



# Newsletter

May 1999

Issue 331

## DAY-STAR

## THEATRE

*The Southampton Canal Society is very pleased to welcome the Day-Star Theatre company again to perform for us as part of their 18th annual Waterways Tour.*

### The Play

This year's play is called *The Water Flows On* and we shall be seeing its second public performance.

Ken's idea of taking his wife on a canal boat holiday brings back more than just the happy childhood memories of a boating holiday in the mid sixties. The canals are busier now. The wide open spaces seem smaller. The boats are no longer cheap and cheerful. His wife, June, seems to hate it on the first day.

He remembers playing wild west outlaws with his sister as the family explored the freedom of the quiet, decaying waterways. But are such fond memories hiding an unhappy truth?

And then June meets the mysterious Mr Brindley .....

### 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 plays, songs and music. His most recent television appearances have been in 'Watching', 'Coronation Street', 'Medics', 'Children's Ward' 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 and runs courses on traditional canal painting.

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 are on their seventeenth 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.

### I'd Rother go for a country walk

A series of 14 walking routes covering the River Rother has been produced by the Environment Agency in association with East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sussex Downs Conservation Board.

The western Rother, from its source at Selborne in Hampshire to its junction with the Arun at Pulborough is a beautiful lowland river skirting the northern foothills of the South Downs in Hampshire and Sussex.

The attractive, full-colour guides with detailed maps are in a handy pocket-sized format. The circular walks described range between four and nine miles with an estimated duration of two to four hours.

Readers will be interested to know that five of the guides

cover the river between Midhurst and the Arun and follows much of the former route of the western Rother Navigation.

Little remains of this commercial transport route and casual visitors to Midhurst are often surprised to see a Wharf Road. How long before this forgotten navigation appears on a list of prospective restoration projects?

Copies of the Rother Valley Walk leaflets can be obtained from Sussex Downs Conservation Board (Tel: 01903 741234) or East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Tel: 01705 591362).

*River Views Autumn/Winter 1998/99*

*("A twice-yearly newsletter from the Environment Agency for boaters")*

*Apologies to Day-Star but the headline on this article was too good to miss!*

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

**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**

- 6th May** Day Star Theatre
- 3rd June** AGM followed by Waterway Videos
- 1st July** Talk by Neil Kearns of the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society
- 5th August** Ray Brooks will be Demonstrating Canal Crafts
- 2nd Sept** The Chesterfield Canal with Laura Sturrock and Peter Oates
- 7th Oct** A visit by Trevor Thornton of Commercial Narrow Boat Operators Association
- 22nd Nov** Annual Canal Quiz organised by last year's winners, IWA Guildford & Reading Branch at Byfleet Boat Club, Woking

**April Meeting**

With many restoration projects complete and waterways back in use, it is easy to get the feeling that the bulk of the work is over. Clem Barnett's talk reminded us that there is still a long way to go and those with that 'completion feeling' would have been brought down to earth with a bump.

Most of the completed waterways were still wholly owned either by British Waterways or local authorities so the route and rights were preserved, whereas on these later projects the cooperation of a multitude of different landowners has to be secured long before work can begin. Often, getting the permission can be more difficult and involve more work than the actual restoration.

Clem Barnett had obviously been involved with the Wilts & Berks Canal for a very long time and had completed an immense amount of work, particularly in negotiations with landowners and authorities but was still full of enthusiasm.

The second half of his talk was illustrated with 2¼" square slides and even if there had have been 'non-canal' persons in the audience, they would still have been enthralled with the brilliance and beauty of the slides.

We learned a great amount about the Wilts & Berks Canal and its connections and also about a long distance footpath which roughly follows the route of the canal.

**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 June 1999 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.

**THE WEY-SOUTH PATH**

The long-awaited 5th edition of the *Wey-South Path* walking guide is now available from **W&A Enterprises Ltd.** It may be obtained by mail order from 24 Griffiths Avenue, LANCING, BN15 0HW for just **£5.50** inc post and packing. Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to **W&A Enterprises Ltd.**

The original text by Aeneus Mackintosh has been thoroughly revised by Geoff Perks and Ken Bacon, with new maps by Mary Bacon. The major change, however, is that as well as the main walk, which follows as closely as possible the route of the canal from Guildford to Amberley, in six sections, there are ten closely related circular walks. Introductory pages cover such topics as the history of the canal, details of the locks, public transport and accommodation.

