



# Newsletter

May 1998

Issue 320

## DAY-STAR THEATRE

Tickets are selling very well for the visit by the Day-Star Theatre, who have been booked again to appear at the next (June) meeting of the Society. The theatre company have become well-known on the waterways scene in the last few years and were a big hit at the 30th Birthday Party last year. They will be coming to Southampton to give us a special performance of their brand new play for 1998. Last year's production was thoroughly entertaining; this year's is likely to be no different.

Light refreshments will be available after the performance and, having heard the Committee's plans, the food will live up to the Society's high standards.

Eric Lewis still has a few tickets left. If you want to see the play then do not delay - contact Eric as soon as possible, either at the May meeting or at his address / telephone number listed on the next page. If you leave it too long, it is quite possible that you might leave it too late. A small admission charge is being made to cover costs: SCS members - £2.50; the general public will pay £3.50. You try going to the theatre for less!!

## SOCIETY LIBRARY

Still **NO-ONE** has volunteered to look after the books in the library. As pointed out in the last few issues, our librarian, Sue Lewis, will be unable to store the Library's books at home after the Society's AGM in July. Sue is prepared to either continue running the library, to assist the volunteer in any way or to step aside and let the member run the library on their own. Sue has successfully run the loan service for members for a number of years.

If no one is prepared to assist the Society with this by the July's AGM, the Committee will have to arrange for the disposal of all the books. Please consider again whether you could look after these books. If you feel that you can help in any way or can give any ideas, please have a word with either Sue Lewis or Brian Evans.

### Bits & Pieces

**Thank you** to all members who have recently donated raffle prizes - this action saves the Society money.

For the last couple of months, I have tried to include a comprehensive list of **waterways related events** within a reasonable distance of Southampton. If you know of any not included that might be of interest, or if you think it a waste of space, please let the Editor know.

## IWA SAYS "NOT ENOUGH ACTION" IN EA'S PLAN FOR NAVIGATION

The IWA today expressed concern at the content of the Environment Agency's 'Action Plan for Navigation'. IWA is disappointed that the Plan appears to do little to address the severe backlog of structural work on the Agency's navigations. The Association called on the Agency to give greater urgency to tackling urgently needed structural works and also to give navigation a greater priority within the Agency's duties.

One of a series of Action Plans on the Agency's statutory functions, the 'Action Plan for Navigation' attempts to set a broad agenda for the implementation of its environmental strategy. Unlike the Agency's own LEAP Action Plans which address specific issues in detail, covering benefits and constraints, timescales, costs, partner organisations and other contextual information, this plan contains little detail and focuses primarily upon administrative issues such as market research, staff training, overheads and licencing. It contains no solid commitment to undertake any specific works and little that even hints at this important issue.

The Environment Agency's Functional Action Plans have been produced in support of its 'Environmental Strategy for the Millenium and Beyond' and its annual Corporate Plan.

IWA National Chairman, Mrs Audrey Smith said, "There is an absence of any real commitment from the Environment Agency within this plan to make inroads into the enormous backlog of structural works which are required on many of its navigations. We are concerned not only about the backlog of work, but also about the Agency's seeming lack of interest in doing anything about it. We are aware that the Agency is undertaking a detailed survey of its navigation structures, but waterway users need to see evidence that real work is happening to address the serious situation which has only been aggravated by recent flooding."

Mrs Smith continued, "IWA has eagerly awaited the production of the Action Plan for Navigation, believing that the Agency would take this opportunity to reassure boaters that there are short, medium and long term plans in place to safeguard the future of its navigations. This plan indicates that this is not the case and it seems that we were all guilty of wishful thinking. I cannot see how this publication can do anything other than add to the uncertainty with which licence payers on Agency navigations view the future. If this plan set out to reassure boaters that the future of navigation is safe in the Agency's hands, I can only say that it has failed."

