



Chairman's Column

April Meeting

On behalf of the Society I am delighted to welcome travel author Liam D'Arcy Brown to our April meeting when he will be describing to us the 'Chinese Grand Canal' – a waterway that is 1,400 years old and stretches for 1,100 miles crossing several river valleys on route.

The Grand Canal of China has had a lot of coverage recently as, in advance of Liam's talk to the IWA Solent & Arun Branch on 25 March, the Spring issue of "Cargoes" carries an article on this major waterway. In addition, this month's "Waterways World" includes an excellent illustrated article by Liam entitled "The Emperor's River."

So all members attending this meeting should have an extensive knowledge of this canal at the end of Liam's talk to us.

Society Skittles Evening

Details of our successful Society Skittles Evening which took place on 26 February are included in this Newsletter.

Proposed Boat Gathering

Five boats will now be taking part in our 2010 Boat Gathering which will be taking place at Flecknoe and Braunston, on the Grand Union Canal, early next month. It is still not too late to join us, just contact me as soon as possible.

Vacancies for Chairman and Treasurer & Membership Secretary

I cannot say that I have been overwhelmed with responses regarding the forthcoming vacancies for Chairman and Treasurer & Membership Secretary following my personal letter to all members. Please remember, this is **your** Society and without your help the future is uncertain. Having been a member for many years, I would hate to see the Society come to an end after forty-three years just because we could not fill these important positions.

Society Visit to Bursledon Brickworks

It is proposed to have a visit to Bursledon Brickworks at 2pm on 10 June. This is the last surviving Victorian steam-driven brickworks in the country and is run by enthusiastic volunteers to preserve the site for future generations.

The cost for admission, guided tour and cream tea comprising 2 scones, clotted cream and jam, tea or coffee is £7.50. Please add your names to the list available at our monthly meetings if you would like to

be included in the visit. Payment to Maureen Greenham by the end of April please.

Society Burgees

We have long exhausted our stock of Society burgees and Angela Rose has been making enquiries about a new supply. Our original supplier, who still has the Society artwork, can provide new burgees at a cost in the region of £10.00 each. If you would like one of these can you please advise Angela.

Membership Subscriptions

Just another reminder that our new membership year starts on 1 April and subscriptions (Individual - £15; Joint/Family - £22) should now be paid to Anne as soon as possible.

The Purton Hulks

Members will well remember the talk Paul Barnett gave us in November 2008 about 'The Purton Hulks'. There has, at last, been some movement concerning the official protection of these important relics. Paul has now announced that, "Having recently returned from a meeting with Lady Margaret Hodge and English Heritage, I am immensely pleased to advise that The Friends of Purton have successfully secured a ministerial pledge to protect the timbers of the last remaining Kennet barge – "Harriett," which currently lies within the 81 vessels of the Purton Hulks. Although a major breakthrough, the Friends would like to state that it considers the move to be a small yet significant step forward in the protection of this vitally important collection for the nation."

Well done to Paul Barnett and the Friends of Purton. We will watch further developments with interest.

The Purton Hulks recently featured on BBC TV's 'Countryfile'.

2010 Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday 29 July but, because of the unavailability of some key Committee members on that date, the AGM is likely to be brought forward by one week to 22 July. This will be confirmed in a future Newsletter.

Our Next Speaker

A reminder that our May meeting will actually be held on Thursday 29 April. Our speaker will be Paul Gosling and we will be hearing about 'Gosling's Gollivants 2009'. I understand that boats, railways and airplanes are all involved.

Paul Herbert

Canal project moves on to another lock

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust is now turning its attention to the next major extension to the navigable section centred on Loxwood, on the West Sussex/Surrey border.

With Devils Hole Lock virtually complete and ready for its formal reopening on 17 April 2010, the Trust is launching an appeal for reconstruction of the next lock north - Southland.

Restoration of Southland Lock is, in effect, a complete

rebuild. The only visible remains are the iron quoins (hinge posts) for the bottom gates, and because a badger sett is located at the foot of the original lock, it is planned to build a replacement lock about 10m away from the badger sett.

