



Newsletter

Chairman's Column

June Meeting

This evening we give a very warm welcome to John Ross with his history of canals and traditional Narrowboat painting. After the break there will be a demonstration of his painting skills.

Society Boat Gathering

The society boat gathering ended up a little bit different this year, *Remus* had a poorly engine (blown head gasket), *Dolly* has been sold, *Evelyn Broadbent* has a new mooring away from Napton and *Liberty* had a large hole in its gas locker and water tank, leaving only *Stanton* usable. But the boat had been unable to get to the gathering site. Hence we met Laura and Peter in the Barley Mow at Newbold for a good meal and drink on the Saturday evening.

Chairman's Holiday

Peter and Laura continued cruising and we headed to Scotland camping via Ilkley where we met our prime minister while watching the Tour de Yorkshire.

We are writing this in our little tent on a very wet night overlooking a snowy Ben Nevis with a little electric heater warming our feet.

Due to high winds the Scottish Waterways festival at Banavie was cancelled. We did watch some boats passing through Neptune's Staircase today, Sunday, being assisted by 2 very damp waterways men.

July meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thursday the 2nd July which is our Annual General Meeting. This will be followed by cheese & wine and a natter.

August meeting

As usual, there will be no meeting in the month of August.

September Meeting

At this meeting, Aileen Butler will present her Magic Lantern Show of the Manchester Ship Canal Construction, plus other canal related pictures, etc.

Alan Rose

Annual General Meeting 2015

In accordance with the Constitution, notice is hereby formally given of the Southampton Canal Society's Annual General Meeting on the 2nd July 2015 at Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth Road, Chilworth, Southampton at 7.45pm.

Any member may request an item to be included on the agenda of the AGM by giving at least

fourteen days written notice of the item and its nature to the Chairman, Alan Rose (contact details can be found at the top of the back page).

Please note that the papers associated with the AGM (Agenda, Minutes of last year's AGM, Officers' Reports and the Society's Accounts) will be published in the July Newsletter.

England's water voles in desperate decline

English waterways could lose one of their most charismatic and once widespread residents as water voles succumb to the invasive American mink, records released by the Canal & River Trust show.

Between 1970 and 1999, water voles were found on 269 of the 2,000 miles of waterways managed by the trust. But since the turn of the century, their range dropped by almost 50% to 141 miles.

Mark Robinson, national ecologist for CRT, said the numbers told of a species in desperate decline.

"I very rarely hear good news about water voles.

Whether extinction [from England] will occur or whether we will turn the tide I don't know, but I think it's certainly in the balance," he said.

The introduction of the American mink, which have escaped from fur farms in Britain since the 1920s, has been the single greatest driver of decline. Mink are voracious predators and will hunt voles.

"That has driven whole river systems to a complete population crash," said Darren Tansley, a wildlife officer with Essex Wildlife Trust. "The possibility [that they will become extinct in England] is there

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Bits and Pieces

Wilts & Berks Restoration

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust says it has raised £575,000 in grants to breathe life back into the canal at Studley Grange.

Work is expected to begin on June 8 on the derelict 1.2km (0.7m) length between Royal Wootton Bassett and Swindon.

Contractors will excavate the route and then dispose of the soil on the adjacent former landfill site as part of a new landscaping scheme which will become a new wildlife haven.

Dunromin

The editor of this Newsletter has finally moved into his new house (to him) in Braunston. Laura and I have spent almost three months living in the back cabin of *Stanton*. Although we have enjoyed our time on the boat idling along the canals, it will be good to have a permanent base larger than 8ft x 7ft!

Panorama of ex-working boat

An interactive panorama has been created on the internet by photographer Harald Joergens of ex Cowburn & Cowpar nb *Swallow*. Some years ago, the boat was restored back to full carrying condition for use as a display boat at events and gatherings promoting the value of historic boats. The panorama can be viewed at <http://mbswallow.co.uk>

