

Newsletter

Chairman's Column

Welcome Back to Bruce Hall

We are delighted to welcome back Bruce Hall MBE, Chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust. When Bruce last visited us, a few years ago, he was able to tell us all about the Cotswold Canals and the hopes, dreams and aspirations of the Trust. Since then, of course, everything has changed.

British Waterways and The Waterways Trust, along with the various local authorities along the route of the Stroudwater and Thames & Severn Canals, have agreed that these canals will be one of the next major restoration schemes. Following the completion of other major restorations in the north, attention is now being turned to the Cotswold Canals and it is suggested that within ten years one will again be able to cruise from the Thames to the Severn.

Mid Hants Railway Dinner

Further to the item in my last Chairman's Column regarding taking part in one of the steam hauled Dining Specials on the Mid Hants Railway, I have now received further details. I understand that the normal lunch and evening dining trains for this winter are now sold out but a leaflet will soon be produced for 2003. I believe that there are some vacancies on 'The Christmas Countryman' on Saturday evenings during December.

I have to admit to being surprised at the high cost of the various dining options and feel that this idea for a future Society outing may be less attractive to members than originally envisaged.

If anyone is interested in the Christmas Specials, please contact me. More information on the 2003 programme in due course.

Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz and American Supper

I am sure that members will not need to be reminded that this popular event will take place at Chilworth on Thursday 5 December. IWA Solent & Arun have sent out invitations to the usual teams though I am not sure at present which teams will actually be taking part.

In the last Newsletter I appealed for volunteers for the Society Team. We normally have a few problems encouraging our members to take part but, this year, everything has changed and we now have **seven** volunteers for the four places available. Of course, if we were able to attract one more member to participate, we might be able to field a second Society team!!! That would be a first. Anyway, many thanks to those who have volunteered - the Committee will be considering the final team at its meeting next week.

The usual American Supper will also be held as part of the Quiz Evening so please don't forget to bring some goodies with you.



Western portal of Sapperton Tunnel, Thames & Severn Canal

Annual Members' Slides, Prints and Photo Competition Evening

Our January 2003 meeting will be the annual Members' Photographic evening when you will have the opportunity to show some of your more interesting slides and prints to your colleagues and even take part in a competition. See the item in this Newsletter for further details.

Paul Herbert

September Meeting

John Laverick

At our September meeting we were pleased to welcome John Laverick, the Heritage Lottery Project Manager for the Kennet and Avon Canal.

John provided a background to the history and subsequent restoration of the canal. As he put it, the official re-opening of the canal by the Queen was only the end of Chapter One. Whilst the canal was physically open, there remained a great deal of work to be done, including to the large number of structures on the canal.

The Kennet and Avon Canal had attracted a Heritage Lottery Grant of £29m with a five year contract period. The K&A Canal Partnership had been formed, comprising British Waterways, the K&A Canal Trust, all riparian local authorities on the line of the canal, and the Association of Canal Enterprises (businesses along the canal). Once the offer of the lottery grant had been received it was decided to appoint a Project Officer (John Laverick) to plan and oversee the work.

John explained the great variety of tasks that had had to be carried out. Before the Lottery would release monies a Conservation Plan had to be drawn up, together with a Public Transport and Visitor Management Strategy. There were also important Heritage conditions including the use of traditional materials eg: lime mortar mix. The ongoing works had to be a mix of old and new technologies.

John outlined some of the major tasks undertaken eg: the major relining of the basic structure of the canal

October Meeting

Day-Star Theatre

An almost full hall welcomed back our friends Pete (Duffy) and Jane Marshall with "Day-Star Theatre's" 2002 production, 'The Moon on the Water'. It was good to see a number of members who are not able to attend our monthly gatherings on a regular basis, and also to welcome some guests.

It was back to Day-Star's last visit in April 2001 that we were first introduced to the canalside village of Sandy Edge when we were entertained by the exploits of 'The Hero of Sandy Edge Wharf'. This year's production returned to Sandy Edge, and its nearby flight of three locks. A synopsis of this play was published in previous Newsletters so I won't repeat that detail here, but just a little about the characters, splendidly portrayed by a cast of thousands – well, by Jane and Duffy, actually!

Firstly we have Simon, a singer/song-writer, a free spirit, doing his own thing, drifting along on board his aging and slowly sinking narrowboat 'Moon'. He arrives at Sandy Edge, accompanied by his current girlfriend 'Babe' – who is a bit of a snob. She doesn't

in the Bath Valley. At the same time that this work was being undertaken, the opportunity was taken to drain down the Somerset Coal Canal and Dundas Basin. During the drain-down the remains of Brindley's original flood gates were discovered. Other tasks included the re-lining of the side ponds on the Caen Hill flight of locks; the construction of a large number of visitor moorings (the K&A had previously been short of such facilities); extending the chimney at Crofton Pumping Station; pipework at Claverton Pumping Station; back pumping and bypass weirs along the Bath flight of locks.