Southland Lock was originally built of bricks, rather than the local stone used for the locks further south. The bricks were recycled in the 1930s, reportedly by

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March Meeting

Alan Copeland - "Curiosities of the Chilterns"

Before our March meeting none of us knew quite what to expect from Alan's talk, but what an evening it turned out to be. Those members who were unable to attend missed an exceptional event.

Alan had prepared well for his talk, providing print-outs of the wealth of curiosities, and their locations, he would be speaking to us about. Because of the large number and various complexities of those curiosities, it is simply impossible to include them all here. But, just to give a flavour.....

We saw various memorials, Victorian loos, water pumps, drinking fountains and wells, stocks and pillories, attractive and somewhat bizarre buildings, strange and funny signs, mile stones, green telephone boxes, old post boxes, a totem pole and a ship's figurehead. Then we had level crossing gates, but no railway, an Egyptian shelter, a boundary tithing stone, a topiary cockerel, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and even the nude statue of a young lady linked to the sinking of the SS Lusitania! What about

the underpass for frogs and toads and the windmill that starred in 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'? Do you know of a Marmoset that has its own marked grave or the shark that nose-dived into the roof of a house?

And there were so many more – I only wish I could list them all here.

But, for those of you who did miss Alan's talk, don't despair – he has a number of similar talks about curiosities in other areas and we will be inviting him back. If you cannot wait until then, log on to his website at www.curiosities.co.uk for full details and pictures from all his shows.

Many thanks Alan for such a wonderful evening which we all thoroughly enjoyed, particularly your own brand of humour – and, oh yes – your well planned background sound effects. We look forward to welcoming you back sometime in the future.

Paul Herbert

Society Skittles Evening

Our occasional Skittles Evenings have always been popular and the latest event on 26 February this year was no exception. On this occasion we had moved to a different venue, The Phoenix in Twyford which proved to be a good choice. The Pub was easy to find and had adequate car parking. The skittles alley was on the same floor as the entrance so no more trying to descend those difficult stairs at our former venue.

We were again able to attract a good crowd of members and guests and, whilst we were below the maximum capacity of the room, we were really cosy and I am



not sure where more people could have been fitted in.

We are grateful to Maureen Greenham for organising the event and to Tony Fry for the actual organisation of the skittles competition on the night. This time the competition was individuals and it was the girls against the boys. After a 'nail-biting' event the ladies competition was won by Jan (? surname – apologies Jan). The men's competition was even more fiercely fought with a dead-heat between Tim Symington and Paul Herbert, both of whom had managed to knock down all 27 skittles over the three rounds played. So, it was down to a sudden

Above: The skittle alley at the Phoenix.
Left: Tim and Jan - the evening's winners.
Right: Tony and Maureen - the event's organisers.



death play-off, won by Tim. So, congratulations to Jan and Tim who were awarded their prizes. To add an extra variation to the evening Tony organised a knock-out competition with participants paying for the privilege – all for a cash prize. Again, Tim and Paul were in the running for the top spot with Tim finally taking the prize.

It was a great evening, and all appeared to enjoy the food laid on by The Phoenix. Paul had pleasure in presenting Maureen and Tony with a bottle of wine each as the Society's token of appreciation for all their efforts. They have agreed to run another similar event, perhaps in the autumn.

Paul Herbert



Waterways Diary

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the correctness of this information, please check with the listed contact who will be glad to confirm and supply further details.

