

Newsletter

Issue 387

November 2004

Chairman's Column

November Meeting – Change of Speaker

On behalf of the Society I would like to thank our member David Pearce for stepping into the breach to present our November programme 'The Thames Creeks', in place of Roger Squires, who will not be able to be with us as planned.

Day-Star Theatre

My brief critique on Day-Star Theatre's production at our October meeting appears inside this Newsletter but I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee members, their spouses and partners, and the other Society members who provided the excellent supper at the end of the evening. Many thanks also to those volunteers who assisted in other ways, in the kitchen, laying out the food, clearing up at the end, and for setting out and restacking the furniture. Thanks also to those who generously donated raffle prizes. Well done to all!

The Newsletter

As members will be aware, the October issue of the Newsletter was the last to be printed by Hunt Johnston Stokes Limited. Whilst the Committee deliberates and investigates various options for the future printing and dispatch of the Newsletter, Committee Member Martin Cripps has generously offered to print one or two issues, including this current edition. Many thanks Martin.

As I said in my last Column, it would obviously be financially beneficial to the Society if we could attract another sponsor for the Newsletter. So, do you work for a company or organisation which might be

Droitwich Canals

The £11.2 million programme to restore the Droitwich Barge and Junction Canals took a huge leap forward today (8/10/2004) as partners in the proposed restoration learned that the bid for £4.6million Heritage Lottery funding has been approved.

The bid sought well over a third of the funding for the creation of a unique 21-mile cruising ring, linking the Worcester & Birmingham Canal in the East to the navigable River Severn in the West. The restored Droitwich Canals are expected to generate an additional spend of £2.75m per year within the local

prepared to sponsor the cost of printing and possibly posting the monthly Newsletter? If you have any suggestions along these lines, can you please contact Peter, the Editor, as soon as possible.

Inter-Society Waterways Quiz

Don't forget, at our next meeting, on 2 December, the Society will be hosting the 2004 Inter-Society Waterways Quiz. We have had one or two volunteers but are still looking to select members for the Society Quiz Team. Don't forget, we are the current holders of the Quiz Cup and therefore need to field a strong team if we aim to hold on to it.

After the quiz there will be the traditional 'American Supper' and I would remind all members of the need to bring along a selection of food and drink. Many thanks.

Refreshments Rota

Many thanks to those volunteers who have assisted with the provision of refreshments at our monthly meetings. Your help is very much appreciated. We are now seeking volunteers to assist with our monthly refreshments from March 2005 onwards. Please don't leave this important task to others - give your name to Gill.

January Meeting

A reminder that the programme for our January meeting is the popular annual Members' Photographic Evening and Competition. Please see the details on page 2 in this Newsletter.

Paul Herbert

economy, and will play a key role in the regeneration of Droitwich Spa town centre with the development of a 2-acre canalside site and marina. Property values are expected to increase by up to 15%.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for £4.6million will be combined with pledged funding of £2million from Wychavon District Council and Worcestershire County Council. Works will not start on site until 2nd stage approval for £3million is received from Advantage West Midlands for the Droitwich Junction Canal. This currently has a 1st stage approval and a decision is expected in December 2004.

Droitwich Canals Trust website

October Meeting Day-Star Theatre – “Taking a Chance”

In our last Newsletter we referred to Day-Star Theatre's October visit to us as the final ever performance of their Waterways Tours, after twenty three years. That was true. We also said that this would be their final appearance at Southampton Canal Society. True at the time of writing but, after end of show discussions with Pete and Jane, don't be surprised if we see them again some time in the future. If they are prepared to drive all the way from their base at Audlem in Cheshire, I know that our members will always give them a warm welcome.

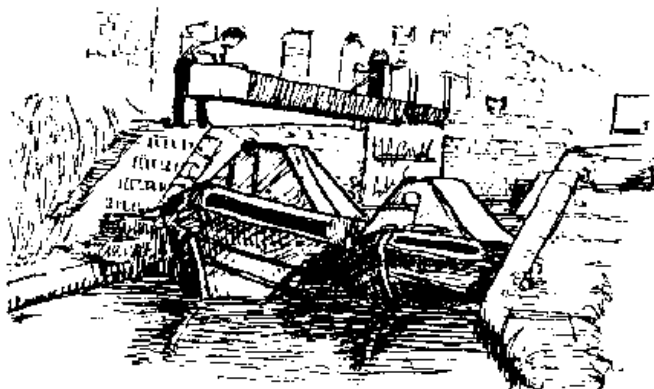
Day-Star always attracts a good audience in Southampton but we surpassed ourselves on this occasion, with over 80 tickets sold! A completely full house with little room left for any further chairs, just as well as there were no chairs left! It was good to see so many members present, former members, and a large number of guests. We also had international representation with guests from Vancouver and Hong Kong. It seems that the reputation of both the Southampton Canal Society and Day-Star Theatre is world-wide!

