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**A Navigational Problem****Who is Bigger?**

*The following is an actual radio conversation released by the US Chief of Naval Operations, 10-10-95*

Hail: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

Reply: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to South to avoid a collision.

Hail: This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

Reply: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

Hail: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER ENTERPRISE, WE ARE A LARGE WARSHIP OF THE US NAVY. DIVERT YOUR COURSE NOW!

Reply: This is a lighthouse... Your call.

**Chairman's Column****February 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

Tonight we look forward to hearing Tony Fry's presentation "4000 Locks and Counting". How many years has this taken him and Pauline? They must have started young. It will be an interesting evening.

**March Meeting**

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March St David's Day, Caroline Tilley, Volunteer and Education Presenter will be updating us about The Royal National Life Boat Institution. She will be raising awareness of beach and sea safety and also help to promote fundraising.

**April Meeting**

The meeting on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April will hear Roger Cansdale's talk about "The Heroes & Villains of the Basingstoke Canal." This will be a very intriguing occasion.

**May Meeting**

As always, there will be **NO** May Meeting.

**Boat Gathering**

Just an early reminder of a possible early May bank holiday boat gathering in the Napton –

**Monica Lanigan**

I would like to inform all our members of the sad death of Monica Lanigan on the 6th January. She passed away peacefully at home with her dog Rosie by her side.

Monica and her late husband, Jim, had been long standing members of the society.

Her funeral took place at the Romsey Crematorium on Tuesday 23rd January.

**CRT and People's Postcode Lottery**

CRT are celebrating £1.7 million funding for waterway projects, delighted to have attended the 2018 People's Postcode Lottery annual Charity Gala where it was announced that £93.4 million was awarded to charities and good causes in 2017 – thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery.

The Trust received an incredible £1,717,813 in 2017. The funding is supporting a range of projects including: Community Roots, a project to improve the condition of a number of SSSI sites across the country; restoration work in Birmingham, Marple and Oxford; and the Trust's Heritage Heroes programme in collaboration with Help for Heroes. Chief executive Richard Parry and corporate partnerships manager Wendy Hawk attended the evening to accept the cheque and celebrate the partnership.

Richard Parry, chief executive at CRT, said: "The

Braunston area. If you are interested, please see me.

**Committee Meeting**

Our next Committee Meeting is on the 17<sup>th</sup> February. If you have any questions or suggestions you would like to be brought up please inform any Committee Member tonight or Email or telephone the details on are on the back page of the Newsletter.

**Society Clothing**

Angela will be putting in an order later this month for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sweatshirts and Polo Shirts that have been ordered. If you are interested in ordering one or more items, the details and colours of the garments will be on the table at the meeting

**SCS New Year Luncheon**

21 members enjoyed a very delicious lunch and puds again at Keats Restaurant, Ampfield on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January. There was plenty of chatter and discussions. There is a selection of photos of the event on page 5 of this Newsletter.

Thank you.

Alan Rose

Brenda Pomeroy, Adrianne Howarth and Angela and myself attended at the Crematorium. Also in attendance, that we recognised as an old member and friend of Monica, was Dianne Carter.

There was a thanksgiving service then held at St John the Baptist Church, North Baddesley which was attended by her friend Eva Drinkwater.

Alan Rose

funding from People's Postcode Lottery is delivering some great benefits for our waterways and the communities that care about them. I'm delighted that our partnership continues to grow and I look forward to seeing the results transforming our waterways through 2018 and beyond."

The gala was a celebration of the phenomenal achievements of charities working across Great Britain and internationally that are supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery.

