



Newsletter

Chairman's Column

On behalf of the Southampton Canal Society, I wish you all a very Happy and Enjoyable New Year for 2015.

January 2015 Meeting

We all look forward with eagerness to our Members' Photographic Evening and especially the Competition. The meeting gives us all the opportunity to share our boating experiences and the "fun" we have and see around us on the waterways.

Just before the tea interval, entries for the Photographic Competition will be shown. You don't have to be showing other pictures during the evening to enter. One picture only to do with the waterways.

Thank you to David Doulton for offering again the use of his digital projector.

Society Christmas / New Year Lunch

We have organised our now traditional Christmas / New Year Lunch which will be held on Saturday 10th January meeting at around 12.30. The venue is Keats Restaurant, Winchester Road, Ampfield, SO51 9BQ (OS Grid ref: SU400232). Telephone: 01794 368252. The restaurant is on the opposite side of the road from The White Horse pub.

The cost of the lunch is £22.00 and, as discussed, please make your payment direct to Keats by cash or by a card payment on the day.

As usual, please bring along any unused Christmas crackers, party poppers and the like.

February 5th Meeting

Richard Thomas returns with another of his excellent talks: "The River Lee from Luton to Old Ford Lock, London."

March 5th Meeting

This meeting is a special treat and is all about "Evelyn's War" as told by Tim Coghlan, owner of Braunston Marina.

Evelyn Hunt was an "Idle Woman" - one of the women who volunteered to crew a pair of working narrow boats during the Second World War. For much of her time on the boats, Evelyn kept a diary on her life afloat. This wartime diary of gives a fascinating insight into their daily life working on the canals and the Home Front.

Tim will be showing many photographs taken of Evelyn and her companions working their boats.

Thank you all for your support an here's to pleasant boating and all our other outdoor activities that we will enjoy in 2015.

Alan Rose

Canal Trust's joy over lottery cash

A FORMER landfill site will be turned into a wildlife haven after the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust won £50,000 of lottery cash in a TV vote.

The trust scooped the money after featuring on The People's Millions, an ITV feature which sees groups outline their case in a bid for the cash. Viewers then vote to select who will be handed the grant.

Chris Coyle, of the canal trust, said it was wonderful that they had secured the money.

"We were on TV on Wednesday night (26 November) and we heard on Thursday that although we hadn't won, we were the best runner-up and the long and the short of it was that we were voted for by the public and got the £50,000," he said.

"We got people going on the night and we got enough to secure the £50,000. It's wonderful."

He said the money would now be spent on converting a former landfill site at Studley Grange near Swindon into a wildlife corridor, with a standing water habitat and a multi-use path, featuring a

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Bits and Pieces

T&M repairs starting

A SUBSTANTIAL leak was discovered in the Trent & Mersey Canal at Dutton in late November which required immediate closure of the waterway, close to where the major breach occurred in the winter of 2012.

When the canal was drained, a hole about one metre long was found in the original lining of the canal, near the previous repairs.

Repairs were due to start this week with the aim of completion in the early spring. Unfortunately a definite opening date cannot be given at present.

Canal Trust gets more cash

In addition to the lottery cash award of £50,000 (see left), the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust has received a further award for £10,000 from the Yorkshire Building Society from their Lasting Legacy Fund.

This will help to repair a 200 year old brick culvert carrying the Cocklemore Brook under the restored canal at Pewsham near Chippenham that has collapsed. This will re-water the canal which is popular with the local community and a habitat for wildlife.

Waterways Events

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.

