a short walk of up to 1½ miles. £3.50. Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey GU16 6DD (SU893549).	BCA: 01252 370073 Email: info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk Web: http://www3.hants.gov.uk/canal-eventdetails?id=241604
Thu 4 Sep 2014 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Part 1: Eva Drinkwater and the old days of the Society, restoration and other involvement in the IWA. Part 2: The history of Foxton locks, the inclined plane and the surrounding area. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Tue 9 Sep 2014 7.00pm	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Bat talk & walk. Bat Expert James Emmett will give a talk and slide show about bats at the outset then lead the group on a short walk of up to 1½ miles. £3.50. Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey GU16 6DD (SU893549).	BCA: 01252 370073 Email: info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk Web: http://www3.hants.gov.uk/canal-eventdetails?id=241604
Sun 14 Sep 2014 2.00 - 4.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	Heritage Open Days. The Gunpowder Store, Stonebridge Wharfside, Shalford. Open with displays on the history of the Wey & Arun Canal and Chilworth Gunpowder history. Parking at Broadford Business Park, Shalford GU4 8EP (SU998466) (behind Parrot Inn, on the A248)	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sun 14 Sep 2014 2.30pm	Wey & Arun CT	Guided walk from the Gunpowder Store, Stonebridge, Shalford to Gosden Aqueduct. To book places and further details, please contact David Daniels.	David Daniels: 01483 505566 Email: support@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/
Thu 18 Sep 2014 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Guest lecture: The William Smith Archive - the collections of the father of English geology. Meet: Radstock Museum, Waterloo Road, Radstock, BA3 3EP (ST689549).	Derrick Hunt: 01225 863066 Email: workparty@coalcanal.org.uk Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Sun 21 Sep 2014 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk: Bath, the Coal Canal and William Smith Connections. Meet: Outside B.R.L.S.I., Queen Square, Bath, BA1 2HN (ST747649).	Derrick Hunt: 01225 863066 Email: workparty@coalcanal.org.uk
Tue 23 Sep 2014 2.00pm	Southampton CS	Cruise on the Chichester Ship Canal. See article on page 1 for further details.	Aelred and Sue Derbyshire: 01794 512920 Email: aelred.d@virgin.net
Thu 25 Sep 2014 9.30am	Wey & Arun CT	2½ mile circular guided walk along canal towpath and through village of Loxwood. Cost £5, limit of 20 walkers - please book. Canal Centre, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 ORD (TQ041311)	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk

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The English boatmen of the First World War

By Tim Coghlan

This article first appeared in the June 2014 issue of Towpath Talk and appears by kind permission of both the editor and the author.

UNTIL the recent revival of interest in the First World War - with the impending centenary of its outbreak on August 4 this year - very little was known about the role of our boatmen during the conflict.

The reason for this is quite simple: the boatmen were very much an isolated and illiterate community at the outbreak of hostilities. Those who became directly involved in the war seem to have left nothing in terms of accounts or even letters home or diaries.

During the Second World War the same might well have happened, except for the books and diaries written by the middle class female volunteers, the Idle Women, who worked the canals as boatmen, leaving us with a profound insight into the boatmen's way of life in the twilight of the working canals.

Because of this lack of information on the First World War, I and other canal history enthusiasts of the period, have been trying to piece together between us what little is known. Hopefully our forthcoming Historic Boat Rally, with its theme of the canal boatmen in the First World War - it is attended by many descendants of the working boatmen - will lead to more stories coming forward, to add to our store of knowledge of just what the boatmen did.

So what did they do? At the outbreak of war in 1914, there was no military conscription, and it did not really come in until 1916. From the outset, the boatmen were seen as an important reserve occupation, vital in the movement of heavy goods, especially iron and coal, which were essential to war production.



'ON WAR SERVICE - 1916'
This badge was issued in WWI to those working in important trades - such as boatmen - who were exempted from military service.

Photo © Tim Coghlan

volunteers mainly signed up with the Northampton and Warwickshire regiments.

Further south it was the Ox & Bucks and the Middlesex, and further north, the Staffordshire and Manchester regiments, and so on. Of the 31 named dead on the Braunston village war memorial, six at least and probably eight were boatmen, and this was from just one canal village community.

Although volunteering was only for those over 18, the recruiting sergeants soon turned a blind eye to the ruses used to join up. A young Kendall from Braunston is recalled by his descendants as volunteering at 14, using his much older brother's birth certificate. Amazingly he survived.

But he was a lucky one. His cousin Clarence Kendall, who joined the Bedfordshire Regiment, was one of the Braunston six that were killed, having survived until March 23, 1918, when he died - no record of how or exactly where - during the great German March offensive. He was only 19, and has no known grave.

Another Braunston man was Harry Lewin, who joined the Northamptonshire Regiment at the outset, and was killed in action in northern France as early as May 9, 1915 aged only 17. The 1911 Census has him with his parents aboard the nb Venice at Middlewich, recorded one of only "two surviving children." These tales show the scale of loss and human suffering.