The lottery also took the opportunity to announce an increase to 32% of each ticket sale going directly to good causes. The news of the funding total and increase was shared at the annual event, on Tuesday 23 January, at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/> 26 Jan 2018

## 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	Venue	Contact
Thu 1 Feb 2018 7.45pm	Southampton CS	<b>4000 Locks and Counting</b> - a talk by Tony Fry about his canal cruising experiences (including recent trips on the Erewash and Montgomery canals)	Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>
Mon 5 Feb 2018 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT (Royal Wootton Bassett Branch)	<b>Waterway Recovery Group</b> by George Eycott.	The Angel Hotel, 47 High Street, Wootton Bassett, Wilts, SN4 7AQ (SU068826).	Jenny Stratton: 01793 850310 Email: <a href="mailto:jenny.stratton@wbct.org.uk">jenny.stratton@wbct.org.uk</a>
Thu 8 Feb 2018 7.30pm	IWA Avon & Wilts Br	<b>Australia's Murray River</b> A talk by Rob Dean who has cruised this massive river (1,240 miles long!) with his wife.	The Community Room, Wickhouse Close, Saltford, BS31 3BZ (ST678674).	Geoff Harman: 0117 9623812 Email: <a href="mailto:harman@lampeter99.plus.co.uk">harman@lampeter99.plus.co.uk</a>
Thu 15 Feb 2018 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	<b>Dundas Aqueduct and the Somerset Coal Canal.</b> Tim Wheeldon will give a two part illustrated talk. First a look at the Dundas Aqueduct on the K&A Canal and then the story of the redevelopment of the first quarter mile of the derelict Somerset Coal Canal.	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 15 Feb 2018 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	<b>A Pictorial Journey - continued further</b> by Roger Halse.	Radstock Working Men's Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). For location <a href="#">see map here</a>	Steve Page: 01761 433418 Email: <a href="mailto:membership@coalcanal.org.uk">membership@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
Tue 20 Feb 2018 7.30pm	Cotswold Canals Trust	<b>The Mills of Stroud — After the Textiles Industry</b> by Steve Mills. Stroud was once a thriving centre of the woollen trade. As the textile industry faded, a host of other trades moved into the empty mills. The reasons behind this and some of the major successor industries will be discussed.	Fromebridge Mill, Whitminster, GL2 7PD (SO768072). <a href="http://cotswoldcanals.com/">http://cotswoldcanals.com/</a>	Trust Head Office: 01453 752568 Email: <a href="mailto:mail@cotswoldcanals.com">mail@cotswoldcanals.com</a>
Tue 20 Feb 2018 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	<b>To be announced.</b> Entry donation £2.50 (incl K&A members) – to help pay for the meeting.	Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3HD (SU692718).	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 21 Feb 2018 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	<b>"Exploring the Caledonian Canal"</b> with Dr Roger Squires who will discuss Telford's masterpiece. A ship canal across Scotland using the natural fault line of the Great Glen and its series of fresh water lochs.	Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, GU24 8AZ (SU974615)	Malcolm Brickwood: 07437 200021 Email: <a href="mailto:chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk">chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Thu 1 Mar 2018 7.45pm	Southampton CS	<b>The Royal National Lifeboat Institution.</b> Caroline Tilley will talk about RNLI, the charity which rescues 24 people a day.	Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>
Thu 15 Mar 2018 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	<b>"Braunston &amp; Stoke Bruerne – from Waterway Transport to Leisure use Today."</b> John Pomfret looks at transport history in these villages and then takes us through the rise and fall of freight canal traffic to the recent leisure developments.	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 15 Mar 2018 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	<b>The Bristol Junction Canal</b> by Stuart Fisher.	Radstock Working Men's Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR (ST688547). For location <a href="#">see map here</a>	Steve Page: 01761 433418 Email: <a href="mailto:membership@coalcanal.org.uk">membership@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
Tue 20 Mar 2018 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	<b>Branch AGM.</b> Entry donation £2.50 (incl K&A members) – to help pay for the meeting.	Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3HD (SU692718).	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 21 Mar 2018	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	<b>Branch Annual Lunch.</b>	Butt Inn, Station Rd, Aldermaston, Reading RG7 4LA (SU600669).	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 21 Mar 2018 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	<b>"Whitchurch Silk Mill."</b> Join Deborah Wheeler for a virtual tour of a Georgian silk weaving water mill, see, hear and feel it's fascinating history and beautiful fabrics.	Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, GU24 8AZ (SU974615)	Malcolm Brickwood: 07437 200021 Email: <a href="mailto:chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk">chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Sat-Mon 31-2 Mar-Apr 2018 10.30am-4.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT, Crofton Branch	<b>Easter weekend steaming.</b> Adults: £8.00 Concessions: £7.00 Children under 16: Free.	Crofton Beam Engines, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW (SU261623).	Web: <a href="http://www.croftonbeamengines.org">www.croftonbeamengines.org</a>
Thu 5 Apr 2018 7.45pm	Southampton CS	<b>The Heroes &amp; Villains of The Basingstoke Canal.</b> This canal largely owes its existence to a few people at critical points in its history. Some of their actions were soundly commercial or altruistic and some fraudulent and criminal. Roger Cansdale tells about these heroes and villains.	Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>

