



Newsletter

December 1998

Issue 326

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas
and a prosperous New Year to all our readers

World Heritage Waterways

The IWA, which suggested to Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, that all Britain's inland waterways should be considered for nomination for World Heritage Site status, has met to discuss the proposals with senior officials at the Department. IWA was also joined by representatives of British Waterways and the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council, who had made similar recommendations.

At the meeting, it was made clear that for a number of reasons that the Department could not accept such a large nomination as IWA has proposed. Nor would they accept the "narrow canal system" as BW had proposed; but they agreed there was merit in our persuasive argument that a greater length of waterway might be appropriate for consideration, rather than limiting the nomination to the few structures or short lengths of canal which had originally been short listed.

There is a need to ensure adequate protection, both in a legal and planning sense, is in place for sites nominated in order to satisfy the international judges. Also, the provision of an adequately reasoned and acceptable case is necessary to support the content of such a nomination. There appears to be agreement amongst all parties that protection, provided it is handled sensitively, could bring considerable benefits to the country's waterways - irrespective of World Heritage Site inscription.

Nomination of the inland waterways for World Heritage status is based upon the way that British canals were

financed and developed as a major contributor to the industrial revolution, together with their subsequent maintenance more or less 'as was'. This is an economic phenomenon which has considerable merit for inscription. IWA understands that a linear site (ie a string of waterways) will be seriously considered by the Department and its advisers.

IWA believes that there is a need for the right protective mechanism to be in place for Britain's inland waterways to identify components, patterns, and protect both individual items and the totality. It is accepted by all parties that there is an active management system in place for the waterways, that they are now heritage sensitive and that there are already elements of listing, scheduling and also conservation areas.

At her final IWA Council Meeting as National Chairman, Audrey Smith said, "I am pleased that this final initiative in my period as Chairman is already beginning to bear fruit. I look forward to hearing of the benefits which the Association is able to bring to the inland waterways by using this consultation exercise as a starting point."

IWA hopes that the Secretary of State will make known his decision early next year. Meetings so far have provided a focal point for those concerned to work together to consider enhancing the appropriate protection of the waterways and waterside.

IWA Press Release - 19 November 1998

NEW IWA NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

Last month, the IWA announced the election of its new National Chairman, Richard Drake, who takes over from Audrey Smith who has retired from the role after 4 years.

Richard Drake has been an active member of IWA since 1978. One time Chairman of IWA's Chester and District Branch, he was later appointed as Western Region Chairman. In 1997, Richard became Deputy National Chairman of IWA and, having recently retired from his career as a computer manager, was ideally placed to take over the National Chairman's role and devote more of his time to the Association.

Coventry & Ashby Canals

The new map from GEOprojects covering these two canals, plus the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, has at last arrived. In the Spring, the publishers announced the map would be in the shops shortly but it took until October before supplies reached the Society. At the same time, a map of the Trent & Mersey Canal was also announced but this is unlikely to be seen before next Spring.

Despite this, the new map is up to the usual high standards to be expected from GEOprojects. Get your copy (or a Christmas present for someone special) from the stand and, at the same time, help the Society.

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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MEETINGS

1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm
St John's Ambulance Hall,
King's Park Road, Southampton

**FORTHCOMING SOCIETY
EVENTS**

- 4th Dec** Annual Inter-Society Quiz and American Supper
- 7th Jan** "The History of Water Mills and Windmills" by John Silman
- 4th Feb** "The Ups and Downs of Belgian Waterways" - Ron and Myra Glover
- 4th March** Members' Slide Evening
- 1st April** "Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration" with Clem Barnett
- 6th May** Day Star Theatre
- 3rd June** AGM followed by Waterway Videos
- 1st July** Talk by Neil Kearns of the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society
- 5th August** Ray Brooks will be Demonstrating Canal Crafts
- 7th Oct** A visit by Trevor Thornton of Commercial Narrow Boat Operators Association

November Meeting

Although the Society is concerned with canals, and hence boats, the November meeting was surely the first to feature a boat that has travelled some of our inland waterways actually "in the flesh" (so to speak) at the front of the hall. Peter Glover entertained us, and even educated us, with stories about his boats and his travels in them as a sailor and oarsman.

We learnt how he has designed various small boats over the years and he showed us some of the models he had made to "prove" his ideas before moving on to building them. The boat on display could even be taken apart into two pieces so that it could be fitted into Peter's Volkswagen van - a feat that was demonstrated after the meeting. We also saw how, with a canvas awning, it was possible to sleep aboard the boat.

