



# NEWSLETTER

## Chairman's Column

### June Meeting

This Evening your Committee Alan, Paul, Angela, Gill, Maureen and David have arranged:

- A Social evening to include a Silent Auction, (Anne Coleman organised one in 2009 and a great time was had by all). Any items of Value (if preferred) can be Auctioned.
- Maureen is running her popular Quiz's and a couple of competitions through out the evening. With Prizes!
- Light refreshments of drinks and nibbles are available.

Here's to an enjoyable evening. The proceeds of this evening will go into our own Society funds.

### Society Burgees

These are available at £12.50 each or £13.50 posted.

### Summer Boat Trip

LAST CHANCE to join the Gosport Ferry boat trip to Beaulieu on 19 July. The cost of £20 includes the sea journey into the Beaulieu River with commentary, travelling past the ships in dock at Southampton, returning via the north side of the Isle of Wight and a

For further details contact Angela, Club Secretary (contact details on the back page).

### July Meeting

This meeting on the 7th July will be a talk on "The History and Design of the 'Bailey Bridge'" with Pablo Haworth. Even I remember my Dad telling me about these. For a sneak preview look at the Bailey Bridge web page on Wikipedia.

### August Meeting

This is to be held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> JULY and will be our 44<sup>th</sup> Southampton Canal Society AGM - further details to follow.

### Summer Boat Trip

A few seats are still available on the Boat Trip arranged for the 19th July running from Gosport to the Beaulieu River and return. Please see the item below.

*Alan Rose*

## Membership Subscriptions

Our Treasurer & Membership Secretary, Gill Herbert, wishes to remind members that subscriptions for 2011/2012 were due on 1 April. If you haven't yet paid Gill would be grateful to receive payment (Single - £15

or Joint £25) at the next meeting or could you please send her a cheque at the address shown on the back page of this Newsletter. Thank you.

*Maureen Greenham*

### Day-Star Theatre

Day-Star Theatre have been booked to appear at Chilworth on Friday 7th October giving a performance of their new play for 2011: "A Long Weekend."

More details about the play will be given in a future issue of this Newsletter. However, tickets for the show are **now** available from Angela Rose priced at £8.00 each.

### Mikron Theatre

The Mikron Theatre have already begun their tour around the country. They will be giving a number of performances within fairly easy reach of Southampton (see Waterways Diary on page 3).

This year they are presenting two productions:

#### Hell & High Water

In 1761 there were two earthquakes in London, a transit of Venus was observed in 120 locations around the world, George the Third was crowned King and, on July 17th, the first boatload of coals was borne smoothly along the Barton Aqueduct over the River Irwell on the Bridgewater Canal - the engineering marvel that was the wonder of its age.

In the turbulent times of the Industrial Revolution, Manchester's demand for coal was insatiable and there was an urgent need to get it there quickly and cheaply. Mikron's new show for 2011 takes us back to 1761, when three men had a vision and hundreds of others

toiled to make it a reality. Over rivers, under rock, through "Hell and High Water", they proved that determination can literally move mountains.

#### Beer Street

...a heady draught of people, pubs, brews and brewing.

A lively, rumbustious show telling the story of pubs and beer and the part they have always played in society. Mikron's 40th anniversary production happily coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Campaign for Real Ale.

Has the traditional pub managed to survive as the social centre of a community in this age of pubcos, trendy wine bars and chilled out café bars?

How has the smoking ban affected pubs?

How do we deal with the new generation of 'binge drinkers' and the associated health problems?

This fast-paced production will be full of fun, music and lively bar room chat.

# May Meeting

## The Suez Canal Past & Present – Dr Roger Squires

Only 22 members were able to attend April's meeting which was very disappointing when we had booked such a well known speaker. However, those unable to get there missed a very interesting presentation which would have broadened their knowledge of the history of this international waterway.

Roger's talk was split into two parts, the first dealing with the long history of the development of the canal and the second giving his personal experience of traversing this major waterway.

Roger had obviously undertaken significant research into the history of the Suez Canal both the waterway as we know it but also the ancient canals built in the land of the Pharaohs. It appears that there were a number of waterway constructions in the area almost throughout history. A canal was supposedly built by Thutmose III in about 1500 B.C.E. Inscriptions of Rameses 2 (1279-1212 BC) claim that he finished (or repaired) a canal leading from the Nile to the Red Sea. However, many of these early canals silted up or were reclaimed by the desert.

The first modern attempts to build a canal came in the late 1700s when Napoleon Bonaparte conducted an expedition to Egypt. However, construction met with difficulties and was soon stopped.

