



NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Column

December Meeting – 2009 Inter-Society Waterways Quiz

As we come to the Society's final meeting of 2009 (where did that year go?) and we again host the popular Inter-Society Waterways Quiz, it is with great pleasure that we welcome the participating teams. We have the same line-up as last year with teams from IWA Salisbury Group, IWA Solent & Arun Branch, IWA Guildford & Reading Branch and, of course, Southampton Canal Society. We had hoped this year to have included a Ladies' Team but, unfortunately, there were not enough volunteers. Perhaps next year? As the current reigning champions it has fallen upon our own Society to organise this year's Quiz and I am delighted that Eric Lewis has again agreed to be the Quizmaster. As always, the Quiz will be followed by the traditional American Supper.

January Meeting

Another tradition – at our next meeting, on 7 January, we will be holding our annual Members' Photographic Evening and Competition. Further details are in this Newsletter.

2010 Programme

Our Secretary, Angela Rose, has again provided us with an entertaining programme of speakers for the new year. Just a couple of tasters - in February Eric and Sue Lewis will be showing us slides of 'Round Britain in the 1970's' whilst Alan Copeland will be visiting us in March with "Curiosities of the Chilterns". Further details of our 2010 programme will be published in a future Newsletter.

Society New Year Lunch

As members are aware, all places for the Society's New Year Lunch at the Blue Hayes Restaurant on Saturday 16 January have been taken up. If any members who have booked subsequently find themselves unable to attend, due to illness or whatever, can they please contact Maureen Greenham straight away so that any spare places can be offered to members on the reserve list. Also, if any members haven't yet paid, can they please do so without delay. Many thanks. We can all look forward to another enjoyable event.

To maintain the festive spirit, if anybody has crackers or party-poppers left over from their Christmas and New Year gatherings, it would be helpful if they could bring them along. We would rather end up with too many, than not enough. Thanks.

Society Skittles Evening

Maureen Greenham is currently working towards the booking of a further Society Skittles Evening, this time the venue will be the 'Phoenix' in Twyford. Dates under consideration are Fridays 19 or 26 February. Details will be confirmed as soon as possible.

British Waterways Property Portfolio

An e-petition against the possible sell-off of British Waterways' property has been posted on the 10 Downing Street web site. Further details of this possible threat and the petition are published elsewhere in this Newsletter and I would urge all our members to sign this petition, the process for doing so being very straightforward.

As I was completing my input for this Newsletter I received an email from the IWA with the news that, in just a few days the petition has already attracted 9,000 signatures; an Early Day Motion had now been tabled in the House of Commons; and there will be an End of Day Adjournment Debate on 30 November.

Russell Coles

Our thoughts are with former Society members, Tony and Jackie Coles, who recently lost their son Russell (27) in an accident. Tony and Jackie were members for many years, Tony having served on the Committee and he was the editor of our Newsletter, prior to Peter Oates. Our condolences have been expressed to Tony and Jackie and Russell's younger brother, Philip.

Monthly Raffle

Following the appeal in our last Newsletter, many thanks for the prizes donated for our Raffle which were very much appreciated. Don't forget, David Townley-Jones would be happy to receive any unwanted Christmas presents that are suitable for future prizes.

