

Newsletter

June 1997

Issue 310

WATER TRANSFER FOR SOUTHERN CANALS

In a bold scheme devised by BW engineers and hydrologists, up to 5 million litres a day (1.14 million gallons) will be moved 60 miles from Bradley on the Birmingham Canal Navigations to the Braunston Summit. It was due to be operating by the end of May.

The main aim is to use supplies available in the Birmingham canals to feed down the Grand Union Canal to Leamington, then back-pump up to the Calcutt-Braunston level where water can be further back-pumped up the Napton Flight to the South Oxford summit or up the Braunston Flight to the Braunston summit. From there water can be pumped up the Watford Flight to the Leicester Line summit or released down the Grand Union Canal in either direction.

The initial task was to get more water into the BCN. Pumping from Bradley borehole is to be increased and pumping is to start from Perry Well near Perry Bar.

Bowyer Street and Sattley Pumping Stations will lift water from the BCN Minsworth pound to the 10 mile Birmingham

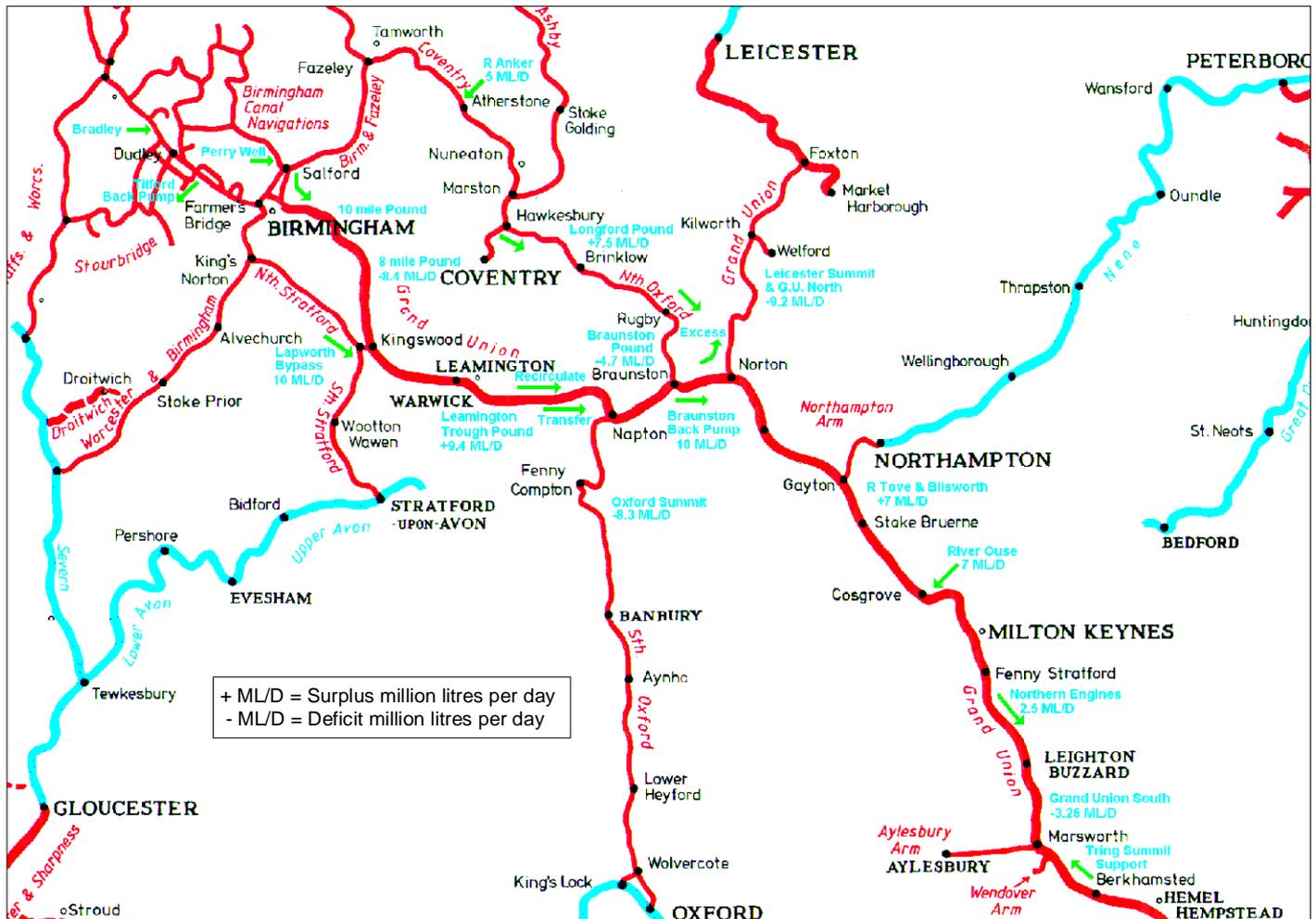
summit of the GU from where it will flow down past Knowle Locks. At Lapworth, the bywash capacity has been increased to allow extra water to flow from the BCN and along the North Stratford Canal to the GU. Water will then pass down the Hatton Flight to the Leamington trough pound.

