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## NEWSLETTER No 279 AUGUST 1994

**MEETINGS**  
 1st Thursday each Month at 7.45pm  
 St John's Ambulance Hall, Kings Park  
 Road. Southampton.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**4th August 1994**

Members Slides.

**1st September 1994**

Small Steam Launches on Canals and  
 Rivers by Dr Roger Calvert.

**6th October 1994**

The Publication of Canal &  
 Riverboat Magazine by Norman  
 Alborough.

**3rd November 1994**

Our Waterways Heritage by Mrs  
 Frances Hart, Chief Executive IWA

**1st December 1994**

American Supper and a Christmas  
 Toast the Production of Champagne.

**5th January 1995**

The Kennet & Avon Canal and its  
 Appeal by Terry Kemp.

**2nd February 1995**

The Grand Union Canal 1793-1993  
 &  
 Today's Engineering by Chris  
 Mitchell.

**2nd March 1995**

Early Inland Navigation in  
 Hampshire by Peter Boyce.

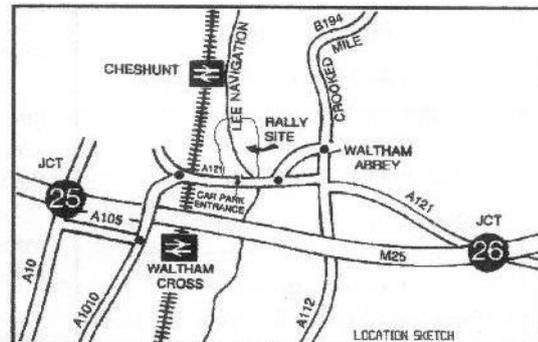
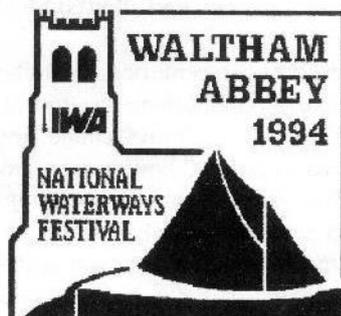
**6th April 1995**

History of Postcards featuring  
 Hampshire & Canals by John Silman.

**4th May 1995**

The History of Waterways and  
 Gloucester Docks by Tony Conder.

**JULY MEETING** David Meek presented an excellent set of slides on steam rail power in southern England, this was not limited to main line steam services but ventured far and wide. Many photos were taken on pre-Beeching closure branch lines and private sidings belonging to quarries, docks and local gas works, showing some well looked after small steam engines performing vital services to keep industry running. Although most of the slides were in black and white they showed a lot of detail of steam engines and local history, which in some areas has almost changed beyond recognition, remember telephone poles!



## Returns to the Lee & Stort Navigation on 27-28-29 August 1994

### TRAVEL INFORMATION

The only long-distance approach to the Rally Site which is recommended (unless you are travelling North or South on the A10) is the dreaded M25 Both exits 25 and 26 will bring you to the area, and as far as towing is concerned, exit 25 will provide you with an easier route, and this should be signed by the AA, the stretch between Junctions 27 & 25 anti-clockwise can be very busy.

Many roadwork's will be lifted over the Bank Holiday weekend but some may still be in operation. These are on the M25 between the M4 and M40; on the M1 northbound at Scratchwood Services; on the M1 between junctions 8 & 7 and on the A10) approaching Waltham Cross,

Travel Information can be heard on many Radio Stations operating In London.

### The Lee Valley Leisure Park - a river valley renaissance

Two centuries ago Izaak Walton in his; "Complete Angler" described the River Lee as his "lovely river" .

But the Industrial Revolution and the rapid expansion of London in the 18th and 19th Century brought radical changes: the river was canalised, industrial development spread along its banks with water, sewage, gas, railway and later electricity services finding sites in the valley and an easy passage into London. The gravel deposits were exploited and that once beautiful valley quickly degenerated into a forlorn and derelict place.

Here, this August Bank Holiday weekend, the National Waterways Festival presented by the Inland Waterways Association is a far cry from the scene typical of the Lee as recently as only a quarter of a century ago. It brings with it the return of the flavour of canal life, its characters, its crafts and the colourful boats typical of the working boats which were so much a part of Britain's commercial waterways.

Nowadays, the Lee has become a peaceful backwater for pleasure cruising; before the second world war attention was first drawn to the possibility of rescuing the Lee Valley from its years of neglect and of creating there a great "playground" for Londoners. The War intervened, but in 1944 Sir Patrick Abercrombie in his Greater London Plan revived the idea when he suggested that "the valley gives the opportunity for a great piece of constructive, preservative and regenerative planning every piece of open land should be welded into a great regional reservation".

With the years of post-war austerity, it wasn't until 1967 that the Lee Valley Park was formally constituted by Parliament as Britain's first regional park. Today, the Lee Valley Park covers an area of 10,000 acres of the Lee Valley from Bromley-by-Bow in London's East End to Ware in Hertfordshire, a distance of some 23 miles forming a unique mosaic of leisure and recreational facilities: there is no other area of comparable size so close to London that has been set aside for leisure and recreational use.

If the 1980's will be remembered as the decade in which Britain rediscovered its docklands and waterside development creating wide public interest, then the Lee Valley Park is surely a forerunner of such schemes. Here, a river renaissance is in progress and a river valley which once served man's needs as a busy, industrial route is once again serving his newest need for recreation and leisure.