The 68 page, A5 sized book is produced by the same team responsible for the quarterly *Wey-South Bulletin*, the excellent Trust magazine. The cover is in full colour, while the inside pages are black & white, with the path picked out in red on the maps. The description of the route is arranged so to be next to the map, as far as possible. It is printed in a large clear typeface, with notes on points of interest printed in italics. There are several photographs and line drawings. This is **the definitive guide**. Nobody should try to explore the canal without it.

The 1997 Broadsheet version of *Wey-South Path*, which is mainly just the map of the route remains available, costing £1.20 inc p/p from W&A Enterprises as above.

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

**Bits & Pieces**

**Society Secretary** - After a number of years in the post of Secretary, Eric Lewis has decided to step down and hand over his duties to someone else as from the AGM in June although he is willing to remain on the Committee, if elected. The vacant post provides an opportunity for someone to join in the running of the Society. The main duties involve organising speakers for our monthly meetings, dealing with a small amount of correspondence and attending meetings of the Committee. If you are at all interested, have a word with Eric or Brian Evans. The post is an essential one - give it some thought - then volunteer.

**Seminar** - On 13th April, the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities held a 'Strategy Seminar'. This was held to launch their new strategy for the Inland Navigations of the United Kingdom entitled "Steering a fresh course". As Eric Lewis was in London that day, he attended on our behalf. The Editor now holds a number brochures from the Association and several navigation authorities. These may be borrowed from him.

**Bateaux de Bourgogne** - If anyone would like to see the 1999 hire boat brochure covering the canals of Burgundy, would they please contact the Chairman.

**Environmental Policy Statement** - Under the title "Our Waterway Environment", the IWA launched their policy on the environment of the country's waterways. A copy is held by the Editor, from whom it may be borrowed.

**Various Canal Society magazines** (such as *Wey-South* from the Wey & Arun Canal Trust and *One Seven Four* from the Inland Waterways Protection Society) are held from time to time by the Newsletter Editor. Any of these may be borrowed by members.

**Local Waterway Walks** - The Society is likely to organise several informal walks beside local waterways this summer, probably on Sunday mornings sometime in July and September. Likely candidates are the Titchfield Canal and Andover Canal in Romsey. More news next month.

**The Newsletter**

You may remember that, last month, a competition was announced for a more distinctive name for this publication. Come up with an interesting name and you could win a small prize! Well, one person has suggested "Snug Ditch". The obscure origin for this comes from a poem written about the Southampton and Salisbury Canal:

*Southampton's wise sons found their river so large,  
Tho' 'Twould carry a Ship, 'twould not carry a barge.  
But soon this defect their sage noddles supply'd,  
For they cut a snug ditch to run close by its side.  
Like the man who, contriving a hole through his wall  
To admit his two cats, the one great, t'other small,  
Where a great hole was made for great puss to pass through,  
Had a little hole cut for his little cat, too.*

Now this might not be the best name for the newsletter! If you don't like it, can you come up with anything better?

**CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND****GEOProjects Maps**

Inland Waterways of Britain .....	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal .....	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations .....	£3.75
The Broads .....	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen .....	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals <b>NEW!</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 SOMETIME!</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)

**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.

## WATERWAYS DIARY 1999

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton during the first half of this year. Hopefully you can find something to interest you. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then contact the editor.

**Thu 06/05/99** 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Day Star Theatre. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614.

**Sun 16/05/99.** *IWA Solent & Arun Branch* - Arun Navigation Campaign Cruise between Pulborough and Pallingham. Contact Alan White on 01243 573765.

**Sun 16/05/99** 10.00am & 2.00pm. *Somersetshire Coal Canal Society* - Two 'Open to all' guided walks - Midford to Combe Hay. Meet opposite the Hope & Anchor, Midford - please do NOT park in the pub car park. Contact one of the leaders: Mike Chapman on 01225 426948 or Adrian Tuddenham on 01225 335974.

**Thu 20/05/99** 7.30pm. *IWA Salisbury Group* - To be announced. Contact Tony Fry on 01722 710192.

**Thu 03/06/99** 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - AGM followed by Waterway Videos. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614

**Sun 06/06/99** *Wey & Arun Canal Trust* - Poddle '99 - the Trust's 27th Annual Sponsored Walk - 14 miles starting from Billingshurst. Includes free ploughman's lunch! Contact the organiser on 01403 752403. See also below. Peter Oates has several sponsorship forms available to anyone interested in taking part.

**Sun 13/06/99.** *IWA Solent & Arun Branch* - Adur Adventure Cruise between Shoreham and Henfield: a 20 mile return 'marathon' flotilla cruise beating the tide into the Sussex downland. Contact Alan White on 01243 573765.

