

Newsletter

Chairman's Column

5th March Meeting

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Tim Coghlan has had to postpone his visit this evening. Luckily our June speaker, John Pomfret has been able to step in at short notice. John is well known within the Inland Waterways Association as the Freight Group Chairman and he's also on the IWA Navigation Committee. His talk is entitled "**FREIGHT ON THE WATERWAYS**". He will cover the history of freight carrying on waterways and the current situation in the UK, using case study examples on the Humber, East Coast, Thames, Severn and Mersey based waterways. This will be followed by a comparison with Continental Europe.

2nd April Meeting

This meeting on Maundy Thursday will be an evening with SCS member David Doulton who will be sharing his interest in "British Transport" with us.

Boat Gathering

An informal gathering for boaters or SCS visitors in the Napton / Braunston area is to be held over the first May Bank Holiday weekend of the 2nd May.

This is not an organised event, just a small number of boat owners enjoying a casual get together. If you are around and would like to join us please contact me as soon as you are able.

May Meeting

There will be no May Meeting as the hall will be in use as a polling station for the General Election.

Thank you all for your support.

Alan Rose

Greywell Tunnel Portal Now Visible Again

The eastern portal of the Greywell Tunnel has, not unlike those temples lost in South American jungles, steadily receded from view over time as vegetation has accumulated over it (below). The Basingstoke Canal Society has intended to do something about this for a while, and they eventually got there recently to sort it out (right).

The Greywell Tunnel is around 1200m long and extends under Greywell Hill in a westerly direction. It marks the beginning of the last 5 miles, the now derelict (and in some places, obliterated) section of canal that once wound its way into the centre of Basingstoke. The tunnel has long since been impassable since collapses occurred towards the western end in 1932 and again in the 1950's. In addition, it is now famously one of the most significant bat roosts in Britain. Both of these factors make it highly unlikely that the tunnel will be ever navigable again.



How it looked in November 2014.
The keystone is just about visible here

now visible from the towpath at a distance. Bank clearance will continue along both banks as far back as the derelict Lock 30 (about 100m away), which will also be exposed once again.



The Greywell Tunnel portal and canal banks after recent clearance

The portal is one of several Grade II listed structures on the Canal, which also include at least 14 bridges (one of which is also a scheduled monument), two or three houses/cottages and a couple of pubs. Odiham Castle is also Grade II listed and a scheduled monument. The Society has held the view that because of its listed status, and also it was a centre-piece of the Canal restoration in the 1970's, the portal has been badly in need of some attention to rescue it from the damaging effects of root penetration and the like.

Not only has the brick facia now been cleared, but the adjacent banks have also been cut back, such that the arch is

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Bits and Pieces

Education volunteers wanted in Crofton

Canal & River Trust (CRT) are looking for volunteers to help teach school children near Crofton Pumping Station about the wonders of their local canals and rivers.

The volunteers will lead sessions for primary schools, cub scouts and brownie groups, that extend from the classroom to the waterside. The sessions include everything from how the canals were built to helping children stay safe by the water. They will also cover the wildlife and history of the waterways.

Further details on the [CRT website](#).

Flying facelift for tunnel

This winter seems to be the time to see to tunnel portals as abseilers gave a facelift to a historic Wiltshire canal landmark at the end of February. CRT used a specialist rope team to spruce-up the two centuries-old Bruce Tunnel on the Kennet & Avon Canal. Lowering people down by rope is the only way to prevent ivy, moss, weeds and young saplings getting into the masonry joints and damaging the impressive structure.

Further details on the [CRT website](#).

Editorial Office

Laura and I are currently moving from Nether Heyford to Braunston. Having already moved out of our old house, we have moved temporarily into Stanton's back cabin where this Newsletter has been edited. Being of no fixed abode, please use [email](#) if you wish to contact me.

