



# Newsletter

## Chairman's Column

### February Meeting

This evening we offer a warm welcome to Roger and Sandra Downton with their recreation of Operation Frankton, the wartime mission we all know as "The Cockleshell Heroes"

### March Meeting

As a special treat at our March 3<sup>rd</sup> get-together, Tim Coghlan will be telling us about "Sonia Rolt and other Idle Women". Some members may recall Tim's in depth and widely acclaimed article on Sonia Rolt in the Spring 2015 edition of IWA's Waterways magazine. Hopefully, you will all come along to hear more about this fascinating episode in our waterways history. Visitors and IWA members are warmly welcomed.

### April Meeting

On 7<sup>th</sup> April, we will hear about "Flying Boats of Southampton" with Colin van Geffen. I am looking forward to this, as this talk was recommended to me by Rob Unsworth.

### New Year Lunch

Our New Year Lunch at Keats Restaurant in Ampfield was another great success. Excellent food and jolly good company. Thank you to Paul Herbert for the pictures on page 3.

*Alan Rose*

## CRT launch restoration appeal

The Canal & River Trust has launched an appeal to help restore the waterways in the north of England affected by the floods on Boxing Day. And, although water levels have dropped, the stormy weather has been continuing in January.

Whilst it's business as usual on the vast majority of the network, it's clear that the flooding has had a significant impact on the eastern end of the Rochdale Canal, and the adjoining Calder & Hebble Navigation. Impacts were also experienced in central Leeds, where the River Aire flooded, and on the disused northern section of the Lancaster Canal.

Some of the most serious damage included:

- Elland Bridge on the Calder & Hebble Navigation which has suffered serious structural damage. CRT engineers together with Calderdale Council have installed a temporary footbridge 30m long. The Government has confirmed up to £5m in funding to rebuild the listed bridge which will probably not be reopened until December.
- A 15m section of canal bank between Locks 16 and 17 of the Rochdale Canal has breached.
- A landslip has blocked the Rochdale Canal between locks 15 and 16. CRT contractors have dug a channel through the blockage to enable water to flow along the canal.
- The embankment between the Rochdale Canal and River Calder at Charlestown has suffered severe scour damage meaning that water levels have been held low to prevent the canal wall from failing.
- The banks of the River Aire breached in Leeds and inundated the Aire & Calder Navigation. The breach has been temporarily repaired with stone to prevent flooding of the canal.

CRT hope some sections of affected waterway will be reopened in a matter of weeks. However other stretches, where significant engineering works are needed, are likely to be closed for several months.

In addition, the clean-up operation has also swung into action. CRT staff, contractors and volunteers have been busy clearing debris, washing down towpaths and cleaning moorings where access allows.

Despite encouraging progress being made in some places over the past few weeks there is still much to be done to get life back to normal in the waterside communities that have been hardest hit by the Boxing Day floods. That's why CRT have launched an appeal aimed at reopening sections of canal and towpath which are so important to local communities, providing a valuable escape for local people and supporting businesses.

The money will be used to repair canal banks, restore towpaths and clear deposited silt and other rubbish which is preventing people from enjoying their local waterways.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/>

*Tim Coghlan*

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## Bits and Pieces

### Annual subscriptions

The Society year ends on 31 March 2016. Subscriptions for the year 2016-17 fall due from 1 April 2016. Subscription rates are unchanged at £16.00 for a single membership and £27.00 for a joint membership. Some members are so keen to pay their subscription that they pay early. Can I ask you to hold off paying your subscription until the meeting on 7 April? It makes the sums so much easier for me at the following year-end.

*Aelred Derbyshire*

### End of an era

Canal boat painter and signwriter Ron Hough died on 11 December aged 81. He was the last of the master craftsmen who painted the old working boats in the twilight of canal carrying, and who brought that tradition into the new era of canal leisure boating.

Around the age of 16, he began working for canal carrier and boat builder Samuel Barlow in the Braunston yard as a boat building apprentice. But he was soon attracted to the yard's tradition for painting, especially that of its foreman, the legendary Frank Nurser, who took him under his wing, recognising his natural talent. He was buried in Braunston only a short distance from his mentor Frank Nurser and the many working boat men and women whom he knew in his Samuel Barlow days.

## Waterways Events

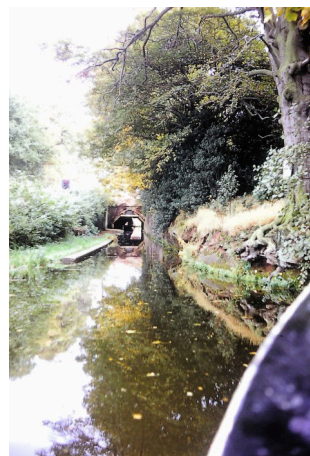
The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the correctness of this information, please check with the listed contact who will be glad to confirm and supply further details.

OS grid references and/or postcodes are shown (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.