From there a series of eleven pumps will lift water round the locks to the top of Calcutt Flight. These pumps will lift 200 litres per second. Over a 24 week period it could equate to 2900 million litres (approx 12500 lockfulls) delivered to the bottom of the Braunston Flight.

Work is also in hand to refurbish the nine pumps known as the Northern Engines at the locks between Fenny Stratford and Marsworth. On the southern approach to Tring, pumping stations at Cowroast and Dudswell are being refurbished.

Pumps at Cosgrove and the River Tove have been installed to improve supplies to Stoke Bruerne.

Water News for Boaters (BW, EA, BMIF and IWA publication)



1967 - 1997

HAPPY 30TH BIRTHDAY TO ALL OUR READERS

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.

Chairman:

Brian Evans, 19 Lansdowne Gardens, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8FN. Tel: 01794 517115

Secretary:

Eric Lewis, 51 Friars Croft, Calmore, Hampshire, SO40 2SS. Tel: 01703 860384

Treasurer & Membership:

Laura Sturrock, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 5RU. Tel 01794 517614

Committee:

Martin Cripps
Paul Herbert
Peter Oates
David Townley-Jones

Newsletter Editor:

Peter Oates, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 5RU. Tel: 01794 517614

MEETINGS

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS**5th June 1997**

30th Birthday Party including
Day-Star Theatre Company

3rd July 1997

AGM plus Videos

7th August 1997

Members Slides

4th September 1997

Ownerships - shared ownership of
narrow boats with Alan Mathews

20th September 1997

SCS / IWA Small Boat Cruise and
Barbecue

2nd October 1997

Bristol to Sharpness
Talk with video - Alan Padwick

6th November 1997

Bugsworth Basin and the IWPS
Ian Edgar

4th December 1997

Annual Inter-Society Quiz
and American Supper

May Meeting

I saw that once", "I remember her", "I had a trip on that one once", could be heard coming from the older members during Alfred Taylor's interesting slide show entitled 'Paddle Steamers of the South Coast.'

But many of the slides were way out of living memory having been taken from very old black and white photographs. Mr Taylor had the history and technical details of these interesting ships to hand and spoke with knowledge gained during many years as a ship's engineer.

Being an active member of the Paddle Steamer Preservation Trust, he was able to give us up-to-date news of those ships that still exist. He also helps as an engineer with the upkeep of the 'Warrior' which is berthed in Portsmouth. Though Mr Taylor always speaks about ships, his slide shows are given to raise funds for the Portsmouth Area Hospice.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In accordance with the Constitution, notice is hereby formally given of the Southampton Canal Society's Annual General Meeting on the 3rd July 1997 at St John's Ambulance Hall, King's Park Road, 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.

Society Barbecue

Don't forget the Canal Society barbecue this year. The venue will be Bursledon Brickworks which lies near the River Hamble and on the same day as the IWA's Small Boat Cruise on the river: Saturday 20th September.