| Date / Time | Organiser | Details | Contact |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Thu 8 Jan 2015 7.45pm | Southampton CS | Our members' annual "Waterways Photographic Evening and Competition". Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184). | Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com |
| Sat 10 Jan 2015 | Southampton CS | Christmas / New year Lunch. Further details see page 1. Keats Restaurant, Winchester Road, Ampfield, SO51 9BQ. Booking essential. | Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com |
| Thu 15 Jan 2015 7.30pm | IWA Salisbury Group | Chris Witts returns to talk about "The Severn Bore", something he has written a book about. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR (SU182275). | Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover.3@btinternet.com Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 |
| Thu 15 Jan 2015 7.30pm | Somersetshire Coal CS | "Coal from Camerton Part 2" by Mike Chapman. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). | Steve Page 01761 433418 Web: http://www.coalcanal.org |
| Sun 18 Jan 2015 10.00am | Somersetshire Coal CS | Walk from Camerton to Radford Mill led by Mike Chapman. Meet at the bottom of Red Hill, Camerton BA2 0PD (ST683578). | Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org |
| Tue 20 Jan 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br) | "The Wilts & Berks Restoration" by Brian Stovold. The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses. | John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com |
| Wed 21 Jan 2015 8.00pm | Basingstoke CS | John Gibson - "The National Trust and the Wey Navigations". John, manager of the Wey, will talk about the history of the Wey Navigations and the half century since the Trust's acquisition of the Navigations in 1964. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615). | David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk Web: http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk |
| Wed 28 Jan 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br) | "The Wey Navigations" by John Gibson. Stone Building, Wharf Road, Newbury RG14 5AS (SU472671). Free entry. Car parking £1.00. | Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: kact.newbury@btinternet.com |
| Mon 2 Feb 2015 7.30pm | Wilts & Berks CT | The proprietor of Wilderness Boats, Ian Graham will give a talk. Church Hall, United Reform Church, Wood Street, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 7BD (SU065826). | Cheryll Yeowell: 01793 812708 Email: cheryll.yeowell@wbct.org.uk Web: http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/ |
| Thu 5 Feb 2015 7.45pm | Southampton CS | "The River Lee from Luton to Old Ford Lock, London" with Richard Thomas. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184). | Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com |
| Sun 15 Feb 2015 10.00am | Somersetshire Coal CS | Special visit - venue TBA. Led by Mike Chapman. Further details from Mike. | Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk |
| Tue 17 Feb 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br) | "The whole length of the K&A" - Nick Channer. The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses. | John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com |
| Wed 18 Feb 2015 8.00pm | Basingstoke CS | "Restoration of the Cotswold Canals" by Liz Payne, vice-chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust who will describe restoration to date and current progress along the canals. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615). | David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk Web: http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk |
| Thu 19 Feb 2015 7.30pm | IWA Salisbury Group | Stuart Burroughs will talk about "Fall out - Rolt/Aickmann and the origins of the IWA." The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR (SU182275). | Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover.3@btinternet.com Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 |
| Thu 19 Feb 2015 7.30pm | Somersetshire Coal CS | Social Evening - "Restoration Update" by Derrick Hunt. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). | Steve Page 01761 433418 Web: http://www.coalcanal.org |
| Wed 25 Feb 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br) | "The Wilts & Berks Restoration" by Brian Stovold. Stone Building, Wharf Road, Newbury RG14 5AS (SU472671). Free entry. Car parking £1.00. | Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: kact.newbury@btinternet.com |
| Thu 5 Mar 2015 7.45pm | Southampton CS | "Evelyn's War" with Tim Coghlan. The wartime diary of Evelyn Hunt, an "Idle Woman" which gives a fascinating daily insight into the life on the canals and on the Home Front. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184). | Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com |
| Sun 15 Mar 2015 10.00am | Somersetshire Coal CS | Walk - Tucking Mill. Led by Mike Chapman. Meet: Twinhoe Lane, Midford. Further details from Mike. | Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk |
| Tue 17 Mar 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br) | Branch AGM followed by speaker (to be announced). The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses. | John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com |
| Wed 18 Mar 2015 8.00pm | Basingstoke CS | "The History and Restoration of the famous Crofton Beam Engines" by Jon Wills. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615). | David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk Web: http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk |
| Thu 19 Mar 2015 7.30pm | IWA Salisbury Group | "Twinning - The Kennet & Avon and the Canal du Nivernais." Di Harris will talk about how the twinning with the French canal happened in the 1970s and visits between the two. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR (SU182275). | Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover.3@btinternet.com Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 |
| Thu 19 Mar 2015 7.30pm | Somersetshire Coal CS | Social Evening - "Cotswold Canals - from 'Pie in the Sky' to Front Runner Project" by Ken Burgin of the Cotswold Canals Trust. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). | Steve Page 01761 433418 Web: http://www.coalcanal.org |

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December Meeting

The Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz

As always, our 2014 programme rounded off with the popular Inter-Society Waterways Quiz. Forty five members and guests supported the four teams.

