

Southampton Canal Society

Newsletter

Issue 348

February 2001

GATE PADDLES

When a boat sunk in Gargrave Lock in 1998, four people trapped on board drowned. Although not a cause of the accident, events were speeded up by the incorrect use of a gate paddle. It was briefly opened whilst the lock water level was low, sending water cascading into the boat.

As a result, the use of gate paddles was one of the many matters investigated after the accident. Where gate paddles had been causing particular concern these were locked off. Trials have also been carried out into the use of flow deflectors or baffles, which direct the jet of water away from the boat.

Successful trials have been carried out on the Leeds & Liverpool and the Grand Union at Buckby. Signs have also been fixed to balance beams reminding users of the correct operating sequence. The

importance of correct gate paddle operation will also be brought out in the Boaters Information Project.

Since the initial actions, a survey of all wide locks with gate paddles has taken place. From this information a risk matrix has been produced which indicates the level of risk from the use of gate paddles, determining whether any action is needed to reduce the likelihood of an accident occurring and its priority.

The surveys are now nearly complete and the results will be discussed with staff and users.

It is hoped in the future to develop a mechanical device that will prevent gate paddles from opening until the water level in the lock has reached a certain height thus reducing the risk of inundation.

BW Monthly, December 2000

BATTY BW?

Thanks to Tony Coles for spotting the following snippet in the Mail on Sunday of 21st January.

GO-GO British Waterways may have shrugged off its old bureaucratic image, but it is not allowing its new-found commercialism to hamper its love of nature.

True, a BW executive is these days more likely to be found hanging out with millionaire yacht owners than supping real ale and spotting rare narrowboats.

But its Dr Doolittle streak is intact. The organisation has taken to lining its tunnels with bricks specially made to allow bats to nest in safety.

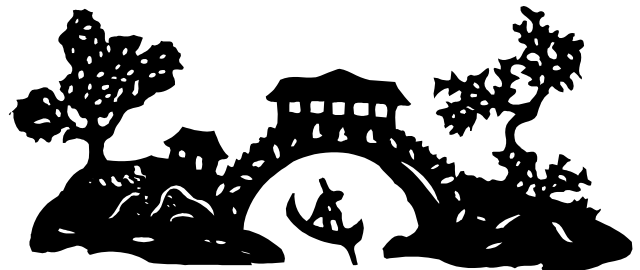
That's a big boost for two fragile species - the bats themselves and Britain's bat-brick industry.

LE CANAL DE SUEZ

This is the title of a beautiful book recently presented to the Society library by Gerald Davies. It was published in 1950 and, although written in French, there is a lot to interest the English enthusiast. For those with a smattering of the language there is even more.

The book contains maps, traffic and tonnage charts and many photos. Some of the pages present before and after pictures which emphasise the development that the canal brought with it.

Many thanks, Gerald.



FUTURE MEETINGS

We tried to book the May meeting at our new venue for the first Thursday in the month (3rd).

Unfortunately we have since had this turned down because Chilworth Parish Hall is to be used as a polling station in the forthcoming local elections. There is also the prospect of a General Election in the offing ... The hall is also booked on the second Thursday of May. In order not to miss our unbroken record of a meeting every month since 1967, your committee is likely to arrange the meeting on Tuesday 1st May.

Day-Star Theatre have indicated that they would like to visit us again this year - the exact date is still to be arranged.

The invitation to members to suggest topics / speakers for future meetings is still open. So come on, let Peter Oates (or any Committee member) know what you would like to see and hear.

December Meeting

At the December meeting, Southampton Canal Society once again hosted the Inter Society Quiz at the St Johns Ambulance Hall. This year there were four teams taking part: IWA Solent & Arun Branch, IWA Avon & Wilts Branch, IWA Salisbury Group and Southampton Canal Society.

The quizmaster was Peter Oates and once again he had put together a collection of slides and questions that not only tested the knowledge of the team members but also kept the audience alert and interested.

The teams seemed to be very evenly matched throughout the whole competition there remained but few points between first and last, which added excitement to the proceedings.

For the interval Peter had set a number of questions based on large air photographs supplied by Jon Sims. First the teams examined the photos and wrote down their answers, then members of the audience were invited to 'have a go'. Everyone then partook of the ample American Supper. Teams and audience returned to their seats for the final few questions.

After a very close competition, Salisbury Group were triumphant with the top score of 56½ points. This

meant that the trophy would be passing into IWA South West Region for the first time.

Following on were IWA Solent & Arun Branch with 54 points, Southampton Canal Society with 51½, and IWA Avon & Wilts Branch with 45½ points.

The individual prize among the audience for answering the Air Photo quiz was won by Brian Evans with 19 out of 25 points.