Canal Society Library

Don't forget the Society Library is open at our meetings (except the June meeting) to lend any of the many interesting and often unusual books on the waterways.

Sorry to miss the party!

A number of former and "out-of-area" members who have been closely involved with the Society in the past were recently contacted (where we could find addresses) to share our celebration of 30 years.

Beryl Gardner was contacted but unfortunately does not feel well enough to attend. She wishes us an enjoyable party.

Bill Jones has recently left hospital and is unable to join us but hopes we enjoy ourselves.

Margaret and David Kessler-Lyne send their apologies but "offer our congratulations to the Society for reaching it's 30th birthday and wish it continuing success in the future."

Mike Smetham, who will be on holiday abroad, congratulates us all, "particularly Brian our everlasting chairman, who has held everything together from the beginning.

Alan and Sonia Moore apologise for having to be on their canal boat but wish us a very successful evening at the party.

Donations

Following Alfred Taylor's talk in May, £30 is being sent to the Portsmouth Area Hospice and £50 has been sent to the Bruce Trust after Jon Sims' recent presentation.

Waste Blitz

Romsey residents are all set to show the rest of the country that they are the best when it comes to caring for their local environment.

We have been informed that the Romsey Community Waste Blitz is being organised by Test Valley Borough Council with the aim of getting everyone in Romsey to slim their wheeled waste bins. To help you start reducing your waste, a free booklet called the Romsey Green Pages has been produced.

For your copy of the booklet or further information contact Joceline Tran, FREEPOST SO4562, Test Valley Borough Council, Romsey, SO51 8XG. ☎ 01794 515117.

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

IWA Solent & Arun Branch Events

The S&A Branch are advertising the following events in the area (in addition to our own):

8 June (Sun) - "The Poddle" - Wey & Arun Canal Trust sponsored walk - 25th anniversary of this annual event. Contact: John Lisk 01403 752403.

14-15 June (Sat & Sun) - Beaulieu Classic Boat Festival, Bucklers Hard. Solent & Arun boats and stand.

15 June (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - Guided towpath walk from Birdham to Cream Tea. Contact: Linda Wilkinson 01243 537500.

5 July (Sat) - Chichester Basin Barrel Races - teams of four paddlers in spectacular racing. Contact: Paul Coppard 01903 766585.

6 July (Sun) - Avon and Stour Small Boat Cruise, Christchurch. Contact: Alan White 01243 573765.

12 & 13 July (Sat & Sun) - Mikron Theatre Company at the Chichester Canal Basin. Performances start at 8pm. Contact: John Cooper 01243 671051.

19 & 20 July (Sat & Sun) - "Optimist" Sailing for youngsters at Chichester Canal Basin. Opportunity to try sailing. Contact: John Cooper 01243 671051.

20 July (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - as above.

9-10 August (Sat & Sun) - Littlehampton Regatta; WACT stall,

IWA carrying mayoral greetings and "mooring news".

10 August (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - as above.

17 August (Sun) - Chichester Canal Water Fair and Steam Boat Rally. Many attractions on and off the water. Parade for all boat types; chance to cruise the canal in your own boat. Contact: Paul Coppard 01903 766585.

23/24/25 August (Sat, Sun & Mon) - National Waterways Festival, Henley on Thames.

7 September (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - Last opportunity this year. See above.

20 September (Sat) - Hamble Small Boat Cruise - Autumn cruise including visit Bursledon Brickworks and Botley Village Quay. Easy launching at public slipway at Swanwick. Contact: Alan White 01243 573765. Also SCS barbecue at Bursledon Brickworks.

19 October (Sun) - River Rother Guided Walk, Stopham to Shopham. Guided walk, donation please.

Except as noted above, further details may be obtained from:

Peter Boyce, Greensleeves Cottage, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 6PW.

Tel (home) 01705 269642, (office and answer machine) 01730 829016, (work) 01705 693611 ext 1364. E-mail: iwa.solent.arun@dial.pipex.com

BCN Marathon Challenge Cruise

The IWA's 1997 BCN Marathon Challenge will take place over the weekend of 28th & 29th June 1997. Helen Davey, one of the event organisers, said, "Why not accept our challenge and cruise some of the under used sections of the BCN and the associated Midlands canal network. Let's prove to everyone that canal enthusiasts from all over the country, regardless of the size of craft, are still prepared to "Cruise 'em or lose 'em!" All types of boats from narrow boat to canoe are welcome to take part.