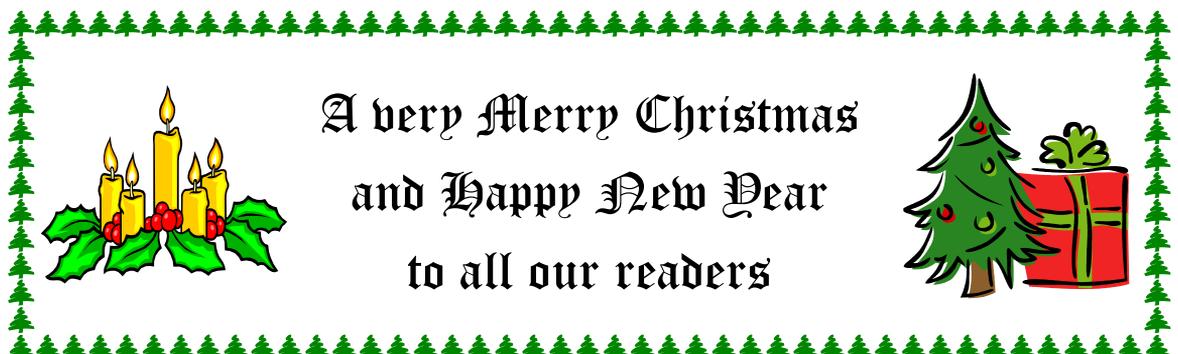
Membership Subscriptions

Sorry to bore you with another reminder that if you haven't yet paid your membership subscription for the current year (£15 for individuals and £22 for couples/family membership), can you please see our Treasurer & Membership Secretary, Anne Coleman, as soon as possible. Many thanks.

Seasonal Greetings to all our Members

It just leaves me to wish all Society members A Very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Paul Herbert



SOS 2010 Campaign

Waterways funding continues to be a major concern. The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is alarmed at the depth of the cut in grant-in-aid for British Waterways for next financial year (2010/11). It is being reduced from this year's available grant of £57.448m to just £47.848m, representing a reduction of over 16.7%. IWA is concerned that the Environment Agency will receive similar treatment.

IWA has launched a national campaign called SOS 2010 (Save Our System) in response to the cuts

SOS2010 is additionally supported by Association of Waterway Cruising Clubs, The Boating Association, National Association of Boat Owners, Residential Boat Owners Association, Royal Yachting Association, Save Our Waterways.

The aim of SOS 2010 is to encourage all local waterways stakeholders - societies, trusts, boat hire companies, businesses, local community groups - to collaborate locally and to pursue local action, such as towpath events and communication with the local

media, publicising the benefits of the waterways in their area, highlighting the effect of the cuts on the quality of local waterways and encouraging communities to care about them.

IWA is calling upon all stakeholders to work together and in partnership with local navigation authority managers to identify issues of poor maintenance and slipping standards, especially those issues affecting safety and to report them at www.sos2010.org.uk

The collection of evidence about problems caused by underfunding locally will allow us to build the national picture so that no-one can deny the effect of these cuts and so that the underfunding can be reversed.

IWA has written to several national organisations including the British Canoe Union, Sustrans, Ramblers Association asking them for support. It is now encouraging all waterways supporters in the mean time to mobilise and engage with these groups at a local level and to encourage their support and participation.

IWA Head Office Bulletin no. 153 October 2009

British Waterways' Property Portfolio

Well informed parliamentary sources lead IWA to believe that British Waterways' property portfolio will be put up for sale as part of the Government's 'fire-sale' of assets in order to help plug the spending deficit.

The removal of BW's assets is a significant and retrograde step, it will cause an extra £45 million hole in BW's budget at a time when the grant in aid has already been slashed by more than half since 2003/4. It is not over stating the case to say that this in general terms means the end of BW's shared aim with government to become more self sufficient. It will lose its autonomy and discretion over its spending priorities as a result, and be wholly at the mercy of whatever grant government is able to find. This will undoubtedly, once implemented, put the operations of the waterways under impossible strain owing to lack of adequate funding.

This comes only seven months after the Government's decision in April that BW's good track record with its property meant that it would stay in BW's hands in a wholly-owned subsidiary.

Selling off its assets would mean that BW would be £85 million short of the £120 million it needs to run the canals and waterways of this country.

That will mean inevitable decay and disrepair and will undoubtedly

lead to closure as the organisation contracts to preserve a core network - this impact may include the locks and tow path on a canal or river near to you.

We will be back in the dark ages of state ownership of the late 1940's.

The ability of BW's property portfolio to support BW's operations is at the heart of how the waterways are run, funding over half of its operations. The cash generated helps keep the waterways open and running. This revenue is also at the core of its strategy to move towards the third sector under the 20/20 proposals. This becomes an impossible dream if these proposals are implemented.

For the price of less than half a day's interest payments on the national debt government is not just selling off the family silver, but the family trust fund - it is cashing in something valuable and part of the heritage of the waterways for a 'pile of beans'.