John continued, explaining the many other works to locks, bridges and other canal structures; considerable dredging; nature conservation; etc etc etc. He described the many problems that had to be contended with – weather conditions, flooding, foot and mouth restrictions, work access across farmland, and vandalism to a dam causing flooding of works sites. John was able to describe many of the works in some engineering detail, much to the delight of many in the audience.

To conclude, John explained that the five year project was now coming to its natural conclusion and he would be moving on in March to a new post involved with the restoration of the Cotswold Canals.

Many thanks John for such an interesting talk and we wish you much success with your next major project.

Paul Herbert

think much of working the boat or the locks, just wanting to sunbathe on the roof. Anyway, she finally goes off by train having decided she doesn't like sheep, canals, boats, the countryside or even Simon.

We then have Dave and Doreen, local farmers. Doreen is rather pushy and a little aggressive, always wanting to get things done (like most women I know) whilst Dave is just a little laid back (!!!) and is always putting things off.

Finally, we have Isobel, a dotty middle-aged spinster – a 'mad old hippie' according to Dave (mainly because she's a 'townie' and also probably a witch). Isobel has a goat named Tranquility, who has a drink problem because of its liking for elderberry wine! Speaking of alcohol, Isobel is heavily into drink – she distils her own moonshine, but never drinks the stuff. (We later find out the reason – she is an alcoholic!)

We soon find out that Simon is David's twin brother and hasn't been back to Sandy Edge, or seen any of his family, since he left under a bit of a cloud 30 years

(Continued on page 5)

Poirot launches canal boat race



The following article appeared in the Northampton Chronicle & Echo about the start of the Jam 'Ole Run (which both the Society Treasurer and Secretary took part in). It should also be pointed out that the run is not a race.

THE star of the TV detective series Poirot climbed aboard to launch almost a dozen historic narrow boats as part of a modern recreation of a traditional race along the county's canals.



David Suchet and Peter Oates aboard the Raymond at Braunston

Actor David Suchet took to the water to join 30 other boating enthusiasts at Braunston Marina near Daventry as part of the bi-annual Jam 'Ole Run - an eight day narrow boat trip to London and back along Britain's waterways.

The Poirot star helped to steer a 70-foot Braunston-built wooden butty recently restored by local canal lovers.

The convoy of 11 narrowboats will travel a total of 210 miles and pass through 186 locks as they glide

along sections of the Grand Union, Oxford and Coventry canals.

To complete their journey within the time limit they will need to be travelling from five in the morning until 10 at night.

The recreation is now in its fourth running and is growing in popularity, with several youngsters taking their place among the hardy sailors.

Tim Coghlan of Braunston Marina said: "With eleven boats we have the largest fleet ever. What particularly pleases me is the number of young people keen to join us and work first hand with some of the veterans of the working days.

"The youngest, 13-year-old Mark Thompson Rhyods of Guilsborough, is accompanied by his dad Tim and is already on his second run."

The boats were sent off by canal veterans Jim and Doris Collins of Braunston, both in their eighties, who were both born on working narrowboats and took part in the last ever original running of the Jam 'Ole Run in 1970.

The recreation run was first established in 1995 after staff met former Braunston boatman Ernie Kendal who explained how tough the long trip could be in arduous conditions.

Modern day boating enthusiasts were so impressed they pledged to recreate the traditional challenge.

*daniel.owens@northantsnews.co.uk
Monday, October 21, 2002*



The "Jam 'Ole" fleet (3 pairs and 2 pleasure boats) moored below Cowley Lock near Uxbridge. (23.10.02)

Left to right: Nutfield & Raymond, Cassiopeia & Ipswich, Duke, Berwyn, Greyhound & Fazeley



Left and right: Nutfield and the newly painted Raymond tied up at the site of the "Jam 'Ole" near Bulls Bridge (23.10.02).



Photos: Peter Oates

Boat Access

The following article is the result of a conversation between Paul Herbert and John Whitehouse at, of all places, the Southampton Boat Show. Paul felt that the subject would be of interest to the rest of the Canal Society and John was persuaded to put pen to paper. Thank you for taking the trouble, John.

We have a 44 ft Springer which we have used quite happily for the last twelve years.

Unfortunately Olive suffers from rheumatoid arthritis which by its nature becomes increasingly worse. She can walk short distances but steps are a problem. She can no longer steer the boat but is still able to operate the throttle and so is able to control the boat within locks. This allows the boat to be handled much more easily than single handed.

