



Chairman's Column

Welcome to our Speaker

We are delighted to welcome Dr Roger Squires, the well known waterways campaigner and author, to our April meeting when he will be telling us all about the Panama Canal.

Proposed Visit to the Purton Hulks

I regret that, due to insufficient numbers, the Society's proposed trip to the Purton Hulks on Saturday 16 May has been cancelled. Perhaps this can be looked at again for sometime next year.

River Thames Trip

As announced at our last meeting, providing there is sufficient interest from members we are planning a boat trip on the River Thames on Sunday 7 June, on board a Salter's 'Steamer'. The trip, which will be part of a scheduled cruise, will start from Wallingford at 10.30am arriving at Abingdon at 1.30pm. The return journey starts at 2.30pm so there should be enough time to look around Abingdon or have lunch if required. The boat will arrive back at Wallingford at 5.30pm.

Of interest along the way are Benson Lock, Shillingford House (built for Lily Langtree), River Thame, Dorchester Abbey, Wittenham Clumps, Days Lock, Redbrick Clifton Hampden Bridge near the famous Barley Mow Pub, Culham Lock Cut, Abingdon Marina, and Abingdon's magnificent waterfront including almshouses and the dominant spire of St Helen's Church.

The cost of the trip is £15.60 for seniors, £16.40 for adults and £8.20 for children. As usual, people will need to make their own way to Wallingford (directions will be provided) and car share would be encouraged (however, hiring a mini-bus might be a possibility). Maureen will need to take bookings, complete with payment, at our meeting on 30 April.

Please see Maureen Greenham at the 30 April meeting or contact her (Tel: 023 8040 6951 or Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com) to book your place.

Next Month's Meeting

Another reminder that our next meeting will be held on

Canalside pub re-opens again

One of Northamptonshire's most treasured canalside pubs has re-opened just three months after its future seemed doomed.

The Admiral Nelson in Braunston, near Daventry, is back in business under new management, Maureen Hume and Howard Thompson, who also own the Braunston Manor Hotel and the village's Old Plough.

The pub - which is very popular with visiting canal boat users - ceased trading in January because there were not enough customers to keep up the running costs.

Mr Thompson, who has lived in Braunston and the surrounding area all his life, said: "I was really pleased to be involved with getting the Admiral Nelson back up and running so quickly.

the second Thursday in June, viz. the 11th. This is because Chilworth Hall may be needed for election purposes on our original date.

At this meeting we will not be having a speaker but instead have organised a 'double-header' event. We will be having a General Knowledge Quiz, organised by Maureen Greenham. We will also be holding a Silent Auction for charity. We are looking for members to bring along, for auction, items of a variety and quality that they might want to buy themselves. For example, this could include pictures, cushions, decorative items, games, puzzles, toys, boat items, small pieces of furniture, electrical equipment (in good and safe working order, obviously), homemade cakes, jams etc. I must stress that this is not a jumble sale so we won't be looking for unwanted toiletries, chocolate or wine (however tasty) etc.

Anne Coleman is organising this part of the evening and will need to have your items at least half an hour before the start of the evening. If you are able to let Anne know in advance what you may be bringing and the space they might take up (if appropriate) could you please contact her as soon as possible. Her contact details are elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Let's see if we can have a really enjoyable evening and raise a significant sum for charity. Wine and soft drinks will be provided along with the normal tea and coffee. So, please, see what you can 'dig out' for the auction. Please remember, you will have to take any unwanted items home with you.

British Waterways Canalside Property Portfolio

I have been advised that a press release on BW's Waterscape website recently reported that the Government is allowing BW to retain control of its canalside property portfolio through a new separate wholly owned subsidiary. If correct, that is good news. However, cynics have already claimed that wholly owned subsidiaries can so easily become wholly owned by someone else...whilst another has said that this is like having the portfolio gift-wrapped and placed in the property business's equivalent of the Estate Agent's window! So, I would suggest we all watch this space.....

Paul Herbert

"I have been coming here for most of my life and drank my first ever ginger beer in this pub aged 13. People are very pleased that we have opened it again."

Both Ms Hume and Mr Thompson are determined to make the Admiral Nelson a success despite the recession. They have already made some changes, including refurbishing, decorating and extending the dining area.

Mr Thompson added: "It has made it look bigger, it is better, cleaner and colour co-ordinated. But the changes are not major. It is still a real ale pub."

The credit crunch has had a major effect on the pub trade with more than 1,000 having closed since December 2005, most of which have been in the past 12 months.