Date / Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
<b>Thu 4 Feb 2016 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>"The Cockleshell Heroes" Roger and Sandra Downton's recreation of Operation Frankton - the daring wartime mission. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a></b>
Thu 11 Feb 2016 7.30pm	IWA Avon & Wilts Branch	"Idle Women" by Vince Williams about the women working on the canals in WW2. Avonfield Room, Somerdale Pavilions, Cross Street, Keynsham, BS31 2FW (ST656693).	Geoff Harman: 01179 623812 Email: <a href="mailto:geoff.harman@waterways.org.uk">geoff.harman@waterways.org.uk</a>
Tue 16 Feb 2016 7.45pm	Kenet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	"Canals of Paris" - Jon Willis (of Crofton fame). Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3HD (SU692718). £2.50 (incl K&A members) to help pay for the room hire.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 17 Feb 2016 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	"Barging on North East Waterways" by Nick Grundy who will talk about the waterways of North East England in the mid-1970s when he spent much time exploring them. Nick also did a number of trips as crew on a 300 ton commercial barge carrying cargoes. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk">david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Thu 18 Feb 2016 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"Port To Port" - an historical journey along the length and breadth of the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal with Paul Barnett. He will use information from re-discovered documentary evidence and images from the early 1950s. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR (SU182275).	Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: <a href="mailto:glover.3@btinternet.com">glover.3@btinternet.com</a> Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 18 Feb 2016 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Social Evening. "The History of Clay Pipes" by Marek Lewcun. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). See map at <a href="http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/RWMCmap.gif">http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/RWMCmap.gif</a>	Steve Page: 01761 433418 Email: <a href="mailto:membership@coalcanal.org.uk">membership@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
Sat 20 Feb 2016 11.00am - 3.00pm	Kenet & Avon CT (Crofton Br)	Public Maintenance Open Day. Tour the Engine House, view the winter maintenance in progress and chat to the volunteers involved. Free but donation appreciated. Crofton Pumping Station, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW (SU261622).	Tel: 01672 870300 (not always manned). Web: <a href="http://www.croftonbeamengines.org/index.html">http://www.croftonbeamengines.org/index.html</a>
Sun 21 Feb 2016 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - South Stoke and Twinhoe. Meet at Twinhoe Lane, Midford., BA2 7DG (ST760605) See map at <a href="http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/Midford.gif">www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/Midford.gif</a>	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: <a href="mailto:history@coalcanal.org.uk">history@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
<b>Thu 3 Mar 2016 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>"Sonia Rolt and other Idle Women" with Tim Coghlan. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a></b>
Tue 15 Mar 2016 7.45pm	Kenet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	AGM + speaker TBA. Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3HD (SU692718). £2.50 (incl K&A members) to help pay for room hire.	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 16 Mar 2016 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	"Coals to Croxley (and beyond)" by Ian McKechnie. Ian and friends bought a derelict ex-GUCC Large Northwich motor, and, after fitting it out, decided to load coal delivering it to the paper mill at Croxley. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk">david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Thu 17 Mar 2016 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"The South Pennine Ring" - Roger Squires will talk about this circular canal route in Northern England, 70 miles long with 198 locks. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR (SU182275).	Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: <a href="mailto:glover.3@btinternet.com">glover.3@btinternet.com</a> Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 17 Mar 2016 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Social Evening. "The Restoration of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway." The Radstock Working Mens' Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). See map at <a href="http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/RWMCmap.gif">http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/RWMCmap.gif</a>	Steve Page: 01761 433418 Email: <a href="mailto:membership@coalcanal.org.uk">membership@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
Sun 20 Mar 2016 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - Writhlington and Wellow. Meet at Wellow public car park BA2 8QB (ST738580). See map at <a href="http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/WellowCP.gif">http://www.coalcanal.org/maps/other/WellowCP.gif</a>	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: <a href="mailto:history@coalcanal.org.uk">history@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
<b>Thu 7 Apr 2016 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>"Flying Boats of Southampton" with Colin van Geffen. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a></b>

## Armitage Tunnel



At the December Waterways Quiz, there was a question about the earliest canal tunnel still in use. Armitage Tunnel on the Trent & Mersey Canal was mentioned as it was James Brindley's first tunnel to open in June 1770. Annegret Evans sent your editor the two pictures on the left of the tunnel taken in October 1971 when work had already started to remove the roof as it was seriously affected by coal mining. The picture on the right was taken in



April 1972 when work had been completed and shows the replacement bridge carrying a main road across the canal.

The oldest tunnels navigable now are Dunsley and Cookley Tunnels on the Staffs & Worcs Canal which were reported as open in November 1770.

Thank you Annegret (and Brian).





## January Meeting

### The Members' Photographic Evening

The following list, hopefully, will give you an idea of the range of pictures shown by members.

**Eric Lewis:** A disused railway bridge, on the Erewash Canal, showing its lattice girders and steel structure. Views of a railway in the Norfolk Broads and from a steam boat a gaff cutter. Also we saw Wroxham Bridge, the chain ferry at Reedham and the low bridge at Potter Heigham on the River Thurne.

**Alan Rose:** Glen Coe, Banavie and Neptune's Staircase. The R.Y. Britannia at Leith, the Kelpies & The Angel of the North. At the Royal Northumberland Yacht Club, Blyth, the 1879 built Light Vessel LV50. (the last all-wooden light vessel - her last station was at on Calshot Spit sandbank - RHYC purchased her in 1952).