Details by sending SAE to Helen Davey, 5 Heathfield Close, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9PS. ☎ 01730 814670.

The Poddle

The Poddle is the name for each year's sponsored walk for the Wey & Arun Canal Trust. The route this year (the 25th) includes sections of the canal where restoration has been completed, some areas where work is currently under way and some sections where restoration is in the planning stage. The object is not only to raise funds but to offer all those who take part an enjoyable and varied day out in the countryside (either 7½ or 15 miles walk).

The walk will be on Sunday 8th June, starting at the North Hall beside the B2133, Loxwood (OS grid ref: 038321) checking in by 10.30am. Further details from John Lisk ☎ 01403 752403.

SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

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

THIRTY YEARS AGO

SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY

Minutes of First Meeting held on Thursday, 1st June 1967 at 22nd Millbrook
Scouts' Headquarters, Millbrook.

The meeting opened at 8.30 p.m. with twenty members present. A variety of Inland Waterways literature and maps were displayed around the hall which provided interest in the subject of the meeting.

Mr Brian Evans gave an introductory talk and stressed the aims of various national associations and societies who were solely responsible for saving Britain's Inland Waterway systems from total abandonment. It was only through public pressure that British Waterways were accepting their responsibilities, if somewhat begrudgingly, and carrying out the minimum of maintenance on the canal system. He went on to say that up to the end of 1966, he thought that he and his wife were the only persons in this area who suffered from "canal mania", but as a result of one or two letters to the Editor in the Southern Evening Echo he realised that there were others similarly affected, and by contacting these other people, a small band of canal enthusiasts became known to one another. As a result of the subsequent "get togethers" it was decided to try and form a local area group of people who were obviously interested in the inland waterways generally, but could do little individually to encourage their interest, as except for the Itchen Navigation and a small section of the Southampton/Andover canal at Romsey, there was no canal proper closer than the Kennet and Avon, a canal whose future, along with others, depends entirely on the campaign being waged to bring about its restoration.

Mr Evans went on to say that he hoped that by forming a local society with a modest annual subscription, it would enable those interested to meet socially once a month and so share our common interest. It was hoped to arrange canal trips and other outings of interest as the Society progressed, and there was also a supply of photographic slides and films of waterways interest that would be shown when the winter evenings came along. He then thanked all those present for coming along to the meeting and asked for any questions.

A short discussion then took place. Messrs Mulholland and Packard hoped that we wouldn't forget about the Itchen Navigation in any of our future campaigns.

Mr Rice suggested that there should be an election of Officers and Committee.

The following Officers were then elected to serve until an annual General Meeting to be held probably in October. All were carried unanimously.

CHAIRMAN Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Kessler-Lyne

MR BRIAN EVANS

TREASURER Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Myers

MR DAVID KESSLAR-LYNE.

SECRETARY Proposed by Mr Smetham
Seconded by Mr Rice

MR .L.PEARCE

COMMITTEE OF TWO Proposed by Mr Smetham
Seconded by Mr Kessler-Lyne
Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Smith

MR.RICE

MISS HOSKING

Refreshments were then served by Mesdames Sessions, Evans and Pearce.

A discussion then followed as to the advisability of having a small annual subscription, this to cover such items as hire of meeting places, stationery, and payment of expenses of invited speakers if desired.

It was proposed by Mr Smetham and seconded by Mrs Sessions that an annual subscription of 10/- be levied, payable at our next meeting.

Carried unanimously.