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 4 Jun 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	NB: Change of talk. John Ross will talk on "The History of Canal and Traditional Narrowboat Painting" with a demonstration of his painting skills. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Fri 5 to Sun 7 Jun 2015 10.00am - 6.00pm	See it for Real Productions	Beale Park Boat & Outdoor Show. Beale Park, Lower Basildon, Reading, Berkshire RG8 9NW (SU618781). For ticket prices see website.	Web: http://www.bealeparkboatandoutdoorshow.co.uk/
Sun 7 Jun 2015	Wey & Arun CT	The Annual Poddle. Sponsored walk from St Michael's Church Hall, in Amberley to Warningcamp Heritage Centre Sefton Place BN18 9QY where lunch will be provided. Return to Amberley via Arundel, South Stoke and Bury. Shorter option available. See website for further details.	Margaret Darvill: 01483 894606 Email: poddle@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/events2.php
Tue 9 Jun 2015 2.00pm - 6.00pm	National Trust	This will involve a trip on the Trust's electric boat to Millmead Lock and a tour of the Toll House where the Guildford Borough Council Hydro Project harnesses the power of the River Wey using a reinstated turbine. Return trip to Dapdune followed by tea & cake. Cost £12.00 (Booking essential). Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RR (SU993502).	Navigation Office: 01483 561389 Email: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk
Sat 13 Jun 2015 11.00am - 5.00pm	Reading Borough Council	Reading Water Fest. River Kennet, Forbury Gardens and Chestnut Walk, RG1 3AH. (SU719734)	Tel: 0118 937 2771 Web: http://beta.reading.gov.uk/article/2973/Reading-Water-Fest---13-June-2015
Sat 13 Jun 2015 7.30pm	Cricklade Bloomers	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Cricklade Bloomers, Brook House, High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6DD (SU101938). Bring your own refreshments. Outdoor event with indoor alternative for inclement weather. Tickets £10.00 from The Council Office, Ockwells, 113 High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6AE.	Cricklade Town Council: 01793 751394 Web: www.crickladeinbloom.co.uk
Sat 13 - Sun 14 Jun 2015	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and Runnymede Borough Council	Celebrations of 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta. A river pageant comprising a flotilla of boats of all shapes and sizes will make its way downstream from Hurley Riverside Meadows to Runnymede on 13 and 14 June. The international celebration will take place on 15 June at Runnymede Meadows with the Queen in attendance. For more details see website.	Web: www.thamesalive.org.uk/magnacarta
Sun 14 Jun 2015	Chichester Rotary Club	Chichester Dragon Boat Challenge. Chichester Canal Basin, Canal Wharf, Chichester, PO19 8DT (SU859041).	Email: chichesterdragons@btinternet.com Web: http://www.chichesterdragonboats.org.uk/
Tue 16 Jun 2015 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Annual General Meeting. Radstock Museum, Waterloo Road, Radstock, Avon BA3 3EP (ST689549).	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: chairman@coalcanal.org.uk
Thu 18 Jun 2015 7.45pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"Trail Boat Festivals on Isolated Waterways around Britain" by Ron & Myra Glover. 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
Fri 19 Jun 2015 7.30pm	The Mill House	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." The Mill House, North Warnborough, Odiham, Hants RG29 1ET (SU731521). Fish & Chips, beer and food available. Outdoor event with indoor alternative for inclement weather. Outdoor show with shelter.	Tel: 01256 702953 Web: www.millhouse-hook.co.uk
Sat 27 Jun 2015 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	William Smith Event by Sue Langdon. The Conygre Hall, North Road, Timsbury, Bath, BA2 0JQ (ST668589). Further details from Sue Langdon.	Sue Langdon: 01761 470972
Thu 2 Jul 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Society's AGM. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sat 4 - Sun 5 Jul 2015 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Radford Canal Festival. See restored canal between Paulton Basin and Radford. Pictures at http://www.coalcanal.org/restoration.php	Richard Fox: 01761 479391 Web: http://www.radfordmill.co.uk/canal.html
Mon 6 Jul 2015 7.30pm	Minal WI	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Mildenhall Cricket Pavillion, Mildenhall, Nr Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2LP (SU207696). Food and beer available, bring a chair and blanket, outdoor show with shelter. Tickets: £12.00 (£10.00 concs).	Tel: 01672 516408
Tue 7 Jul 2015 2.00pm - 6.00pm	National Trust	This will involve a trip on the Trust's electric boat to Millmead Lock and a tour of the Toll House where the Guildford Borough Council Hydro Project harnesses the power of the River Wey using a reinstated turbine. Return trip to Dapdune followed by tea & cake. Cost £12.00 (Booking essential). Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RR (SU993502).	Navigation Office: 01483 561389 Email: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk
Thu 9 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Bounty	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Collection after show. The Bounty, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5RG (SU890871) Fish & Chips, food and refreshments available.	The Bounty: 01628 520056 Web: www.thebountypub.com
Sat 11 Jul 2015 7.30pm		Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets. Collection after show. The Riverside Tea Garden @ Sonning Lock, Thames Street, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6UR (SU752754). Please park in the village and walk to the lock.	Tel: 07710 224008
Tue 14 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Rowbarge	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show. The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	The Rowbarge: 0118 9712213 Web: www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge

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Mikron Theatre Tour 2015

Founded in 1972, Mikron is the UK's most prolific theatre company - in their 2015 season they will perform at over 140 different venues! They tour on their narrowboat, Tyseley, in the summer and by road in the autumn, to every conceivable type of venue, reaching audiences that other companies cannot.