To be concluded next month



At Braunston's war memorial by All Saints Church, CRT chairman Tony Hales pays tribute to the boatmen who fell in the First World War.

Photo © Janet Richardson

A MOVING service outside the 'Cathedral of the Canals,' All Saints' Church, Braunston, preceded this year's Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally and Canal Festival at the end of June.

The centennial tribute to the fallen of Braunston, many with boating connections, during the First World War was conducted by the vicar, the Rev Sarah Brown, with readings by veteran actors Timothy West and Prunella Scales.

Many boaters had walked up to the service at the village war memorial, which was accompanied by the Daventry Brass Band. The local branches of the Royal British Legion and the Royal Air Forces Association displayed their standards and poppy wreaths were laid by local dignitaries and Canal & River Trust chairman, Tony Hales. A collection during the weekend raised over £50 for church roof funds.



Timothy West and Prunella Scales with the Rev Sarah Brown at the service. Photo © Tim Coghlan

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.

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Brian Evans.

Chairman:

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Meetings:

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Diary). Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184.

Society Website: <http://www.sotoncs.org.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonCanalSociety>

Wey & Arun Canal Trust launch bridge appeal

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust (WACT) has already restored a section of canal near Alfold, in Surrey, on the summit (highest) level next to Dunsfold Park airfield. Their next aim is to replace the causeway with a new bridge which at present blocks the through navigation for boats. But before that can happen the Trust needs to raise £700,000 and carry out some major engineering work.

WACT hopes to raise £180,000 of the target for the Compasses Bridge project by the end of this year so that work to replace the existing concrete causeway can start on site in April 2015.

"The initial funding target will allow us to complete the design and planning work and choose our contractor," explains WACT chairman Sally Schupke. "We will then need to raise the next £290,000 by September next year to fund the construction phase and the final £230,000 to complete demolition and landscaping work that will enable us to reopen the navigation."

Completion of the project will result in a further 2km of the canal

being restored and create more opportunities for trip boats and for boating events. According to Sally, the work will also enhance the "green corridor" and is all part of the Trust's strategy to make significant progress in Surrey.

"While the total cost of this work is a large sum, we are staging it over more than two years to match the sequence of construction and to maximise our opportunities to draw on a wide range of funding sources," said Sally.

If you would like to contribute to this element of the restoration being undertaken by WACT, which is one of three major projects currently underway, donations can be made via the website - www.weyandarun.co.uk or by sending a cheque to "Compasses Bridge appeal", WACT, The Granary, Fritchfold Farm, Loxwood, West Sussex RH14 0RH. Cheques should be made payable to "Wey & Arun Canal".

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release 15 July 2014

Canal restoration reopens historic Wey & Arun Lock

Nearly 200 years after Southland Lock on the Wey & Arun Canal was built, restoration work is complete and boats can use it once again.

The official opening of the restored lock was marked by a special event organised by the Wey & Arun Canal Trust (WACT) on Saturday 21 June to celebrate completion of the three-year project. More than 150 people attended the event to see Mr Simon Carter officially open the lock and hear music from the Friary Guildford Brass Band before celebrating with a barbecue lunch.

The lock was originally built between 1813 and 1816 but was demolished in the 1930s when the canal had fallen into disuse and many of the bricks reused on other local building projects.

Reconstruction of the lock was a major challenge for the Trust, not just financially but also logistically as the site is located more than a mile from the nearest public road. WACT chairman Sally Schupke said that the Trust is very grateful for the help of the local

landowners in easing the logistics of the work.

"None of this would have been possible without the enthusiasm of the adjacent landowners. Their support made all the difference," she said.

More than £125,000 was reduced from the cost of the £0.5M reconstruction work thanks to the Trust's workforce of volunteers led by Project Manager Eric Walker. Nonetheless, the project still called for the engineering expertise of others including Burras Piling, the main contractor for the piling behind the new lock walls and Hargreaves Foundry in Halifax who made and fitted the lock gates.

With Southland Lock completed, the focus of the restoration work will now move northwards. WACT is working on major restoration schemes near Bramley at the northern end of the canal and near Dunsfold at the summit of the waterway.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release 24 June 2014

Waterways Diary *(Continued from page 2)*

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Sat 27 Oct 2014 11.00am	National Trust	Wey River Festival. Boats will be moored around Dapdune Wharf for the weekend. Lots going on at the Wharf with stalls and children's activities and a performance by the Mikron Theatre company at 2pm. At dusk, an illuminated pageant with boats going up to Millmead and back.	Navigations Office: 01483 561389 Email: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk Web: http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/
Thu 3 Oct 2014 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Geoff Watts will talk about "Memories of the Great War." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Thu 6 Nov 2014 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Day-Star Theatre. Details to be finalised. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com