The Chairman then asked for suggestions as to a suitable name for our newly formed club or society. After some discussion, it was proposed by Mr Rice and seconded by Mr Mulholland that we call ourselves the SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY. It was appreciated that there were members present who lived outside of Southampton, but as Southampton was a central point for us all, we should retain

Continued on next page

THIRTY YEARS AGO (cont)

(cont'd)

its identity. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Secretary was asked to notify the local press of the formation of the Society, and also send a letter to the Ministry of Transport expressing the Society's concern at any attempt of the Ministry to abandon any of our inland waterways when the Minister's report was made public later in the year.

A levy of 1/- per person was taken to cover immediate expenses. 10/- was paid to the 22nd Millbrook Scout Group for hire of the hall, leaving 11/- remaining in the general fund.

The Chairman then closed the meeting. He again thanked all those present for their support and arranged our next meeting for Thursday the 6th July at the same venue.

The above minutes (taken verbatim from the original) were signed by the Secretary, Laurie Pearce, and the Chairman, Brian Evans, at the next meeting on 6th July. The members given on another document as attending that first meeting were: Mr & Mrs B Evans, M King, Mr W Mulholland, W R Myers, Miss B Hosking, Mr E Smith, Mr & Mrs F Wheble, Miss B M Gardner, Mr R E Rice, Mr S E Packard, Mr & Mrs K Sessions, Mr M J Smetham, Mr D Kessler-Lyne, Mr R G Antley and Mr & Mrs L Pearce.

Southampton Canal Society - Formation

As Chairman since the formation of the Society, I asked Brian Evans to give us the benefit of some of his memories of those early days.

The plans for a society in Southampton came together in the Spring of 1967 after various letters in the local press on waterways by four enthusiasts. Laurie Pearce, David Kessler-Lyne and I had written to the Southern Evening Echo and Mike Smetham to the Romsey Advertiser.

I visited Mike Smetham, at the time living just down the road in Romsey with his parents. I had some seats to fill on the 'Water Ouzel' at Braunston, which I had hired for the Ordnance Survey Cine Club and Mike suggested I phone Laurie Pearce (we did not have a phone at home). David was contacted by post.

I arranged a little meeting at our house, at which Joan Pearce and Annegret were also present. I gave a little slide show and projected a holiday film. Since Mike had not had a letter in the 'Echo', we gave him the task of writing to announce a public meeting.

Colleague and friend Ron Antley offered his scout hut for the meeting which stood by the railway footbridge at Millbrook leading to the shore by the King George V dry dock - no container berths in those days. The hut was soon to be swept away for road widening.

We had a gathering of 20 people turn up in that cosy little wooden hut and began as we have carried on for 30 years - with a mid-meeting break for tea and biscuits.

It was decided that the Southampton Canal Society should be formed. I was elected Chairman, Laurie Pearce: secretary; David Kessler-Lyne: treasurer and the four committee members were Bob Rice, Barbara Hosking,

David Gibson and Beryl Gardner. Newsletter Editor was Bessie Allcock.

Early meetings were held on the second Thursday in the month; I think until we arrived at the St John Ambulance Hall. For a few months we met at 'The Old Thatch' pub at Maybush (the cup of tea and biscuits were still available), then moved on to the Temperance Institute in Carlton Crescent.

It was only when meetings got too big (can you believe it?) at around 70 plus that we became concerned for the strength of the upstairs meeting room floor and also the fire escape. That was when we looked for an alternative, and John Reed was instrumental in moving us to the St John Hall.

The Society began as a campaign group and we bombarded the press with items about waterways. We have the cuttings to prove it.

Over the years members were present at many canal working parties particularly in the early years. The Kennet & Avon benefited from our labours at Sulhampstead, Tyle Mill, Froxfield, Wooton Rivers and Bath. Peter Wheble was our bonfire king, often blocking out large areas of countryside with dense smoke, and Norman Lucas, who joined the Society at the second or third meeting and still with us, was present at most working parties. We even had a car-load of navvies who drove to Manchester for Operation Ashtack.

Later on, Peter Oates led work parties on the Basingstoke Canal at Ash Vale, Lock 19 and St Johns Woking, but many volunteers were recruited from outside the Society.

(Continued on page 8)

IWA River Arun Sponsored Cruise

This was Peter Glover's fourth Arun Cruise. On 2 previous cruises he had taken a passenger, but on this trip he decided to use a larger boat and invite Annegret and me along.