However, in recent years two problems have become increasingly difficult. One is access onto and off the boat. The second, more important, is access from the deck to the cabin.

The simplest and best solution would be to have one of the wheelchair lifts which are used on disabled boats, cars and buses. However, these are not suitable for our boat. The front well is too small and the rear deck has the engine under. Buying a new boat would be prohibitively expensive and is not an option.

The stairwell on the boat is outside the cabin but is less than two feet square. It is not feasible to fit a ramp from the deck to the cabin. I contacted several manufacturers of lifts and disabled aids but none could help. Eventually, quite by chance, I came across a very small lift at a caravan show intended to be used for caravan access. It offered possibilities.

It is called the Unwin Power Step. It comes in several versions but the one that suited us offered a platform 350 cms (13.8 inches) square on which to stand. It needs a base 350 cms by 500 cms. It would just fit into my stairwell space.

Attached to the platform is a vertical handle fitted with up and down buttons. The handle is about 3 ft high and rises with the platform. Operation is extremely

simple. Stand on the platform. Grasp the handle. Press the button. Stop by taking the finger off the button or wait until it gets to the bottom or top, when it is stopped by safety switches. It takes possibly 10 or 15 seconds. Step off.

Maximum rise is 24 inches which is just enough to go to deck height. Ideally, I would have preferred another 9 inches to go to gunwale height.

Installation was relatively simple. I am incompetent but found it no great problem. It was a matter of cutting out the existing steps and fitting a flat base of heavy plywood. Then taking the unit out off the box and standing it on the base. Bolt it to the stairwell bulkhead with four bolts; it has of course to be firmly fixed. Unwins supply brackets if it has to be fixed to another side bulkhead. Then simply connect to the 12 volt supply via the included ready fused cable.

For personal use, I leave the lift in the midway position and use it as a step. It baffles my smaller dog if it is left at top or bottom. He cannot jump the two feet. The bigger dog has no problems.

The unit is rated, I think, for 25 stone. I am told that it is tested using a 32 stone man. Consumption is about 10 amps.

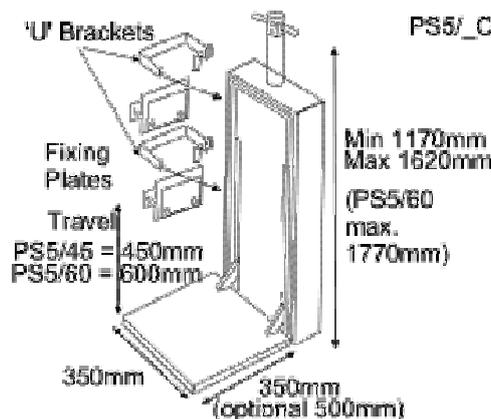
We have used for a three week trip and it has been very successful. It does not, of course, help with the lesser problem of access to and from the boat but as the gunwales are only about 9 inches high we can manage with

wooden blocks and ramps.

The lift is not cheap: £1550 ex VAT (VAT is not payable if the lift is used by a disabled person). It is far cheaper and less trouble than buying a new boat, and much better than giving up boating.

If anyone is interested Unwins' address is:

Willow House, Artillery Road, Lufton Trading Estate, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8RP. Phone 01935 410920. Fax 01935 410921. Or if you want any more comments, phone me on 023 8043 8422 (not after 9.00 pm - I go to bed early!)



John Whitehouse

WATERWAYS DIARY

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. Hopefully you can find something to interest you.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the correctness of this information, please check with the listed contact who will be glad to supply further details of that event. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then contact the editor.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 7 Nov 2002 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Bruce Hall MBE, Chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust, will be giving the latest news on the restoration of the Stroudwater and the Thames & Severn Canals.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Wed 20 Nov 2002 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Dick Allan - The short way home from the Med - Bringing a sailing boat through the French canals. Westgate Centre, Chobham Road, Woking	Arthur Dugate: arthurdugate@iname.com
Thu 21 Nov 2002 7.30pm?	IWA Salisbury Group	Talk by Jon Sims and Colin Jones entitled "All in the Same Boat" about boat building and Waterways for Youth - a local project. Salisbury Rugby Club	Jon van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 5 Dec 2002 7.45pm	Southampton CS and IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Waterways Quiz and American Supper	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Sat to Sun, Tue to Thu 14-15, 17-19 Dec 2002	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Santa Cruises - Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett	Tel: 01252 370073
Wed 18 Dec 2002 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Robin Higgs will present one of his railway and/or canal journeys Westgate Centre, Chobham Road, Woking	Arthur Dugate: arthurdugate@iname.com
Thu 2 Jan 2003 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Members' Slides, Prints and Photo Competition Evening	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
4th Thursday of month	Wey & Arun CT	Series of interesting but not too arduous walks in Sussex come rain or shine. Lunch at well chosen establishment en route or at end. Donation to WACT appreciated.	Don Gibson: 01903 201375
All year	Wey & Arun CT	Cruises on n/b Zachariah Keppel on the restored section of canal at Loxwood.	WACT Office: 01403 752403 wact@weyandarun.freemove.co.uk
All year	Chichester CS	Cruises on n/b Egremont on the canal from Chichester.	Bookings: 01243 670786

