



Chairman's Column

March Meeting

We are pleased to welcome Alan Copeland to our March meeting. I believe this will be Alan's first visit to the Society and I am sure we will thoroughly enjoy his presentation, with the interesting sounding title, "*Curiosities of the Chilterns*".

Society Skittles Evening

I am having to write my input for this Newsletter before our Society Skittles Evening takes place on 26 February. Therefore, a write-up on the event and (hopefully) photographs will be published in the April Newsletter.

Proposed Boat Gathering

This is the last call for boating members wishing to participate in the proposed Boat Gathering to be held in the Napton / Braunston area over the early May Bank Holiday. This informal event can only go ahead if there is enough interest. So, if you would like to take part, or would like further information, please contact me as soon as possible.

Canal link for Melksham

An ambitious project to build a new section of canal in Melksham could bring a café culture to the town and millions of pounds in revenue.

A partnership bidding to restore the former Wilts & Berks Canal in Wiltshire has announced it will prioritise the Melksham link this year, to mark the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Wilts & Berks and Kennet & Avon Canal.

The 3.5km Melksham link will start at the Kennet & Avon Canal in Semington, run past the Berryfield estate and join the River Avon in Melksham, before heading north towards Lacock.

It is hoped the Melksham link, which will run alongside the former A350, will be completed by 2014. A community hall and play area would have to be relocated if the plan gets the go-ahead.

Residents will be consulted on the proposal, which would need planning permission and funding of up to £10 million.

Campaigners hope the Wilts & Berks will be restored from Semington to the River Thames in Abingdon within 15 years.

Dave Bentley, landlord of the New Inn in Semington Road, said: "I think the plan is excellent. Not only will it increase the character of the area and look nice, but as a landlord it will also increase my trade."

Shirley Webb, 63, who has lived in Berryfield Park for 12 years, said: "It will be a nice thing for the area and good for the café and pub, but I think it would be better to spend the money on the town rather than on a canal. Melksham needs more money invested in it."

Chamber of commerce president Graham Ellis said: "I think it will bring in a tremendous amount of people

Vacancies for Chairman and Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Further to my announcement at last year's Annual General Meeting of my decision to retire as your Chairman, and a Committee Member, at the 2010 AGM, and my announcement at last month's meeting that there was a need for volunteers to come forward from the Society membership in order to fill that vacancy, and also that of Treasurer & Membership Secretary, as Anne Coleman has advised she will not be standing again. I have now written to all Society members asking for volunteers. It is imperative that those Committee and Officer vacancies are filled as, otherwise, the future of the Society cannot be assured.

Membership Subscriptions

Just another reminder that our new membership year starts on 1 April and subscriptions (Individual - £15; Joint/Family - £22) should be paid to Anne at our meeting on 1 April, or if you are unable to attend that meeting, as soon as possible thereafter.

Paul Herbert

into the area.

"It will also do wonders for the canal frontage and for business and tourism for the area as well as looking so nice."

Ken Oliver, canal officer at Wiltshire Council, said: "We chose the Melksham link to start with because we wanted something very significant for this year, and it is something that will deliver immediately because boats will be able to come off the Kennet & Avon and travel through Melksham.



An artist's impression of the restored Wilts & Berks Canal running past the Berryfield estate

"The original line is not restorable as some of it goes through the town centre in areas that have been built on, so a new solution has been sought.

"Reopening the canal will bring many opportunities for regeneration in Melksham and the development of a café culture, with new canalside pubs and restaurants. The Kennet and Avon Canal is recorded as bringing in about

£20 million a year and it's not just the boaters.

"The scene brings people in and they spend money on things like bed and breakfasts and bike hire among other things."

He said the canal would head towards Lacock, through Pewsham near Chippenham and eventually onto Swindon.

Mr Oliver said funding will come from opportunities for canalside development but the partnership will also apply for grants.

Much of the route is on private land and negotiations are ongoing with the owners.

February Meeting

Eric and Sue Lewis – “Round Britain in the 1970’s”

Our long-standing members, Sue and Eric Lewis, have given us quite a few interesting presentations over the years and their double act certainly didn't let us down on this occasion.