April Meeting

Alan Smith - "Alaska and the Yukon" (or "Up Close, Personal and Casual!")

We were pleased to welcome Alan Smith to our April meeting and I was delighted with the good attendance again. I took copious notes of Alan's presentation but, let me say from the outset, there is no way that I can give full credit to his beautifully illustrated talk so I hope this brief synopsis will suffice.

Alan and his wife were on a one month holiday which commenced with their voyage on a small cruise ship from Vancouver heading north up the western coastline and then via the Inside Passage. The weather was pretty grim at the start, very cold and wet. However, the spectacular scenery made up for that. Alan gave a brief history of Alaska which was originally Russian, but was then sold to the USA for \$2m.

There are very few roads in Alaska so most freight has to go by sea (when weather and ice permits). The population mainly lives in coastal communities. The main industries are fishing, fishing, and even more fishing. Large cruise ships were very evident throughout their trip and many float planes were continually buzzing around, the latter providing an easy form of transport in that region.

We were spellbound with Alan's photographs of the scenery, including glaciers and fjords (reminiscent of Norway), and the very varied wildlife including brown pelicans (a bit out of their normal area), seals, sea lions and porpoise, humpbacked whales, puffins, sea otters, grizzly bears and a lone wolf, just to mention a few!

We saw First Nation (native Canadian) villages. We heard about the famous Klondike Gold Rush and the railway that cuts through that region, now used mainly for tourists off the cruise ships.

Their cruise ended at Wittier. This small town, with a population of around 300, was originally built as a military base in World War II to protect the USA from Japanese air raids and possible invasion. The only inland route at that time was by rail. Now there is a fairly unique tunnel shared by the railway and highway. Alan and his wife left their ship and travelled by road to Anchorage and then onwards via the Alaska Railroad.

The remaining part of Alan's talk was about the Yukon, which takes its name from the Yukon River. Again, we learnt about the history of that region. In 1906 gold was found in Fairbanks – the town with the greatest temperature range in the world.

Again we were entertained by Alan's splendid photography and his tales of their adventures in that area including travelling on one of the Sternwheelers operating on its rivers.

It was an extremely entertaining and informative talk and I can only regret not having more space available for a lengthier and more detailed account of their journey. Many thanks Alan.

Paul Herbert

Piddler will return as £30k iron man

The controversial Ribble Piddler statue is to return to Preston for good.

The £21,000 oak giant, officially called Gauging the Ripple, was removed from the side of the Millennium Ribble Link canal in January last year because wood in the statue's legs was rotting.

A routine inspection in December 2006 found damage, rot and a crack in the calf of the monument, nicknamed the Ribble Piddler because of its posture over the waterway. It was moved into storage because of safety concerns.

Today Preston Council leader Ken Hudson has announced the Piddler is coming back for good. The monument will be cast in iron by Coupe Foundry in Higher Walton, to ensure there is no

repeat of the damage. The work is expected to cost £30,000, which will be paid for through grant funding.

Coun Hudson said: "I am delighted to announce that Preston's iconic piddling man Ribble Link statue is to return. The statue is due to be cast and will be back in pride of place at the Ribble Link later this year.

"Ever since it was removed we've missed him towering over the Ribble Link. It's just not been the same driving down Tom Benson Way, or sailing or walking down the canal.

Chorley sculptor Thompson Dagnall took five months to carve the original 16ft statue after winning a competition in 2002.

Lancashire Evening Post - 30 March 2009

Walkers wanted for wildlife count

Walkers on Britain's canals are being asked to note the wildlife they see, from dragonflies to frogs, in order to map where nature needs additional help.

With thousands of miles to cover, British Waterways is asking people to help them understand where species are thriving and where they need support.

It is particularly looking for bumblebee sightings, after populations were decimated by a year of disease.

Many crops, including most fruits, depend on bumblebees for pollination.

Ben Darvill, director of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, said three of Britain's 25 native species of bumblebee are now extinct, and a further six species were at "crisis point".

'Rapid destruction'

"With the rapid destruction of bee-friendly habitats, canals and river banks have become an important home to a variety of wild flowers and native plants that bumblebees rely on to survive," he said.

British Waterways, which manages 2,200 miles of canals and rivers, has produced a guide to wildlife found near the country's canals and rivers, including information on bumblebees and tips for how to help them.

Mark Robinson, national ecology manager at British Waterways, said: "A wealth of water-loving birds, mammals, fish, amphibians and insects thrive on the UK's canals, rivers and reservoirs, which act as green corridors and safe havens for many species."