**IF YOU THOUGHT SOS WASN'T IMPORTANT
IT OUGHT TO BE NOW**

EVERYTHING IS AT STAKE

IWA Waterways - Winter 2009

England's artificial reef

Thanks to Alan and Angela Rose who spotted this item of news:

SHIP operators need to be specially cautious around the coast of Bournemouth, England, after a new reef was built.

Europe's first artificial reef was officially opened to new marine creatures in the English Channel, off the coast of Boscombe Spa village near Bournemouth last week. Unlike the man-made reefs in the Gulf of Mexico, which use toppled, rusted-up, old oil platforms, the one off southern England was built with bags of enthusiasm and geo textile materials.

It was designed and built by California and New Zealand-based environmental group Amalgamate Solutions and Research to introduce a new hazard to shipping in the Channel. It is nestled

nically in Poole Bay close to The Solent and outside the mouth of the UK's largest natural harbour.

ASR claims it will help marine life in the area, reduce erosion on local sandy beaches and promote tourism. As if Bournemouth had any problem in attracting tourists, being one of the largest tourist towns in the UK.

ASR's next job is to introduce one of these artificial reefs to the Asian sub-continent. It is constructing India's first coastal protection reef outside one of India's top tourist towns, Kovalam, near Kerala off the east coast.

Lloyd's List - 30 October 2009

The IWA case against selling BW canal-side property

Key points:

- Makes no economic sense. The property portfolio provides BW with about £45m in revenue – over a third of the money it needs to run the waterways properly and almost half of the maintenance budget. The Government already doesn't give BW enough grant to run the waterways. Disastrous for BW's finances.
- BW has an annual shortfall of £30m in the money it needs to maintain the waterways properly. That gets worse in 2010/11. Government grant reduces by 17% making it a £40m funding gap. Losing another £45m makes the shortfall £85m. A huge chunk of the £125m BW needs to operate its network.
- Government has been reducing grant and will want to continue reducing it. That can only lead to waterways falling into dereliction, and as safety becomes compromised, closures.
- BW's vision to turn itself into a third sector "trust" organisation in tatters. Over time this could get the cost of running the waterways off the Government's balance sheet. But can't be done overnight. Would need the property revenue to help support operations. Without that it can't be done.
- A desperate measure. The Operational Efficiency Review as recently as April gave BW a clean bill of health. It recognised that BW had achieved significant growth in its canal-side property portfolio. No suggestion that it should be sold off. The only reason is the plight of the public finances.
- The proceeds from the sale would make an insignificant contribution towards reducing the national debt – less than a day's borrowing this year.

Losses are:

- All the public benefits, recognised by Government. Headline benefits are urban and rural regeneration, health, social integration and cohesion, an ever expanding leisure facility.
- The taxpayers money invested - £750m over the last 10 years.
- Volunteer effort over many years.
- BW's aim of more self sufficiency, until now supported by Government, becomes unachievable. Will become almost entirely dependent on the taxpayer. BW will lose autonomy and ability to prioritise investment. Last time this happened, in the 1940s, the system nearly closed.
- Cashing in a public asset. Equivalent to selling off a National Park. Indefensible. Not just selling off the family silver, but the family trust fund. The nation's heritage not theirs to sell.

ALL PARTIES INTERESTED IN THE WATERWAYS MUST JOIN TOGETHER TO FIGHT THIS WITH ALL MEANS AT THEIR DISPOSAL. IF WE DON'T THE WATERWAYS AS WE KNOW THEM ARE FINISHED.

BACKGROUND

The Operational Efficiency Review

The 2008 Budget announced that the Government would take action, through the Operational Efficiency Programme (OEP), to ensure that future efforts to drive efficiency in the public services kept pace with developments in the private sector.

Advisors were appointed to examine key areas.

The OEP presented its final report to Government on 21 April 2009.

Its conclusion on British Waterways was that it had achieved significant growth on its canal-side property portfolio. The only comment of substance was that under current economic conditions it was important for the company to remain focussed on

maximising gains from its property while also delivering excellence in management of the waterways. This will be enhanced by managing the canal-side property portfolio through a dedicated, wholly-owned subsidiary of British Waterways.

British Waterways is understood to have acted on that recommendation. The OEP made no suggestion that ownership of this portfolio by British Waterways was misplaced or that it would be better managed by the private sector.

