



**NEWSLETTER No. 299
JUNE 1996**

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MEETINGS

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

6th June 1996

AGM followed by Waterway Videos.

Saturday 29th June 1996

Boat trip on the Kennet & Avon Canal

4th July 1996

A Lazy Summer
by our own Paul Herbert.

1st August 1996

Members' slides.

5th September 1996

In Cressy's Wake by Tony Conder, curator
of the National Waterways Museum,
Gloucester Docks.

3rd October 1996

The Cotswold Canals Trust
Bruce Hall, chairman of the Trust

CANAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

Items in the library may be borrowed by any member from Sue Lewis at our meetings. Please remember to return any books you've finished with so others may enjoy them.

SOCIETY SALES STAND STOCK

Three new maps from GEOprojects are now available from the Society's Sales Stand: London - City and Docklands Atlas; The Broads and Birmingham Canal Navigations. Two further canal maps in the series are on order: Shropshire Union Canal and Llangollen & Montgomery Canals. The last your editor heard, these were still at the printer's

MAY MEETING

For anyone owning a boat, Peter Sterry's talk must have brought reassurance, hearing how the National Association of Boat Owners, dedicated to protecting their members' interests, goes about the task.

We learned that the Association is headed by a group of willing volunteers possessing the knowledge to be able to deal with National and Local Government, Waterways Authorities, etc on the boater's behalf. Members are kept informed by a bi-monthly magazine, of rule changes, laws etc that may affect thier boating or its costs.

This was quite a difficult, wide-ranging subject to cover, which could not easily be illustrated with pictures. Peter put the points across in an easily understood form with one or two good stories to emphasise various aspects. A subject that brought forth more questions than usual, he was well able to answer them, adding to the interest of this informative evening.

CHAIRMAN'S THANKS

The Society Jubilee guided walk, Mayoral cruise and barbecue made up a superbly happy and interesting day. This was no doubt due to the excellent organisation and considerable effort of the committee and helpers. Many thanks to all. Brian.

For a report about the Society's day, see next page.

SOCIETY BOAT TRIP

The Society boat trip on the Kennet & Avon Canal will be on Saturday 29th June 1996 from Bradford-on-Avon Wharf to Dundas Aqueduct and return. Tickets have sold well - if you're thinking of going and haven't yet paid for your passage then unfortunately you're too late. To all those going, bon voyage.

SUIAG TRIP

A reminder of one of the trips being organised this summer by the Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group. Members of the Canal Society will be most welcome to go on this trip.

Bathtime Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th July - A weekend along the Avon valley with a moderate amount of walking (around 4 to 5 miles each day). The attractions will include Claverton Pump (working), canal and river locks, aqueducts, old railways, various mills and Bath itself. Cost £60 including coach transport and bed & breakfast in Bath.

Further details of the trip from Jon Sims, 24 Nutshalling Avenue, Rownhams, Southampton, ☎ 01703 732868.

TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A copy of a draft report 'Cycle Strategy & Network' has been received by the Chairman. It is interesting in that the Romsey section of towpath along the Andover and Redbridge Canal is included as a possible cycle track. Also cyclists living in or near Test Valley will be interested to see the proposals. Anyone wishing to borrow the draft report should contact the Chairman. The closing date for comments to the Council is 27 September 1996.

THANK YOU

A letter from the Mayor of Romsey, Councillor Charlie Mead, has been received by the Chairman of SCS, saying how much he and the Mayoress enjoyed the boat trip on the Canal - "It was really great fun," - and thanking us for our hospitality at the barbecue.

Alan White, IWA Solent & Arun Branch coordinator for the Jubilee Jigsaw happenings in our area, has also written thanking SCS members for their contribution to the celebrations. The Branch were quite impressed with our contribution and the number of people it pulled together.

Both these letters can be seen at meetings.

Town Mayor and Mayoress travel in the inflatable Mayoral 'barge'

Was Councillor Charles Mead the first Mayor of Romsey ever to travel on the Andover and Redbridge Canal, when he and the Mayoress joined members of Southampton Canal Society on Sunday and the Inland Waterways Association at New Road, Romsey?