**Sun 20/06/99** *Mytchett Westel Canoe Club* - Westel Canoe Tourist Trial, Basingstoke Canal. 6, 12, 20 or 30 miles. Any canoes & kayaks. Camp site available. Contact Jeff Simmons on 01784-255085

**Sun 20/06/99** 10.00am *Somersetshire Coal Canal Society* - Guided walk - Combe Hay Locks. Meet at The Wheatsheaf, Combe Hay. Contact Mike Chapman on 01225 426948 or Roger Halse on 01249 652846.

**Sat - Sun 26/06/99 - 27/06/99** *Kennet & Avon Canal Trust* Reading Water Fest, Reading. Contact Gina Snowden on 0118 966 1668

**Sat - Sun 26/06/99 - 27/06/99** *British Waterways* /

## PODDLE '99

This year the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's Sponsored Walk will start and finish at the Weald School in Station Road, Billingshurst.

The morning route of around 8.5 miles heads across open country to reach the Wey & Arun Canal at Haybarn. It then follows the canal northwards past Lordings Lock and Newbridge to Rowner Lock. During the course of the walk, a variety of sections of the canal may be seen - from fully restored to infilled.

After lunch at the Bat & Ball pub, a ploughman's lunch provided free, the afternoon route covers some 5.5 miles. Returning to the canal at Malham Lock, the route heads south along the canal towpath again. A series of scenic field paths will take the walkers back to Billingshurst and the base at the Weald School.

Whilst the organisers hope walkers will want to walk the full distance, it is possible to finish at the lunch stop and return to the start by the free minibus service.

*AngloWelsh Leisure* - Bristol on Water Festival. Contact Bristol on Water 0117 9276614

**Thu 01/07/99** 7.45pm *Southampton Canal Society* - Talk by Neil Kearns of the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614

**Fri 16/07/99.** *IWA Solent & Arun Branch* - Chichester Channel Cruise: Itchenor - Fishbourne. An easy paced flotilla cruise in search of a pub lunch and a lost quay in Chichester Harbour's most attractive arm. Contact Alan White on 01243 573765.

**Thu 05/08/99** *Southampton Canal Society* Ray Brooks will be Demonstrating Canal Crafts. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614

**Sat - Sun 21/08/99 - 22/08/99** *Somerset Navigators Boat Club* - Taunton Water Festival. Contact John Tucker on 01823 490443.

**Sun 22/08/99** *Chichester Canal Society / IWA Solent & Arun Branch* - Chichester Canal Water Fair. Fun event in support of restoration of the Ship Canal and exploration of restored section. Contact Alan White on 01243 573765.

**Fri - Mon 27/08/99 - 30/08/99** *IWA National Waterways Festival & Inland Boat Show*, Worcester. Contact Edwina Wallace on 01530 270714

**Thu 02/09/99** 7.45pm. *Southampton Canal Society.* The Chesterfield Canal with Laura Sturrock and Peter Oates. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614.

**Sun 12/09/99.** *IWA Solent & Arun Branch* - River Hamble Cruise from Swanwick to Curbridge and Botley. Autumn cruise to a double destination using Hampshire's unique double tides. Contact Alan White on 01243 573765.

**Thu 07/10/99** *Southampton Canal Society* A visit by Trevor Thornton of Commercial Narrow Boat Operators Association. Contact Peter Oates on 01794 517614

**Mon 22/11/99** *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* Annual Inter- Society Canal Quiz organised by last year's winners at Byfleet Boat Club, Woking. Details / volunteers Peter Oates on 01794 517614.

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

**Throughout the year - Wey & Arun Canal Trust** run cruises on n/b *Zachariah Keppel* on the restored canal. Information from John Lisk on 01493 752403.

**Throughout the year - Chichester Canal Society** run cruises on n/b *Egremont* on the canal from Chichester. Information from John Cooper on 01243 671051.

WRG have adopted the Malham to Newbridge section of the Canal as a "Dig Deep 2000" project. The work involves restoration tasks on two locks and the installation of a back-pumping system. This enables the 3 mile section to be kept in water and used until it is linked to other restored areas. Whilst Dig Deep 2000 will provide the labour, funding is required for materials and equipment. The project relies on a substantial input from Poddle '99 - which is where your support is so vital. (Contact details in diary above)

## Lewis A (Teddy) Edwards

Teddy Edwards died on March 27th at the age of 82, having been a member of the Association almost since its formation in 1946; he had only missed the inaugural meeting because it clashed with his birthday! Unlike many of the early IWA members, he had not needed Tom Rolt's book *Narrow Boat* to inspire him to appreciate the inland waterways as he had been a keen canoeist and travelled about half the then navigable system before the Second World War and had met Rolt in Cressy on the Oxford Canal in 1937.