*Chris Stringer, Publicity Manager. Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. IWA Waterways April 1989.*

**Subscriptions are now due**

Single Membership £5.50

Family Membership £ 8.00

**Southampton Canal Society Sales**

Embossed Ball Point Pens 50p

Fibre Tip Pens 75p

GEO projects Maps

Basingstoke Canal £2.50

Oxford Canal £ 3.75

Kennet &amp; Avon Canal £ 3.25

Screen Printed Tee Shirts £6.50

in Navy - large &amp; extra large

in red - medium

Embroidered Sweat Shirts about £15.00

in Navy - medium

in Bright Royal - medium

**Wednesday 24th August 1994**

Swan Centre, Eastleigh. 10 am - 4 pm

Ray Brooks will be giving a

Demo of Traditional Canal Painting to

advertise an autumn evening course at

Toynbee School, Chandlers Ford

**Southampton Canal Society Library**

Please return any books to

Sue Lewis at meetings for the benefit of  
all members**British Canal Walks**Self-guided linear walking holidays  
using the towpaths of our 200 year old

Canals, activity with tranquillity.

Interested ?

**Towpath Treks**

15 Penrith Way, Aylesbury, Bucks

HP21 7JZ. Tel 0296 395566

**Anderton lift**

BW have made a submission to English Heritage for the full restoration of the Lift and an application for a grant. It is also proposed that in the short-term remedial work should be carried out to prevent further deterioration of the structure.

The formation of a Trust to carry out the restoration of at lift and, possibly, its future operation is now being considered by membership of the Steering Group.

**WATERWAYS BY WINTER MOONLIGHT** Immortalised in Wedgwoods fine bone china and available from The Bradford Exchange, Units 1 & 2 Boothern Old Road, Stoke on Trent Staffordshire, ST4 4RX, at £19.90 each.

Plate 1 Between the Locks Bradex 26-W90-53.1

Plate 2 By the Wharf Bradex 26-W90-53.2

Plate 3 Under the Lift Bridge Bradex 26-W90-53.3

Josiah Wedgwood was one of the businessmen who sponsored the expansion of the waterways in the mid-eighteenth century. The Trent & Mersey Canal brought raw clay to his factory at Burslem, and allowed him to transport his finished goods to the great seaports.

Over the past two centuries, the architecture of our canals and locks has remained largely unchanged. But there has undoubtedly been a transformation in their use. Once serving as thriving highways, connecting the great cities of the Industrial Revolution, they now act as tranquil havens away from the hustle and bustle of modern life.

Alan Firth specialises in the painting of historical canal scenes which are carefully researched and finely detailed. As one of Britain's top waterways artists, his work is regularly exhibited at the National Waterways Rallies and Museums.

*"Probably nowhere else in Britain has there been less change in scenery than on the inland waterways. 'Between the Locks' could as easily have been a scene drawn in 1793 or 1893, as in this century. It is that timelessness of the waterways I love, and hope I capture in my work.*

*Ever since my childhood, I have travelled the canals. I can still remember the last days of the commercial narrowboat trade. It is a world I have always loved, and I will always continue to do so. "* Alan Firth.

**Guided Walks along London's Waterways -1994**

The walks by the Inland Waterways Association in partnership with London Walks have proved very successful. The IWA guides continue to lead the walks and donate their 'takings' to IWA funds. The cost is £4.00 (£3.00 concessions) and each walk lasts about two hours.

The walks start at 2.30 PM from the Underground Station listed except Boxing Day.

Date	Walk	Underground Station
Sun 4 Sept	New River: Manor House - Highbury	Manor House
Sun 18 Sept	Regent's Canal: Paddington - Camden	Warwick Avenue
Sun 2 Oct	New River: Highbury - Islington	Highbury & Islington
Sun 16 Oct	Regent's Canal: Camden - Islington	Camden Town
Sun 6 Nov	Regent's Canal: Islington - Mile End	Angel
Sun 20 Nov	Regent's Canal: Mile End - Limehouse	Mile End
Sun 4 Dec	Regent's Canal: Paddington - Camden	Warwick Avenue
Sun 18 Dec	Regent's Canal: Camden - Islington	Camden Town
Boxing Day	at 11.00am	
Sun 26 Dec	Waterways in Islington	Kings Cross by taxi rank

**SHANNON-ERNE WATERWAY** (ex. Ballinamore & Ballyconnell Canal) was declared officially open on 23 May: Linking the waterway network of Ireland with that of Ulster for the first time in over 100 years.

Cross-border co-operation was emphasised in the joint ceremony performed by Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and Ireland's Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) Dick Spring.

The initial tape cutting and unveiling ceremony was at Corraquill Lock; the first closest to the North, with the border actually running along the byewash. This high-security start -only open to certain guests and the press - was followed by a VIP cruise into Ballyconnell, with bands playing and crowds cheering; including crews of boats from the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland - and our own IWA Chairman David Stevenson.

**BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON CANAL** has been officially reopened by Bernard Henderson, Chairman of British Waterways. The 14 1/2 mile long canal was opened at Bridgewater docks with the unveiling of a plaque on 4 June following the arrival of a flotilla of craft in the docks - the first for over 40 years.

Twenty years of restoration commenced with campaigning by the IWA - for which our local branch received due credit in the speeches. The partnership between Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and British Waterways saw the scheme through.