Was the boat that they cruised in, driven by an electric outboard, the first powered craft on that waterway?

A little procession of four small boats whirred and paddled about 500 yards upstream before returning to Romsey "Wharf". Their journey was made easier

with deeper water thanks to the effort of the men from the environment agency who had added an extra four inches to the stop planks at New Road.

The boating was watched by a small crowd of people, about 45 of which had enjoyed a guided walk from Romsey Community School across Greatbridge and Fishlake Meadows, all part of celebrating the golden jubilee of the Inland Waterways Association.

Five hundred miles

"Fifty years of fighting for Waterways," says the poster, in which time 500 miles of canal and river have been restored and returned to public use.

Aboard one of the small boats was carried a large, two feet six inch piece of jigsaw, depicting a map of the Solent and the inland waterways of Southern Hampshire, one of 35 pieces representing the map of England and Wales.

Made in Birmingham, the jigsaw pieces were dispersed to all parts of the country to be returned to the city as much as possible by boat.

This piece of jigsaw had already travelled extensively on local waterways and the voyage will continue via the Way and Avon Canal, Rivers Wey and Thames and the Grand Union Canal.

Eleven Mayors are involved with its voyage and

greetings letters between them all are also being conveyed by water.

Back in Birmingham all 35 pieces will be assembled up the front of the International Conference Center to coincide with an international conference on inland

waterways, sponsored by the Inland Waterways Association and British Waterways, from June 26th to 29th.

The Romsey Mayoral Voyage over, boaters and walkers returned to Romsey School for a barbecue and "canal afternoon" in the

comfort of the community lounge with publicity stands, exhibition of paintings by Harley Crosley and waterways videos.

Romsey resident Brian Evans, of Lansdowne Gardens, is the chairman of the Southampton Canal Society.



In a Mayoral barge on the Barge? The Town Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr and Mrs Charles Mead pictured during their ceremonial trip on the old Barge canal on Sunday

Romsey Advertiser, Friday May 24, 1996

Southampton Canal Society Sales Stand

Enamel Society Members Badges	75p	Notelets, with line drawings (by Brian Evans) of canal and Romsey scenes	£1.00
Embossed Ball Point Pens	50p	Screen Printed Tee Shirts	£6.50
GEOprojects Maps		with Society logo across chest	
Basingstoke Canal	£3.00	in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large	
Oxford Canal	£3.75	in Red - medium	
Kennet & Avon Canal	£3.75	Embroidered Sweat Shirts	£15.00
Grand Union Canal (each)	£3.75	with Society logo on breast	
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford		in Navy Blue - large	
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley		in Royal Blue - medium and large	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames		Cotton Shopper Bags	£2.25
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash		with screen-printed Society logo each side	
The Thames Map	£3.75	Colourful Tea Towels	£2.50
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75	Decorated Mugs	£2.25
The Broads	£3.75	Decorated Trays (two sizes)	£1.00 & £2.95
Birmingham Canal Navigations	£3.75		
Waterway Jigsaws (192 pieces 10" x 13¾")	£3.50		

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CHICHESTER CANAL SOCIETY

A letter to all members of the Chichester Canal Society from their Chairman, John Cooper, was recently sent to Brian Evans about the canal restoration scheme and the impact of the Flood Relief Option. The following is taken from John's letter:

Members will be aware that the choice now lies between two proposals - the Pagham Rife and the Chichester Canal. The former is approximately £1 000 000 cheaper than the latter, but offers no other benefits other than flood relief and will have an appreciable, detrimental effect on a natural watercourse. The Canal scheme, on the other hand, makes full use of an existing man-made waterway which, once restored, will also bring an income from tourism to the locality of at least £500 000 per annum (according to the study carried out by the Civil Engineering Consultants, Sir William Halcrow and Partners), recreate through navigation between the Harbour and the City, offer considerable recreational and amenity opportunities to the community as well as providing the spur to the much needed redevelopment of the southern gateway to Chichester.