## January Meeting

### Waterways Photographic Evening and Competition

The following list, hopefully, will give you an idea of the pictures shown by our members. Twenty-two members attended, including four visitors.

David Doulton: Inter-Rail in October visiting Venice, Prague, Dresden, The Rhine and Frankfurt. Very interesting pictures.

Gordon Osborn: Easter on the Oxford Canal; Little Bourton lift bridge; and a summer cruise through Barrow upon Soar, Shardlow Museum and along the Trent & Mersey and Erewash Canals.

Janet & Malcolm Gunningham joined in with 19 like-minded boaters and explored the BCN for one week cruising the Wyrley & Essington, Horseley Fields, Pelsall, Chasewater, Rushall Locks and a visit to Bradley where locks gates are still being build. Very interesting.

Alan Rose: Views of Redbridge, the Anchor Inn, Flying Scotsman. The Old Lace Mills on the Erewash Canal. Going under the M6, Gravelly Hill complex better known as "Spaghetti Junction" with the sound of his Lister Engine. On through Leicester showing the remarkable graffiti on some of the buildings. Stopping at Foxton Locks for their Vintage

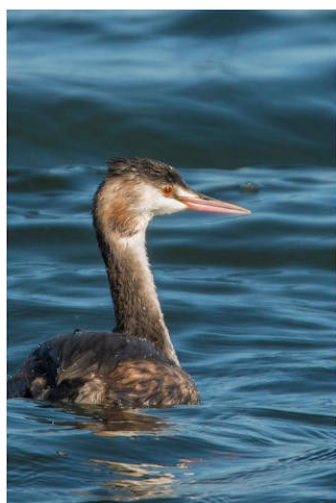
Festival with steam and traction engines, boats and people. A Wurlitzer Organ playing was good to see and listen too.

Tony & Pauline Fry showed the Manchester Ship Canal in 2008 – cruising to Liverpool, Salford Quays, Trafford Park and Barton Swing Bridge built in 1894. Views of Weston Point which is at the beginning of the Weaver Navigation on the MSC and built in 1841 were interesting.

After the break we viewed the entries for the Photographic competition. A good "nature" choice of pictures – Duck, Mr Ratty the water vole, a flock of herons, a tree silhouette, a grebe, boats in Europe, a Kingfisher and the working boat "Hadley". The voted winner was the "Kingfisher" by Tony Fry.

To conclude a very enjoyable evening David Doulton's masterpiece a "Murmuring of Starlings" taken over Fishlake Meadows, Romsey at 5pm that evening. Thank you, David, for the use of your digital projector, and last, but not least our members and visitors.

*Angela Rose*



Left: The winner: Tony Fry's "Kingfisher"

Runners-up clockwise from top left:

Alan Rose

David Doulton

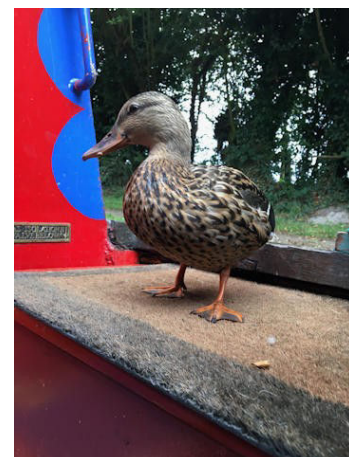
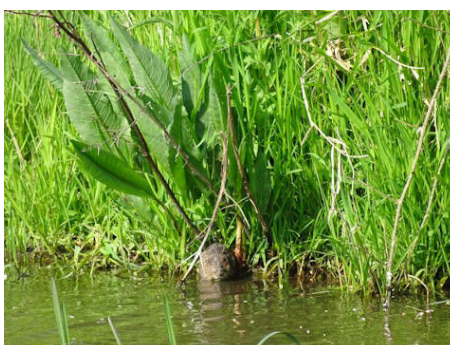
Pauline Fry

Angela Rose

Janet Gunningham

Gordon Osborn

Eric Lewis.



