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November Newsletter

I am afraid that I have recently been ill and had a brief spell in hospital in Coventry.

As a consequence I was unable to produce this Newsletter before now (3rd November). Please accept my apologies. It is a smaller issue than usual - normal service next month (hopefully).

If any member has any comments or questions to be raised at the AGM, please send these to the Secretary (details on back page) as soon as possible.

The Second Lockdown

From Thursday 5th November, England will again enter a period of lockdown. As part of this, all public and most private meetings can no longer be held so the Waterways Events feature will not appear in this issue of the Newsletter.

Although this Society was not planning any meetings until the New Year, a number of other organisations were. The latest Covid restrictions mean that all such meetings are cancelled.

Peter Oates

Chairman's Column

Dear Members,

Because of the problems we have been having this year we are still not able to meet as we would like. It is also very unlikely that we will be able to meet in the foreseeable future.

The committee have decided that subscriptions should be waived until we can meet again.

Any member that has already paid for this year, can have it refunded or they can request it be left in the Kitty till we meet once more. It is your decision.

The AGM will be held between members of the committee, and an amended Notice of the Annual General Meeting is included in this newsletter. All other AGM details were printed in the [June newsletter](#). And as nobody has bothered, despite many requests, to even reply, we are going to go ahead with our meeting by email.

Anyway a report of the findings of the AGM will be put in the December newsletter.

On another note Angela and I went to our boat in the middle of September to prepare Purton for our one trip this year all the way to London and back. A real feel good factor.

Unfortunately a couple days before we were due to set sail through the open countryside some of our fellow boaters dropped out. Eventually it was decided that it wasn't worth going with a depleted fleet.

We stayed up there and spent a few days boating all the way to Hillmorton, where we met up with a friend on his boat and had a couple days with him before setting off all the way to Braunston to spend a couple nights before setting off back to Ventnor Farm.

Since getting back home the weather reports stated that one of the days at Braunston was the biggest rainfall in GB for a very long time and the total UK rain that day would have filled Loch Ness!

I think that if we had gone South, we would have had a very wet journey.

Keep safe

Alan Rose

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Southampton Canal Society for the year ending 31 March 2020 will be held on 5th November 2020 at 1945. Because of the unusual circumstances this year the actual meeting will be held between the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Gordon Osborn via email.

The Agenda will consist of the following items:

1. To approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 4th July 2019.
2. To receive and approve the Reports of the Chairman and Secretary and the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2020. These papers were published in the Society Newsletter for [June 2020](#).
3. To approve the continued appointment of the current Officers and Committee until the next AGM.

As the Society Constitution has no provision for proxy voting at the AGM members are requested to send any comments or questions to the Secretary for consideration at the AGM.

A report on the proceedings will be published in the Society Newsletter in December 2020.

*Angela Rose
Hon. Secretary*



Chichester Basin

How much do you know about these two "local" waterway features?

Have a look at the [Society's website](#) to find out more.



Milton Locks, Portsmouth

An odd year's boating

Thank you to Jan and Malcolm for providing this welcome item about this most peculiar year's boating.

We normally go out on our boat towards the end of April, maybe May, but this of course has not been a normal year. We were only allowed to venture forth on July 4th (Independence Day). I know we could go to our boat before that but as we were not able to stay on board we decided it was too far for us in one day.

We set off from Fenny Marina north to Napton and then on to Braunston. There were not many boats about to start with but gradually more and more hire boats were on the water. It was lovely to see families enjoying themselves after weeks of lock down. The sun shone and every one was happy. Obviously we had to go into shops but carefully. It seemed quite safe in the open air. We went as far as Milton Keynes but it was very crowded with continuous moorers and wide beam boats. These were at times quite difficult to pass.

We turned back and at Norton junction we went up the Leicester arm. At Watford locks we saw a pair of swans with 10 cygnets, never seen that before. It seems the quiet waters during lockdown had helped them maybe. We went as far as Foxton and were happy to moor next to an off-license boat, at least Malcolm was.

There was a lot of duck weed on the canal which opened for us and then closed behind. The locks had not been used much and the lockies

told us that Foxton was fine as it had recent new gates but Watford locks had leaked a lot when they were re-opened. Further north was not a good idea as we were 18 miles from Leicester, and it was under special measures and the river there closed it seemed. So back to the marina and then home for a spell.



Jan and Malcolm's boat, Amy Grace, moored above Foxton Top Lock and seen from a drone.