We assembled on the paddock behind the now closed 'Waters Edge Hotel' after ten o'clock on Sunday morning, 18th May. A very varied gathering of boats, dinghies, canoes, the Wey & Arun Trust work boat and one larger boat with 5 people to crew it. Before 11.00 the boats were launched down an extremely steep, slippery ramp, made worse by the lack of rain this year which increased the distance to the water.

We were afloat. I sat at the front taking pictures, Annegret sat in the middle and Peter at the back in charge of the power.

The river was so shallow that within 200 yards of the start the first sheer pin had been broken, but once replaced we were able to glide along, taking in the beauty of the Sussex countryside, for about 1¾ miles without further incident.

Then the prop began to pick up weed. Time and time

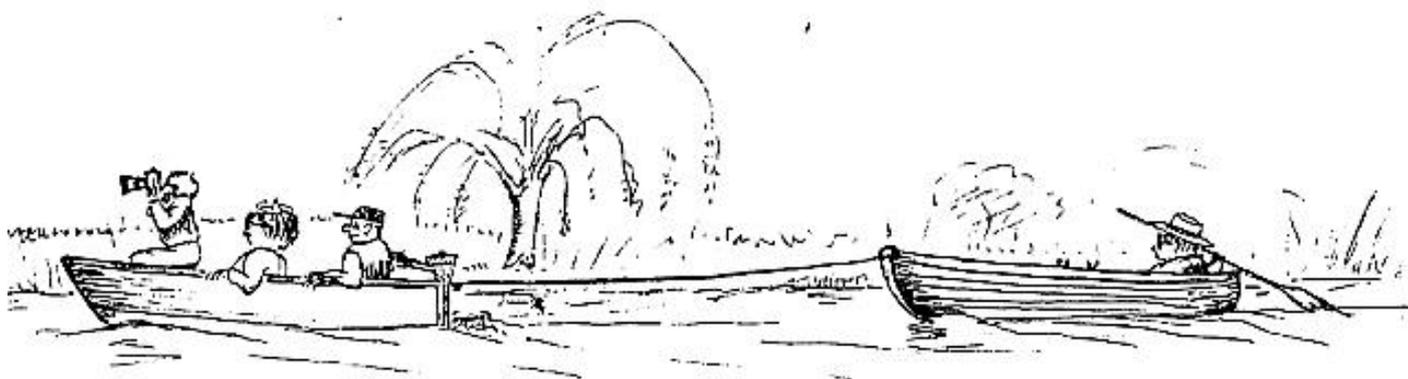
We had started the cruise in dull, cool weather but it had become beautiful long before we reached the limit of navigation.

A few of us walked across a field to Pallingham Bridge (Wey & Arun Canal) where we used the parapets of the bridge as stand-up picnic tables.

SCS members Keith and Kath Everitt arrived on foot, they were having a walk in the area to see what the cruise was about.

Our return journey began after 2.00pm. At first our passage was quite quick with the river current helping, and further down the high tide made just that bit of difference that even the rocks and shallows did not bother us. Once in deeper water the engine was started and we were away.

Peter Boyce had rowed his heavy dinghy all the way to Pallingham Quay Farm, and half way back was beginning to get tired. He thumbed Peter Glover and was taken in tow. As we got cracking again we heard above the noise of the engine Peter G mumbling something about 'salvage'.



again. At one point there were four boats all with outboards tipped up for weed clearance.

In the end, Peter gave up with the engine and resorted to man power, rowing where the river was wide enough and sculling or poling where it wasn't. In a couple of places, we were down to five feet, and that was the width of the river! In those narrow places the current was quite fast against us once we had travelled above the point that the tide had reached.

At one shallow point there were rocks and the boat stuck. Peter Glover hopped overboard and pushed onward, the water only coming half way up his wellies.

Only the larger boat with the five crew members did not make it to Pallingham Quay Farm. The shallows with the rocks had proved just too much. But they had put in a lot of effort to reach that far and were only a few hundred yards short of the farm.