Returning to their performance, a synopsis of 'Taking a Chance' was included in the last two Newsletters, so I will not repeat it here.

Meadow barrier

RESIDENTS in a Hampshire village have clubbed together to buy four acres of water meadows to preserve the land as pasture and ward off house builders. Around 20 Twyford residents will commit £70,000 towards the £85,000 required with the rest covered by donations or loans. The site includes a 400-yard stretch of the eastern bank of the River Itchen and it is hoped to open the meadows up to the public.

All at Sea September 2004



Day-Star Theatre

As always, Pete and Jane put on a superb performance in their usual indomitable style. Their character and costume changes, in full view of the audience, enhance their productions and I have yet to see them getting their characters mixed up. As usual we had the rough and ready and the well to do, those up to no good and those just drifting through. As the play flitted to and fro between the present day and 1963 (the year of the Great Train Robbery, which took place just down the road.....) it was possible to guess what the final outcome might be – or was it? Again, as is usual for Day-Star, there was a twist at the end.

A fantastic and very entertaining production. Many thanks to Pete and Jane. We will very much look forward to enticing you back to Chilworth again.

At the end of the performance, after a number of encores, I had the pleasurable task of thanking Pete and Jane for entertaining us for so many years, and making a presentation of a Southampton Canal Society burgee and a bottle of wine.

Following the play all those present were able to enjoy an excellent supper provided by the Society Committee and other members.

Paul Herbert

Members' Photographic Evening and Competition

The meeting on the 6th January 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.

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 4 Nov 2004 7.45pm	Southampton CS	'The Thames Creeks' by Roger Squires. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Wed 17 Nov 2004 7.30pm	Cotswold Canals Trust	The Little Ships of Dunkirk - Christian Brann. Trout Inn, Lechlade.	Charles Lyne: 01285 713148
Wed 17 Nov 2004 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	A Narrow boat down the River Rhone and back - Dick Allen. Pavilion in the Recreation Ground in Station Road, Chobham, Surrey	Arthur Dungate: 01252 622101. Email: arthurdungate@onetel.com
Thu 18 Nov 2004 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Eric Lewis on "Little & Large in the North West." Huddersfield Narrow, Manchester Ship Canal, River Weaver. At Three Crowns, Whaddon.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 or Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: ronmyra.glover@virgin.net
Thu 18 Nov 2004 7.30pm	IWA Avon & Wilts Branch	Birmingham & Black Country Canals - Ron Cousens. Riverside Inn, Saltford Marina.	Geoff Harman: 0117 9623812
Thu 2 Dec 2004 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Inter-Society Waterways Quiz and American Supper. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Thu 9 Dec 2004 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Christmas meal at the Fox & Goose, Coombe Bissett.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 or Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: ronmyra.glover@virgin.net
Wed 15 Dec 2004 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Update on the Kennet & Avon Canal - Peter Crawford. Pavilion in the Recreation Ground in Station Road, Chobham, Surrey	Arthur Dungate: 01252 622101. Email: arthurdungate@onetel.com
Thu 6 Jan 2005 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Members' Photographic Evening and Competition. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Wed 19 Jan 2005 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	The Restoration of Cobham Mill - Paul Bryant. Pavilion in the Recreation Ground in Station Road, Chobham, Surrey	Arthur Dungate: 01252 622101. Email: arthurdungate@onetel.com
Thu 3 Feb 2005 7.45pm	Southampton CS	'Venturing into Germany' with Ron & Myra Glover. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Wed 16 Feb 2005 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	President 195? - Richard Thomas. Talk about the steam powered narrowboat. Pavilion in the Recreation Ground in Station Road, Chobham, Surrey	Arthur Dungate: 01252 622101. Email: arthurdungate@onetel.com
Thu 3 Mar 2005 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Eric and Sue Lewis on "Little & Large in the North West." Huddersfield Narrow, Manchester Ship Canal, River Weaver. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Thu 7 Apr 2005 7.45pm	Southampton CS	The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal with Cliff Penny. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton	Eric Lewis: 023 8086 0384
Sat 27 Nov to Fri 24 Dec 2004	Chichester Ship CT	Father Christmas Boat Trips from Chichester Basin. Adults & Children £7.00. Advanced booking absolutely essential.	Alison Slaney: 01243 536933 from 18 Oct 2004 from 9.00am to 7.00pm
Sat 4 to Thu 23 Dec 2004	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Christmas Canal Cruises from Canal Visitor Centre, Mytchett. Booking Essential - books open October 1st!	BCA: 01252 370073
Sat 11 to Fri 24 Dec 2004	Kennet & Avon CT	'Rose of Hungerford' - One and a half hour trips from Hungerford Wharf with hot mince pie and a glass of sherry or wine for adults. Present for the children. Everyone meets Santa. Bookings only on Sats.	Richard and Diana: 01488 683389
Dec 2004	Kennet & Avon CT	'Kenavon Venture' - One hour Santa Trips from Devizes Wharf. Adults £4 including a glass of mulled wine. Child £4 including a present from Santa. Booking essential.	01380 729489
Sat 11 to Sun 12, Sat 18 to Wed 22 Dec 2004	Wey & Arun CT	Santa Cruises on the Wey & Arun Canal £6 (hourly from 11am to 3pm). From Onslow Arms on B2133 in Loxwood.	WACT Office: 01403 752403 wact@weyandarun.freemove.co.uk Web: www.weyandarun.co.uk
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 Web: www.weyandarun.co.uk
All year	Chichester Ship CT	Cruises on n/b Egremont on the canal from Chichester Basin.	Bookings: Jenny Pine 01243 670786 Enquiries: 01243 771363