## Memories - The Chairman, Secretary and their boats



To mark the Southampton Canal Society's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Annemarie Evans, daughter of our President and a journalist/broadcaster based in Hong Kong, has been chatting to some members but would like to talk to more. If you'd like to share some memories and anecdotes, please email Annemarie at: [hkhradio3@gmail.com](mailto:hkhradio3@gmail.com) and she'll give you a phone call.

Society chairman Alan Rose's interest in canals started off early in life – not so much the boats on the canals, but what was swimming in them. "I used to go and fish for sticklebacks in The Feeder in Neasden, London. The Feeder ran from the Welsh Harp, which is the Grand Union Feeder Reservoir," he says. "The Feeder ran along the back of my



Above: Alan and Angela with Purton in dry dock at Braunston.

Right (top to bottom):

Purton in her carrying days

Purton at last year's IWA Festival of Water  
The Rose's second boat Liberty

father's former home in Neasden. I then had my first attempt at sailing on the Welsh Harp [Reservoir] and also launched my first canoe on Boxing Day 1959."

And then he started noticing the bigger craft... "I used to also travel out to Denham on the Grand Union Canal to go fishing. I'd watch the British Waterways boats come flying up to Denham Deep Lock almost hitting the gates. They'd be up off the boats, empty the lock, in, fill and out. It all seemed to only take five minutes!"

Then in 1968, Alan and Angela and two friends hired a Ladyline fibreglass

cruiser from Barbridge Junction on the Middlewich Branch of the Shropshire Union and set off to Llangollen after about "five minutes' instruction".

"Our first major event was just after passing through Hurleston Locks. We got our first ever rope around our prop, which meant I had to go into the cut up to my Plimsoll line."

It was quite an emotional moment for Alan, as he lost one of his flip flops bought earlier in Texas.

"The next mishap was at Wrenbury Lift Bridge where we managed to knock down the windscreen, which meant we then had to visit the hardware shop in Ellesmere to purchase hammer and nails and a screwdriver. Our first renovation job! We have not been back to the Llangollen since."

In 1970, a trip to Macclesfield followed, which was the Rose's first taste of the lengthy lock flight, Heartbreak Hill, on the Trent & Mersey Canal, before they left the canals to go boating on the sea. Twelve years later, "we were given a job to repair a Norman 23 river cruiser that had sunk just before Christmas 1982 in the backwater at Runnymede on the Thames," says Alan. "Before we could start the job the insurance company wrote it off. We were asked whether we would like it, offered them £350 and found ourselves with a boat. After repairing the two holes in the bottom and cleaning out the engine we re-launched it back into the Thames, moved it around to Nicholls boatyard, brought it back to Southampton, refitted it and then thought: What do we do with it now? A friend suggested putting on to the canals."

But after a year, Alan and Angela moved on to bigger, better and decidedly longer things, with the narrow boat, *Liberty*, which was just a boat shell, when they bought her in 1984. They still have *Liberty* at

Napton. She was joined, in 1998, by a shortened Large Northwich working boat called *Purton*, which was originally built in 1936. Alan has been able to track her working history as she's maintained the same name throughout. "She was moored at Sells Green on the Kennet & Avon," says Alan. "We decided to buy her as all she needed was a clean-up and coat of paint. After 19 years we are just finishing the painting!"