The next attempt to build a canal was at the instigation of the (now) famous Ferdinand de Lesseps. Construction was begun in 1859 and the Suez Canal opened ten years later in November 1869 – at a cost of \$100 million. And the rest, as they say, is history!

Roger took us through the building of the canal describing the various major difficulties that had to be overcome, the highly complex political situations and the actual operation of the canal. Later came the closures of the canal due to the Suez Crisis and the

Arab/Israeli wars.

Today the Suez Canal is operated by the Suez Canal Authority. The canal itself is 101 miles (163km) long and 984 feet (300m) wide. It begins at the Mediterranean Sea at Port Said, flows through Ismailia in Egypt and ends at the Red Sea's Gulf of Suez. It also has a railroad running its entire length parallel to its west bank. The canal can accommodate ships up to 210,000 deadweight tons. Most of the canal is not wide enough for two ships to pass side by side so traffic has to be one-way at a time. Whilst there is only one shipping lane there are several passing bays where ships can wait for others to pass. There are no locks on the canal and it takes between 11 and 16 hours to pass through, ships having to travel in convoy at low speed to prevent erosion of the banks.

The second part of Roger's talk was dedicated to a trip he took through the canal, from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. With the use of his digital images he described the various landmarks on route. Whilst the Egyptian side of the canal is developed and much of the land is under cultivation, the opposite bank is still mainly desert with only the occasional habitation to be seen. Following the Israeli wars the route of the canal is now a fortified zone, with many barracks and other military installations to be seen.

It is obviously not possible to provide a blow by blow account of all the sights shown to us by Roger but it was a most interesting tour of a canal I suspect most of us have never travelled.

Many thanks Roger for coming down from your London home to speak to us and for providing such an insight into the history, both past and present, of this major international waterway.

*Paul Herbert*

## Girl wins World Pooh Sticks Championships

A nine-year-old girl from Oxfordshire has won the individual prize in the World Pooh Sticks Championships. Saffron Sollitt, from Wallingford, beat 500 other competitors from around the globe at Days Lock in Little Wittenham, near Abingdon, on the River Thames. The game was written about by Winnie the Pooh author A A Milne and involves racing sticks under a bridge.

Team Kelly took the top spot in the group competition. Last year's event was cancelled due to high water levels. The competition attracted entries from New Zealand, Germany and the Netherlands.

Individual winner Saffron said: "It was my first time so I was amazed to win. I used a few tricks like putting my stick in pointing upwards and picking the part of the river with the fastest flowing current."

The championships started in 1983 when the lock keeper noticed walkers recreating Pooh's pastime on the River Thames. He thought it would be an excellent way of raising money for his favourite charity, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

The event went from strength to strength until the lock keeper's retirement when it was passed to the Rotary Clubs of Oxford Spire and Sinodun. Money raised this year, expected to be excess of £1,500, will go to the RNLI, Little Wittenham Church and other charities supported by the Rotary club.

Lesley Hunt, from Rotary Club of Oxford Spire, said: "It was such a shame last year was cancelled but this year was tremendous. The weather was beautiful and everyone left with smiles on their faces."

[www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news) 27 March 2011

## Waterways Diary

*Continued from page 3*

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Sun 10 Jul 2011 10.00am	Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society	A 4 mile linear guided walk from Salterns Lock, Chichester Marina, PO20 7EJ (SU827011), along the canal towpath to the basin at Chichester seeing the engineering features / remains. Parking available at Marina.	Adge Roberts: 01903 721762 Email: <a href="mailto:adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk">adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Sun 10 Jul 2011 5.00pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell and High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Plough Inn, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, OX14 4QH. (SU545938). Collection taken after show	Plough Inn: 01865 407738 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Sun 17 Jul 2011 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - Timsbury Basin - detailed site assessment. Meet: Paulton Sewage Works (ST654576).	Derrick Hunt: 01225 863066 Email: <a href="mailto:derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com">derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com</a>
Thu 21 Jul 2011 7.00pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Boules & BBQ. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, SP5 3AR (SU182274).	Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: <a href="mailto:glover3@gotadsl.co.uk">glover3@gotadsl.co.uk</a> Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 28 Jul 2011 7.45pm	Southampton CS	AGM - followed by Cheese & Wine (which went down very well last year). Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a>

