

Newsletter

April 1997

Issue 308

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

With the visit of the IWA Chairman, Audrey Smith, it was decided in committee to make a donation of £100.00 to the IWA Jubilee Appeal. Normally, a donation is made at a later date but we decided on this occasion to make a 'splash' and present the cheque at the end of the meeting.

I was a bit surprised when asked to make the presentation after the tea break. A bit unusual, but never mind, anything to keep the committee happy.

Well, I handed over the cheque, but there was not a lot of 'splash'.

Imagine my surprise when I was called back to the front and Audrey made a presentation to me on behalf of Southampton Canal Society members. As someone said, "He was nearly at a loss for words." Quite true.

I would like to thank members, both those who financed and those who secretly arranged the purchase of the beautiful framed print of the picture by Alex Prowse to give to me for 30

years as SCS Chairman.

There have been times during those 30 years when Society matters became a bit like hard work. There has been occasional disappointments. Sometimes I have felt cross, even angry. But mostly it has been fun and the last thing that I would have expected was reward.

To me, our Society is part of a wide movement contributing to the betterment of the waterways. Waterways which I feel are beneficial to the environment, contribute to the quality of recreation for many and in some areas provide civilised transport. I hope that I will always be able to support that movement.

Annegret was highly delighted with her beautiful pot plant. While she is hardly likely to get me to a meeting early, as Audrey suggested on the night, she has always been a big support and over the years has completed endless hours of typing.

So thank you all, members, once again for your generosity.

Brian

Minister pays tribute to WRG

The Minister for the Waterways, Mr Robert Jones MP, paid particular tribute to the work of the IWA's Waterway Recovery Group in a House of Commons debate on canals and funding for the waterways on 17 March. The Minister also recognised the work of the IWA, the Association of Waterway Cruising Clubs, Royal Yachting Association and British Marine Industries Federation following a display at the House of Commons, organised jointly by the four organisations earlier this month.

The half hour debate in the Commons explored the importance of waterways in urban and rural regeneration and acknowledged the wide benefits enjoyed by millions of people throughout the country.

Mr Jones reported that he had received a heavy postbag of letters from IWA members and other supporters calling for more funding for the waterways, but said that an extra £5 million had been added to BW's budget for the next three years.

(Continued on page 4)

Reflectors to protect otters

The Environment Agency is installing special roadside reflectors to stop otters being hit by cars at busy road crossings.

The Agency is teaming up with the South-East Otters and Rivers Project and British Trust for Conservation Volunteers to attach reflectors to bollards by the road at Woodmill by the River Itchen in Southampton. The reflectors are angled and will reflect the light from passing vehicles away from the road towards the nearby River Itchen. This way, otters in the river will be alerted when cars are approaching and so will avoid the road.

"The light from car headlights will scatter over the river for a short distance and warn otters not to stray too close," says Tim Sykes, Conservation Officer for the EA. "Of course, in the middle of the night when the roads are clear, otters will still be able to safely cross and go about their business free from the human threats that can arise from living in the heart of Hampshire."

At Woodmill otters have been seen scurrying across the road venturing between the Itchen and its tidal reaches.

"Fortunately, no otters have died here so far," said Tim.

"Elsewhere in Hampshire, several otters have been found on busy roads, killed by passing traffic. This rare and protected animal needs our help and vigilance if they are to survive so close to Southampton City."

The Environment Agency works closely with the Otter Project to encourage otters to recolonise the South. Creating otter havens by building artificial holts, planting areas of cover and managing wetlands are just some of the measures taken. Tackling water quality problems, encouraging healthy fish stocks and mitigating against threats such as roads are also main issues.

"Otters are known to live throughout the Itchen catchment, with signs of their activity regularly being found in the upper reaches of the River as well as at the mouth of the Itchen near Woodmill," said Tim Sykes.

"These creatures can roam great distances in search of food and to patrol territories, and enabling otters to cross busy roads safely is a major aim of the EA in Hampshire. I would appeal to drivers when they are on roads near rivers and wetlands to be aware that otters are nearby and to reduce their speed accordingly."

Environment Agency news release 24 March 1997

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.