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 5 Mar 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Change of meeting. "Freight on Waterways" with John Pomfret. The history of freight carrying on waterways and the current situation in the UK, using case study examples on the Humber, East Coast, Thames, Severn and Mersey based waterways, followed by a comparison with continental Europe. Visitors welcome. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sun 15 Mar 2015 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - Tucking Mill. Led by Mike Chapman. Meet: Twinhoe Lane, Midford. Further details from Mike.	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk
Mon 16 Mar 2015 2.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	Guided Walk - Gunpowder Store at Stonebridge on River Wey to Hunt Park along the course of the canal. Approx 1.5 miles with level surface but suitable footwear recommended. Parking: public car park by A281 at Trunley Heath Road (SU999461). Gunpowder Store: GU4 8EP (SU998465). No booking required.	Trust Northern Office: 01483 505566 Email: support@weyandarun.co.uk
Tue 17 Mar 2015 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	Branch AGM followed by Rob Dean, Chairman of K&ACT. The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com
Wed 18 Mar 2015 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	"The History and Restoration of the famous Crofton Beam Engines" by Jon Wills. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk Web: http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 19 Mar 2015 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"Twinning - The Kennet & Avon and the Canal du Nivernais." Di Harris will talk about how the twinning with the French canal happened in the 1970s and visits between the two. 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 19 Mar 2015 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	"Cotswold Canals - from 'Pie in the Sky' to Front Runner Project" by Ken Burgin of the Cotswold Canals Trust. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547).	Steve Page 01761 433418 Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Wed 25 Mar 2015 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br)	Branch AGM followed by "The History of Newbury Wharf" by local historian David Peacock. Stone Building, Wharf Road, Newbury RG14 5AS (SU472671). Free entry. Car parking £1.00.	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: kact.newbury@btinternet.com
Thu 2 Apr 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	SCS member David Doulton will be sharing his interest in "British Transport." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Mon 13 Apr 2015 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	"Canal Short Cuts" by Stuart Fisher who will talk about proposed branches of the W&B and several coast to coast canal schemes further afield. Church Hall, United Reformed Church, Wood Street, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 7BD (SU065826). Free parking is in the Borough Fields (Sainsburys) car park whence there is a footpath to Wood St. £2.00 to cover costs.	Cheryll Yeowell: 01793 812708 Email: cheryll.yeowell@wbct.org.uk Web: http://www.wbct.org.uk
Thu 16 Apr 2015 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	After a visit to the waterway, Gareth Jones (chairman of IWA South East region) will talk about "The Panama Canal." 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 Apr 2015 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	"The Coal Canal Archive" with Roger Halse. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547).	Steve Page 01761 433418 Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Sun 19 Apr 2015 13.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	River Arun navigation boat rally exploring the River Arun from Pulborough up to Pallingham to help maintain navigation rights. Please complete application form at http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/ArunBoatRally2015EntryForm.pdf or send email. No fee - donation welcome. Launch at Pulborough slipway (TQ046185) 1.15pm.	John F H Taylor-Cram: 02392 250463 Email: rallies@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sun 19 Apr 2015 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - "The K&A Canal at Avoncliff" by Mike Chapman. Meet: Avoncliff (south) car park BA15 2HB (ST804599), accessed via Westwood.	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk
Tue 21 Apr 2015 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	"The River Kennet through history" with David Peacock. The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com
Wed 22 Apr 2015 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	"Narrow Boats to Norway" by Clive and Jill Field. Please note change of date. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk Web: http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Mon 27 Apr 2015 7.30pm	IWA Guildford & Reading Br	Branch AGM followed by "Barge Building at Dapdune Wharf" by Jem Bates at National Trust premises at Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RR (SU993502).	Gareth Jones: 07850 819071 Email: hhei@btconnect.com
Thu 7 May 2015	Southampton CS	No meeting - hall in use as a polling station in the General Election.	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sun 10 May 2015 10.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT (Melksham Branch)	Sponsored Walk - from Buttercross in Market Place, Chippenham, SN15 3HD (ST921732) to The Bell in Lacock. Either return walk (10 miles) or provided minibus back from Lacock. Registration £5 for individuals, free entry with £20 or more sponsorship. Further info from Trust website.	Malcom Hitchingson: 01373 859207 Email: Walk@wbct.org.uk Web: http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/

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January Meeting

Richard Thomas: The River Lee from Luton to Old Ford Lock, London

Richard's talk described a journey of approximately 25 miles from Luton to Hertford and continued with the navigable portion of about another 27 miles from Hertford to the Thames.



Houses beside the Lee Navigation at Folly Island, Hertford. The Lee supplied fresh water into London via the New River. Also ice blocks were brought up to Ryemead Castle for storage. The Rye House area is now an outdoor centre, where Lewis Hamilton started go-kart racing at the Karting Centre.

Richard showed a selection of old postcards: an outing for folks in an open barge; people walking on the frozen Dobbs Weir Lock; the Fish & Eels pub and Carthage Lock, named after the naval retreat in April 1741 during the War of Jenkins' Ear.



Ponders End Lock

The River Lee meanders alongside the Navigation in places, now named the Lee Conservancy. Near Waltham Common Lock is the former Royal Gunpowder Mill and Richard pointed out that there is, still on the lock approach, a tow rope hook which was used for looping the horse rope over the bridge.

Near the Waltham Abbey stretch, lies the White Water Centre which was used for some of the canoeing events in the 2012 Olympics. Just below Ramsey Marsh Lock is the 1835 River Lee Trust Bridge built using stone from the old Westminster Bridge.

On into Enfield and the Royal Small Arms Factory: this area had been very busy in WW2 as the famous Lee-Enfield Rifle was made here.

We were shown a post card of "Gentleman's" Row which probably dates from the early 18C, all now completely preserved.

Safer than you might think

CRT have been left with a £10,000 clean-up bill after discovering seven looted safes amongst debris at the bottom of a 200-year-old lock near Leicester city centre.