When Rolt resigned as Honorary Secretary of the Association in 1950, Teddy Edwards took over the post and was 'back room worker' to Aickman's very public campaign throughout the 1950s. Although labelled a 'great survivor' of the IWA's internal wrangling of the 1950s, matters came to a head in 1958 when the Association opted for incorporation and Teddy Edwards departed office to form the East Anglian Waterways Association, in close alignment with Bessie Bunker and Victor Carpenter who left to form the Inland Waterways Protection Society.

Throughout the 1960s the East Anglian Waterways Association, along with the Great Ouse Restoration Society (which Edwards had helped to relaunch, much to the indignation of Aickman) was the active waterways force in East Anglia and all the restoration projects in this area for a period of twenty years had the hand of Teddy Edwards behind them.

Perhaps rather than for his campaigning work, the name of 'L A Edwards' is better known as author of the waterways Bible: 'The Inland Waterways of Great Britain', an adaptation of Bradshaw's, the original guide and later updated by Colonel W Eric Wilson (of the publishers Imray, Laurie Norie & Wilson). The first edition of 'Edwards' was published in 1950 and later editions appeared in 1962, 1972 and 1985. An updated edition was being worked on in the early 1990s, but with the book out of print in 1995 and Teddy Edwards in failing health, Imrays decided to commission the current edition afresh.

## Isaac 'Ike' Argent

Ike Argent died at the end of March, at the age of 78, whilst boating on the way to the traditional Easter working boats gathering at The Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port. He had spent a lifetime on the inland waterways; his parents being boaters with the Erewash Canal Carrying Company.

Ike Argent started work on the canals in 1936, originally for the Trent Navigation Company and then for Fellows Moreton & Clayton, working on the 'fly boat' runs which travelled between London and Birmingham in only two days. Following nationalisation, Ike worked for the British Transport Commission, initially operating a dredger on the River Trent and eventually becoming maintenance foreman on the Erewash Canal in 1967.

Ike Argent was to play a prominent role in the revival of the Erewash Canal in the 1970s and in particular the restoration of the Great Northern Basin at Langley Mill. The revival of the Canal was done very much in a spirit of

co-operation between the volunteers of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association and the workforce from BW headed by Ike Argent.

He retired from BW's employ in March 1983, in the same year as the restored Erewash Canal was reclassified as a 'Cruising Waterway', but continued to cruise canals throughout the country, and was a regular attendee at gatherings of working boats.

## Anderton Boat Lift

Full restoration of the Anderton Boat Lift now looks certain following the announcement, on March 30th, of a £3.3 million grant from the Heritage Fund, towards the total cost of £7 million to complete the restoration of the Boat Lift and provide suitable visitor facilities in the form of an Operations Centre. The restoration will be undertaken through British Waterways, owners of the Boat Lift, by Anderton Boat Lift Trust, which is a partnership of BW, IWA, Cheshire County Council, Vale Royal Borough Council, Trent & Mersey Canal Society and Mid Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

BW have committed £1.9 million into the restoration fund and further financial support has been promised from English Heritage, Vale Royal Borough Council, the European Commission's Raphael programme, local company Brunner Mond, Trent & Mersey Canal Society and Friends of Anderton Boat Lift.

The Lift was the first structure of its kind in the world, although since copied on the continent, being built in 1875 by Edwin Clark, to connect the Trent & Mersey Canal to the River Weaver 50 foot below. One of the principal cargoes transported on both waterways was salt and the salty atmosphere around the lift contributed to its corrosion over the years.

## Lichfield & Hatherton Canals

Representatives on the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust, including Chris Coburn, met with Alan Meale MP, the Waterways Minister, and Lord Whitty, the Minister responsible for roads, at Westminster on March 29th to ask that they look again at the decision not to construct navigable crossings at the time of building the Birmingham Northern Relief Road across the line of the two canals. The meeting was arranged by South Staffordshire MP, Sir Patrick Cormack.

Although the meeting reached no new resolution, Alan Meale recommended a further meeting with all parties, including the road builders (although without the Department's involvement) and asked that this report back to him.

In spite of enormous public dissatisfaction over the lost opportunity to include the cost of the crossings within the building programme, there stills remains no indication from Government that it is willing to put the matter right. During March IWA also made further direct representations to both Alan Meale and to Lord Whitty over the Lichfield and Hatherton crossings. (See also next page.)