Left: *Zachariah Keppel* on the Wey & Arun Canal near Loxwood.

Right: *Egremont* on the Chichester Canal.



Wey & Arun Canal News

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust is delighted to announce the recent appointment of Turlough Bamber as their new restoration manager.

Turlough arrives at an exciting time for the Trust as it seeks planning approval for the B2133 Guildford Road crossing in Loxwood. The project to install a replacement for Haybarn Bridge (near Billingshurst) is near completion, a large Summer work camp took place this year at Lording's and the Trust is organising a 2-day exhibition in Bramley, Surrey (8th/9th October). Bramley is a major challenge to full restoration as the original route of the canal is now blocked by 20th century housing.

Turlough is 68 years old and made his professional career in construction, involving roads, canals, earth embankments, high-level dams and heavy foundations in difficult ground conditions.

He is a Chartered Civil Engineer specialising in geotechnics and earthworks. Since retiring in 2001, he has been involved in disaster response work for World Vision (Kosovo post-war and sanitation reconstruction) & Tearfund Logistics in their "Great Lakes" projects for water and sanitation, therapeutic and supplementary food programmes in Congo and Burundi. A further logistics role with Tearfund was on the "Operation Lifeline Sudan" food programmes in that tragic war-torn country.



Turlough has been involved in dams, canals with associated hydraulic structures and roads as well as short-span bridges in many developing countries, including Jordan, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa, Botswana and Guinea (West Africa). Married with four sons and seven grandchildren, he has lived in Godalming for 32 years. Over 11 years, he and his wife have converted Fox's Barn in Binscombe, Surrey.

Turlough has always looked for a challenge in his professional work. The Wey & Arun canal restoration programme is another challenge and fits the bill well for his retirement.

Turlough says "We live in such a wonderful part of England, and I am delighted to be invited to lend a hand. I pray that my grandchildren will be able to enjoy the fun and peace of canal life. We must restore the "lost route to the sea" to link up with the rest of the British

waterways network. So much has been done already by the Trust's dedicated volunteers, but there is much work still to do by those same volunteers, professional design groups and local authorities if we are to complete the whole length of canal and restore it as a major local recreation resource. Our canal is the last link that connects the wonderful British Waterways network to the south coast: a challenge to be grasped and not ignored."