We welcomed a new team this year from the **Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, Devizes Branch** comprising Elaine and John Kirby, Di Harris and Bob Naylor.

The other teams were: **IWA Salisbury Group** with Ron Glover, Colin Davies, Nick Grundy and Frank Wilson; **IWA Guildford & Reading Branch** with Ben Scott, Garth Jones, David Daines and Ray Carnell; **Southampton Canal Society** with Brian Evans, Alan Rose, Peter Oates and David Wilkinson.

As last year's winners IWA Guildford & Reading arranged with SCS member Chris Davey (who has lived near Skipton, Yorkshire for many years) to be their Quizmaster, with Sue Lewis, SCS member who took on again this year the task of keeping up to date with the scores for each round.

Chris started the teams off with a picture identification round plus, as the quiz was not a "Powerpoint" presentation, the audience took part through out the evening.



Above: Peter Oates accepts the trophy from quizmaster Chris Davey

Right: The winning Southampton team

The question rounds were formed from all around the UK and Ireland and included Boat Builders, Tunnels', Historic Boats, Bridges, Locks and Characters' on the "cut", as the teams battled for positions. The picture round on Foreign Canals moved Southampton up on points with Brian Evans continental knowledge.

All the team places were close and a gallant effort and sense of humour by the "first timers" from Devizes was acknowledged.

The Southampton team was very pleased to receive back the magnificent Inter-Society Waterways Quiz Trophy, which they last won in December 2011.

Many thanks to Chris for organising the Quiz and to Sue the scorer and to all team members for their participation.

Thanks to all who generously donated raffle prizes and especially to Pam McKeown for her now traditional prize of a great home-baked Christmas Cake.

The evening finished with the traditional American Supper- many thanks to our members for providing such a wide selection of delicious food and to those who assisted in the galley and the setting up and clearing of the furniture.

Angela Rose



Tideway ban on hire narrow boats

Following a minor incident involving a holiday narrowboat, the Port of London Authority (PLA) has decided hire craft are classified as 'commercial' and have banned them from the Thames Tideway, writes Harry Arnold.

Holiday hire narrowboats have always made the short Tideway passage between the Grand Union Canal at Brentford and the Environment Agency's (EA) non tidal Thames navigation and sometimes the longer voyage down to the Regent's Canal at Limehouse: The PLA seems to have just discovered this.

It now insists such craft must comply with the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) which lays down construction and operational standards for hire vessels operating on MCA categorised waters (ie, those "not proceeding to sea").

This is usually applied to charter craft and mandates all commercial

vessels operating within the geographical boundaries must have a suitably qualified skipper aboard.

There are many other regulations involved such as freeboard which narrowboats cannot comply with.

The irony is that because of the right of public navigation that allows you to take any sort of privately owned craft on the River Thames, subject to the correct licensing tolls, other narrowboats in this category, but of the same construction, can cruise the Tideway at will.

Discussions are currently in hand between representatives of the PLA and those of the Association of Pleasure Craft Operators (APCO) and technical officers of the British Marine Federation (BMF) to see if some sort of compromise solution can be reached.

www.boatingbusiness.com

Waterways Events

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| Date / Time | Organiser | Details | Contact |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Wed 25 Mar 2015 7.45pm | Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br | Branch AGM followed by "The History of Newbury Wharf" by local historian David Peacock. Stone Building, Wharf Road, Newbury RG14 5AS (SU472671). Free entry. Car parking £1.00. | Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: kact.newbury@btinternet.com |

From Southampton to Ely in the Fens 1973

This month we conclude Laurie Pearce's experiences travelling to the IWA National Rally held at Ely on the River Great Ouse in 1973. We resume the story (as written at the time) just after an evening passage through Stanground Lock onto the Middle Level.

We looked desperately for suitable moorings but with the high overgrown banks most of the time, moorings were hard to find. We felt that we had entered a Hampton Court watery maze, but our Ordnance Survey map proved invaluable. One could easily get lost on these waterways. Weed proved too much for our Evinrude outboard in one place and a stop was made to clear it. But soon after we found a suitable bank to which we could moor up for the night in the middle of nowhere, but in fact about two miles from Whittlesey.