Chairman:

Brian Evans, 19 Lansdowne Gardens, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8FN. Tel: 01794 517115

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Eric Lewis, 51 Friars Croft, Calmore, Hampshire, SO40 2SS. Tel: 01703 860384

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Martin Cripps
Paul Herbert
Peter Oates
David Townley-Jones

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MEETINGS

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS**3rd April 1997**

BW Customer Relations - Jim Kelly

1st May 1997

Paddle Steamers of the South Coast
Alfred Taylor

5th June 1997

30th Birthday Party including
Daystar Theatre Company

3rd July 1997

AGM plus Videos

7th August 1997

Members Slides

4th September 1997

Ownerships -shared ownership of
narrow boats with Alan Mathews

20th September 1997

SCS/IWA Small Boat Cruise and
Barbecue

2nd October 1997

Bristol to Sharpness

Talk with video - Alan Padwick

6th November 1997

Bugsworth Basin and the IWPS
Ian Edgar

4th December 1997

Annual Inter-Society Quiz
and American Supper

March Meeting

The well-attended meeting in March was visited by the Inland Waterways Association National Chairman, Audrey Smith. In her usual cheery manner, we were told details of how the IWA was organised to deal with a wide gamut of issues and problems from parliamentary bills to restoration, from navigation authorities to fundraising and membership enquiries. We were helped to understand the many difficulties facing an organisation run by volunteers with a small full-time workforce.

Audrey also gave details of and answered questions on some of the current concerns of the IWA and the influences upon Association policy.

During the interval, Audrey was kind enough to make a presentation to our chairman on behalf of SCS members (see front page).

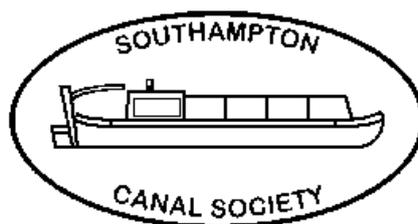
Altogether a most informative evening presented by a most delightful and knowledgeable lady. Thank you, Audrey

Model display

On board the SS Shieldhall, moored in Ocean Village, Southampton, on Sunday 6th April from 10.00am to 5.00pm, there will be a display of models including trams, canals, agricultural machines and live steam engines.

Watercress Line

A meeting of the Southampton & Waterside Group of the Watercress Line will be held at the Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh starting at 19.45 on Wednesday 16th April - Red Funnel Ferries, a presentation by a representative of the Isle of Wight ferry company.



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SCS 30th Anniversary

This year (1997) sees the 30th anniversary of the Society.

Arrangements have been for a special birthday party at the June meeting which will include a visit by the Daystar Theatre Company and also refreshments. In order to gauge demand, tickets will be issued for the meeting in advance. These will be free to members but a charge of £3.00 will be made to non-members to cover costs. Eric Lewis has all the latest information.

We also ordering a special sweatshirt for the occasion. The design will feature a coloured SCS logo on a grey sweatshirt. Details of the cost are still not available but Paul or Ray on the Sales Stand would still like to hear from those interested so they can order the correct numbers and sizes.

Society Barbecue

Plans are in hand to hold another Canal Society barbecue this year. Again it will be organised in close association with the IWA. This time the venue will be Bursledon Brickworks which lies near the River Hamble and on the same day as the IWA's Small Boat Cruise on the river: Saturday 20 September. If it's only half as successful as last year's barbecue, it should still be an event worth attending. More details later.

Canal Society Library

Don't forget the Society Library is open at our meetings to lend any of the many interesting and often unusual books on the waterways and related subjects. Many of the books are out of print and very difficult to find elsewhere. Sue Lewis would love to see you.

Chichester CS AGM

The Chichester Canal Society's AGM is to be held on Wednesday 16th April 1997 at 7.30pm at the Chichester District Council Offices, East Pallant House, Chichester. It will be followed by a slide-illustrated talk by Edward Hill on 'The Chichester Canal - Its Rejuvenation.'

IWA Solent & Arun Branch Events

The S&A Branch are advertising the following events in the area (in addition to our own):

20 April (Sun)- Canal Clean-up day on the Titchfield Canal: a gentle stroll along its length collecting rubbish: 10.00am Meon Shore near Sea Mark

18 May (Sun) - Arun Sponsored Cruise, Pulborough to Pallingham - 'Cruise it or lose it'. Contact: Alan White 01243 573765.

25 May (Sun) - Chichester Canal "Whit Walk". Choice of two walks. Sponsors or donation please. Contact: John Cooper 01243 671051.

8 June (Sun) - "The Poddle" - Wey & Arun Canal Trust sponsored walk - 25th anniversary of this annual event. Contact: John Lisk 01403 752403.