**Gordon Osborn:** Port of Grimsby, Sea Lock Repair to the Lock Cill. Limpet dam constructed of a steel prefabricated tube and rubber seals. Ventilation needed and pumps to clear the water. Look at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=HduWuXi2ITM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HduWuXi2ITM)

**Janet Gunningham:** Cruising over the years: Hiring from Swan Line in 1978, a Wyvern boat at Watford Locks, 1979. At Fradley Junction showing an open view with no trees. The Black Prince boat *Poseidon* at the Tardebigge flight. (Gordon also hired this boat later on.) Stratford with a Kate boat. Their first boat *Genesis* on the K&A. Cruising on the Chesterfield, Huddersfield Narrow and the Shropshire up to Chester. Some of these views came from Janet's uncle, he used an old pram and 5 gallon cans to collect the fuel. In 2005 Janet and Malcolm moved their mooring to Fenny Compton with a new boat *Amy Grace*.

After the break we viewed the entries for the Photographic competition. A good choice of pictures from: a Bridge on the Oxford Canal. 1805-2005 Red Coats across a Bridge, Mallard Duck on a floating tyre, a Sunset at Calcutt, Basking seals and an attractive Norfolk property. The winner was Janet Gunningham with the above



© Janet Gunningham

picture of the Mallard Duck taken near Somerton Deep Lock on the Oxford Canal.

**David Townley-Jones** finished off the evening enjoying a busy day at the Traditional Boat Rally at Henley on Thames: Showing *Gloriana*, various Amphibious craft, Dunkirk Ships, free trips on the steamer *Alaska* to view the boats. The *MTB 102* built in 1937 and used at Dunkirk. Part refitted at Marchwood and Portsmouth. With lots more to see, it all looked a very good day out.

A very enjoyable evening, thank you to all who helped and to David Doulton for the use of his digital projector, and last, but not least our members and visitors.

Angela Rose

## New Year Celebrations



© Paul Herbert



© Paul Herbert



© Paul Herbert

Three pictures of members enjoying themselves at the Canal Society New Year lunch on 16 January at Keats Restaurant and taken by Paul Herbert. Thanks Paul.



## 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 are normally held on the first Thursday of each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Events) at Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184. Contact the Secretary for further information.

This Newsletter is normally published during the first week of each month in time for the Society's meeting.

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**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonCanalSociety>

## Ham Mill Lock chamber completed

The volunteer led restoration of Ham Mill Lock chamber on the Cotswold Canals is now complete! Over 12,000 volunteer hours have been recorded since work started on the Grade 2 listed structure in November 2014.

A group of over 100 Cotswold Canals Trust volunteers with backgrounds as diverse as electronics engineers, chemists, publishers, plumbers, teachers, lorry drivers and civil servants have become a group of bricklayers, fitters and labourers.

The picture on the left below shows the lock in September 2014 during preparations for restoration whilst on the right is the completed lock in January 2016.

Further pictures of the work here can be viewed at [https://](https://www.flickr.com/photos/98072539@N08/sets/72157636318937023/)

[www.flickr.com/photos/98072539@N08/sets/72157636318937023/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/98072539@N08/sets/72157636318937023/).

Centred on Stroud, a £25 million project led by Stroud District Council commenced in 2010. Known as Phase 1A - Stonehouse to Brimscombe, this has comprised of 6 miles of the most difficult section of the two canals to restore.

It has been funded with £12 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, £7.5 million from the South West Regional Development Agency and contributions from other sources. The Cotswold Canals Trust has committed £800,000 and volunteer effort worth over £1m.

Indeed there is a wealth of pictures and videos on the restoration at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/98072539@N08/> and <https://www.youtube.com/user/CotswoldCanals/videos>.



Talking of videos, the Cotswold Canals Trust published a video on 16 December 2015 about what is hoped will happen after restoration of Phase 1A is completed later this year. Entitled 'The Stroudwater Navigation — Complete and Connected', historian and broadcaster Professor Mark Horton takes us on a walk along a largely derelict section of the Stroudwater Navigation. The four mile stretch between Saul Junction and The Ocean at Stonehouse is the subject of the Cotswold Canals Trust's £15million restoration funding bid submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in November 2015.

An answer to the bid is expected in April. If successful, development work on the next section (known as Phase 1B) would begin immediately, with a target date for the completed link to the national



Cotswold Canals Trust

canal network within six years. The 15 minute video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocmNDtGqVL0>.

In addition, the Trust has just made available, on-line, a slideshow about the Cotswold Canals. This is a thirty-six mile, west to east, end to end photo journey from Saul Junction on the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal to Inglesham where the Thames & Severn Canal joins the River Thames. This may be accessed via this page on the Trust's website at <http://www.cotswoldcanals.com/pages/posts/on-line-end-to-end-photo-journey-824.php>

And of course, the Trust's website as a whole provides yet more information at <http://www.cotswoldcanals.com/>