Once again out with the pots and pans, a super meal, a yarn with Joan and John on 'Mayfly' and then to bed with only the sound of an odd coot or jumping fish to disturb us, not forgetting Rupert who was already snoring in his own bed!

I awoke at 5am and climbed out of my sleeping bag and peered out of the canopy. The morning mists were rolling along the water and across the Fens and the weather prospects looked good. I was sorely tempted to wait for the sunrise and take a photograph but, not being too energetic a soul, my sleeping bag re-admitted me and I don't remember anymore until 8am. Joan and John in 'Mayfly' set off at 9am to go ahead to March where there was a good boatyard owned by Mr Fox and where they wanted to get their engine "looked at". We had a leisurely breakfast again, gave Rupert his constitutional and left our mooring at 10.50am.

Soon we reached Whittlesey with its notorious bend which excludes full length narrow boats from navigating the Fens. Soon afterwards we passed through Whittlesey Lock, all the work being done by the lock keeper's wife, a fine specimen of a canal lady with whom I should hesitate to engage in argument!

We passed through some floating weed with high banks on each side. We now had 14 miles before we reached March. It was doubtful if the weed cutters had been at work for the first few miles of Whittlesey Dyke. The only weed free channel was in the middle which had obviously been cut by boats which had passed through previously. One or two half narrow boats had passed us whilst moored up and these no doubt with their "Lister weed cutters" had done a good job.

Just past Floods Ferry, where we turned onto the old course of the River Nene, the engine stopped dead. I checked the petrol tank and, although it showed a quarter full on the gauge, it was nevertheless empty! We had however covered 50 miles on 5 gallons of petrol, so can't complain. We drifted into the bank and I refuelled from my spare three gallon cans and we were on our way again.

Within the hour we had covered the 4 miles to March where we found 'Mayfly' tied awaiting the engineer and all the shops closed for half day. We refilled our water containers from a handy hose belonging to the Middle Level Boat Club and, a little way up the road, a Texaco garage topped up my petrol cans.

We had a snack and a glass of beer and enjoyed the sunshine for a while before we set off again at 4pm to wander around the fenland dykes until we came out at Salter's Lode. The five miles to Pophams Eau consisted of a wide and deep waterway most of the way and we were able to travel side by side and hold a conversation with 'Mayfly'. Pophams Eau connected us to the Sixteen Foot Drain where we turned right and headed south.

[Editor's Note: In 1973, the current route to the Great Ouse at Salter's Lode via Well Creek was not navigable although restoration of the Creek had started the previous year and was completed in 1975.]

Laurie's route from Horseway Lock to the Ouse at the Old Bedford Sluice at Salter's Lode is today unavailable as the Environment Agency closed Welches Dam Lock as unsafe in 2006 but has not undertaken any repairs and the Old Bedford Sluice is badly silted up.]

We were passing many anglers even though it was a weekday, but perhaps they were on holiday or on strike! We did try and strike a friendly note with them with "good mornings" etc but it generally fell on stony ground. We seemed to just get scowls and ferocious looks in return! Apparently, there are more fishermen per mile on the Fens than there are in the rest of the country and a local publican told me that they were very anti boat people, which I am inclined to agree with.

Half way down the Sixteen Foot Drain, about 5 miles from the entrance, we spotted a reasonable mooring. It happened to be near a pub and telephone box, both of which we wished to make use of. So a giant leap ashore, a hammering of mooring stakes and we were set for another night under a starry Fenland sky! We had travelled approx 26 miles in 6 hours actual travelling time.

We heard on the previous evening that if we could have got to Salter's Lode by 1pm the next day we could still have got through as the organisers had made a mistake with their calculations regarding the times for getting through the tidal sluice on to the River Great Ouse. It is only possible to get through the sluice gates for a period of about ten minutes when the falling tide on the Ouse makes a level with the Middle Level Navigations. As it was time for Spring Tides they were able to open the sluice gates for a little longer but one had to realise that as many boats as possible had to pass through the sluice while it was open otherwise it meant waiting for another 24 hours.

As we were treating this as a holiday and not a marathon race, we decided to stick to our original timetable and make our way leisurely along the remaining 20 miles and 2 locks so that we could pass onto the Ouse the following day: Thursday. In any case we were hoping that David and Margaret Kessler-Lyne in 'Marave' were not far behind us and would soon be catching up (they were Society members). On the other hand we wanted to be first in the queue or thereabouts when Salter's Lode was opened and it was every man for himself to navigate the flowing Ouse to the safety of Denver Sluice.

