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NEWSLETTER No. 259 NOVEMBER 1992

MEETINGS - 1st Thursday each month at 7.45 pm.
St. John Ambulance Hall, King's Park Road, Southampton.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

1992

5th November - Film & Slides on Canal Lifts in Belgium and the new Rhine-Main-Danube Canal plus the opportunity to purchase waterways books - Hugh Mcknight.

3rd December - American Supper and a talk on Owls by the Ringwood Owl Centre complete with a couple of live owls.

1993

7th January - B.W. Boat Standards by George Gibson, Marine Surveyor.

4th February - Historic Portsmouth by George Haysom. (Mr Haysom spoke to us in July 1991 on HMS Warrior)

4th March - The Wey Navigation by Bob Nicholls of The National Trust.

1st April - "No job for a gentleman" by Commander Compton-Hall, RN Retd., OBE. History & development of the submarine by the Director of the RN submarine museum at HMS Haslar.

OCTOBER MEETING. A change of programme pleased some members and disappointed others. We were unable to present the 'Narrowboat Joinery & Wheelwrighting' as planned and John Cooper of 'The Chichester Canal Society' stepped in at a late hour.

John's previous talk in February 1991 was to only 14 people since it coincided with a snow fall and the population was advised to stay at home so many members at the October meeting had not heard his talk on the Chichester Canal. This time he included more history and the latest developments, so there was something new for us all.

We are grateful to John for taking on a last minute booking and we wish him and the Society well with the restoration of the Canal.

CANALS EXHIBITION at Eastleigh Museum will be from August 16th to October 11th. A long way ahead but keep it in mind. This exhibition fits nicely into Canals 200 year.

DONATIONS to be made this month:-

£50 to the Wilts & Berks following Jon Sim's talk 'Big Digs and Little Digs' in September.

£100 to the Chichester Canal Society following John Cooper's talk in October.

£25 to the Inland Waterways Association.

CHICHESTER CANAL - John Cooper emphasised that volunteers are badly needed both for canal restoration and to help run the Water Fayre at Chichester Canal basin. If you can help please phone (0243) 573839.

IWA MEMBERSHIP - 1991 saw the first decline in membership for a number of years, from 23,820 to 23,390.

CANALS 200. The Royal Mail is issuing a set of four or five commemorative inland waterways stamps. They will be available from the 20th July 1993.

The British Waterways Canals 200 Calendar was launched at this year's National Waterways Festival. Each month features an evocative archive photograph, published in gentle sepia tones, of one of the many canals receiving its authorising act during the heady years of 'Canal Mania'.

A number of the photographs have never been published before and have been selected from various sources. Also depicted are the distinctive and decorative seals of the canal companies and small historic photographs showing further interesting details for each of the canals.

The calendar costs £4.99 plus £1.00 p&p, available from:- British Waterways, Customer Services, Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford WD1 3QA

When we arrived at Cosgrove we unfortunately had a slight accident, a person fell in whilst we were mooring up. He was quickly pulled out and was changed in time for tea.

After tea we went to the local playing field to play games. When we returned to the boats a man complained to us for mooring opposite his house. This was very unfair as we weren't causing any disturbance.

The next day we left Cosgrove and headed towards Stoke Bruerne. During our trip up the locks we unfortunately squashed a duck, which got trapped between the gate and the wall. When it managed to come out it was obviously in a great deal of pain, so the steerer gave it a quick death.

When we reached the top of the locks we moored up for lunch which we had on the bank before visiting the Waterways Museum. Everybody enjoyed the museum but it was a shame not to see the model of the Anderton Lift working. After we had visited the museum shop we visited the little shop on the other side of the canal.

At about half past two we returned to the boats and set off through the tunnel to Gayton Junction where the other boats moored to empty the locks

We stopped at 6 o'clock just before Concoform Marine where we moored for tea.

After tea we went to a local field to sing our boating songs which we had to write during the week. My boats song was to the tune of the Drunken Sailor. After we had sung our songs we had drinks of lemonade and pieces of cake.

When we had finished our mini party we returned to the boats and started cruising again in the dark. Unluckily we were all in bed. We moored at the bottom of Buckby Locks for the night.

The next morning we set off up Buckby Locks, with most people on the towpath but a few inside helping to clear up.

When we reached Braunston we sang through Braunston Tunnel Making the most of our last day.

On reaching the bottom lock we moored up and returned the boats before loading the coaches and returning home to Southampton.

Adventure Afloat was a great success where there was a good team spirit and a good sense of co-operation. It was a shame that it all had to come to an end.

Thanks to Peter, one of our younger members, for his report of a school trip on the canals that has kept us

UTTERANCES OF CONFUCIUS are well documented. There are hundreds, all applicable to a variety of situations, and on one occasion last summer, when the panic abated, I added another.

Most of us have a problem or two, and mine is deafness, but never mind. It was mid morning, the weather was perfect, no sign of rain, no wind, and halfway up the Oxford. I had waited a long time for just such a day to paint the roof of my 50 footer, so I steered into the bank to tie up on a nice "quiet spot". Quiet spots soon become popular, congested, noisy, and this was no exception.

Preparation involved the usual dry and dusty sandpapering, so between jobs as it were, I decided on a cuppa, what better? So down off the roof I went to put the kettle on. Back again to the job in hand applying a new tin of grey primer with a 2 inch brush.

It was about midday and adjacent boat owners were rattling pans and plates so it was obviously lunchtime. I carry on painting and minding my own business when an unpleasant smell pervades my nostrils. Quite honestly I thought it was a culinary disaster on a towpath barbecue gadget, something on fire! I must admit to not enjoying the close company of burning meat, in fact I detest it, IF that's what it was. The smell got worse and from my elevated position, with nostrils flared, I scanned the area, even across the cut to a small marina to locate the offending culprit.

I came down off the roof to get some rag and on passing one of my own partially opened windows, the said smell was both acrid and ghastly.

CRIKEY! The penny was dropping. Oh yes, I put the kettle on an hour ago and where was the plastic handle? It had vanished into 3 black sticky puddles on top of my wife's 4 burner cooker!

So apologies to all you barbecue fans. Confucius adds to the list by now saying "HE WHO IS HARD OF HEARING SHOULD NOT BUY WHISTLING KETTLE"

from forgetful 'POLLY' - S.C.S