Although Peter does not take slides, he was able to project pictures of some of his adventures onto the silver screen with the aid of John Silman's epidiascope. His trips have included an 11-day journey, in the company of another small boat, down the Thames from Lechlade, the usual upstream limit of navigation. They travelled through the centre of London and on to Benfleet in Essex. The Thames Barrier looks very big from a small boat. But Peter has also journeyed upstream from Lechlade to the legal head of navigation at Cricklade; only just possible, even in a boat as small as his.

Peter's passion for small boats has taken him to all our local waterways, including the Titchfield Canal and even seen him rowing across the Solent to the Isle of Wight on a number of occasions.

It really was an excellent idea for Peter to bring one of his boats along to the meeting. It enabled everyone to see at first hand what was involved and to appreciate the problems and delights of constructing your own small boat and using it for pleasure. I am certain that everyone present found the meeting most enjoyable. Thank you, Peter.

Joan Reed

It is with the deepest regret, I have to announce the death of Joan Reed who passed away, at the age of 83, on Thursday 26th November after a short illness. Joan, and her husband John, joined the Southampton Canal Society in its very early days and took part in many of its activities. In 1971, when John retired, the couple moved up to Braunston to live near the canals they so enjoyed. They were often to be seen around the system with their boat, the *Braunston Mayfly*, or tied up at their mooring at Braunston Stop. Although I did not know them well, I remember John and Joan always making me most welcome whenever I passed through Braunston.

Joan always maintained her membership of the Society and took an interest in all the news. It was very good to see her in June last year when she made the long journey to Southampton in order to attend the Society's 30th birthday party. She obviously enjoyed the occasion and meeting so many friends again.

The funeral will take place at Braunston Church on Saturday 5th December 1998 at 11.00am when Joan will be laid to rest beside her late husband.

Peter Oates

Members' Slides Evening

Please remember that you will have the opportunity of showing some of your slides at the March meeting. You should put together between 10 and 20 pictures that might be of interest to other members. To help with the organisation, please let Eric Lewis know your intention by the February meeting.

Distributed by: Hunt & Co, Chartered Accountants, 123/124 High Street,
Southampton, SO14 2AA. Tel: 01703 225255

Membership Recruitment

The Society has been approached by the IWA who are looking at ways of strengthening their links with waterway groups. One of these ways

Wilts & Berks Canal

In 1996 the then Thamesdown District Council made a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to restore a length of canal in Swindon and also to create a wetland and children's play area. The bid encompassed a 2 km stretch of canal, half to be dredged or excavated and the other half subject to an interpretation trail.

A year later, the interpretation aspect was dropped but the remainder has been accepted for a grant by the Fund. The developer of an adjacent housing estate has provided a large donation, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust has offered a contribution and the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group has pledged an amount of volunteer labour. A grant covering 76% of the total project cost of £484,475 was finalised earlier this year.

Swindon Borough Council (as successors to Thamesdown) have decided to use the services of the chairman of Swindon branch of the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group to co-ordinate the £350,000 canal aspect of the scheme.

The project comprises a 1km length of canal between a main road in Swindon and a 0.7 km length of canal previously restored, on farmland. The 1 km section consists of

(a) 200 m of filled-in canal that requires the diversion of a water main and a gas main, amongst other services, prior to excavating,

(b) 500 m of watered, but heavily silted canal which needs only to be dredged, and then

(c) a further 300m of filled-in canal to be excavated.

Also included in the project is the reconstruction of a stone farm bridge and a spill-weir. Work on the project has now started and should be completed by summer 1999.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - November 1998

has been to encourage IWA members to join their local group, and likewise to encourage members of that group to join the IWA. Some months ago, they undertook a mailing exercise with a canal restoration group, whereby they wrote to each other's members in the area near to the restoration scheme to encourage supporters to be members of both organisations. It was claimed to be a very successful exercise for both parties.

IWA would like to repeat the exercise with this Society. Before agreeing to give any names and addresses to IWA, we wish to be certain that there would be no objections from our

members. Laura Sturrock, our membership secretary, has also written to IWA seeking assurances that names and addresses would not be forwarded to any third party.

To help keep track of our members and in order to print address labels for sending out copies of the newsletter, names and addresses of members are kept on computer.

Please ring or write to Laura if you have any objection to your name and address being given to IWA or to them being kept on computer. If Laura has not heard from you by the next meeting (7th January 1999), she will assume that permission has been granted.

CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

GEOProjects Maps

Inland Waterways of Britain	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations.....	£3.75
The Broads	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals NEW!	£3.75
Grand Union Canal (each).....	£3.75
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford	
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames	
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash	
Kennet & Avon Canal	£3.75
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals.....	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75
Oxford Canal	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal	£3.75
The Thames Map	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal COMING SOMETIME!	£3.75

Ball Point Pens – Embossed 50p

Burgees – Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side..... £8.00

Decorated Mugs..... £2.25

Notelets – with drawings of canal and Romsey scenes £1.00
(by Brian Evans)

Shopper Bags – Cotton with screen-printed Society logo each side.. £2.25

Society Members Badges – Enamel 75p

Sweat Shirts – 30th Anniversary in Light Grey..... £16.00
with multi-coloured embroidered Society logo on breast

Sweat Shirts – Standard in Navy or Royal Blue £15.00
with Society logo embroidered on breast

Tea Towels – Various colourful designs £2.50 & £3.25

Tee Shirts – Screen printed with Society logo across chest £6.50
in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large
in Red - medium

Visit the Sales Stand at Society meetings and place your orders with Paul Herbert or Ray Brooks.

Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust have secured ownership of a 250 metre section of canal at Over, near Gloucester, from Gloucester Health Authority, in a deal whereby a contractor building houses on the adjacent plot of land will pay for the complete restoration of this section of canal. The length of canal had been completely infilled over the years and recent trial digs have shown the location of the former lock at Over. The restoration work is to be carried out in a nine month period by workers employed under the Government's New Deal, and includes a lock cottage, which along with the length of canal will become the property of the Canal Trust. The lock cottage is likely to be used as a visitor centre.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - November 1998

Lichfield & Hatherton Canals

Opponents of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road suffered a set back in mid October after the High Court dismissed claims by the Alliance Against the BNRR that Government consent for the road was unlawful. The road building, which will make both the Lichfield and Hatherton Canal restorations more difficult, is expected to start in about 18 months time.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - November 1998

IWA Web-site

An error has crept in to the web-site address on some of the change of address notices for IWA's new head office. The correct web-site address is:

<http://www.waterway.demon.co.uk/index.htm>

New IWA e-mail addresses

A new e-mail system has been installed, at no cost, in Head Office. As well as providing internal e-mail for Head Office staff, the new set up also expands our internet e-mail facilities and the following e-mail addresses are now in use:

General enquiries: iwa@waterway.demon.co.uk

Membership: membership@waterway.demon.co.uk

Mail Order Sales enquiries: sales@waterway.demon.co.uk

Web site enquiries: webmaster@waterway.demon.co.uk

Heritage Expenditure and Visits

In a recent consultation response to Government, IWA made the point that an element of grant to navigation authorities should be coming from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, in addition to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, in acknowledgement of the heritage, recreational and educational benefits to the population at large.

An analysis of the latest available (1996/7) Annual Report and Accounts from English Heritage, showed a total income of £133.7 million, of which £108.9 million was government grant aided. A simple analysis shows that:

Overall, English Heritage spent £48 million on its 409 historic properties (the rest being grants given, research and administration, etc.). The Report reveals that there were 5.9 million visits to English Heritage's 119 staffed properties and 5.4 million to its free sites. The average government grant per visit works out to £3.46.

It is the comparison with visits to BW's waterways which is interesting. Here the government grant is about £50 million per year and there are 159 million visits. The average government grant per visit works out to 31.4p - less than one tenth of the support for English Heritage visits.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - November 1998

Routine Maintenance on BW's Waterways

A number of boaters have written to IWA Head Office, or to members of Council, over the Summer to say that routine maintenance works on some of BW's network seem not to be taking place with the same frequency and standard as in the past.

Whilst the general point has been taken up with BW at a senior level, and comments noted, specific examples of concern are needed if progress is to be made in having shortcomings rectified.

Many IWA members do take up specific problems on the waterways with the local waterway staff, but are requested to copy specific instances to either IWA Head Office, or to John Baylis, Chairman of IWA's Navigation, Technical & Amenities Committee, giving sites and dates where-ever possible. Photographic evidence and any additional information would be helpful.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - November 1998

True or False? (Answers to last month's questions)

5. False: The trial run for Foxton inclined plane was built in 1896 at Bulbourne Depot not Bulls Bridge.
6. True: The two canals originally ran parallel for a mile to Longford before the present junction at Hawkesbury was constructed.
7. False: James Brindley's wife was called Anne Henshall.
8. True: Lenton Chain is the point where the Beeston Cut joins the Nottingham Canal. The Trent Navigation Company used to lock their Beeston Cut with a chain across it from Saturday evening until Monday - without fail. The major part of the Nottingham Canal north of the junction is now closed but the rest of it together with the Beeston Cut form bypass to an unnavigable section of the River Trent.