We cast off at 10am and covered the remaining 5 miles of the Sixteen Foot Drain before turning left along the Forty Foot or Vermuyden's Drain which extended for three miles before turning into the final long stretch of twelve miles of the Old Bedford River which would take us to Salter's Lode. Along the Forty Foot Drain we negotiated two locks.

The first was Horseway Lock, where the lock key was housed in an iron box which was opened by a combination lock with its "secret" number '4040'. However, three boys who were fishing there seemed to know the combination so with their help we passed through but the paddles were extremely stiff. We actually rose about a foot but the gates were quite high so they probably had to contend with flood conditions occasionally.

The second lock, Welches Dam Lock, was manned by a relief lock keeper. Once again there was a very small rise which was fortunate as there was a very low bridge across the middle of the lock. The gates were opened by a mysterious chain and we noticed that some sparrows had a nest in a small hole behind one of the lower lock gates. It was noticeable that the Forty Foot was abundant with wild flowers, butterflies of all kinds and dragonflies. So obviously pesticides had not been used in the vicinity. It reminded me of my

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boyhood days when all the countryside was the same and we just took the wildlife and flowers for granted.

The morning mists had now gone and the sun streamed down from a cloudless sky. About a mile up the Old Bedford River we had to swing a swing bridge. It happened to be beside the Ship Inn and time for a snack. We stopped for 1½ hours in which time two boats passed us from the Cosgrove Boat Club.

A few more miles and we came to Welney where we hoped to buy bread and milk. To our disgust it was early closing day in Welney so once again we had to tighten our belts. Fortunately we had come well stocked with food so weren't so emaciated as the reader would think! A friendly caravan dweller allowed us to replenish our water bottles from his garden tap and we took the opportunity to go up over Welney Bridge and have a look at the River Delph which runs parallel with the Old Bedford River. An elderly lady who was looking over the bridge told me she was 80 years of age and how lovely it was to see boats on that stretch of water again. She remembered when the lighters pulled by horses used to come up the river! Whilst at Welney, David and Margaret caught us up and enjoyed a cup of tea we had just brewed so we were able to compare notes of the journey so far.

We left at 5.30pm and pressed on up the long straight stretch which seemed everlasting. After about three miles we were confronted by a mountain of weed across the river. We had come across a weed rope which stretched across the river to collect the floating weed as it is cut and you have to lift it up and over the boat, quite a ticklish operation. The last three miles were soon covered and at 7pm we moored up to the bank a hundred yards from the sluice.



Above: An outer set of mitred gates or doors exists on the other side of the bridge at Old Bedford Sluice to keep out high tides on the Great Ouse.

Left: Ely Cathedral seen from the River Great Ouse several miles upstream of the city.

Right: The Cutter Inn at Laurie's destination - the waterfront at Ely.



Above: Welches Dam Lock in 2007 with the Forty Foot Drain stretching away in the distance and is now an unnavigable reed bed.

Below: The inner guillotine gate at Old Bedford Sluice in 2007. This gate replaced a pair of mitred gates in 1996. On the left of the picture is the bridge over Salter's Lode Lock on Well Creek.



As we were unable to negotiate the sluice until 2pm the next day, we looked aghast at the rising River Ouse which was flooding in at a rate of knots. We all thought we would never fight that current with our

puny engines if it ebbed so quickly. However, it apparently floods far quicker than it ebbs and it wasn't to be quite so horrifying as we had at first thought.

At 1.30pm we received instructions from Roger Sexton, one of the local organisers, and dispersed to our boats with queasy stomachs! At 2pm the sluice gates opened and away we went fighting against the current (which was pouring in through the opening) along a short channel and into the main stream where we opened up the throttles and headed for Denver Sluice a quarter of a mile upstream.

As only 5 to 7 boats could lock through Denver Sluice at one time, it meant that some boats would have to wait for nearly an hour and they had a choice of anchoring or just marking time with the engine! The lock was filled and we jostled about outside wondering whether or not to anchor and then the lock keeper called us in to the last space for the second lock full. We hoped that 'Marave' and 'Mayfly' would soon follow but in fact they had to wait until last.