Flooding in recent years has also damaged natural habitats alongside canals, which has led to a decline in the Kingfisher population.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7980491.stm>

To take part in the survey or find more details go to the website: <http://www.waterscape.com/wildlife-survey-2009>

Alternatively contact British Waterways at 64 Clarendon Road, Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 1DA. Tel: 0845 6715530 (Mon-Fri, 9:00-17:30) Fax: 01923 201300

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 30 Apr 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Panama Canal" with Roger Squires. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184) NB This is the "MAY" meeting!	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat 2 May 2009	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Join Canal Ranger Peter Bickford for an early morning stroll down the Canal at Brookwood, listen and learn about birdsongs. Peter will be focusing on migrant birds for this walk. Booking essential, £3 per person	Canal Centre: 01252 370073
Sun 10 May 2009	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	IWA Solent & Arun Branch river trip on River Arun to Pallingham. Start from Pulborough. (TQ046184)	Brendan Whelan: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Sun 10 May 2009 12.00 noon - 4.00pm	Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society	Poyntz Bridge (SU859039) open. A chance to cross the canal on the unique 1820 cast iron bridge.	Linda Wilkinson: 01243 576701
Sun 10 May 2009 2.30pm	Chichester District Museum	"A basin full of history" A tour with local historian Alan Green exploring the rich history of Chichester's canal basin. Tickets from Chichester District Museum (£4 or £3 concessions). Places are limited and must be booked in advance.	District Museum: 01243 784683 Email: districtmuseum@chichester.gov.uk
Sat 16 May 2009 11.00am	Southampton CS	Special guided tour of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett. Following a poor response from members this outing has been cancelled. See front page.	Maureen Greenham: 023 8040 6951 Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com
Sun 17 May 2009 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	WALK - Kilmersdon Pit & Inclined Plane. Meet: Radstock Public Car Park, Waterloo Road, Radstock. (ST690549) (3 miles walk).	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948
Thu 21 May 2009 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Peter Dunn & George Eycott will be talking about "The Claverton pump & Burbage crane." Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
23-24 May 2009	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Brookwood Boat Rally. (SU964576).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Sun 7 Jun 2009	Southampton CS	Proposed River Thames trip on a "Salter's Steamer". Starting from Wallingford at 10.30am arriving at Abingdon at 1.30pm. Return to Wallingford at 5.30pm.	Maureen Greenham: 023 8040 6951 Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com
Thu 11 Jun 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Society 'social' evening comprising a Silent Auction and a General Knowledge Quiz. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184). See front page. NB: This is NOT 1st Thursday of month.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat 20 Jun 2009	Kennet & Avon CT	Reading Water Fest	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: johns@360swift.com
Sat 27 Jun 2009 10.30am	Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society	Guided walk along the site of part of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal (Free). Meet at Barnham Court Farm, Barnham (SU956035) for a 4 mile walk to Ford. Allow 4 hours.	Walk details: 01243 576701
Sun 28 Jun 2009	IWA Salisbury Group	Having heard the talk in May, now a visit to Claverton to see the Claverton pumping station and inspect the restoration work on the Burbage crane. For further details see Contact column.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Thu 2 Jul 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Tales, slides and cine film" an evening with Brian Evans. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184)	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Thu 2 Jul 2009 7.30pm	Chichester Ship Canal Trust	Talk: "Past, Present & Future of the Chichester Canal." At Christ Church, South Street, Chichester. Tickets £3.00 from Linda Wilkinson.	Linda Wilkinson, 1 Chidham Lane, Chidham, Chichester, PO18 8TL Tel: 01243 576701
Sun 12 Jul 2009	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	IWA Solent Branch river trip on the Stour. Start from Christchurch. (SZ1692)	Brendan Whelan: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Thu 16 Jul 2009 7.00pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Boules & BBQ at 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 26 Jul 2009	Kennet & Avon CT	Newbury Waterways Festival. (SU473672)	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 30 Jul 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual General Meeting followed by supporting programme (details to follow). Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184). NB this is the "AUGUST" meeting.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Thu 3 Sep 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Speaker to be confirmed. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sun 20 Sep 2009	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	IWA Solent Branch river trip on the Hamble to Curbridge and Botley. Start from Swanwick. (SU495092)	Brendan Whelan: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Fri 25 Sep 2009 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Performance by Day-Star Theatre (details of production to be confirmed). Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184). NB this is the "OCTOBER" meeting and is NOT on a Thursday.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sun 17 May, 21 Jun, 19 Jul, 16 Aug, 20 Sep 2009 2.00pm	Paul Barnett	Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett, Marine Historian. Donations in aid of Severn Area Rescue Association. or £3.00 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.