*IWA Press Release 28 April 1998*

SUPPORT YOUR CANAL SOCIETY

**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 SOCIETY EVENTS**

<b>7th May</b>	River Lea (Part 2) - Bow Back Rivers by Richard Thomas
<b>4th June</b>	Day-Star Theatre with their new show for 1998 (admission charge)
<b>2nd July</b>	AGM and Waterways Videos
<b>6th August</b>	Members' Slides
<b>3rd September</b>	"An Evening with our Chairman" (assuming he still is!)
<b>1st October</b>	"Black Country Waterways" with Ron Cousens
<b>5th November</b>	"A Small Boat on Local Waterways" by Peter Glover
<b>4th December</b>	Annual Inter-Society Quiz and American Supper

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

**April Meeting**

Colin Ward's 'Lots to do at the Soo' turned out to be a whirlwind tour in which Colin and his wife visited many locations and special points of interest on canals of the USA and Canada.

An enthusiastic account, illustrated with many beautiful slides which emphasised the size of many lakes and waterways and the great distances that had to be travelled to visit these points of interest. It is difficult for us to imagine a lake so large that 'seas' can build up in severe weather, sufficient to cause trouble for a ship the size of a Channel ferry.

The Wards had ferry trips on Lake Huron and drove their hire car the length of Manitoulin Island.

The larger waterways perform a necessary part of the inland transport system but we learned that heritage waterways are treated quite seriously as big tourist attractions and many are in good order.

Visits were made to the Severn-Trent Canal system, the Lachine Canal, the St Lawrence Seaway, to a lock staircase on the Rideau in Ottawa, the Hydraulic Lifts at Peterborough and the Big Rapids Marine Railway on the Severn-Trent, a boat trip at Niagara Falls, a trip on a DUKW in Boston, the Erie Canal, and many more.

And the Soo? That's the way the locals say Sault, as in Sault Ste Marie, the furthest west that the Wards travelled. Here they visited the locks which carry traffic past the Falls of St Mary between Lake Huron and Lake Superior.

**BOLLARDS**

Bollards are the "poor man's sculpture" of the waterways. They occur at locksheds, landings, wharfs, basins and docks and come in a variety of shapes, sizes and materials.

The earliest examples have all disappeared but later wood, stone, cast iron and concrete examples abound. Canal companies often favoured a distinctive style: fat bulbs on the Grand Union, plain phalluses on the BCN. Elsewhere there are anonymous dollies, mushrooms and stumps and more rarely, the occasional inverted cone. These humble objects lend character to many canalscapes. Dozens of white-painted bollards dot the windswept banks of the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (like notes in a musical score) and there are still ancient wooden stumps with whitened tops to be found on rural Midlands canals.

Mass produced steel mooring bollards are readily available but a local waterway might prefer to announce itself by having serviceable new bollards cast from original patterns. There are British foundries which still make cast iron objects, and the expense is not great. There is scope for inventiveness too; old wooden stumps which have cracked and rotted away can be replaced by new wooden bollards made by BW craftsmen, and date-marked for the millennium. Surely it is time the humble bollard made a comeback.

*BW Monthly April 1998*

**Don't forget ...**

The IWA Solent & Arun Branch are organising the Arun Navigation Campaign Cruise on Sunday 10th May. If you can't take part yourself, I believe Peter Glover will be and will accept your sponsorship money.

This year's IWA National Trail Boat Festival is to be held on the Wilts and Berks Canal at Wootton Bassett over the Spring Bank Holiday. Admission is FREE!!

## Events and Meetings in 1998

The following is a list of waterway oriented events happening around our area. This list proves there is plenty of waterway interest within a moderate distance of Southampton. Something on this list must interest you! Phone numbers of contacts are given at the end of the list.

7th May (Thu) - *Southampton CS meeting - River Lea (Part 2) - Bow Back Rivers* by Richard Thomas. Details from Eric Lewis.

10th May (Sun) - **Arun Navigation Campaign Cruise**. This is the 16th running of the Pulborough - Pallingham Sponsored Small Boat Cruise but with a new name. See article on the front page of last month's newsletter or contact Alan White.

21st May (Thu) - **The Canal du Midi** by Frank Stokes and Dereck Johnson. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

23rd - 25th May (Sat to Mon) - **National Trail Boat Festival** at Wootton Bassett on the **Wilts & Berks Canal**. This is a premier event in promoting the Association's aims and objectives, and supporting local canal societies and trusts. If you can't make the National at Salford this year why not try this one! Free admission. Boat bookings to Tony Mason on 01793 852852; other details form Doug Small on 01628 544666.