This is confirmation of independent advice taken by British Waterways on its property performance that concluded that the company had consistently out-performed the Investment Property Databank – a widely accepted benchmark for performance in the property industry. Confirmation that it manages its property well.

DEFRA Steer

In March 2008 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) gave British Waterways a

DEFRA Strategic Steer for Business Planning

.In the context of self sufficiency, the steer stated that it wanted:

'...BW to grow its commercial business and alternative sources of funding so it can both invest more in the network and reduce central government's commitment over time.'

DEFRA Grant-in-Aid

The DEFRA grant-in-aid is insufficient to bridge a British Waterways funding gap between the resources needed to maintain the network in 'steady state' and the finance available to the company. KPMG has estimated the shortfall to be £30m per annum. In response to that British Waterways has restructured and brought into effect cost efficiencies to achieve a saving of £10m. However there is to be a nearly 17% reduction in grant-in-aid for British Waterways from DEFRA for the year 2010/11. The base level of grant will be £52.848m, which includes £5m brought forward to 2009/10, so £47.848m cash in the year itself. This means that there is an effective year on year reduction in England and Wales of £4.6m or £4.6m plus the £5m brought forward = £9.6m (in 2009/10 the base level of grant is £57.448m).

Since British Waterways restructuring will deliver the £10m savings over time, the immediate effect of the reduction in grant for 2010/11 is to worsen British Waterways' financial situation, rendering the £30m annual shortfall closer to £40m in the short term. British Waterways realises £45m in revenue from its property portfolio. Depriving British Waterways of this revenue means that its annual funding shortfall increases to about £85m. A large constituent of the £125m per annum British Waterways needs to run its waterways. To bridge that gap with grant-in-aid the Government would have to nearly double the grant it makes available to British Waterways annually.

British Waterways and the Third Sector

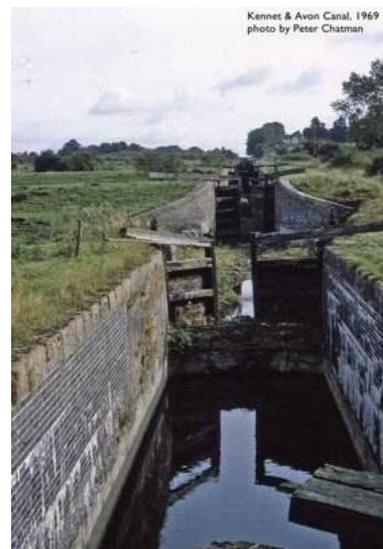
British Waterways has a vision to move itself into the third sector and is in an ongoing debate with stakeholders in developing that vision. IWA would like to see that developed but can envisage how in principle that can convey benefits. However, the British Waterways vision involves central government providing funding to that third sector organisation under a contract. It becomes far more costly for Government to assist British Waterways to achieve its aims if the company cannot transform itself into a third sector organisation taking with it a dowry of the property portfolio. In practice IWA believes that the loss of the property portfolio makes the British Waterways vision unachievable.

www.waterways.org.uk/News/LatestWaterwaysNews

Don't let this kind of dereliction happen again - This is what will happen if we do nothing!



Left: Caen Hill , Kennet and Avon Canal -Today



Right: Caen Hill , Kennet and Avon Canal - Previously

You may know about the media speculation that the Government intends to include the British Waterways' property portfolio as a component of the £16bn asset sale.

The Government has made no announcements and is steadfastly refusing to be drawn on the subject.

We have been using this period of silence as a window of opportunity to lobby Ministers. We have orchestrated a political lobby in both the Commons and latterly the Lords to pressurise Government, and have briefed radio and national TV, using an array of reasons to support the argument that a sale would be in no-one's interest.

We stand the best chance of preventing this sale if the Government can be persuaded not to do so, during this period of Ministerial silence. Whilst no announcements have been made, it is easier for Government to back away as it involves no public reversal of policy.

However, an e-petition has appeared on the 10 Downing Street website:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/protectourcanals/>

IWA supports the statements in the petition. The worst outcome now that this is in the public domain, would be if this petition receives scant support. That might give Ministers the impression that there are few waterways supporters who care very much about the issue. On the other hand, if it is well supported, the Government, this close to an election, is very sensitive to actions it might take which may lose votes, and would probably take notice.