Their engineers were stunned to discover the safes along with a car engine, beer barrels, a small sunken boat and other debris when they drained North Lock on the River Soar for routine maintenance. The rubbish was revealed after the water was emptied in order to make important repairs to the lock gates and to inspect the 200-year-old brickwork.

Next we travelled along beside miles of reservoirs controlled by Thames Water which allows plenty of bird watching and fishing. We then pass under the North Circular road using the Art Deco bridge.



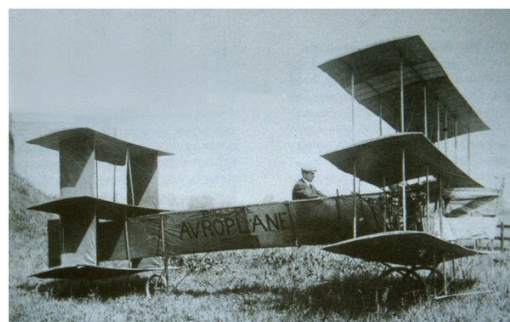
Tottenham Lock pre 1960

There were pictures of the old timber barges unloading one plank at a time into the waterside furniture factories. At Tottenham Lock, we saw nine barges waiting to go up.

At Walthamstow is the old Copper Mill built c1800 to process the copper that was brought from the Port of London along the Lee. Boatyard services have always been available at Enfield and the Victorian Yard at Clapton.

Alliott Vernon Roe, after being evicted from the Brooklands site in Surrey, moved lock, stock and barrel and his home, into an area just by the railway arch on Waltham Marsh, where he worked and completed his "Triplane" which in June 1909 was the first all-British aeroplane to fly.

We go past Pond Lane Flood gates and Hackney Power Station. And past the site of "Lesney Match Box Toys" on the junction with the Hertford Union Canal (at 1¼ miles long, a useful junction between the Regent's Canal and the Lee Navigation).



A V Roe's Avro Triplane

We arrive safely at Old Ford Lock, (an interesting area if you look on the internet), the three lock cottages were made into one house for the Big Breakfast Show and more

recently, for the 2012 Olympics, the entire canal section was blocked off.

24 members and 2 visitors from the Chichester Canal enjoyed an evening packed with information that was put across in an extremely clear and humorous manner by Richard.

Angela Rose

The discovery of so much debris is a complete contrast to the renaissance of the city's waterways where the cleaner water has recently attracted otters back to the city for the first time in 30 years and where kingfishers and other wildlife have become commonplace.

They are now sending a team in to clear the lock with a long-range excavator to remove the rubbish before the important maintenance works can get underway. Leicestershire Police are also set to visit the lock to examine the safes.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/> 23 Feb 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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Waterways Events

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Date / Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Tue 12 May 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 16 May 2015 2.00pm	Basingstoke CS	Society AGM followed by a guest speaker. Non-members welcome. Deepcut Village Centre, Cyprus Road, Deepcut, Surrey, GU16 6TB (SU909577).	Philip Riley: Email: chairman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Sun 17 May 2015 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - "The K&A Canal at Bradford on Avon" by Mike Chapman. Meet: Avoncliff (south) car park BA15 2HB (ST804599), accessed via Westwood.	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk
Tue 19 May 2015 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	"Basingstoke Canal" with Philip Riley, chairman of Basingstoke CS. Joint meeting with IWA Guildford & Reading and Oxfordshire Branches. The Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading RG30 3HD (SU691719). Entry donation (inc K&A members) £2.50 to help with expenses.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com
Thu 21 May 2015 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Richard Thomas is returning to talk to us about "A day in the life of a ... Thames Tug." This is a look at the work done by the Cory tug "General VIII," engaged in the movement of refuse lighters. The talk features a voyage from Wandsworth to the aptly named Mucking in Essex. 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
Sun 24 May 2015	Basingstoke CS	Magna Carta Rally at Odiham Wharf, Colt Hill, Odiham, Hants, RG29 1DH (SU747517). More info at http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/headline/magna-carta-boat-rally-24th-may-2015/ This will be part of the Magna Carta celebrations in Odiham – more details of local events can be seen at http://magnacarta800th.com/events/odiham/ .	Enquiries: 07817-897446 (please leave a message) Email: enquiries@basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 4 Jun 2015 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Talk topic and speaker TBA. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com

Greywell Tunnel

(Continued from page 1)

Clearance over the top of the portal, next to the footpath, has exposed a fence that was probably installed during the restoration, and inevitably it is in a bad state. This will be replaced by the Society in due course. Users of the footpath are therefore urged to take care and not to lean on the fence until this work has been done.

We are grateful to the local landowner who allowed us access to his grounds and to use it for burning cuttings, of which there was a large amount of course.

Further pictures are available on the Basingstoke Canal Society website.

<http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk>

Right: The last attempt to reach Basingstoke by boat in November 1913 evidently attracted local interest in Greywell village. AJ Harmsworth's boat *Basingstoke* can be seen entering the tunnel. It seems that excessive vegetation over the portal was a problem then too.