4th June (Thu) - *Southampton CS meeting - Day-Star Theatre* with their new show for 1998 (admission charge). Details / tickets from Eric Lewis.

7th June (Sun) - "**The Poddle**" is the **Wey & Arun Canal Trust's** sponsored walk. Mostly on the Surrey sections of the canal. Details from John Lisk.

7th June (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Guided Walk and Cream Tea**. Starts at 2.00pm at Salterns Locks, Birdham. Details from John Cooper.

13th - 14th June (Sat & Sun) - **Beaulieu Classic Boat Festival** at Buckler's Hard. Boats, trade show, rowing pageant. Organised by Classic Boat Magazine.

27th - 28th June (Sat & Sun) - **Anglo-Welsh Waterways Weekend** in Bristol Harbour. Open Sat 10.00am - 10.00pm, Sun noon - 6.00pm. Numerous land and water-based attractions. Admission free! Details from Richmond Event Management 0117 9276614.

2nd July (Thu) - Southampton CS **AGM** and **Waterways Videos**. Details from Eric Lewis.

5th July (Sun) - IWA Salisbury Branch are organising a boat trip on the Upper Thames starting at Lechlade. Details Tony Fry.

5th July (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Guided Walk** (as above).

8th July (Wed) - Illustrated talk on **The Chichester Canal - Its History** by Edward Hill at Chichester District Council Offices at 8pm. Details from John Cooper.

11th July (Sat) - **Chichester Basin Barrel Races** organised by the Chichester Canal Society. Teams of paddlers in spectacular racing. Details from John Cooper.

18th July (Sat) - **Mikron Theatre** at Chichester. Performances start at 8.00pm. Details from John Cooper.

18th - 19th July (Sat & Sun) - "**Optimist**" sailing for youngsters at **Chichester Canal Basin**. Opportunity to try sailing. Details from John Cooper.

25th - 26th July (Sat & Sun) - **Littlehampton Regatta**. Many attractions (including IWA Branch stand and cruise). Organised by Littlehampton Harbour Board - contact Paul Naish on 01903 721215 (office hours).

26th July (Sun) - There will be a return **cruise** from **Littlehampton to Arundel** in support of plans to create public moorings at Arundel for visiting boaters. Details from Alan White.

25th - 26th July (Sat & Sun) - The Newbury Branch of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust are organising the **Newbury Waterways Weekend**. This includes a Canal Fair from 10.00am to 5.00pm on the Sunday which will include craft and canalware stalls, waterway and local society stands, boat trips and various other entertainments. Details from Eddie Middleditch 01635 42041.

6th August (Thu) - Southampton CS **Members' Slides**. Details from Eric Lewis.

9th August (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Guided Walk** (as above).

23rd August (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Water Fair and Steam Boat Rally**. NB Please note change of date from that announced last month. Many attractions on and off the water. Parade for all types of boat; chance to cruise the canal in your own boat. Hire a skiff or ride the trip boat. Chichester Canal Basin 12.00 to 5.00. Contact John Cooper (or Alan White if you would like to help run the IWA S&A Branch stand).

28th - 31st August (Bank Holiday) - **International Festival of the Sea** at Portsmouth Dockyard. Find the IWA S&A Branch stall among 400 other stands and a thousand other boats. Ticket hotline and information on 0870 909 1998. If you would like to help on the IWA stand contact Alan White.

29th - 31st August (Bank Holiday) - **National Waterways Festival**, Salford on the Manchester Ship Canal. Details from IWA Head Office 0171 586 2556 (office hours).

3rd September (Thu) - *Southampton CS meeting - An Evening with our Chairman* (Brian Evans - assuming he still is!). Details Eric Lewis.

12th - 13th September (Sat & Sun) - **Godalming Working Boat Rally**. Details Mike Adams 01483 773512.