October Meeting

(Continued from page 2)

ago. He always was the rebel and black sheep of the family. So – everyone wants to know why he has come back – what does he want? Doreen had invited Simon to stay in the family farmhouse (where he used to live, of course) whilst his boat dried out from its most recent sinking experience. She was not aware at that stage that he was her brother-in-law.

Then comes the next twist – Simon and Isobel meet and we learn that they used to be an item and lived together on a canal boat when they ran away from their families thirty years previously. In 1969 Simon temporarily left Isobel whilst he went off to Woodstock, but he never came back. In due course Isobel returned to Sandy Edge. It is the first time they have met in all those years. You can imagine their main topic of conversation!

For those who were unable to join us, are you managing to keep up with the plot? Do you want to know why the large white duck turned out to be a drowning sheep; was it rescued; why did Simon, under the influence of moonshine 'borrow' a hire boat whilst its crew 'Him' and 'Her' were inebriated after a visit to the local hostelry; why did Dave decide to walk along the narrow edge of the nearby aqueduct, 100' above the valley floor; was Simon and Doreen's rescue mission successful? Want to know more – well, you will have to wait until you get the opportunity to catch 'The Moon on the Water' somewhere else around the country. Sorry about that!

As always with 'Day-Star Theatre', we enjoyed the usual multi-character performances of Duffy and Jane, together with the costume and character changes in full view of the audience. We will all look forward to welcoming them back next year.

Paul Herbert

Members' Slides, Prints and Photo Competition Evening

The January meeting will be our annual Members' Slides Evening. This will give everyone the opportunity to show some pictures - even those who feel they might not have enough of interest to make up a whole evening's show. If you can put together up to a maximum of around a dozen pictures (even just one or two) that you feel will entertain / educate / amuse your fellow members, look them out for this evening.

We have the facility to project prints (up to 7" x 5") onto the screen as well as transparencies. So if you don't take slides, you too will be able to show something of waterways interest as well.

Again, like the last couple of years, the evening will also

incorporate a photographic competition. To be held just before the tea interval, this competition is open to all members - you don't have to be showing other slides / prints during the evening. What we're looking for is **one** picture which can be anything to do (even loosely) with the waterways. The competition will be judged by all those present at the meeting.

And as an incentive to enter, there will be a mystery prize given to the winner.

So don't be shy, this is YOUR opportunity to show others your interest in waterways, what you've done or where you went and what you saw on holiday.

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:

1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm
Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton

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Brian Evans.

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Martin Cripps, Eric Lewis, David Townley-Jones

Newsletter distributed by:

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Society Website:

<http://www.users.waitrose.com/~whitenap/index.htm>



Nutfield and Raymond returning from the "Jam 'Ole" down Braunston Locks (26.10.02)

Photo: Peter Oates

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 and the Great Glen	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals and the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal.....	£3.75
Forth & Clyde and Union Canals with the Crinan Canal.....	£4.75
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

Huddersfield Broad & Narrow Canals with the Ashton Canal.....	£4.00
Kennet & Avon Canal	£3.75
Lee and Stort Navigations with the East London Ring.....	£4.75
Leeds and Liverpool Canal.....	£4.75
Llangollen & Montgomery Canals	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75
Macclesfield and Peak Forest Canals with the Ashton Canal	£4.75
Oxford Canal	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal	£3.75
Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal with the River Severn and the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal - Map 1 Preston Brook to Fradley Junction.....	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal and River Trent - Map 2 Great Haywood Junction to Cromwell Lock.....	£3.75
Worcester & Birmingham Canal, with the Droitwich Canals.....	£4.00

Ball Point Pens: Embossed 50p

Book: Remus the Narrowboat & his First Adventure (by Sue Lewis).....£4.99

Burgees: Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side£8.00

Decorated Mugs:£2.25

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

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 - or ring Paul on 023 8026 2365

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

7th November 2002 Bruce Hall MBE, Chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust, will be giving the latest news on the restoration of the Stroudwater and the Thames & Severn Canals.

5th December 2002 Waterways Quiz and American Supper

2nd January 2003 Members' Slides, Prints and Photo Competition Evening