I am therefore urging you to sign up to this petition - if you agree with it, and ask that you encourage everyone that you know, to also sign up.

We need more signatures than our membership, or even the total number of boaters in the UK – So please ask all of your colleagues, friends and family and e-mailable contacts to help us today! – and ask them to pass this message on as well - we need all of the UK to know about this and to respond on line .

The future of the waterways could depend on your actions today – Please act, and pass this message on.

Thank you

Clive Henderson

IWA national chairman

nationalchairman@waterways.org.uk

Inland Waterways Association News Flash - 24 November 2009

By the time this Newsletter was going to press on Sunday 29 November, support had seen the petition rocket to 15th position (out of more than 4700 petitions) with over 13 000 signatures in 10 days, and this rapid rise is eliciting immense national media interest. Anyone concerned about the funding of British Waterways and our canals and rivers is still invited to go to the web site and sign up in support at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/protectourcanals/>

NOTE: the petition expires in 2010 (that's next year!). So please don't think it's out of date (as some of you have) and refuse to sign up - we need everyone's support NOW! - Please help us to continue to grow this petition URGENTLY.

An Early Day Motion (No. 233) has now been tabled in the House of Commons by Bob Laxton MP Chair of the all party Parliamentary Waterways Group, concerning 'Inland Waterways and Funding', supporting the actions of the IWA, and recognising the serious threat to funding that the possible sale of British Waterways' Assets might have on the operation of the canal and rivers network:

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=39776&SESSION=903>

IWA is also pleased that Linda Waltho MP secured an End of Day Adjournment Debate on Funding for British Waterways on the 30th November in the House of Commons: http://www.parliament.uk/about_commons/speakers_office/edadjourns.cfm This was due to be televised on the Parliamentary Channel - on Freeview.

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.

Recently, OS grid references and/or postcodes have been added (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
Thu 3 Dec 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz. Followed by an American Supper. Teams: IWA Salisbury, Solent & Arun, Guildford & Reading, Southampton CS. Possible a challenge from a Ladies Team! Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat 5 Dec 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Otter holt construction near Southampton	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: pollyw@hwt.org.uk Web: www.itchennavigation.org.uk
Tue 8 Dec 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Scrub clearance in Winchester.	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: pollyw@hwt.org.uk Web: www.itchennavigation.org.uk
Thu 10 Dec 2009 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Christmas dinner at The Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Wed 16 Dec 2009 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Brian Stovold - 'The Wilts and Berks Canal - Past, Present and Future.' Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 17 Dec 2009 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Talk - details to be announced. The Radstock Working Men's Club, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk
Sun 20 Dec 2009 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	2 mile walk - Camerton and its association with the S.C.C. Meet: Near the Old Post Office, Red Hill, Camerton, BA2 0PB. (ST681579)	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk
Thu 7 Jan 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Members Photographic Evening, Slides, Prints and Photo Competition. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Wed 20 Jan 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Peter Oates - 'The Itchen Navigation'. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 21 Jan 2010 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Liz Payne, Chairman of Cotswold Canal Trust will talk about restoring the Cotswold Canals. The Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
27 Jan 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	A Racy Victorian Lady Restored - The restoration of the Goring built Thames steam umpiring launch Consuta, by Derek Brown Of The Consuta Trust. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 4 Feb 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Eric & Sue Lewis show slides "Round Britain in the 1970's." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Wed 17 Feb 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Roddy McKee - 'Tale of Two Steamers - Waverley and Kingswear Castle'. The history and ongoing upkeep of these two restored, sea-going paddle steamers. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Wed 24 Feb 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	The Cotswolds Canals Restoration by Liz Payne, Chairman of Cotswolds CT. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 4 Mar 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Alan Copeland with "Curiosities of the Chilterns." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Wed 17 Mar 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Ron and Myra Glover - 'Crossing Germany from West to East'. Ron and Myra will be describing and illustrating their cruises in Germany in their steel motor cruiser. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Wed 31 March 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Boat Building & Industry at Honey Street (on the K&A) by Adrian Softley. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Sun 20 Dec 2009, 17 Jan, 21 Feb, 21 Mar 2010 1.00pm	Paul Barnett	Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett, Marine Historian. Tour fee £3.50 per person. Approx 2 hours weather permitting. Meet Purton Lower Bridge, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (S0692044).	Paul Barnett: 07833 143231 Email: barnadillo@aol.com Web: www.friendsofpurton.org.uk