*Purton* was built at W M Yarwoods and Son of Northwich in Cheshire for the Grand Union Canal Carrying Company, London. She was one of 38 built at Northwich, primarily for coal carrying from the Warwickshire Coalfields to London, the Dickinson paper mills at Croxley and Apsley, Kearley and Tonges at Southall, otherwise known as the Jam 'Ole,

where there was a jam factory.

"The Grand Union Canal Carrying Company was based at Bull's Bridge in Southall," says Alan, "that was the main dock area. On the way back, they'd pick up fruit for the HP factories, timber, aluminium, steel, munitions later on."

Alan and Angela have met old crew members of *Purton*. "One of them was a young girl on *Purton*, she and her sister lived on *Purton* in the 1950s. We also have met some of *Purton*'s old skippers, though they've passed away now. Gladys Horne was a wonderful old boat lady, who lived in a lock cottage at Berkhamsted, Tom Sibley was also one of her captains, he lived in the lock cottage down from Gladys."

The Roses enjoy using both boats, says Alan, but there is a special connection to a boat that is more than 80



years old and which plied the canals for decades fully laden. After being taken over by British Waterways, *Purton* was shortened from 72 feet to 60, which still is a large boat to handle.

"When she was launched in 1936," says Alan, "they were due for the coronation [of Edward VIII] and a lot of the boats were painted red, white and blue. Then Edward VIII abdicated but they still kept the red white and blue for George VI's coronation."

*Purton* is still painted red, white and blue today and last August took the trophy for the best working boat at the IWA Festival of Water. She may be 60 feet, but most of that would have been for coal, leaving the living space of the cabin for Alan and Angela, but they're a fairly seasoned crew after 51 years of marriage.

Annemarie Evans

## SCS New Year Luncheon

Below is a selection of photographs taken at the Society's New Year Luncheon at Keats Restaurant, Ampfield on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018.



## Waterway Events (continued from page 2)

Date/Time	Organiser	Details	Venue	Contact
Sun 15 Apr 2018 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	<b>Walk - A visit to Paglinch.</b>	Paglinch Farm, Shoscombe Vale, Bath, Avon, BA2 8NQ (ST711557)	Steve Page: 01761 433418 Email: <a href="mailto:membership@coalcanal.org.uk">membership@coalcanal.org.uk</a>
Tue 17 Apr 2018 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	<b>To be announced.</b> Entry donation £2.50 (incl K&A members) – to help pay for the meeting.	Grange Free Church Hall, Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3HD (SU692718).	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@gmail.com">swift.john21@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 07533 886917.
Wed 18 Apr 2018 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	<b>"Canal &amp; River Trust Engineering a 200 Year Old Infrastructure."</b> Neil Owen discusses the way in which CRT are managing their Engineering Assets, including future improvement and the implication on the possible adoption of waterways managed by other Navigation Authorities.	Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, GU24 8AZ (SU974615)	Malcolm Brickwood: 07437 200021 Email: <a href="mailto:chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk">chobham.talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Sat 28 Apr 2018 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	<b>Claverton Pumping Station.</b> Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@claverton.org">enquiries@claverton.org</a> Web: <a href="http://www.claverton.org">www.claverton.org</a>
<b>Thu 3 May 2018</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>NO MAY MEETING. As always, there will be NO May Meeting.</b>		<b>Angela Rose: 02380 675312</b> Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>
Sat-Mon 5-7 May 2018 10.30am-4.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT, Crofton Branch	<b>Early May Bank Holiday steaming.</b> Adults: £8.00 Concessions: £7.00 Children under 16: Free.	Crofton Beam Engines, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW (SU261623).	Web: <a href="http://www.croftonbeamengines.org">www.croftonbeamengines.org</a>
Sat 12 May 2018 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	<b>Claverton Pumping Station.</b> Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@claverton.org">enquiries@claverton.org</a> Web: <a href="http://www.claverton.org">www.claverton.org</a>

## 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 in this issue) 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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Brian Evans.

### Chairman:

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Email: [alanjrose@btinternet.com](mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com)

### Secretary:

Angela Rose, 33 Brackley Way, Totton, Hampshire, SO40 3HP. Tel: 02380 675312.