They tell stories of uniquely British things - In their 2015 season they're celebrating the centenary of the Women's Institute and also serving up their unique take on the nation's favourite take away - Fish and Chips! Mikron Theatre Company began when Mike Lucas, Sarah Cameron and Ron Legge took a show to the Edinburgh festival in 1963. Mikron was named after MIK*e, *RON and Sarah Came*RON*. Mikron is the Greek word for small. Small they were and small, in the good sense of the word, they still are.

Performances within about 50 miles of Southampton during June and July are given in Waterways Events on pages 2 and 4. There follow brief details of each production:

One of Each

Storms at sea, saucy secrets and sibling rivalry.

Sir Caspian Delamere is a man on a mission, to find the finest Fish and Chips in Britain. He's narrowed it down to two seaside vendors – finalists for his GOLDEN FISH-FORK award.

By coincidence The Pick led Egg and The Silver Darling are rival establishments run by twins, Roderick and Annette Whale. Unable to agree on the best way to cook this iconic dish, they went their separate ways years ago, and now they find their food and their

New Chairman for Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

FORMER Swindon Council leader Rod Bluh is being appointed as chairman of the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust.

He will be officially confirmed in the role later this month.

Rod, who served with Swindon Council between 2006 and 2013, said: "I am honoured to be asked by the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust to be their chairman.

"It is something I see as being a huge asset for all communities along its route, and something which has the potential to bring economic, social and environmental benefits to Swindon, as well as to Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

"Of course, I know the plans for the canal in Swindon very well, but I look forward to learning about the plans for restoration all along the rest of the line, especially with major schemes like the Melksham Link now so imminent.

"The major developments planned for the Wichelstowe area, and in the Eastern Villages, will give great opportunities to extend the canal,

Water vole decline

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if nothing is done to control mink."

The development of river banks and water pollution has added to the pressure on one of Britain's most endangered mammals. The industrialisation of river systems during the 1970s and 1980s destroyed the banks where voles make their burrows.

Tansley said although CRT's numbers were based on ad hoc observations not scientific surveys, they were consistent with the observed decline in all English waterways. Populations are very difficult to estimate, but Tansley said the natural population of tens of millions had now almost certainly dropped below one million.

Where conservation programmes to control the mink have been put in place, Tansley said the vole population had rebounded. Unfortunately, he said, mink do not pose an economic threat and therefore controlling its spread was not seen as a priority and attracts no funding

philosophies in direct competition for the coveted GOLDEN FISH-FORK. Which portion will prevail? Rod's old fashioned, homely style? Or Nettie's high-tech twist on tradition?

Their story is covered by unscrupulous journalist, Meriel Hacker, and she is after a scoop. So what will she do when she hooks a much bigger fish than she ever expected...?

Set sail with Mikron for a savoury tale about the British National Dish. Hot, salty and wrapped in newspaper!

Raising Agents

100 years of the Women's Institute

Bunnington WI is a bit down-at-heel. Dwindling membership means they can barely afford the hall, let alone a decent speaker. So when a PR guru becomes a member, the women are glad of new blood. Initially.

The milk of WI kindness begins to sour when she re-brands them the Bunnington Bunnies. They're hopping. With stakes higher than a five tiered cake stand, a battle ensues for the very soul of Bunnington, perhaps the WI itself!

On the threshold of one century into the next, this tale of hobbyists and lobbyists asks how much we should know our past or how much we should let go of it.

Above all else, like the WI itself, Raising Agents is a story of friendship.

More details about Mikron Theatre and their tour can be found on their website <http://mikron.org.uk/>

which will be a considerable amenity for these new communities."

The trust is delighted by the appointment.

Kath Hatton, vice chairman, said: "The trust is thrilled that Roderick Bluh has accepted our invitation to become our chairman. He has long been a supporter of the restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal, and we look forward to benefitting from his knowledge and experience.

"His well-known skills of organisation and management will be invaluable to the Trust as we re-organise ourselves to manage the changes coming about.

"The pace of the restoration is coming together, with more and bigger projects coming along, and we need to be ready for them.