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release 29 September 2004

"Next stop Guildford", says Canal Trust

As part of the national strategy to connect Littlehampton to Kendal by inland waterway, the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is proposing a bold step in Loxwood. The plan is for the canal to cross the B2133 as it did until the end of the 19th century. Civil engineering professionals will carry out the difficult work, as they did in the award-winning project to build a new aqueduct in nearby Drungewick, which the Trust completed in 2002. However, there will be important contributions by volunteers.

Project manager Eric Walker says, "This bridge is the most difficult part of the canal restoration in West Sussex. The road was realigned in the post war period and the angle between the road and the canal makes for a complex design. This is a beautiful rural canal and our aim is to enhance the availability of the canal to all its users - walkers, riders and boaters".

The project is to tunnel under the road by the Onslow Arms on the Guildford Road. To do this engineers will have to drop the canal about 1.7 metres from Brewhurst lock at the south-eastern end and fit a new lock to the north of the road. The Wey and Arun

Canal Trust estimate the cost of this project at £1.2 million, which is being raised.

This project will be carried out in 3 stages. Stage 1 is to lower the canal by the Onslow Arms and divert the various services at a cost of £500,000. This money has been raised by the Wey and Arun Canal Trust and work on this stage is scheduled to start at the beginning of next year, subject to the necessary planning approvals being granted. The 2nd stage is to lower the canal by about 1.5 metres from Brewhurst lock to the east side of the B2133. Stage 3 is to tunnel under the B2133 High Street at Loxwood. Trust volunteers will then build a new lock on the west side of the road. Of course, this would not have been possible without the generosity of the land owners through which the canal passes.

All of this is subject to approvals from West Sussex County Council, local councils and others. Initial meetings have taken place and all parties are keen to see this project through. The canal once linked Loxwood to Guildford and the Thames by water. When this ambitious project is complete, another link in London's Lost Route to the Sea (at Littlehampton) will have been hammered into place.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release 24 August 2004

A remarkable result for The Wey & Arun Canal Trust at Bramley

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust held an exhibition in Bramley Village Hall on the 8th and 9th October. Bramley is on the original route of the canal (London's lost route to the sea) but in the 20th century houses were built on the canal bed. This means that the Trust needs to identify alternative route options. The exhibition showed the results of preliminary studies by engineering consultants Halcrow Group Ltd.

Speaking immediately after the exhibition, Bramley Link Project Manager, Chris Harrison, said he was delighted with the results. There were over 700 visitors, including the Mayor of Waverley, Councillor Victor Duckett, the Mayoress of Waverley, Guildford MP Sue Doughty and representatives of local



authorities. The exhibition was supported by Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council, the Environment Agency and SEEDA.

Chris Harrison emphasised that the exhibition was just the first stage of a long-term consultation and planning process. All visitors were invited to complete a questionnaire. The summary results showed that 66% were in favour of restoring the canal through Bramley. A large majority of those in favour preferred a route following the river rather than the old railway. Independent auditors appointed by the Canal Trust will now analyse the questionnaire results in detail.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release 14 October 2004

Wilts & Berks Canal

In recent months, Wilts & Berks Canal Trust has continued with physical restoration works at sites along the canal and has made progress with the production of route and feasibility studies in partnership with the local authorities along the line of the canal and other waterway interests, including IWA. This has included a further grant of £4,000 from the Association towards the employment costs of a project officer for the Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership - a consortium of interested bodies that includes local authorities, IWA and the Trust.

The feasibility studies are necessary to resolve routes for the canal at Abingdon, Cricklade, Melksham and Swindon, so that these can be included in the local plans for each area to preserve the routes from unwelcome developments that would hinder future restoration work.

Trust projects nearing completion are the River Key Aqueduct at Cricklade and Chaddington Top Lock near Wootton Bassett and Lock 3 at Seven Locks, near Dauntsey. Two successful WRG Canal Camps were held on the canal this summer, including one at Dauntsey where the former wharf wall has been completed and the winding hole dredged. Other work is progressing at West Challow and at Stepping Stones Lane Bridge near Shrivenham.

New restoration work is planned to start at Pewsham Locks near Chippenham, and plans are being made to complete the section of the North Wilts Canal adjacent to Moulton Hill Country Park in Swindon, starting early in 2005.