14-15 June (Sat & Sun) - Beaulieu Classic Boat Festival, Bucklers Hard. Solent & Arun boats and stand.

15 June (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - Guided towpath walk from Birdham to Cream Tea. Contact: Linda Wilkinson 01243 537500.

5 July (Sat)- Chichester Basin Barrel Races - teams of four paddlers in spectacular racing. Contact: Paul Coppard 01903 766585.

6 July (Sun) - Avon and Stour Small Boat Cruise, Christchurch. Contact: Alan White 01243 573765.

12 & 13 July (Sat & Sun) - Mikron Theatre Company at the Chichester Canal Basin. Performances start at 8pm. Contact: John Cooper 01243 671051.

19 & 20 July (Sat & Sun) - "Optimist" Sailing for

youngsters at Chichester Canal Basin. Opportunity to try sailing. Contact: John Cooper 01243 671051.

20 July (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - as above.

9-10 August (Sat & Sun) - Littlehampton Regatta; WACT stall, IWA carrying mayoral greetings and "mooring news".

10 August (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - as above.

17 August (Sun) - Chichester Canal Water Fair and Steam Boat Rally. Many attractions on and off the water. Parade for all boat types; chance to cruise the canal in your own boat. Contact: Paul Coppard 01903 766585.

23/24/25 August (Sat, Sun & Mon) - National Waterways Festival, Henley on Thames.

7 September (Sun) - Chichester Canal Cream Tea Walk - Last opportunity this year. See above.

20 September (Sat) - Hamble Small Boat Cruise - Autumn cruise including visit Bursledon Brickworks and Botley Village Quay. Easy launching at public slipway at Swanwick. Contact: Alan White 01243 573765. Also SCS barbecue at Bursledon Brickworks.

19 October (Sun) - River Rother Guided Walk, Stopham to Shopham. Guided walk, donation please.

Except as noted above, further details may be obtained from:

Peter Boyce, Greensleeves Cottage, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 6PW.

Tel (home) 01705 269642, (office and answer machine) 01730 829016, (work) 01705 693611 ext 1364. E-mail: iwa.solent.arun@dial.pipex.com

BCN Marathon Challenge Cruise

The IWA's 1997 BCN Marathon Challenge will take place over the weekend of 28th & 29th June 1997. Helen Davey, one of the event organisers, said, "Why not accept our challenge and cruise some of the under used sections of the BCN and the associated Midlands canal network.

Let's prove to everyone that canal enthusiasts from all over the country, regardless of the size of craft, are still prepared to "Cruise 'em or lose 'em!" All types of boats from narrow boat to canoe are welcome to take part.

Details by sending SAE to Helen Davey, 5 Heathfield Close, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9PS. Tel: 01730 814670.

SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

Enamel Society Members Badges	75p	Waterway Jigsaws (192 pieces 10" x 13 ³ / ₄ ")	£3.50
Embossed Ball Point Pens	50p	Notelets, with line drawings (by Brian Evans) of canal and Romsey scenes	£1.00
GEOprojects Maps		Screen Printed Tee Shirts	£6.50
Basingstoke Canal	£3.00	with Society logo across chest	
Oxford Canal	£3.75	in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large	
Kennet & Avon Canal	£3.75	in Red - medium	
Grand Union Canal (each)	£3.75		
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford		Embroidered Sweat Shirts	£15.00
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley		with Society logo on breast	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames		in Navy Blue - large	
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash		in Royal Blue - medium and large	
The Thames Map	£3.75		
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75	Cotton Shopper Bags	£2.25
The Broads	£3.75	with screen-printed Society logo each side	
Birmingham Canal Navigations	£3.75	Colourful Tea Towels	£2.50
Shropshire Union Canal	£3.75	Decorated Mugs	£2.25
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals	£3.75	Decorated Trays (two sizes)	£1.00 & £2.95

It's the Recycling Sale!

Recycle your unwanted boating, caravanning and camping items, and help the Basingstoke Canal recycle its precious water supply. The Henley Boat Jumble and Caravan Clutter is the opportunity for individuals, boat clubs, canal societies, etc to raise cash for themselves and benefit a waterways cause at the same time. The event is for used items only; there will be no new goods on sale, but the hunt will be on for the largest or unlikeliest item. So turn out those club houses, garages and lofts!