We were presented with a plethora of slides of the various waterways travelled by Eric and Sue and friends during the 1970's. We started off with some views of London's canals, including Limehouse Basin, the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal with sights of the old Paddington Basin, Brentford Dock and the former Fellows, Morton and Clayton's dock. There were atmospheric shots of old working boats, the tractors used for towing them through the locks, old warehouses, various paper mills, the Ovaltine and Roses Lime Juice works, nearly all of which have now disappeared.

We travelled northwards on the Grand Union via the dry dock at Bulbourne Junction, Marsworth Wharf and the site of the entrance to the old Newport Pagnell Arm (long since filled in), the old Buckingham Arm, Stoke Bruerne, and then on to Braunston. Later we found ourselves at Hawkesbury Junction/Sutton Stop with the 'Greyhound', Sephtons Boatyard (where Jose and Rose Skinner's "Friendship" was built), and the long derelict pump house. A quick trip up to Coventry past industrial sites and the Weavers Cottages, and into the (then) derelict Coventry Basin and its sad looking warehouses (hardly recognisable from the restored site we can experience today).

Where to next – far too many places to include in this brief write-up but, just to mention a few – the Trent & Mersey Canal with the old Thurlwood Steel Lock and the northern portal of Harecastle Tunnel; up the Macclefield and Peak Forest Canals to Whaley Bridge; back down to Marple Junction and through into Manchester via the Ashton Canal; down through the (then) infamous Rochdale Nine to Castlefields. Later, to the Anderton Lift and the River Weaver. Onto the Shropshire Union Main Line to Chester and Ellesmere Port; along the Llangollen Canal; then the Staffs & Wores Canal and finally (I think) down the South Oxford Canal. Phew – I am feeling quite worn out now!!!

What I found particularly interesting was how some areas have hardly changed at all in the last thirty years or so whilst others are hardly recognisable, mainly because of new developments replacing the former loading docks and warehouses etc. We saw a wide variety of cruising boats from hire companies that went out of business many years ago. In fact I think there was only one company shown that is still in operation today.

Many thanks Eric and Sue for sharing your 1970's experiences with us. For some of us who were cruising regularly back in those days it was quite a nostalgic experience.

Paul Herbert

Southampton Then and Now

Your editor recently received the email printed below from a Southampton based writer asking for help with her current project. I said that I would see if any of our members were in position to help.

If you feel able to assist Penny Legg then please contact her directly, but I would be interested to hear that you have been in contact.

Peter Oates

Dear Mr Oates,

I wonder if it is possible that you and the Southampton Canal Society might be able to help me please?

My name is Penny Legg and I am a writer and photographer based in Southampton. I have been commissioned to produce a book, Southampton Then and Now, by The History Press, which will be published in October 2010.

This book follows a tried and trusted formula: it presents pairs of photographs, an archive image with a modern colour photograph, to illustrate the changes to the city over time. Each photograph is then captioned. The changes can often be startling and the books are very popular.

I am looking for archive images that are suitable to be retaken in the modern day and I wondered if you and your members would be able to help me please? I am looking for family snaps showing people and places, landscapes, buildings, the waterways, anything in fact that goes to show the city and its immediate area. I have been working on this project for some time and the search for old images is the hardest bit! My deadline for the book to be with the publisher is at the end of March and I still need quite a few images. Do you think that your members might have photographs that they would not mind being used in the book? Full credit for them will be given in the book, of course.

For information, I am a member of the National Union of Journalists and the Society of Women Writers and Journalists. I have been commissioned to write four books for The History Press, of which Southampton Then and Now is the second. The first, Folklore of Hampshire, is due out in July 2010. My website: www.pennylegg.com gives a flavour of my life and work.

I do hope you can help me and I look forward to hearing from you.