Once out of the lock we headed away upstream in beautiful clear wide water. It was 16 miles to Ely

with no locks and we did it in 3½ hours! At Adelaide Bridge, a mile from the Rally site we went alongside the picket boat for our orders which were handed to us in a large buff envelope. We had been allocated Red No 6 mooring which was just the other side of the Rally site. In another 20 minutes or so we found the mooring and made fast.

So ended our trip of 4½ days during which time we had covered nearly 100 miles of unfamiliar but quite attractive waterways. Now to explore Ely and enjoy the Rally.

Laurie Pearce

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 are normally held on the first Thursday of each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Events) at Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184. Contact the Secretary for further information.

This Newsletter is normally published during the first week of each month in time for the Society's meeting.

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Brian Evans.

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

New bookable visitor mooring site in Little Venice

THE New Year sees the Canal & River Trust launch a new bookable visitor mooring site at Rembrandt Gardens in Little Venice, following positive feedback received during consultation on the Paddington Basin and Little Venice pool mooring proposals earlier this year.

CRT will be working with Bespoke Boating Solutions, a local independent mooring provider who will operate the mooring on a voluntary basis, to pilot the scheme until the summer.

The mooring, alongside Rembrandt Gardens in Browning's Pool, will provide up to three berths, although these will be subject to size limitations. The first bookable moorings will be available from Monday January 5, 2015. The booking line will be open from January 2, 2015.

For all enquiries and bookings please contact RembrandtGardens@gmail.com

Boaters will be able to book the mooring (free of charge) during the

pilot scheme, although this will be reviewed for the summer season in line with the proposals made during the consultation. Bookings will only be possible online, up to one month in advance. The maximum stay time per booking during the pilot period will seven days, with no return within one calendar month. To ensure that all boaters get a fair chance to use the mooring when visiting the Paddington area, boats will be limited to 14 days use of the mooring each year

Sorwar Ahmed, boater liaison manager for London, said "I'm really pleased that we've been able to provide this service for boaters wishing to visit Paddington. It's something we've been working on a for a while, so I'm delighted that Sarah Emmings at Bespoke Boating Solutions has agreed to operate the scheme voluntarily while we pilot it. I hope that this new mooring provides another option for those looking for short term moorings in London".

www.towpathtalk.co.uk 25 December 2014

Lifejackets recommended in review of tunnel safety

WEARING of lifejackets by boaters navigating canal tunnels is being recommended by the Canal & River Trust (CRT).

This follows a CRT review of tunnel safety requested by the North Staffordshire coroner following a fatality within the 2926-yard Harecastle Tunnel on the Trent & Mersey Canal on May 20 this year.

The steerer of a privately owned narrow boat was apparently knocked off the boat in the section of the tunnel where the roof is low when the craft collided with the wall. His waterlogged body, with a broken neck, was not recovered until the following day.

There was also no way which his wife and son could call anyone for help as mobile phones do not work in the tunnel.

The coroner's report makes a number of recommendations such as lifejackets or buoyancy aids should be worn; in which he makes the assumption they are mandatory equipment on narrow boats, which

they are not. He suggests the installation of a telephone system or radio link and also the provision of safety hats.

However, CRT have rejected some of these as being too expensive and have only advised the wearing of lifejackets or buoyancy aids and also not made it mandatory.

The Trust says, "We fully support the Coroner's findings that similar fatalities could be avoided if the casualty is wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid".

However the Trust's advice doesn't just cover tunnels: CRT says "We support the wearing of lifejackets whenever you go boating".

The wearing of safety hats is required for the passage of Standedge Tunnel on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

www.towpathtalk.co.uk 16 December 2014

Wilts & Berks Canal grant

(Continued from page 1)

kilometre of canal banks planted with hedging, shrubs and wild flowers to provide food and shelter for wild bees, insects, water voles and wildfowl. Bat and bird boxes will also be provided, along with benches.

"We're going to be turning that from a landfill site into not just a

restored part of the canal but a wildlife trail as well," Chris said.

He said the group would be working with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Friends Of The Earth on the scheme. Kath Hatton, the vice-chairman of the trust, said: "The project will provide a wonderful amenity for the community with local schools and youth groups being involved."

www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk 29 November 2014