



Chairman : Brian Evans, 19 Lansdowne Gardens,
: Romsey. Tel:- 0794 517115
Vice Chairman: Les Osborn, The Gardener's Cottage,
: Pinehurst Road, Bassett, Southampton.
: Tel:- 0703 768116
Secretary : Martin Cripps, 42 Delamere Road,
: Southsea. Tel:- 0705 753241
Treasurer & : Graham Smith, 2 Hearne Gardens,
Membership : Shirrell Heath, Soton. SO3 2NR.
: Tel:- 0329 834297

NEWSLETTER No. 236 SEPTEMBER 1990

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 6th September - David Laing - Canal trip round England. David Laing spoke to the Society in February 1988 about Irish Canals and promised to return to tell us about his travels around English Canals after 'Winkle' was unloaded from the ferry in Liverpool.
- 4th October - Chris Davey - Waterway Recovery Group. The history, aims and objectives, work camps, future plans.
- 1st November - Peter Brougham - Kennet and Avon boat builder. Construction and fitting out of narrowboats. The tricks of the trade recounted with enthusiasm.
- 6th December - Christmas Festivities - with Les Osborn giving a hands on demonstration on the art of painting canal roses etc.

AUGUST MEETING The 'Few' were treated to an excellent variety of slides on Members Slide Night. First we had 'IWA Rally 89', pictures by Laura Osborn. She had picked out a number of pieces of traditional canal painting - obviously influenced by Les' interest in the art.

Frank Stokes followed with the IWA trip to China. A very interesting collection of slides with excellent informative commentary. Several members remarked that their preconceived ideas of Chinese waterways had been quite inaccurate. The IWA party returned home by rail via Russia.

John Massey showed a variety of Dutch slides - waterways, buildings, views and greenhouses where the farmers carefully computer cultivate cucumbers etc.

To finish off the evening, Martin Cripps took us first along the Itchen Navigation and then presented views of Gloucester Docks, taken on a walk around before entering the Museum on our recent Society Outing.

SOCIETY TRIP Saturday 22nd September to visit Claverton Pumping Station, working water wheel / beam pump in action with time for your own picnic lunch followed by a 4 hour cruise, with cream tea, aboard 'Ladywood', from Bradford on Avon to Dundas Aqueduct and return. £11.50 adult - £10.00 DAP/child. Bookings to Secretary at meetings or address above.

BUS STOP Have you told Martin Cripps where you wish to be picked up by the coach for the trip to the K & A?

SUBSCRIPTIONS for the year are now due following the AGM where members attending voted not to increase subscriptions this year, thus increasing the extremely good value of membership remaining at £4.00 single and £6.00 family, and can be paid to the Treasurer at meetings or to the address above.

WEEKEND COURSES As a result of the popularity of the first session of courses in narrowboat decoration, The Canal Museum, Stoke Bruerne will again be providing similar weekend courses this Autumn.

Date	Course	Max No	Tutor(s)
Oct 6 & 7	Ropework	12-20	Colin Jones/Robert Jackson
Oct 13 & 14	Narrowboat lettering and decoration	15	Brian Collings
Oct 20 & 21	Narrowboat decoration	15	Brian Collings
Nov 3 & 4	Ropework	12-20	Colin Jones/Robert Jackson
Nov 10 & 11	Narrowboat decoration	20	Brian Collings/Julia Hurdle
Nov 24 & 25	Narrowboat decoration	20	Brian Collings/Julia Hurdle
Dec 8 & 9	Narrowboat decoration	20	Brian Collings/Julia Hurdle

Further details from Les Osborn.

DUDLEY TUNNEL In the July Newsletter there was an item about the new tunnel under Dudley Hill. Since then British Waterways have announced a scheme to repair and re-open Dudley Canal Tunnel to navigation. The tunnel was closed in 1981 because of structural failure of the tunnel lining over a 130m length near the Parkhead Portal.

In 1985 & 1986 the tunnel was given a detailed structural inspection by BW mining engineers, which revealed that apart from the failed length, the remainder of the tunnel was in good condition.

During 1988 & 1989 stage one of the tunnel works included the repair of the short tunnels and part of the main tunnel. Stage two, carried out in early 1989, consisted of a site investigation contract in which boreholes were taken with radial drilling inside the tunnel to determine the extent of the geological problems in the vicinity of the failed length. The full extent of the problem in the area around the failed length has now been accurately determined and funds have been made available by BW to carry out the next two stages of restoration.

Stage three, which starts this summer, will comprise the provision of access roads, water and electrical services and desilting the approach tunnel. This should be completed in the early part of this winter. Stage four is the replacement of the failed tunnel lining and is to start in the winter of 1990 with completion by late summer 1991.

The estimated cost of stages three and four is £1M and Dudley MBC has given British Waterways a grant of £100,000 towards the cost of the work.

The IWA has given an enthusiastic welcome to the announcement. David Stenson, National Chairman, said, "One of the objects of the 1991 National Waterways Festival to be held at Windmill End on the Dudley Canal, and backed by Dudley and Sandwell councils, was to campaign for the restoration of the tunnel as a through route for pleasure craft. Now it will be a celebration of its reopening."

IWA REGIONS It is proposed that as from 1st January 1991 the Guildford and Reading, Solent and Arun and Oxfordshire branches of the IWA will cease to be members of the South East Region of the Association, and as from that date they will form a new region yet to be named.

A Special General Meeting of the South East Region will take place at 8pm on Thursday 13th September at AUEW House, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford to consider the above proposal.

PORTSMOUTH AND ARUNDEL NAVIGATION COMPANY - PORTSEA CANAL On Saturday 28th April over 40 people were involved in activities to brighten up Milton Locks, one part of the Portsea Canal, Portsmouth's Lost Canal.

A skip was filled with rubbish, the bridge over the lock and the fence along the path were painted, a 30 foot long hedge was planted and finally a pictorial plaque explaining the history of the lock and the Portsmouth - Arundel Canal was erected. It was unveiled by Mrs. Lofting who lives in the old engine house that housed the pump that supplied sea water from Langstone Harbour to the Canal. It is hoped to put a brief history of the canal in the next newsletter.

BRITISH WATERWAYS NEWS RELEASES

13th JULY 1990

TOWPATH SIGNS IN READING During the last few weeks, over 65 signs have been erected along the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath in Reading from the River Thames to Burghfield. The new green signs, featuring a yellow arrow on a white disc, direct the public along the towpath, which provides an attractive and traffic free walkway close to the town centre.

NEWBURY 'DISCOVERY TRAIL' The 'Newbury Discovery Trail', the first of a new series of self guided walks along the Kennet and Avon Canal, is launched today. The Trail takes walkers through a variety of walks of between 15 minutes and 2 1/2 hours duration, to the historical bustle of Newbury's wharves, the gentle surroundings of water meadows and ancient wooded escarpments.

GUIDED WALKS ON THE K & A Along the Kennet & Avon Canal, there is much to see and discover about the canal and its surrounding environment, and what better way to appreciate this than on a guided walk led by a local expert. The walks take place throughout the Summer and cover topics such as industrial archaeology, architecture, history and wildlife.

The walks are based around various locations between Bath and Reading. All are along the Kennet and Avon Canal and free to members of the public. They vary between two and seven miles in distance.

Copies of the Guided Walks Programme are available from local Tourist Information Centres and from British Waterways Offices at Devizes and Padworth.