Very best wishes and many thanks,

Penny Legg

Writer, Editor, Photographer

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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 4 Mar 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Alan Copeland with "Curiosities of the Chilterns." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Wed 17 Mar 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Ron and Myra Glover - "Crossing Germany from West to East". Ron and Myra talking about their cruises in Germany. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 18 Mar 2010 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Ron Heritage is the chairman of the IWA Oxford branch. His talk will cover trips on the Thames Tideway, River Mersey and waterways in Scotland. The Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Sun 21 Mar 2010 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CT	Walk: The Upper Locks, Combe Hay. These locks on private and not accessible to the public. Meet: The Avenue, Combe Hay	Mike Chapman 01225 426948 Email: mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk
Sun 21 Mar 2010 10.30am	Itchen Navigation Heritage Project	Guided walk, Shawford. Further details from Polly Whyte.	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: pollyw@hwt.org.uk
Thu 25 Mar 2010 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CT	"Restoring Brassknocker Basin" by Tim Wheeldon. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk
Fri 26 Mar 2010 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	AGM and "Canal ropes, knots and ropework - incl. hands-on work" by John Arthurs. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@googlemail.com
Wed 31 March 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"Boat Building & Industry at Honey Street" (on the K&A) by Adrian Softley. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 1 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Travel Author Liam D'arcy Brown on the "Chinese Grand Canal". The waterway stretches over 1100 miles, crosses several river valleys and is 1400 years old. A talk not to be missed! Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat & Sun 3 & 4 Apr 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Woking Canal Festival. Bridge Barn Pub, Bridge Barn Lane, Woking, GU21 6NL. (SU993585)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073. Web: www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk
Sat 10 Apr 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Join Canal Ranger Peter Bickford for an early morning stroll down the Canal, listen and learn about birdsongs, especially resident birds for this walk. Booking essential. £3 per person. Meet: Howfield Cottage, Pirbright Lock, Connaught Road Brookwood, Surrey GU24 OAG (SU943568)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073
Thu 15 Apr 2010 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CT	"Canals of the South Wales Coalfield, Part 2" by Patrick Moss. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk
Sun 18 Apr 2010 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CT	Walk: Both Canal Branches in the Midford Area (3 miles) Meet: Lay-by opposite Bridge Farm (Lock 16), Combe Hay, Bath, BA2 7EE. (ST743603)	Mike Chapman 01225 426948 Email: mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk
Wed 21 Apr 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Runnalls Davis - 'Birds, Beaux and Barges and a Great Big Bang - The Regents Canal'. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Fri 23 Apr 2010 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Details to be finalised. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@googlemail.com
Sun 25 Apr 2010 11.00am	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Small Boat Cruise: Pulborough to Pallingham and back. Meet at the slipway at Pulborough 'Swan' Bridge (A29) (Ref TQ046185), north bank, east side of bridge. See page 4 for further details.	Andy Berncastle Tel: 023 8027 3599 Email: hilary.berncastle@btinternet.com or Brendan Whelan Tel: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Wed 28 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Branch AGM followed by The K&A Canal 50 years on: a review based on photographs from 1960s canoeing trips by Ray Denyer. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 29 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Paul Gosling with "Gosling's Gallivants 2009" - Boats, Rail & Planes involved. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat 1 May 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Join Canal Ranger Peter Bickford for an early morning stroll down the Canal, listen and learn about birdsongs of migrant and resident birds. Booking essential. £3 per person. Meet: Howfield Cottage, Pirbright Lock, Connaught Road Brookwood, Surrey GU24 OAG (SU943568)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073
Thu 20 May 2010 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	John Gollidge with "My Rescue at Sea." This will be followed by Ron & Myra Glover showing slides, a DVD and talking about the Falkirk Wheel. The Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Fri 21 May 2010 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	'The Grand Canal of China' - Liam D'Arcy Brown. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@googlemail.com
Thu 3 Jun 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	John Silman & Tony Yoward present "Canals and Mills General & Industrial". Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sun 21 Mar 2010 1.00pm, 18 Apr, 2 & 16 May 2.00pm	Paul Barnett	Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett. Tour fee £3.50 per person. Approx 2 hours weather permitting. Meet Purton Lower Bridge, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (SO692044).	Paul Barnett: 07833 143231 Email: barnadillo@aol.com Web: www.friendsofpurton.org.uk

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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<http://www.sotoncs.org.uk>

Meetings:

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm. (See Waterways Diary.) Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184.

Solent & Arun Branch Small Boat Cruise Programme 2010

Sunday 25 April 2010: River Arun to Pallingham

We again exercise the right of navigation at the top of the tidal Arun, from Pulborough to Pallingham and back, some 20 miles from the sea. Suitable for small craft under about 16ft and under about 400kg gross on trailer, as it's impossible to get a car on the slipway at Pulborough, so depends on willing hands and a long rope if necessary. (This cruise may be extended to include options from further downriver, in liaison with the Arundel Boat Club).