Our thanks to Peter for an exciting quiz and interesting evening and to Laura for keeping the scores.

Brian Evans

Editor's notes:

With an individual score like that, I hope we'll see you on the team next time, Brian!

Thanks must also be given to all those who contributed food and effort to yet another successful American Supper.

I had also hoped to bring you in this issue a report of our January meeting, the last in St Johns Ambulance Hall. However, a hiccup on the organisational front means that it has had to be held over until next month.

January Newsletter

As a result of the difficulties posed by the Christmas / New Year period, including several days frozen in on the Oxford Canal near Napton and a late return to work, the editor was unable to produce a January issue of the Society Newsletter. However, a promise was made in the December Newsletter that a map and directions to our new monthly meeting place would be available to enable you all to get to the next meeting. So these were included with a "Stop Press" letter which also gave an opportunity to pass on several items of news. Just for the record and to refresh members' memories, part of this is reproduced below.

Brian Evans

Our chairman has been suffering from ill health for the last few months. On the Wednesday before Christmas, Brian had a serious operation on an aneurysm (a swollen blood vessel) which was life threatening. As a result Brian spent Christmas in Southampton General Hospital, although he was home for the New Year. Brian is now on the mend but his convalescence is likely to take some weeks. I am sure that all members will join with me in wishing him well in his recovery from the ordeal.

Joyce Mayhew

Whilst getting ready to come to the January meeting to serve us our teas and coffees, Joyce fell in her kitchen and broke her arm in two places. I understand that the bones returned to the correct position on their own accord and Joyce was spared the need for traction etc. I also understand that she's raring to go to the February meeting. Hope you have a speedy recovery, Joyce, and we all look forward to seeing you in a few weeks.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

to all those who signed and sent messages in the enormous get-well card from the January meeting.

Also many thanks to members who have sent cards and letters since the meeting and circulation of the "Stop Press" letter. It was very cheering (and

sometimes painful - before the stitches were out) when amusing cards arrived.

Thank you all for taking the trouble to help keep me in touch with the outside world.

Brian Evans

WATERWAYS DIARY

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton.

Hopefully you can find something to interest you. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then contact the editor.

Date	Organisers	Details of Event	Contact
Thu 01/02/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Bullion Run, 1825" followed by the progress of restoration on the Wey & Arun Canal - an illustrated talk by Tony Pratt of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Thu 15/02/01 7.30pm	IWA Avon & Wilts Branch	Talk about the Grand Western Canal by Tony Rymell (Chairman of the Grand Western Canal Trust). Riverside Pub, Saltford Marina, Saltford, Bristol.	Bob Kelley: 0117 9744221
Thu 01/03/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Speaker from the 'Friends of Raymond' talking about the restoration of this wooden narrow boat. NB venue for this meeting yet to be arranged.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Thu 05/04/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	'Last of the Narrowboat Families' - a talk by Terry Putnam about narrow boat carrying in the late sixties on the Grand Union	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Thu 07/06/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	'The Waterways Trust' - a talk by Roger Hanbury on the Trust, the new charitable organisation which is having a big effect upon the canal system.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
4th Thursday of month	Wey & Arun CT	Interesting but not too arduous walks in Sussex come rain or shine. Lunch at well chosen establishment en route or at end. Donation to WACT appreciated.	Don Gibson: 01903 201375
All year	Wey & Arun CT	Cruises on n/b <i>Zachariah Keppel</i> on the restored canal at Loxwood.	John Lisk: 01493 752403.
All year	Chichester CS	Cruises on n/b <i>Egremont</i> on Chichester Canal.	Bookings: 01243 670786

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU

In the December issue of BW Monthly, the following article appeared about a rare disease that can affect those coming into contact with canal water. Whilst aimed at BW's workers, boaters may also be exposed and should be aware of the very slight danger. But don't let it ruin your enjoyment of canals.

Leptospirosis, or Weil's disease, is very rare. But people do become infected and awareness of the disease could save your life. It probably saved Andrew Matthewman's life, a bridge inspector in Technical Services. Here is his story.

On the afternoon of Friday 19 November last year, Andrew started to feel unwell. He began to develop severe flu-like symptoms (high fever, shivering, sweating, confusion, stomach ache, general aches and pains) and went straight to bed. Overnight his condition got worse and he became delirious. He has no recollection of the next 48 hours.

By Monday lunchtime he had developed chronic diar-

rhoea and managed to get an emergency appointment with his doctor.

Andrew suspected that he may have leptospirosis and told his GP that his work brought him into contact with canal water and showed the doctor his medical advice card. Andrew's doctor admitted that he knew nothing about leptospirosis. He took blood and urine samples and gave Andrew a prescription.