(Continued on page 4)

## Events & meetings in 1998

(Continued from page 3)

17th September (Thu) - **Canalside Camera** by Jon Sims. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

20th September (Sun) - **Beaulieu River Small Boat Cruise**. This will be upstream to the top of the navigation from Bucklers Hard. A launching fee of £6.00 is payable but the river is extremely attractive. A gentle cruise and picnic followed by a cream tea in the village. Details from Peter Boyce.

1st October (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - Black Country Waterways** with Ron Cousens. Details from Eric Lewis.

5th November (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - A Small Boat on Local Waterways** by Peter Glover. Details from Eric Lewis.

19th November (Thu) - **Canalware Painting** by Bocraft. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

28th November - 24th December - **Father Christmas Trips** daily on the Chichester Canal. Details from John Cooper.

4th December (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - Annual Inter-Society Quiz and American Supper**. Details Eric Lewis.

First Wednesday in most months - **IWA Dorchester Group** meets. Information Graham Pugh 01305 262305.

Throughout the year - **Wey & Arun**

### April fool again

Remember the shark attack at Bow in 1996? For the second time, BW got an April fool story on television news. BBC South East liked the idea of a submarine service from Docklands to the Millennium exhibition at Greenwich. They interviewed the commercial development manager, Mark Lloyd, at Watford a couple of weeks beforehand and intercut him with film of a Thames passenger boat and a map of the submarines' proposed route. The item was broadcast four times during that morning. The plausible justification for the scheme was that passengers could watch the underwater life while they travelled!

*BW Monthly April 1998*

**Canal Trust** run cruises on n/b *Zachariah Keppel* on the restored canal. Information from John Lisk.

Throughout the year - **Chichester Canal Society** run cruises on n/b *Egremont* on the canal from Chichester. Information from John Cooper.

### Telephone numbers of contacts are:

Peter Boyce (IWA Solent & Arun Branch) 01705 269642  
 John Cooper (Chichester Canal Society) 01243 671051  
 Tony Davis (IWA Guildford & Reading Branch) 01932 844261  
 Arthur Dungate (Surrey & Hampshire CS) 0181 737 4896  
 Tony Fry (IWA Salisbury Group) 01722 710192  
 Eric Lewis (Southampton Canal Society) 01703 860384  
 John Lisk (Wey & Arun Canal Trust) 01493 752403  
 Alan White (IWA Solent & Arun Branch) 01243 573765

## CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

### GEOProjects Maps

Inland Waterways of Britain <b>NEW!</b> .....	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal .....	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations.....	£3.75
The Broads .....	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen <b>NEW!</b> .....	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals <b>COMING SOON!</b> .....	£3.75
Grand Union Canal (each).....	£3.75
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford	
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames	
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash	
Kennet & Avon Canal .....	£3.75
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals.....	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas .....	£3.75
Oxford Canal .....	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map .....	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal <b>COMING SOON!</b> .....	£3.75

**Ball Point Pens** – Embossed ..... 50p

**Burgees** – Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side..... £8.00

**Decorated Mugs**..... £2.25

**Notelets** – with drawings of canal and Romsey scenes ..... £1.00  
 (by Brian Evans)

**Painted Canalware** – Range of items from dippers to plant containers to spoons – Painted by Linda Pearce **NEW!** ..... Various

**Shopper Bags** – Cotton with screen-printed Society logo each side .. £2.25

**Society Members Badges** – Enamel ..... 75p

**Sweat Shirts** – 30th Anniversary in Light Grey..... £16.00  
 with multi-coloured embroidered Society logo on breast

**Sweat Shirts** – Standard in Navy or Royal Blue ..... £15.00  
 with Society logo embroidered on breast

**Tea Towels** – Various colourful designs ..... £2.50 & £3.25

**Tee Shirts** – Screen printed with Society logo across chest ..... £6.50  
 in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large  
 in Red - medium

Visit the Sales Stand at Society meetings and place your orders with Paul Herbert or Ray Brooks.