The Newsletter

I make no apology for devoting so much space in this month's Newsletter to British Waterways' funding cuts and the possibility that BW's non-operational property assets may be taken away from it. I believe that these pose the greatest threat to the waterway network since BW's establishment in 1963. Hopefully, the information within these pages will help your understanding of the issues. I urge you to sign the petition on the 10 Downing Street website - the process is quite simple. In addition, you might wish to

contact your MP to let him / her know all about the threat and urge their support for this cause.

Several members have recently sent me items for possible inclusion in the Newsletter and my thanks to them for doing so. Whilst I have managed to include one such item, I'm afraid that others have had to be "held over". Maybe there'll be room next month. Copy date for any more items: New Year's Day.

Peter Oates

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.

President:

Brian Evans.

Chairman:

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Email: scs@whitenap.plus.com

Society Website:

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

Meetings:

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

November Meeting Tim Dodwell – “Life Before WRG”

At last month's meeting we were pleased to welcome Tim Dodwell, who told us how he first became involved in waterway restoration – long before the formation of the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG).

His first experience was in the mid-50s on the restoration of the River Avon. He told us about the early IWA working groups that worked on a number of restoration projects. We heard about the saving of the (South) Stratford Canal and the fight with bureaucracy on the Stourbridge Canal.

Coming nearer to our own area, Tim described his and others experiences on the Basingstoke Canal where, in 1961, he was based in Chertsey. At that time the canal was just about navigable at its lower end. We heard about the various owners of the Basingstoke and the famous auction in 1949 when the IWA sought to acquire the canal, and thought they had, but they had been outwitted by others. The canal then came into the ownership of the New Basingstoke Canal Company Ltd and Mrs Joan Marshall became the General Manager. In, perhaps, a quirk of fate Tim later married one of her daughters, Elizabeth.

Tim continued with stories about restoration of the Kennet & Avon Canal, the Caldon Canal, Marple Locks and the Peak Forest Canal and various other waterways.

Tim, who has had a long association with the Basingstoke Canal, told us the history of the steam dredger 'Perseverance' which was then brought onto the Basingstoke and carried out such essential work over many years.

We then learnt about the formation of the Waterway Recovery Group which, whilst not replacing all existing working groups, took over the main mantle of restoration work on derelict and near derelict canals, under the overall auspices of the IWA.

The remaining part of the evening was taken up with a question and answer session. A number of members of our Society, both past and present, had of course been involved in waterway restoration, particularly on the Basingstoke and Kennet & Avon Canals.

Many thanks Tim for an interesting evening.

Paul Herbert



NB Stanton on the Oxford Canal in July 2009 carrying 15 tonnes of coal.

Although not fully laden, this was the first sizeable cargo the boat had carried since October 1970 on the last Jam 'Ole Run.

Photo: Laura Sturrock

Members' Photographic Evening and Competition

The meeting on the 7th January will be our annual Members' Photographic Evening. This will give everyone the opportunity to show some pictures - especially those who feel unable to make up a whole evening's show. If you can put together up to a **maximum** of around a dozen pictures (even just one or two) that you feel will entertain / educate / amuse your fellow members, look them out for this evening.

As in the last few years, we will be able to project digital pictures. Please bring your photos (virtually any format will do) either on CD or USB Flash/Pen Drive. This year, we won't be able to read memory cards (such as CF, SM, SD, XD, MMC, Memory Stick).

As usual, we will be able to project prints (up to 7" x 5") onto the screen as well as transparencies and digital pictures.

Again, the evening will also incorporate a photographic competition. To be held just before the tea interval, this will be open to all members - you don't have to be showing other pictures during the evening. What we're looking for is one picture which can be anything to do (even loosely) with the waterways. The competition will be judged by all those present at the meeting. And as an incentive to enter, there will be a mystery prize given to the winner.

Peter Oates