*IWA Head Office Bulletin - April 1999*

## Lichfield & Hatherton Canals - They're not dead and buried yet, but ...

*The Society has received a letter from Chris Coburn about the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals and the impact that the Birmingham Northern Relief Road would have on their restoration. Some extracts are reproduced below:*

The Progress Appeal, Norfolk House, 29 Hall Lane, Hammerwich, Burntwood, WS7 0JP.

You will be pleased to know that the Waterways Minister, Alan Meale, MP has invited written comment regarding the impact of the BNRR on the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals.

We now have a real opportunity to enter dialogue with the Government, the aim being to ensure that common sense prevails. It is crucial that the Minister realises just how many dignitaries and organisations want to see a greater value placed on our waterway corridors.

At this crucial stage, a letter direct to the Waterways Minister and a separate letter to Lord Whitty, the Roads Minister, in your own words would have an enormous impact.

Perhaps you could let me have a copy of your letters for my file. In return, I promise to keep you posted.

With thanks and best wishes

Chris Coburn

### Key issues for letters to:

**Alan Meale MP, Waterways Minister**  
**Lord Whitty, Roads Minister**

Both at: **Department of the Environment, Transport & The Regions, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU**

- \* It is acknowledged that permission has been given for the building of the BNRR and that any amendment to this permission would be subject to compensation to the constructors.
- \* It is widely believed that the decision to overturn the view of the Inspector at the Public Inquiry (ie to make full provision for the canals where the routes coincide) was a mistake made at the time when it was believed that the canal restoration project was not viable.
- \* It is our belief that the decision to discount the view of the Inquiry Inspector was made at a level below that of the (then) Roads Minister.
- \* Those with little or no knowledge of canal restoration may question the viability of the project for the two canals. **THERE IS NO TECHNICAL REASON WHY THE CANALS CANNOT BE RESTORED.**
- \* The Government's own advisory body, the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council, confirms that the Lichfield Canal is likely to be ready for mainline funding in the medium term with the Hatherton Canal later.
- \* Building the BNRR across the line of the canals will set back their restoration by many years but it will not deter the restorers. The private consortium who will operate the finished road may not claim for lost tolls if the canal crossings are built after the road opens. But they may never

have to carry the cost of lost revenue if the road eventually returns to public ownership. Then it would fall upon the taxpayer.

- \* It has been stated by the road consortium that the cost of providing a contraflow system after the road is open for business will cost more than building the canal crossing in the dry at the road construction phase.
- \* Local support for the restoration of the canals is gathering with a trebling in the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Trust in the last two years.
- \* National support is shown by media interest. The road project could create a great deal of goodwill if it made suitable provision for the canals.
- \* Waterway restoration creates hundreds of businesses and thousands of jobs. Estimates show that the cost of providing the road crossings will be more than matched by tax revenues.
- \* Benefits of restoration are wide ranging, including tourism and recreation, environmental and heritage. By reinstating the canals where the road crosses their route will bring restoration forward by several years and will provide some measure of environmental compensation.
- \* The restoration of the two canals will open up a range of other underused waterways in areas that are undergoing a renaissance. For example, Walsall Metropolitan Borough is investing heavily in its canal and town centre canal basin. The restoration of the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals is key to the future of this brave decision.
- \* While the construction of the BNRR has been delayed, the restoration of the two canals has proceeded apace. A bridge and a lock have been completed with a further lock close to completion.
- \* There are many examples of canal restorations currently in progress where bridges are having to be raised retrospectively at great additional public cost and inconvenience: all because of short sighted decisions taken in earlier decades.
- \* Building the BNRR without making provision for canal crossings will be an act of official vandalism - to repeat the mistakes of previous decades will be hard to excuse.
- \* Finding a way to provide for the canal crossings will be judged as a Government planning ahead and rectifying previous errors of judgement.
- \* There is time for common sense to prevail so that yet further lengths of our waterway heritage can be restored, providing benefits for all: walkers, cyclists, bird-watchers, boat owners/hirers, anglers, artists, photographers, picnickers, canoeists, naturalists and conservationists as well as the disabled and disadvantaged who find the waterways of particular value. There are also those who just want to walk the dog or stand and enjoy the waterside environment - birds, animals, insects and wild flowers prosper to the benefit of all.
- \* The economic impact of a restored waterway has been proved time and again.

*The above should make it easier for you to write letter(s) to the Ministers. More information, if required, from the Editor. Please add **your /more weight** to the cause.*