Recently, OS grid references and/or postcodes have been added (where known but not guaranteed) to aid location of the event. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then please contact the editor.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 1 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Travel Author Liam D'Arcy Brown on the "Chinese Grand Canal". The waterway stretches over 1100 miles, crosses several river valleys and is 1400 years old. A talk not to be missed! Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat & Sun 3 & 4 Apr 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Woking Canal Festival. Bridge Barn Pub, Bridge Barn Lane, Woking, GU21 6NL. (SU993585)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073. Web: www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk
Sat 10 Apr 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Join Canal Ranger Peter Bickford for an early morning stroll down the Canal, listen and learn about birdsongs, especially resident birds for this walk. Booking essential. £3 per person. Meet: Howfield Cottage, Pirbright Lock, Connaught Road Brookwood, Surrey GU24 OAG (SU943568)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073
Thu 15 Apr 2010 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CT	"Canals of the South Wales Coalfield, Part 2" by Patrick Moss. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk
Sun 18 Apr 2010 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CT	Walk: Both Canal Branches in the Midford Area (3 miles) Meet: Lay-by opposite Bridge Farm (Lock 16), Combe Hay, Bath, BA2 7EE. (ST743603)	Mike Chapman 01225 426948 Email: mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk
Wed 21 Apr 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Runnalls Davis - 'Birds, Beaux and Barges and a Great Big Bang - The Regents Canal'. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: d.millett7@ntlworld.com Web: www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Fri 23 Apr 2010 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Details to be finalised. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@googlemail.com
Sun 25 Apr 2010 11.00am	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Small Boat Cruise: Pulborough to Pallingham and back. Meet at the slipway at Pulborough 'Swan' Bridge (A29) (Ref TQ046185), north bank, east side of bridge. See page 4 for further details.	Andy Berncastle Tel: 023 8027 3599 Email: hilary.berncastle@btinternet.com or Brendan Whelan Tel: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Wed 28 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Branch AGM followed by The K&A Canal 50 years on: a review based on photographs from 1960s canoeing trips by Ray Denyer. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 29 Apr 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Paul Gosling with "Gosling's Gallivants 2009" - Boats, Rail & Planes involved. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat 1 May 2010	Basingstoke Canal Authority	Join Canal Ranger Peter Bickford for an early morning stroll down the Canal, listen and learn about birdsongs of migrant and resident birds. Booking essential. £3 per person. Meet: Howfield Cottage, Pirbright Lock, Connaught Road Brookwood, Surrey GU24 OAG (SU943568)	Canal Centre Tel: 01252 370073
Thu 20 May 2010 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	John Gollidge with "My Rescue at Sea." This will be followed by Ron & Myra Glover showing slides, a DVD and talking about the Falkirk Wheel. The Green Dragon, Alderbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU183274)	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841 Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Fri 21 May 2010 7.30 for 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	'The Grand Canal of China' - Liam D'Arcy Brown. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@googlemail.com
Thu 3 Jun 2010 7.45pm	Southampton CS	John Silman & Tony Yoward present "Canals and Mills General & Industrial". Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sun 13 Jun 2010	Wey & Arun CT	38th Annual Puddle - 12 mile sponsored walk in the area around Bramley, Surrey. Sponsorship form from Trust office or www.weyandarun.co.uk/puddle-forms2010.pdf	Trust office: 01403 752403 Email: office@weyandarun.co.uk Web: www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sun 13 Jun 2010	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Small Boat Cruise: Port Creek, between Portsmouth and Langstone Harbours.	Andy Berncastle Tel: 023 8027 3599 Email: hilary.berncastle@btinternet.com or Brendan Whelan Tel: 01903 816012 Email: solentandarun@waterways.org.uk
Sat 19 Jun 2010	Reading Council	Reading Water Fest. At Chestnut Walk canalside, Reading. (SU719735).	
Sat 26 Jun 2010 7.30pm		Mikron Theatre with "Pedal Power" ... freewheeling through cycling history with the wind at its back. The Angel on the Bridge, Thameside, Henley, Oxon RG9 1BH (SU763825). Suggested donation £10.	Mikron Theatre: 01484 843701; Email: admin@mikron.org.uk ; Web: www.mikron.org.uk
Sun 27 Jun 2010 7.30pm		Mikron Theatre with "Striking the Balance" about the fight for equal pay in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Donnington Parish Hall, Stockbridge Road, Donnington, Chichester PO19 2QJ (SU855036). Tickets £7.50	Tickets from: Linda Wilkinson, 1 Chidham Lane, Chidham, Chichester, PO18 8TL. Tel: 01243 576701
Tue 29 Jun 2010 8.00pm		Mikron Theatre with "Pedal Power" ... freewheeling through cycling history with the wind at its back. Blubeckers at The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, Berkshire RG7 5SH (SU572664). Suggested donation £10.	Mikron Theatre: 01484 843701; Email: admin@mikron.org.uk ; Web: www.mikron.org.uk
Wed 30 Jun 2010 8.00pm		Mikron Theatre with "Pedal Power" ... freewheeling through cycling history with the wind at its back. The Trout Inn, St Johns Bridge, Lechlade on Thames GL7 3HA (SU222990). Suggested donation £10.	Mikron Theatre: 01484 843701; Email: admin@mikron.org.uk ; Web: www.mikron.org.uk
Sun 18 Apr, 2 & 16 May, 6 & 20 Jun 2010 2.00pm	Paul Barnett	Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett. Tour fee £3.50 per person. Approx 2 hours weather permitting. Meet Purton Lower Bridge, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (SO692044).	Paul Barnett: 07833 143231 Email: barnadillo@aol.com Web: www.friendsofpurton.org.uk

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.