Back at the 'Waters Edge' the boats were hauled out onto the bank and crews were treated to a welcome cup of tea and home-made cakes.

Boats were deflated, folded, stowed, loaded. The weather was glorious. No one was in any hurry and they had second and third cups of tea and more home-made cakes.

Organiser Alan White of IWA Solent & Arun Branch dished out the plaques to participants and declared this year's Arun Cruise yet another success. AND he hasn't has Southampton Canal Society sponsorship money yet. If you promised to sponsor Peter Glover, please pay up promptly. If you didn't - then please think about it for he worked really hard this year to get us to the head of navigation.

Brian Evans

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL

Despite much protest and last minute funding offers from Gloucester County Council and the local district authorities, it is increasingly looking as though the new A419 Latton Bypass is to be built without navigable culverts.

Cotswold Canals Trust and the IWA have long fought for the provision of bridges at Latton under the new bypass and its associated roads. The Department of Transport refused to provide the finance for the bridges, despite strong support from local MPs, high level meetings and protestations to the Roads Minister and every other possible avenue within Government. However, the Department did state that the bridges would be built if the money could be found elsewhere.

The new road is one of the first four in the country to be built under the Government's DFBO (= Design, Finance, Build, Operate) scheme where contractors are invited to bid to undertake the design, organise the finance, build the road and then maintain it with income and eventual profit coming from shadow tolls based on road usage and paid by the Department of Transport.

The Conservative Government had been particularly anxious to see these private sector road schemes succeed and any opposition has been swept from their path - even the National Trust had to concede the loss of some land from their Bellister Estate in the face of the first scheme.

The winning bidder for the road is RMG (Glos) Ltd (RMG = Road Management Group), a specially formed consortium of the Spanish contractors *Dragados*; *Brown & Root* from America and two UK companies *Alfred MacAlpine* and *AMEC*. The price quoted by the Group for the three canal bridges to ensure navigation was £452,000 but this price was only fixed for a short period of time which expired over 12 months ago.

In October 1996, when it had become clear that the Department of Transport were not going to change their minds, Gloucestershire County Council agreed to fund £250,000 towards navigable culverts, even though the bridges are just across the county boundary in Wiltshire. RMG Group were immediately informed of the finance, but appear to have had no intention of building the bridges and much time was lost in fruitless negotiations and delay.

Other local authorities subsequently pledged further sums of money towards the bridges and the full price of £452,000 was found. However, it has now transpired that the contractors amended the road construction design so that a series of major water mains will have to be moved to accommodate the canal at considerable extra cost. The original Highways Agency design had routed the water mains well clear.

The contractors have now demanded a sum nearly three times the original price for the navigable culverts to be constructed and have withdrawn from talks with the County Council. IWA has briefed Minister of State John Prescott on the situation.

According to a report in the *Sunday Times* on 1st June: "The confusion continued this weekend when the Sunday Times made inquiries into the future of the project. An RMG spokesman declined to comment and a Highways Agency official said the bridge was not going to be built. A spokeswoman at the Department of Transport said, however: "This matter is now under review."

As the matter does not yet appear to be totally dead, it would do no harm and may do positive good to write a letter of support for the bridges to John Prescott and / or your local MP at the House of Commons. A possible letter is given below. Please feel free to use or adapt this suggestion for **your** letter.

John Prescott MP
Secretary of State for Transport and the Environment
House of Commons
LONDON, SW1

Dear Sir

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL - A419 LATTON BYPASS

I would like to draw your attention to the need for navigable culverts under the A419 Latton Bypass which is currently under construction.

As you are no doubt aware, the Cotswold Canals Trust and other voluntary organisations have been toiling for 25 years to bring about the restoration of the canal link between the Rivers Thames and Severn. They have the support of the County and District Councils, many other organisations and individuals in the area.

I would like to remind you that without a navigable crossing of the A419, the restoration of the canal as a through route will be all but impossible. The potential for recreation and enjoyment of a navigable waterway by many members of the public will be lost.