Reopening the Canal has been thoroughly investigated both as a flood relief system and as a navigation. Both uses require extensive clearance work, but before that can happen comprehensive measures will be implemented to relocate existing reedbeds so as to protect wildlife habitats. I should like to reassure members that the proposals which have been drawn up to achieve this, will substantially increase the area of reedbed in the locality. The Society is delighted to support a scheme which restores the Canal to its original use and which, at the same time, makes a major commitment to the natural environment.

We know that either of the two options would provide an effective flood relief scheme for Chichester, but we are also aware that public opinion is solidly behind the use of the Canal for this purpose. The very existence of the Chichester Canal makes it the logical choice. What we must all do now is campaign vigorously for the Canal to be chosen. So please write to West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council, your Parish Council and most importantly to Peter Midgley, Sussex Area Manager, Environment Agency, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, WORTHING, West Sussex, BN11 1LD to convince them that this is what must be done.

Following the recent rejection of the Society's application for support from the Millennium Commission we are now mounting a public appeal to raise money to supplement the financial resources which could become available through the Environment Agency, the County and District Councils, industry and commerce, from the public and other sources to ensure that the restoration of the Chichester Canal will become a reality. We need your help now!

Please send your donation - no matter how small - to John Cooper, Jaspers, Coney Road, East Wittering, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 8DA. Cheques should be made payable to The Chichester Canal Restoration Appeal Fund and all donations will be acknowledged. Time is now very short, so I hope you will act quickly. We must not allow this opportunity to be lost.

IWA REJECTS WYE NAVIGATION ORDER

The IWA issued the following Press Release on 16 May 1996:

The Inland Waterways Association today called on the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Secretary of State for Wales to reject the Wye Navigation Order promoted by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency (formerly the National Rivers Authority) wishes to become the navigation authority for the Rivers Wye and Lugg and seeks to achieve this through an Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992. The IWA has submitted detailed Objections to the Secretaries of State and has also questioned the legal validity of the application for the Order.

At a meeting of the IWA's Council, serious concerns were voiced over the Environment Agency's intentions in becoming the navigation authority for the Rivers Wye and Lugg. IWA National Chairman, Audrey Smith, said "The Environment Agency's Order is clearly biased towards interests other than navigation on the Rivers; it is vital that the IWA objects to this Order to safeguard the rights of legitimate users." Audrey Smith added "Any navigation authority should have duties to maintain and improve its navigations for use by the public - the proposed Order clearly fails in this respect".

Central to the IWA's Objection is the proposed repeal of four Acts of Parliament which confer rights of navigation along the Rivers Wye and Lugg. The IWA believes that these are important rights which should not be lost to the general public. The Association is also concerned at the potential lack of consultation over new byelaws, harsh and unworkable rules and regulations, insufficient representation of navigation interests on the proposed Wye Advisory Committee and the prospect of very weak duties to manage the rivers in the interests of navigation.

There has been a right of navigation on the Rivers Wye and Lugg in Herefordshire (and running between the counties of Gloucestershire and Gwent) since 1662. Acts of 1695, 1727 and 1809 strengthened those rights and the Hereford City Council Act 1985, allowed the City of Hereford to make byelaws over the Wye within the City. The Environment Agency wishes to repeal all these rights.

The Wye Navigation Order 1996 has been applied for under the Transport & Works Act 1992, avoiding the need to promote a Private Bill through Parliament, which would have been the case prior to 1992. The IWA believes that the application for the Order under this Act is unduly heavy handed and that the NRA and EA already had adequate powers under the Water Resources Act 1991, to become the navigation authority. The IWA has notified the Secretaries of State that the NRA Welsh Region may have had insufficient powers to apply for the Order, and that the application may therefore be ultra vires. The Secretaries of State will need to consider this contention before allowing the Order to proceed.

CARGO - One of the sacks of charcoal used for the Barbecue was donated by IWA Solent & Arun Branch and had been carried aboard the Thames barge Kitty as token cargo. The charcoal was made in the ancient woodland at Gosport Farm, Ampfield. It can be purchased at the farm for £4.00 per 5kg sack which is considerably less than at the large commercial outlets. Also made at the farm are hurdles, rose arbors etc. Would members be interested in visiting the ancient woodland or in a short talk about it? Please let your committee know.