The main event

Meet at the slipway at Pulborough 'Swan' Bridge (A29) (OS Grid Ref TQ046185), north bank, east side of bridge, at 11.00, to launch and set off at 11.30. Park on south side of river except when launching/recovering, or elsewhere in town or at station. High Water at Pallingham should occur at about 13.30. Explore the old canal briefly on foot on arrival from 13.00 and cruise back to Pulborough by 15.00. Picnic lunch recommended. Bowsaw could be useful for small branches in the river or above it, particularly for any small cabin craft. Possibility of launching small dinghies at Stopham, or calling there briefly at the White Hart pub, just off the A283 (avoiding the submerged metal stakes of an old landing stage, by the pub garden wall below the old bridge), if time and tide permit. Landing at Pallingham Quay Farm is by special arrangement with the land-owner, to access the public footpath. Please respect this privilege.

Sunday 13 June 2010: Port Creek

Port Creek, next to the A27 dual-carriageway, is what makes Portsmouth into an island. Tidal, with low bridges, we again attempt the challenge of navigating it in the time-window when

there is both enough depth and enough headroom. For the confident harbour cruiser, a muddy launch at Fareham (OS Grid Ref SU579056) around 09.00 for a 12-mile cruise (using main channels, shorter if confident navigationally) through Port Creek eastwards to Langstone (Ship Inn), to recover at the good slipway there. High Water is at about 13.00. For the less bold, meet at Highbury (OS Grid Ref SU666043), to launch directly into Port Creek near the railway bridge, from 10.30, to get away at 11.00. Explore Port Creek in both directions and either recover at Highbury (or Hilsa), or head east to Langstone (6 miles). Lift available to recover cars if necessary from launch site.

Sunday 26 September 2010: Beaulieu River

High Water at Beaulieu at about 13.45. Meet and launch at Buckler's Hard from 11.30, or earlier if you fancy going down river first. Access is via a private track to the Marina (OS Grid Ref for Marina Office SU406993); please check in there to pay slip/harbour dues and get parking instructions in this lovely but busy spot. Cruise up to Beaulieu for a picnic lunch at the quay, or sample the pub or café, or just browse among the ice creams and giftware, admiring any New Forest ponies. Return to Bucklers Hard at leisure, but don't run out of sea-water; it should be OK to leave Beaulieu up to 15.00 latest.

For all cruises:

Please contact Andy Berncastle (Tel: 023 8027 3599 or email to hilary.berncastle@btinternet.com) or Brendan Whelan (Tel: 01903 816012 or email to solentandarun@waterways.org.uk) to let us know to expect you and for any advice or guidance. All take part at own risk.

IWA Launches Tailored Boat Insurance Scheme With Built in Breakdown Membership

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) has teamed up with both Navigators & General and River Canal Rescue to enable an insurance facility that it believes is unique to the market, with the added benefit that every policy taken out and subsequently renewed helps IWA, and so helps our charitable work for the waterways.

Our tailored inland waterway insurance policies cover loss and damage to your vessel, protect against legal claims, pay out for injury and damage caused to other property and provide the additional security of inclusive breakdown membership.

Speaking on behalf of IWA, Neil Edwards, chief executive, said:

"IWA currently arranges insurance for over 170 of IWA's corporate members, including most waterways societies and trusts, many boat clubs, community boat groups, navigation authorities, educational, industrial archaeological, waterways leisure and heritage bodies,

museums and a wide range of other non-profit making organisations. This is something that IWA has done as a non-profit making service for over 35 years, and has helped save many thousands of pounds from waterways insurance bills. IWA's experience in insurance matters led us to believe that something advantageous could be put in place for private boat owners too. We believe that our partnership with Navigators & General, a leading pleasure craft insurer, and with River Canal Rescue, the foremost boat breakdown organisation, makes this scheme a market-leading proposition, and one which provides additional financial benefit to IWA that will allow it to further its charitable work for the waterways."

More at: www.waterways.org.uk/support_us/boat_insurance

IWA Press Release - 22 February 2010