The sale will be held in conjunction with the National Waterways Festival at Henley, River Thames and will take place on Sunday 24 August, from 9am to 1pm (setting up from 7am), with free public car parking and free admission to the sale. There will be no shortage of potential customers as the overall figure for the number of boats, caravans and tents on site is expected to be in the region of 1000. The sale is being organised by the IWA Guildford and Reading Branch and profits from pitch rentals will be donated to the Basingstoke Canal Back-Pumping Appeal.

Pitches will be available in various sizes. For details send SAE to: IWA, 47 Manor Way, Guildford GU2 5RP, or telephone 01483 564076. Don't be left out of this. Let your clearout raise money for you and the waterways too.

IWA Reading & Guildford Branch press release

Water Gardens at Longstock Park

The Society has received a letter from Roy Stubbs, Chairman of Southampton's Hospital Broadcasting Association:

The Water Gardens at Longstock Park are opened to the public on 12 Sundays in each year. They are owned by the John Lewis Partnership Trust and all entrance fees are donated to a local charity.

Southampton Hospital Radio are fortunate to be the beneficiary of the entrance fees on Sunday 18th May 1997. It is therefore my objective to "spread the word" and persuade as many visitors as possible to attend that day.

The adjacent Nursery has over 2000 varieties of plants, propagated within the Longstock Park grounds, as well as plants from the Water Gardens.

The Gardens lie 2 miles north of Stockbridge on the west side of the River Test. They will be open from 2pm to 5pm when admission will be £2.00 for adults and 50p for children. Tickets will be available at the car park.

House of Commons Debate

(Continued from page 1)

Additional funding of £1.23 million had also been recently announced for capital repairs in 1996/7 and a further £3.2 million over 4 years has been announced only three days previously, in addition to an extra £2.8 million already announced for the Caledonian Canal. An extra £600,000 has also been made available for the Environment Agency's navigation responsibilities.

IWA Press Release 24 March 1997

Your editor has a copy of the report of the debate in Hansard which members may borrow if interested.

BW Licence Increases

Following representations from the IWA concerning boat licence increases, British Waterways Chief Executive has given the IWA commitments to use all additional revenue for extra physical repairs and maintenance to the navigation channels and structures and also to reconsider the increases already announced for 1998 and 1999.

The promises are set out in a letter to Audrey Smith from David Fletcher, BW's Chief Executive. Dr Fletcher sets out the urgent need for greater spending to reduce the backlog of maintenance and says that "the (licence) price increases are the manifestation of one small part of our determination to get our precious waterways properly funded."

Dr Fletcher says, "I can also confirm that (BW) plan to spend 10% more than this year to reduce the backlog of repairs to dangerous and seriously dilapidated assets of cruising waterways. In respect of Remainder waterways (BW) intend to triple the rate of spend."

However, Audrey Smith had earlier made the point that "the waterways must be seen to be affordable to, and used by, a wide spectrum of the community" in order to maximise funding. In his reply, Dr Fletcher adds, "I confirm (BW) will seriously consider whether the increases announced for 1998 and 1999 can in some way be moderated."

Audrey Smith welcomed David Fletcher's letter and said, "The IWA knows how desperately short of funds BW are and recognises that, at last, efforts are now being made to channel a greater proportion of BW's budget into repairing the waterways and cutting out unnecessary office bound activities. We also understand that as well as expecting more money from Government, all users must pay their fair share - however we must not price boaters off the waterways. David Fletcher's dual commitments are positive steps forward."

IWA press release 17 March 1997

River Arun Sponsored Cruise

Alan White has asked that members be reminded that this event will be taking place on Sunday 18th May.

The cruise is suitable for craft up to about 15 feet which may be launched and hauled out at the launch site at the former Waters Edge Hotel, Pulborough or at the public slipway at Swan Bridge. (Both slipways are steep.) Departure from Pulborough will be at 11.00am returning by 15.30.

The cruise route is upstream to the footbridge crossing the river at Pallingham. The total return distance is 6¾ miles. While there is a legal right to navigate the river at least as far as the footbridge, there are no public access points north of Pulborough.

For the purposes and duration of the cruise we have secured permission to land on the east bank near to the footbridge.

Further details, entry and sponsorship form from Alan White, Wheelhouse, Pottery Lane Nutbourne, Chichester, PO18 8RW. Tel: 01243 573765.