# 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 2 Jun 2011 7.45pm	Southampton CS	<b>"Social Evening" - Bring and Buy, Silent Auction, Quiz, Games and a light supper. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).</b>	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a>
Tue 7 Jun 2011 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk taking in the canal. No 1 East & West Challow 2¾ miles. Meet: East Challow Village Hall OX12 9SW. (SU380884).	Brian Stovold: 07946 524928
Sun 12 Jun 2011	Wey & Arun CT	39th Annual Puddle - 13 mile circular sponsored walk to raise funds for restoration. Ploughman's buffet lunch provided. Start at Cranleigh Leisure Centre, Village Way, Cranleigh, GU6 8AF. (TQ058389)	Joanne and Kevin Holcombe: 01483 418195 Email: <a href="mailto:holcombe79@btinternet.com">holcombe79@btinternet.com</a>
Tue 14 Jun 2011 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk taking in the canal. No 2 Childrey & West Challow 2½ miles. Meet: Childrey Village Green, OX12 9UA. (SU362875).	Brian Stovold: 07946 524928
Sat 18 Jun 2011	Kennet & Avon CT	Annual Reading Water Fest. Chestnut Walk, Reading, RG1 3BA (SU720734).	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a>
Sun 19 Jun 2011 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - The Site of the Dunkerton Pumping Engine. Meet: Dunkerton Sewage Works (Below Engine Bridge, Withyditich) (ST701589)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: <a href="mailto:lazadaysaflloat@yahoo.co.uk">lazadaysaflloat@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Sun 19 Jun 2011 2.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk taking in the canal. No 3 Wantage Branch and main line between East Challow and Grove. Meet: the Sackhouse, Wantage Wharf, off Mill Street, Wantage, OX12 9GF. (SU396881).	Brian Stovold: 07946 524928
Thu 23 Jun 2011 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk taking in the canal. No 4 The remains of the Grove flight of 6 locks. Meet Grove Recreation Ground, Cane Lane, Grove, OX12 0AE. (SU398895). Come prepared for nettles.	Brian Stovold: 07946 524928
Sat 25 Jun 2011 10.00am	Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society	Guided Walk (3 miles) from Barnham Court Farm, Church Lane, Barnham, PO22 0BP to Ford. Walk along the old tow path of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal and see many engineering remains. Parking available at the start. (SU956035)	Adge Roberts 01903 721762 Email: <a href="mailto:adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk">adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Sat 25 Jun 2011 10.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk taking in the canal. No 5 The long one! Meet: Vale and Downland Museum, Church Street, Wantage, OX12 8BL. (SU397878) Route via East Challow to Sparsholt returning via canal where paths permit.	Brian Stovold: 07946 524928
Sun 26 Jun 2011 10.00am - 4.00pm	Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society	Poyntz Bridge open. Situated approx 200 metres south of the canal basin, Poyntz bridge is possibly the only single span 1820 cast iron swing bridge in the UK. Plus a display of photos and artefacts. <b>2.00pm:</b> Guided walk around the canal basin led by Alan Green, illustrating the history of past industry around this canal feature. (SU858038)	Adge Roberts: 01903 721762 Email: <a href="mailto:adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk">adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Tue 28 Jun 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Beer Street" performed by Mikron Theatre. The Trout Inn, St John's Bridge, Farringdon Road, Lechlade, Glos, GL7 3HA. (SU223991). Collection taken after show	Trout Inn: 01367 252313 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Thu 30 Jun 2011 7.30pm	Chichester Ship Canal Trust	Chichester Canal Restoration talk at the Council Chamber, WSCC, West Street, Chichester, PO19 1RG (SU858049). An update on the restoration of the canal from Chichester to the sea. Tickets £3.00 on the door.	Chichester Canal HQ and Shop: 01243 771363
Fri 1 Jul 2011 8.00pm	Mikron Theatre	"Beer Street" performed by Mikron Theatre. Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Berkshire, RG7 5SH. (SU572664). Collection taken after show	Rowbarge: 01189 712213 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Sat 2 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Beer Street" performed by Mikron Theatre. Caversham Court, 13-19 Church Rd, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AQ. (SU708748). Collection taken after show	Reading Borough Council: 01189 390771 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Sun 3 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell and High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Fox & Hounds, 71 Crookham Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, GU51 5NP. (SU802530). Collection taken after show	Fox & Hounds: 01252 663686 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Mon 4 Jul 2011 8.00pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell and High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Berkshire, RG7 5SH. (SU572664). Collection taken after show	Rowbarge: 01189 712213 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Tue 5 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Beer Street" performed by Mikron Theatre. St George & Dragon, High St, Wargrave, Reading, RG10 8HY. (SU785788). Collection taken after show	St George & Dragon: 01189 404474 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Wed 6 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell & High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Goring Lock, High Street, Goring, RG8 9AE. (SU596808). Collection taken after show	Tel: 01491 871494 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Thu 7 Jul 2011 7.45pm	Southampton CS	<b>Pablo Haworth with "The History and Design of the Bailey Bridge." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).</b>	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a>
Thu 7 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell & High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ. (SU613916). Tickets MUST be booked in advance.	Tel: 01491 838 435 Websites: <a href="http://www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk">www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Sat 9 Jul 2011 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	"Hell & High Water" performed by Mikron Theatre. Donnington Parish Hall, Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8QT. (SU854034). Tickets £7.50 by phone or on door.	Linda Wilkinson: 01243 576701 Mikron website: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Sun 10 Jul 2011	Wey & Arun CT	"Gun's Mouth, Shalford, Small Boats Rally". Come and have a look at what the Trust have been doing at Gun's Mouth Island just off the A281 at Shalford. (SU999463) Suitable only for small boats, kayaks, canoes, rowing boats, etc. Further details from contact.	John F. H. Taylor-Cram: 02392 250463 Email: <a href="mailto:tractor1936@btinternet.com">tractor1936@btinternet.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk">www.weyandarun.co.uk</a>