Luckily for Andrew, his doctor rang a consultant at Sheffield Hospital's infectious disease unit. The consultant recognised that Andrew had the classic symptoms of leptospirosis. He prescribed different drugs immediately, which Andrew's doctor delivered, and saw Andrew the next morning.

Tests at the hospital revealed a list of abnormalities, the most serious being kidney and liver functions and blood potassium levels.

For the next three weeks Andrew was seriously ill.

(Continued on page 4)

Leptospirosis - the facts

- Animals which catch leptospirosis recover from the infection, but continue to excrete organisms in their urine. Leptospire can survive in moist conditions outside the host animal for many days, even weeks. However, they are readily killed by drying, exposure to detergents, heating to 50°C for five minutes, and only survive a few hours in salt water.
- The bacteria enter the human body through skin abrasions, or through the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Leptospirosis usually starts with an influenza-like illness. Common features are a sudden onset of fever, intense headache, severe pains in calf and back muscles, red eyes and complete exhaustion. Some cases develop abdominal pains with diarrhoea and vomiting or meningitis. Only a few cases develop severe leptospirosis with jaundice and kidney failure.
- Early diagnosis is very important and treatment with antibiotics in the first few days may be helpful in limiting the course of the infection. However, many sufferers recover without specific treatment.
- Over the last decade an average of 54 cases of leptospirosis per year have been diagnosed in England and Wales. This represents about one case per million of the population per year. Between 5% and 10% of patients die.
- Try and avoid direct contact with canal/river water
- Wear protective clothing to reduce contact with water
- Keep any cuts or abrasions covered
- Wash and dry your hands before eating

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.

Meetings:

1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm
Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton

Chairman:

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

Secretary:

Peter Oates, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 5RU. Tel 01794 517614

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Martin Cripps, Paul Herbert, David Townley-Jones

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Society Website:

<http://www.users.waitrose.com/~whitenap/index.htm>

Leptospirosis

(Continued from page 3)

He suffered from bouts of fever/delirium, memory loss, constant lethargy, lack of concentration, confusion and constant pain. He felt that the strong medication prescribed by the hospital was having no effect. He became depressed, had no appetite and lost weight.

Around Christmas 1999 Andrew began to feel better and in the New Year returned to work, although his kidneys and liver did not return to normal functioning until March 2000.

In June 2000 Andrew began to feel unwell again, with all the same symptoms as before, but not to the same intensity. He had developed Post Viral Disorder which means that the infection had returned. A milder form of leptospirosis can occur up to 12 months after the initial infection.

Andrew had to have another month off work. Now just over a year later, he still suffers the odd bout of tiredness, but is generally feeling fine.

CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

GEOProjects Maps:

Inland Waterways of Britain	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations	£3.75
The Broads	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals	£3.75
Grand Union Canal (each).....	£3.75
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford	
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames	
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash	

Kennet & Avon Canal	£3.75
Lee and Stort Navigations.....	£4.75
Leeds and Liverpool Canal	£4.75
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75
Oxford Canal	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal	£3.75
Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal with the River Severn and the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal - Map 1 Preston Brook to Fradley Junction..	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal and River Trent - Map 2 Great Haywood Junction to Cromwell Lock.....	£3.75

Ball Point Pens: Embossed 50p

Burgees: Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side £8.00

Decorated Mugs: £2.25

Notelets: with drawings of canal and Romsey scenes £1.00
(by Brian Evans)

Shopper Bags: Cotton with screen-printed Society logo each side . £2.25

Society Members Badges: Enamel 75p

Sweat Shirts: 30th Anniversary in Light Grey £16.00
with multi-coloured embroidered Society logo on breast

Sweat Shirts: Standard in Navy or Royal Blue £15.00
with Society logo embroidered on breast

Tea Towels: Various colourful designs £2.50 & £3.25

Tee Shirts: Screen printed with Society logo across chest £6.50
in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large; in Red - medium

Visit the Sales Stand at Society meetings and place your orders with Paul Herbert or Ray Brooks - or ring Paul on 023 8026 2365

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

1st February 2001

"Bullion Run, 1825" followed by the progress of restoration on the Wey & Arun Canal - an illustrated talk by Tony Pratt of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust.

1st March 2001

Speaker from the 'Friends of Raymond' talking about the restoration of this wooden narrow boat

5th April 2001

'Last of the Narrowboat Families' - a talk by Terry Putnam about narrowboat carrying in the late 60's on the Grand Union

7th June 2001

'The Waterways Trust' - a talk by Roger Hanbury on the Trust, the new charitable organisation which is having a big effect upon the canal system.