## RESTORATION SCHEMES - THE BIG FOUR

Apart from the years of canal mania two centuries ago, we are living in the busiest-ever period for canal engineering. And BW has made itself the world leader in the field of restoration, as their involvement in Eurowaterways, VNE and the World Canals Conference shows. Of the 2000 miles they manage, about 200 is non-navigable. Under existing law, all the un-navigable sections are classified as 'remainder waterways' and BW cannot spend money on their restoration. Getting outside funding is thus the critical factor in achieving their addition to the waterway network. Here is a quick view of the four largest schemes in progress. This article first appeared in BW Monthly, April 1998.

### HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL

Britain's highest canal containing its longest tunnel is a monument to Georgian engineering skills in crossing the Pennines. Its 23 miles link the Calder & Hebble at Huddersfield with the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals at Ashton.

**Built:** Completed in 1811

**Use stopped:** Derelict by the 1940's

**Main physical obstacles to restoration:** Standedge Tunnel and built over land on parts of the canal route.

**Likely cost:** £31.1m

**Current position:** Five partners comprising BW, the Huddersfield Canal Society and three local boroughs, have promoted the canal's restoration for several years. Parts of the canal were navigable before they gained a £14.8m grant from the Millennium Commission matched by £12m from English Partnerships in 1996. Last May the Huddersfield Canal Company was set up to coordinate the project with BW managing the canal related engineering work from a new project office at Marsden. Smaller blockages will be tackled this year, larger projects like bringing the tunnel back into use will follow in 1999 and 2000.

**Target finish date:** 2000

### KENNET & AVON CANAL

Already restored to navigation in 1990, the canal subsequently suffered severe boating restrictions. Yet it has enormous tourism potential and a very active canal trust encouraging strong public support. These factors led to the Heritage Lottery Fund granting £25m last year toward putting the canal in proper condition to cope with expected demand from all its users.

**Built:** Completed in 1810

**Use stopped:** Largely derelict by the 1950's

**Main physical obstacles to restoration:** Leak-prone in the Bath Valley and poor water supply to the summit.

**Likely cost:** £29m

**Current position:** Work on the K&A Canal Partnership Project started in earnest last November. It involved seven main contracts through the winter, including channel rebuilding, piling, dredging and lock repairs along the canal's length. The work, managed by BW from Devizes, will continue for four years. Special care is being taken of heritage and environmental aspects of the restoration.

**Target finish date:** 2001

### MILLENNIUM LINK

The scheme covers the entire lengths of the 39 mile Forth & Clyde Canal from Bowling Basin near Dumbarton through Glasgow and Falkirk to Grangemouth, and the 31 mile Union Canal from Falkirk to Edinburgh. Parts of both canals are already navigable as the result of earlier schemes, notably the Glasgow Canal Project which restored 13 miles through the city in the 1980's.

**Built:** Forth & Clyde opened in 1790, the Union Canal in 1822

**Use stopped:** Closed to navigation in 1963 and 1965 respectively.

**Main physical obstacles to restoration:** Union Canal route built over west of Edinburgh, lowered bridges and new motorway crossing, link between canals at Falkirk to be re-established.

**Likely cost:** £78m

**Current position:** BW led a successful bid for £32m from the Millennium Commission in 1996 but European match funding has been held up. This month the Link partners, including BW, have decided to underwrite the sum themselves in order that the project can start. With a lot of preparatory design work already done, restoration will start very quickly. The scheme will also have widespread public participation in developing leisure facilities and conserving heritage and wildlife.

**Target finish date:** 2001.

### MONTGOMERY CANAL

Half of this 35 mile branch of the Llangollen Canal from Frankton to Newtown remains un-navigable. Apart from the first 4 miles from Frankton Junction, navigable sections are isolated by lowered bridges and a 'dry' length at Pant. The canal is important as a wildlife habitat and restoration involves providing alternative sites for rare plants and animals.

**Built:** In stages, open throughout in 1819.

**Use stopped:** Officially abandoned in 1944.

**Main physical obstacles to restoration:** Lowered road bridges.

**Likely cost:** £40m

**Current position:** BW is coordinating restoration for the Montgomery Waterway Restoration Trust, building on the success of previous restoration work. To deal with the whole of the rest of the canal, an outline funding bid has gone to the Heritage Lottery Fund and a full bid is being prepared.

**Target finish date:** Depends on funding.