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# 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.

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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.

## Wyn Gould dies on the K&A Canal's 'Cruiseway Day'

Wyn Gould, who stood shoulder to shoulder with her husband John in their tireless battle to restore the Kennet & Avon Canal to a fully navigable waterway, died on Monday 18th April at the age of 95 - on the very day that the elusive 'Cruiseway' status that they had spent most of their married life fighting for was finally granted to the canal.

Wyn had been living at the home of one of her daughters near Marlborough for the last 18 months and it was there that she died peacefully on Monday in the company of her two daughters Jenny and Jane.

The canal became Wyn and John's whole life and she blamed herself for fanning the flame of a passion that was clearly in him. "Tom Rolt's book *Narrow Boat* had just been published", she said, "and I bought it for him for Christmas and sent it to him in India where he was serving in the Army. That fired the enthusiasm that had been dormant in his mind to come back to England and see what could be done to restore the Kennet & Avon Canal."

When John returned from India and left the Army he needed to find work and he began working for the British Transport Commission on the canal. It wasn't long before John decided to buy a pair of working boats and after a search he finally bought the motorboat, Colin and the butty, Iris.

They carried topsoil from New Mill in Newbury to nurseries at Sunbury-on-Thames but that stopped when British Waterways Board closed the canal.

They then got some dinghies and skiffs and hired them out at Victoria Park in Newbury. Wyn said, "We had five children and we literally dragged them up at Victoria Park where we hired out the boats."

They started doing boat trips and by getting schools interested they were able to get very busy with that but with the canal closed the time came for the working boats Colin and Iris to go. Iris was hauled out onto Newbury Wharf and burned. Then, Wyn explained, "John took Colin near to Bulls Lock where he and Bill Fisher dug out a pit for her and that is where she sank and disappeared - it was all very sad."

They later began the John Gould hire-boat business at Newbury Lock where they had cruisers and houseboats and it became very busy and popular. Wyn said, "This meant that I not only brought up the children, but I hired out the boats and turned the houseboats round every weekend - changing all the bedding and cleaning them

out ready for the next day."

And while Wyn was doing all this John was busy campaigning to save the canal. There were countless meetings to increase support for the canal but, said Wyn, "In the early days we never thought it would come off, not at this end of the canal anyway so it was really special that we lived long enough to see the canal opened. But not getting Cruiseway Status was so irritating."

Wyn related that when they met the Queen at the opening

ceremony in Devizes the Queen said, "Well John Gould, I have heard a lot about you and I'm really glad to meet you at last, perhaps we shan't see your picture in the papers so much now."

Wyn said that their lives were quite different to other people's, "We ate when we had time and the children spent half their time down at

Victoria Park."

The hire boats and trip trips were completely dependent on the weather and as the children got older they needed more money, "But," said Wyn, "money was the last thing John thought about - he would just say - Oh! we will get by, we can always eat the furniture." To help make ends meet Wyn took a job in a launderette and each day when she finished there she went to Victoria Park to hire out the boats and later go home and get a meal and do the washing. As she said, "We had no washing machine then, it was a very intense time and we just lived life from day to day and week to week."

The canal in the Newbury area was not getting any attention so they organised work parties to repair the lock chambers and lock gates. She said, "It was unbelievable what we had to do and people who come through this canal now have no idea what it was like when we started.

"Sometimes you could only go a few yards on a boat with a propeller so we had 'paddle unit' boats that went flopping through the water and that got us along more quickly and more safely.

"Every time we went out it wasn't a trip, it was an adventure.

"Because the canal was in such a bad state the people we took out had to realise that we might not get back at the scheduled time - and we often didn't."

Bob Naylor©

<http://kacanaltimes.blogspot.com>

**"People who come through this canal now have no idea what it was like when we started."**

**"Every time we went out it wasn't a trip, it was an adventure."**