The Trust has secured further sites for the next phase of restoration on the North Wilts Canal at Hayes Knoll Lock between Swindon and Cricklade, and a one mile section of canal to the east of Shrivenham. Developers in Swindon are due to start restoring over



two miles of the canal in the Southern Development Area in the next year.

The Trust has, for the first time, been able to open an office in Wootton Bassett, and now employs an administrator: (Ann O'Donoghue, 0845 226 8567 - E-mail administrator@wbct.org.uk). This post has been possible by grant from the Underwood Trust. The location for the office is co-incidentally in the same town where the first meeting took place to discuss the idea of the canal in the 18th century.

Restoration works so far have been opportunistic. The Trust in co-operation with the project officer for the Partnership is now developing a strategy to implement the funding and restoration of the remainder of the Wilts & Berks canal. 2014 is the 100th anniversary of the Act of Abandonment, and the Trust aims to have at least part of the canal re-connected to the main system by that time.

The aim of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust, originally called the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group, and founded in 1977, is to protect, conserve and improve the route of the Wilts & Berks and North Wilts Canals, and branches, for the benefit of the community and environment. Its ultimate goal is to restore a continuous navigable waterway linking the Kennet & Avon Canal at or near Melksham, the Thames at or near Abingdon, and the Thames & Severn Canal at or near Cricklade.

The Wilts & Berks Canal was promoted from 1793 as a means of providing cheap transport. The Bill empowering construction of the canal received Royal Assent in 1795 and the canal was cut from the Kennet & Avon Canal at Semington, near Melksham, to the Thames at Abingdon during the years 1796 to 1810.

A link from Swindon to the Thames & Severn Canal

(Continued on page 6)

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:

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

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Wilts & Berks Canal

(Continued from page 5)

at Latton (near Cricklade) was completed in 1819. This link, known as the North Wilts Canal, allowed traffic to bypass the difficult Thames navigation between Lechlade and Abingdon. The main line of the canal was 52 miles long, with six miles of branches and nine miles of the North Wilts Canal. There were 42 locks on the main line, 11 on the North Wilts Canal and three on the Calne branch, and there were three short tunnels.

The canal enjoyed a period of prosperity between 1817 and 1841. However, with the coming of the Great Western Railway in 1841 decline set in. Stanley Aqueduct between Chippenham and Calne collapsed in 1901, stopping through traffic. An Act of Parliament abandoned the canal in 1914. A county boundary change in 1974 transferred the eastern section of the canal from Berkshire to Oxfordshire.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - October 2004

River Avon (Warwickshire)

On 16th September, the cabinet of Warwickshire County Council accepted the recommendation of the county's Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee - that the county should not support the principle of opening the higher reaches of the river Avon to navigation, and to the subsequent creation of a navigable link between the river and the Grand Union Canal in the Warwick and Leamington area.



Whilst the outcome of the county's review has been disappointing to navigation interests, the consultation exercise has shown areas of weakness in

the cases and the tactics of those opposed to the extension of existing head of navigation upstream, and has served to highlight aspects that need to be addressed before the successful launch of any formal scheme in the future.

A further outcome of the County's review was that it became the catalyst for improved relationships among a number of bodies with disparate interests in the river navigation. One of the consequences of this has been the creation of The Stratford & Warwick Waterway Trust, which is now a corporate member of IWA.

The Trust aims to seek greater access to the river corridor for a wider constituency - including pedestrian access and the consequent linking of two long-distance footpaths, as well as extending navigation from its present head at Alveston to the Warwick and Leamington area, and thus to create a navigable link with the Grand Union Canal.

The inaugural meeting of The Stratford & Warwick Waterway Trust is due to take place at The Moat House Hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon at 2.00 p.m. on Saturday 9th October.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - October 2004

River Ouse (Yorkshire)

The Highways Agency has come under criticism in Selby for failures of the new swing bridge that crosses the Yorkshire Ouse as part of the A63 Selby by-pass, which opened in June 2004. The road was shut on two Sundays in September and is due to be shut again on 3rd October for remedial work to be undertaken. The bridge, which was built at a low level, rather than at a fixed high level, to save costs and to reduce impact on the landscape, is manned continuously, and is estimated to be costing about £3,000 for every occasion the bridge is swung to allow a boat to pass.

IWA Head Office Bulletin - October 2004