Despite representations to your predecessors in Government from many people, including MPs, and the raising of over £450,000 towards the cost of the bridges, it now seems that everyone's efforts to secure the restoration of the canal will have achieved nothing.

I strongly urge you to consider ways that a navigable crossing might be financed and incorporated into the current road works. After due consideration, I am sure you will agree that the restoration of the canal must not be prevented by the road scheme.

Yours etc

DAY-STAR THEATRE

The Southampton Canal Society is very pleased to welcome the Day-Star Theatre company to perform for us on the occasion of our 30th Anniversary as part of their 1997 Waterways Tour.

The Play: *Something in the Water*

This is a sequel to *The Barge and the Book Keeper* (1993) in which the canal user, Charlie, and the canal authority executive, Hilary, finally get together despite their different outlooks on life and their different views on the waterways. Now in this new story they are newly weds, generally happy but still with their differences. The waterways are becoming increasingly crowded and busy as is their canalside business. Charlie sees this as spoiling what is good about the canals and Hilary says you can't have it both ways. So as the canals fill up with boats and the tow paths fill up with sightseers, dog walkers and fishermen, the water, the very life blood of the waterways, becomes more scarce and to the waterways the water is everything.

Meanwhile Hilary's straight laced mother and Charlie's old rogue of a father are reluctantly brought together and, nearby, a TV drama is being made about a working boatman who tries to woo a sophisticated city girl in a small cruiser. Will opposites continue to attract on the canals? And if so is it because there is something in the water?

This is a play about four unusual romances. Three between very different people and the fourth between, well, us and the canals.

The Company

Duffy Marshall known on the cut by his real name Pete but professionally as Duffy. Trained as a drama teacher and as well as performing he writes all Day-Star music and scripts. His most recent television appearances have been in 'Watching', 'Coronation Street' and 'Brookside'.

Jane Marshall as well as performing with Day-Star from the beginning has appeared in the film 'Robin Hood', and in 'Brookside' and paints traditional canalware for canalside shops and gift shops throughout the country.

In 1977 Jane and Duffy Marshall moved on board an old wooden narrow boat called Day-Star. By 1982 they were touring with Day-Star Theatre and this year begin their sixteenth summer Waterways Tour. During that time they have developed a unique style of informal comedy theatre which is often performed in whatever available space there is in canalside pubs or at festivals. Their satirical plays are inspired by life on the waterways but reflect the lives of people everywhere using the highly individual background of the canals past and present. Involving many characters the plays are usually performed by just two actors, few props and a minimum of costume and they will take with them the audience, their imaginations, the pub and anything that just happens to be passing by on a very unusual theatrical journey.

When not touring the canals and rivers in their current narrow boat, the 'Angry Bull', Day-Star are based at Audlem in South Cheshire on the Shropshire Union Canal where they also run their school theatre tours throughout the rest of the year.

SCS - Formation

(Continued from page 5)

The Society exhibition stand was extensively used at Southampton Show, Beaulieu Auto Jumble, Model Railway exhibitions etc with an accompanying sales table partly stocked with traditionally painted items by Joan Pearce.

Over the years we have become widely known and our badge, which was designed by Beryl Gardner, has been seen in many places.

If you feel that my memory has not served me accurately or you would like to relate further items of Southampton Canal Society history, please contact our eager editor Peter Oates.

PS The Society has not missed a single meeting, even when falling on the 1st January, so June 1997 will see the 361st meeting.

"Sanity in the city."

*The following was part of a report in The Times of Saturday, 10th May under the headline **Defeated Tories rent their homes to Labour MPs:***

New MPs have begun combing the streets of Westminster and beyond for affordable homes convenient for Parliament. One even plans to take to the water.

Candy Atherton, who beat Sebastian Coe to win the Falmouth and Camborne seat for Labour, hopes to buy a narrowboat today. She will then have to find a convenient mooring. Ms Atherton, a former mayor of Islington, lived on a narrowboat moored in the borough for six years until 1992.

"It was my little bit of sanity in the city," she said. "There is something about being near water ... Being the MP for Falmouth and Camborne, I'm a bit more used to it."