President:

Brian Evans.

Chairman:

Paul Herbert, 25 Rosemoor Grove, Chandler's Ford, Hampshire, SO53 1TB. Tel: 023 8026 2365.

Email: p_herbert1@sky.com

Secretary:

Angela Rose, Hilo, Hungerford, Bursledon, Hampshire, SO31 8DF. Tel: 02380 632558 (day) 02380 403982 (home)

Email: info@apas-engineering.com

Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Anne Coleman, 14 Redmoor Close, Bitterne, Southampton, SO19 4DH. Tel: 023 8044 2552. Email: wiseowl@tcp.co.uk

Committee:

Maureen Greenham, Peter Oates, Alan Rose, David Townley-Jones

Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:

Peter Oates, 39 Church Street, Nether Heyford, Northamptonshire, NN7 3LH. Tel: 01327 341798.

Email: scs@whitenap.plus.com

Society Website:

<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.

Boris' new transport plan a boost for Thames ferry services

The River Thames could be returned to its glory days under a plan by the Mayor of London to promote it as an integral transport link, *The Times* has learnt.

Boris Johnson will announce today the integration of river services into the wider transport network, enabling Oyster cards, a form of electronic ticketing, to be used for the first time.

The frequency of ferries will be increased and a new service — running every ten minutes between London Bridge and Canary Wharf — will encourage more people to take to the water for their daily commute.

The announcement forms part of a wider strategy to make better use of the river resource, with the ultimate aim of ferrying thousands of Olympic visitors to events at the 2012 Games and relieving pressure on the Tube.

More than 30 organisations, including boat operators, pier owners and Transport for London, have signed up to a river concordat, which will aim to promote and improve services.

City Hall is exploring the possibility of extending regular services to Putney in the west and expanding the fleet of ferries. The private sector will be approached to invest in extra piers and better infrastructure.

Mr Johnson said: "With the right mixture of investment and imagination, river services can become a truly integral, as well as an extremely pleasant, part of the capital's transport network. Travelling on the river is one of the great pleasures of London, and I want more people to be able to share in the experience."

Kulveer Ranger, the mayor's transport adviser, said that the scheme would provide an incentive to commuters to use the river. "It is an iconic part of London and we want to make better use of it," he told *The Times*.

Mr Ranger admitted that there were challenges to overcome, not least that river fares are more expensive than the Tube and bus. Ferries are also less environmentally friendly than other modes of transport because they use considerable amounts of diesel, and the winding route of the Thames and its tidal nature pose difficulties in providing a fast and efficient service.

A number of ferry operators have tried and failed to attract commuters. Several services have closed, while proposals in 2006

to provide craft every ten minutes between Putney and Greenwich never came to fruition. However, Mr Ranger said that the Tory administration hoped to improve services and increase capacity by attracting private investment. He said that investigations into fuel-efficient vessels were taking place.



Sean Collins, the managing director of Thames Clippers, which is owned by the operators of the O2 entertainment centre in Greenwich, southeast London, said he was confident that more commuters could be attracted to the river despite the relatively expensive fares. The company operates 12 vessels, but more will be added to the fleet as the service expands. Last year passenger numbers rose from 900,000 to 2.7 million.

Mr Collins said that an increasing number of new housing developments along the river justified a better service. "The level of comfort is better than that of a shorthaul aircraft. Everyone is guaranteed a seat on our boats, which are licensed and also offer tea, coffee and snacks.

"A lot of commuters will pay that bit extra for comfortable seats, a wonderful ambience and a brilliant view."

Richard Tracey, the Conservative leader of the transport committee at the London Assembly, said that the river was a wasted resource. "The objective is to get a really good boat service integrated with the rest of the public transport system in time for the Olympics," he said.

"People have been trying to get this happening for 30 years — but let's hope that we can crack it this time."

The proposal has caused concern among some pleasure cruise operators on the Thames, who claim that the Clipper service has already started to attract their customers.

The proposed expansion of the London river service is modelled on a system running in Brisbane, eastern Australia, which carries almost three million people a year and serves 19 stops.

SAILING TO WORK

From November passengers on Thames Clippers will receive a one-third discount if they use their Oyster cards. The cost of a single ticket will fall from £5 to £3.30. Weekly and monthly tickets will also be reduced in price.

The Times - 6 April 2009