"In addition of course he has a deep knowledge of the town of Swindon, which the trust sees as having the potential to become the hub of a southern canals network."

<http://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/> 18 May 2015

from the government. The fight to save water voles has been almost entirely led by charities.

CRT has called for the public's help in a mass citizen science survey of the species - the [Great Nature Watch](#). Robinson asked people to download the eNatureWatch app and log their vole sightings.

"They are just part of our rich wildlife, right back to Wind in the Willows, that we need to look after and protect. And the more we know about where they are, the better we can protect them," he said.

"There's anecdotal evidence that the comeback of otters is reducing the impact of mink by driving them out. I think they will contribute but I don't think they can do the job on their own," said Robinson.

But the idea divides experts. Tansley said otters would certainly prey on mink, but there were many instances where the two species inhabited the same river system.

[The Guardian](#), 11 May 2015

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

Waterways Events

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Date / Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Wed 15 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Oxford Science Park	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Indoor show. The Oxford Science Park, Heatley Road, Oxford, OX4 4GE. (SP539021) Tickets £12.00 (£10.00 concs) on weekday mornings from Sadler Building Reception or on the door. Refreshments available 5.30pm - 7.25pm and in interval.	The Oxford Science Park: 01865 781300 Web: www.oxfordsp.com/news-mikron.asp
Thu 16 Jul 2015 7.45pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Boules and BBQ. 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 16 Jul 2015 7.30pm	Basingstoke CS	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." A savoury tale of Fish and Chips. The Fox and Hounds, 71 Crookham Road, Fleet, GU51 5NP (SU803530). Beer, Fish & Chips, food available. Bring chairs and blankets. This is an outdoor show. Collection after show.	Tel: 01252 663686 Web: www.foxandhoundsc.co.uk
Sat 18 Jul 2015 11.00am -4.00pm	National Trust	'Puffing-A- Wey.' The Steam Boat Association of Great Britain show off their magnificent steam powered craft. Themed activities for children and some free steam boat rides on the river. Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RR (SU993502).	Navigation Office: 01483 561389 Email: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk
Mon 20 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Rowbarge	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show with indoor backup, bring chairs and blankets. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show. The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	The Rowbarge: 0118 9712213 Web: www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge
Wed 22 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Trout Inn	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show, with shelter and indoor backup. Bring chairs and blankets. Fish & Chips, beer and food available. Collection after show. The Trout Inn, St John's Bridge, Faringdon Road, Lechlade On Thames, GL7 3HA. (SU223990)	The Trout Inn: 01367 252313 Web: www.thetroutinn.com
Thu 23 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Plough Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Bring chairs and blankets. Beer and food available. This show will have BSL signed interpretation. Collection after show. Plough Inn, Wolvercote Green, Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8BD (SP495096).	Tel: 01865 556969 Web: www.theploughoxford.co.uk
Sat 25 Jul 2015 6.30pm	Reading Borough Council	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show, bring a picnic, chairs and blanket. Collection after show. Forbury Gardens, Reading, RG1 3EJ (SU718736).	Tel: 0118 9372771 Web: http://beta.reading.gov.uk/article/4458/Mikron-Theatre-perform-One-of-Each---25-July
Sun 26 Jul 2015 10.00am -5.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br	Newbury Waterways Festival. Victoria Park, Newbury, RG14 1DS (SU473673).	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@btinternet.com
Tue 28 Jul 2015 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Goring Lock, Goring, RG8 9AE. (SU596808) Outdoor show with shelter. Bring chairs, blankets and picnics. We'll perform under the bridge if it's wet! Collection after show.	Mikron Theatre Office: 01484 843701 Web: http://www.mikron.org.uk
Wed 29 Jul 2015 7.30pm	Waterfront Café	Mikron Theatre - "Raising Agents." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ. (SU613916) Tickets (£12) must be booked in advance. Food, beer and refreshments available.	Waterfront Café: 01491 835631 Email: info@waterfrontcafe.co.uk Web: www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk
Thu 30 Jul 2015 7.30pm	The Plough Inn	Mikron Theatre - "One of Each." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Collection after show. The Plough Inn, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, OX14 4QH. (SU545937) Fish & Chips, food and drink available.	The Plough Inn: 01865 407738 Web: http://www.theploughinnlw.co.uk
Thu 6 Aug 2015	Southampton CS	No meeting.	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Thu 3 Sep 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Aileen Butler will present a Magic Lantern Show of the Manchester Ship Canal construction, plus other canal related pictures, etc. NB change of venue: St Denys Church Hall, Old Chilworth Village, SO16 7NN (SU406187).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com