Email: [alanjrose@btinternet.com](mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com)

### Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

Aelred Derbyshire, 31 Nelson Close, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 7DA. Tel: 01794 651350.

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David Townley-Jones, Sue Derbyshire, Gordon Osborn, Robb Unsworth.

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Email: [scs@sotoncs.org.uk](mailto:scs@sotoncs.org.uk)

**Society Website:** <http://www.sotoncs.org.uk>

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

## Sir Frank Price: 1922 - 2017

A former council leader and Lord Mayor who played a major role in the post-war transformation of Birmingham has died at the age of 95.

Sir Frank Price is perhaps most closely associated with the development of the inner and middle ring roads, the original Bull Ring shopping centre, the expansion of council housing and creation of the Midlands Arts Centre - now mac Birmingham - in Cannon Hill Park.

Born in 1922, he was raised in back-to-back slum houses and rose to become Labour council leader, a property developer and knight of the realm. The politician also oversaw the development of Telford as chairman of the project board and was a long-serving chairman of the British Waterways Board.

He had retired to Spain where he died peacefully at Almeria Hospital on December 30 following a battle with Alzheimer's.

Birmingham City historian Professor Carl Chinn paid tribute to Sir Frank.

He said: "Frank Price came from the back streets of Hockley and he never forgot where he came from or the loyalty that he owed to his own people.

"Elected to the council in 1949, he would become one of the most important figures in post-war Birmingham and was knighted in 1966 when he was Lord Mayor.

"For all this honour and others, he remained true to his roots.

"As a politician, Sir Frank was determined to improve life for the working class of the city - not only through redevelopment but also through provisions for culture and leisure."

Sir Frank was raised by his mother Lucy and three brothers in the notorious back-to-backs of inner-city Birmingham where 11 families shared a single outside tap and a single toilet. He was a keen boxer in his teens and left school at 14.

After a brief spell with the Communist Party, he moved to Labour and was elected councillor for St Paul's ward in 1949 at the age of 27.

In 1958, he moved to Kings Norton ward which he represented until 1974.

He was knighted at the age of 46 during the Wilson government and was later commissioned as a Deputy Lieutenant for Worcestershire.

He left local politics in 1974 and became the longest-serving chairman of any nationalised industry, appointed by Barbara Castle and running the British Waterways Board for 16 years.



His contribution, however, was far greater than simply the length of his service, since he shaped an independent navigation authority - for the first time free from any railway interference - and this came at a time when politicians were unwilling to accept such a move.

His tenure was subject to attack from many quarters, including civil servants and trade unionists, and, when he went out of his way to cultivate a good relationship with waterways campaigners, it was inevitable that he was perceived by bureaucracy as being 'the opposition'. However, the IWA regarded him as an effective ally in the battle to save the waterways.

By the time he retired in 1984, he left British Waterways a far stronger and more confident organisation, after consistently standing up for the future of the inland waterways.

Throughout the 1970s he had to grapple with two conflicting problems: a drastic lack of funding which prevented BWB from even maintaining existing facilities let alone carrying out any restoration work; and a powerful lobby aimed at breaking up the navigation authority and devolving its assets and responsibilities to the newly created regional water authorities.

Sir Frank was particularly upset that the government refused to accept the reports of BWB's own staff in assessing the work to deal with the rapidly deteriorating historic canal structures. Instead, they wasted time by employing consultants, then failing to act on their recommendations, until the point was reached in the late 1970s when the network was decimated by tunnel closures.

He was also deeply committed to the development of freight transport on the canals, and exerted considerable personal energy in meeting with European leaders and British businessmen to promote his ideas. In particular, he created BACAT, a scheme of roll-on, roll-off barges within ships that could cross the North Sea. Sir Frank, a lifetime supporter of Labour, nevertheless met violent opposition from the dockers, who eventually stopped the scheme.

Sir Frank divorced in his 50s and retired to live in Mojacar, south-east Spain, in his late 60s.

He leaves his ex-wife Maisie and only son Noel, who said: "He was a charming, funny, hardworking and generous man, a socialist to his last breath and loved dearly by all.

"I was proud to be his best friend as well as his only child."

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