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<http://www.sotoncs.org.uk>

Meetings:

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm. (See Waterways Diary.) Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184.

Canals to leave Government control after 62 years

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) welcomes the Government's announcement in its Budget statement on 24 March (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/budget2010_armslengthbodies.pdf) today, that it will progress proposals to allow British Waterways to be mutualised, possibly as a charitable trust, responsible for managing waterways assets on a long lease with the non-operational property endowment held in a 'charity locked' arrangement.

IWA understands that much further work will be needed to identify the exact form of mutual and the detail of its governance and relationship with Government. IWA also welcomes the Government's intention to safeguard British Waterways' assets by ensuring that any proposal will:

- Ensure robust governance arrangements and purpose so waterways assets and the public benefits they bring are protected now and in the future;
- Develop a governance structure that allows all users, local communities and other stakeholders to hold the new body to account; and
- Put the waterways on a long-term sustainable footing while reducing the ongoing cost to the taxpayer.

Speaking on behalf of IWA, Clive Henderson, national chairman said:

'We are pleased with today's announcement as we have supported this initiative from the start. We are also pleased to see Government's intentions to ensure that the public interest is

safeguarded, as this has also been one of our overriding concerns in the development of the proposals put forward by BW.'

He continued:

'IWA looks forward to participating in the promised full consultation, and will be actively seeking to ensure that this opportunity is built upon for the benefit of all waterways users, by exploring the opportunities that a larger Inland Waterways Conservancy might present. With over 5,000km of navigable waterways in the ownership or control of over 30 navigation authorities, the two largest are the government funded and controlled agencies, British Waterways and the Environment Agency. Our vision is to encourage the formation of a larger, rationalised organisation, incorporating both British Waterways and Environment Agency managed waterways, that will also allow for the opportunity for other non-publicly funded navigations to join at some time in the future.'

A copy of the IWA's inland waterways conservancy proposals can be found on the internet at:

www.waterways.org.uk/documents/inland_waterways_conservancy

IWA Press Release - 24 March 2010

Editor's comment: This seems to be a step in the right direction to remove BW's waterways from the direct control of the Government. However, much water will pass under the bridge before these proposals come to fruition. In the immediate future, there is to be a general election. If there's a change of Government, these proposals could well be dropped in favour of some other "solution."

Wey & Arun goes north

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the Cokelers, a Loxwood-based religious community, who sold the bricks to a Cranleigh builders' merchant. The plans are to use bricks for the new lock chamber, probably the locally-produced Weinerberger red multi stock, as used successfully by the Trust for the Loxwood road crossing project. The bricks will face walls of reinforced concrete blocks, resulting in a much stronger and more stable structure than the original. The brick 'training' walls will continue south to the original lock site, to provide protection for the banks without undue disturbance to the badgers and other wildlife.

Gates will be of Ekki, a long-lasting environmentally-friendly tropical hardwood from sustainable sources. The same material will be used to provide a bridge giving access across the canal for the badgers.

As with all of the restored and rebuilt locks currently in use, an

electric pump, with the associated power supply, will be installed, to return water to the pound above the lock.

The detailed plans for the lock, bridges and surrounding landscape have still to be drawn up, and will be produced in full consultation with interested parties, including the riparian owners and the Sussex Badger Group. The dimensions, slightly longer and wider than the original, will comply with Association of Inland Navigation Authorities guidelines.

Even using mainly volunteer labour, the cost is estimated at around £300,000, which will be met by the Trust's own fundraising activities.

Further information about the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is available from the Trust's office, on 01403 752403.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Press Release - 14 March 2010