We had had trouble with an alternator whilst we were out and needed the attentions of an engineer. Malcolm doesn't touch the engine much these days. If he went down the engine bay he might not get out again!

When it was all fixed we set off south, but going down Clayton locks we heard of problems below Cropredy, and Chinese whispers said it could take a week, so we turned back and went to Braunston again.

After a week at home we went up to Brownsover, and then back down the south Oxford cruising to Nell Bridge. The weather by now was colder and we had the fire going in the evenings. We have to go home next week for our flu jabs, but guess that's it for this season. So we go home to sit the winter out and wait for the COVID vaccinations to happen I guess. No SCS meetings to go to at the moment. And planning our next years cruising of course.

*Jan and Malcolm Gunningham
Nb Amy Grace*

More reader contributions



Annegret and Brian Evans received these two photos from their son Andrew, who lives in Tring.

They show the Wendover Arm and the Building Works at Bulbourne on the Grand Union Canal, both taken during a walk on Friday 23 October, 2020.

Your editor is pleased to receive these reader contributions on this page and would really appreciate more items from more readers of this Newsletter.



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 are normally held on the first Thursday of each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Events in this issue) at Chilworth Village Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184. Contact the Secretary for further information.

This Newsletter is normally published during the first week of each month in time for the Society's meeting.

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National Lottery Heritage Funding Success

Lottery bid success will make Stroud and Stonehouse canal towns after 70-year break

Stroud and Stonehouse are set to become canal towns once again, following The National Lottery Heritage Fund's decision to grant £8.9 million to the Cotswold Canals Connected Project.

The exciting decision, announced today, means that the five miles of canal already restored will be connected to the national inland waterway network at Saul Junction.

As well as opening up another 4.5 miles of canal, the funding will see huge benefits in terms of the economy, leisure, community, health, heritage and the environment, including the creation of 21 hectares of biodiversity land, planting 30,000 trees and shrubs, generating additional spending of £5.5 million per year in the local economy, bringing health benefits estimated at £8 million a year, preserving the canal archives from the 1730s and involving up to 500 extra volunteers.

A partnership led by Stroud District Council and the Cotswold Canals Trust has already restored 5 miles of canal between Stonehouse and Thrupp, but connecting to Gloucester and Sharpness Canal at Saul means boats can reach Stonehouse and Stroud from the whole of the national inland waterway network

"This is fantastic news," said Cllr Doina Cornell, Leader of Stroud District Council. "I remember when I moved to the district twenty years ago people talking with enthusiasm about this canal project, and I'm so proud now of the council and all our partners who have made this dream a reality. The canal very much shaped the district in the past and thanks to this National Lottery funding will now do so in the future. I can't think of any other project which benefits so many people in so many ways – and when outdoor pursuits are so important as we look forward to recovering from the COVID pandemic."

"I would like to pay tribute to Stroud District Council councillors from all sides who committed to take the project on in 2008 and have kept the support going for all these years, as well as to the great team of

dedicated council staff."

The canal, known as the Stroudwater Navigation, was formally abandoned by an Act of Parliament in 1954.

Jim White, Chair of Trustees for the Cotswold Canals Trust said: "This is amazing news. Volunteers have been working for this moment since the Trust was founded in 1972. Thanks to National Lottery players our dream of reconnecting to the national inland waterways network is now a reality. As the project progresses we need many more volunteers to help us and we continue to fundraise."

"This important section of canal restoration greatly helps us to pursue our vision of eventually completing the canal route from the River Severn to the River Thames," added Mr White. "We can now start planning the restoration of the canal from South Cerney to Lechlade."

Work on the stretch between Stonehouse and Saul is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. Work is already underway on Whitminster roundabout and the new railway bridge at Stonehouse Ocean near St Cyr's Church.

The project is much more than about a navigable stretch of water however – the mental, physical and economic wellbeing of communities is at the

heart of this project, which prioritises small local business owners, entrepreneurs and innovators.

The Trust and the Council are working with experts to create an exceptional wildlife corridor for people and nature and creating new jobs and training opportunities for local people.

The restored stretch is already providing lots of exciting, free events for all ages, and supports access for all to the towpath and the water.

Major funders for the project are The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Stroud District Council (£2.3m), Cotswold Canals Trust's members and donors' contributions (£2.2m), Gloucestershire County Council (£700,000) and the Canal & River Trust (£625,000). Cotswold Canals Trust will continue to fundraise for the remaining £1.2 million needed.



St Cyr's Church, Stonehouse