

Newsletter

January 1999

Issue 327

Review of Easter Floods

IWA has studied the report of Mr Peter Bye, the independent inspector who has examined the actions of the Environment Agency and other authorities in coping with the Easter floods in the Midlands and East Anglia. The Association is concerned at the absence of much comment on the implications of the flooding for navigation, and indeed the apparent confusion in the report between 'house boats' and 'narrow boats'.

The report is critical of some of the Agency's flood defence actions, particularly so in the Northampton area, although it is acknowledged that in some areas the floods were more extreme than the 'once in a hundred years scenario' for which the Agency largely seems to plan. Other authorities also come in for a degree of criticism for lack of co-ordination.

It is understood that the Agency are to consider the introduction of new warnings for boaters on their navigations of flood conditions and of strong streams (currents) which occur at flows which are smaller than flood flows.

Whilst a consistent methodology and implementation of warnings is desired by all users, the limitations caused by difference in lock manning levels between different Agency regions needs to be taken into account. The Agency also need to ensure that other navigation authorities are given timely and accurate information and are encouraged to inform users on their waterways in an equally timely and consistent manner.

Caldon Canal

Water supplies to Rudyard Lake are in danger following the breach in the dam retaining water in the Upper Dane Valley, from which water enters into the feeder into the reservoir.

Heavy rains had swollen the river and the increased flow undermined the cladding on the rear of the dam; the core appears to have been mainly soil. Once the facing stone had been penetrated, it seems the dam 'blew' somewhat spectacularly during the night. There was evidence of debris in trees some 10 feet above water level. Only about 10 feet of the 40 foot wide dam remains in place; the rest has been carried away down to bedrock.

As a result of the dam's failure, no water can enter into Rudyard Lake, which is only otherwise fed by side waters from the surrounding hills. Although the reservoir is overfull at present, the longer term implications are potentially serious and could affect the Caldron and Trent & Mersey Canals. Repairs will be difficult and expensive as the site is remote and only accessible by small four wheel drive vehicles.

The very heavy rain in October caused further flooding and closure of navigations, particularly along the Welsh border including the Rivers Severn and Wye, but to a lesser extent as far east as Essex. Although the Autumn floods brought a good deal of inconvenience and loss to property owners, the water levels were within record limits and the speed of inundation was much less than at Easter.

IWA is making representations to the Agency to express concerns that navigation difficulties were not considered properly in the report and to press the Agency as to how it intends to address the situation.

Nottingham Canal Museum

Following reorganisation within Nottingham City Council and discussions with British Waterways, it has become clear that any plans to re-open the Nottingham Canal Museum or turn it into a waterways visitor centre will not reach fruition. The displays at the museum are being dismantled and exhibits put into store or returned to their owners. The two restored historic Fellow Moreton & Clayton narrow boats owned by the Museum, *Ferret* and *Ilkeston* are to be sold.

Boat Safety Scheme

IWA has expressed concern at the recent increase in charges for Boat Safety Scheme pass certificates and at the introduction of charges for failure certificates. The Association is particularly concerned that the increase in charges were made without consulting user groups and to date no justification has been received. The matter is being taken up at a senior level with both BW and the Environment Agency.

Swansea Canal

A major breach on the Swansea Canal occurred at Pontardawe on Friday 23rd October following very heavy rains in the area. Canal water levels rose, weirs and other outflows were unable to cope and water topped the towing path with resultant pressure on a hillside embankment which gave way to flood 30 houses, a similar number of industrial units and a dozen town centre premises with up to 4 feet of water.

BW have had to divert considerable resources in addressing the resultant problems and assisting those flooded in the clear-up operation. The cost of repairing the canal is estimated by BW to be in the region of £2 million but the further costs of damages to all those affected, nor the final implications for BW is not yet clear.

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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

Secretary:

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

Treasurer & Membership:

Laura Sturrock, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 5RU. Tel 01794 517614

Committee:

Martin Cripps
Paul Herbert
Peter Oates
David Townley-Jones

Newsletter Editor:

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

MEETINGS

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

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

- 7th Jan** "The History of Water Mills and Windmills" by John Silman
- 4th Feb** "The Ups and Downs of Belgian Waterways" - Ron and Myra Glover
- 4th March** Members' Slide Evening
- 1st April** "Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration" with Clem Barnett
- 6th May** Day Star Theatre
- 3rd June** AGM followed by Waterway Videos
- 1st July** Talk by Neil Kearns of the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society
- 5th August** Ray Brooks will be Demonstrating Canal Crafts
- 7th Oct** A visit by Trevor Thornton of Commercial Narrow Boat Operators Association

December Meeting

The last meeting of 1998 was the occasion of our Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz and American Supper.

This year the quiz questions were ably set by Jon Sims. Attempting to provide the answers were teams from IWA Avon & Wilts Branch, IWA Guildford & Reading Branch, IWA Salisbury Group and IWA Solent & Arun Branch as well as our own Society team. The questions were quite varied ranging from the simple to the fiendishly difficult. This provided a chance for all present, audience and teams, to answer at least some of the questions.

The final results were a very close run thing with just one point between each of the first four teams:

IWA Guildford & Reading	65
Southampton Canal Society	64
IWA Salisbury	63
IWA Solent & Arun	62
IWA Avon & Wilts	57

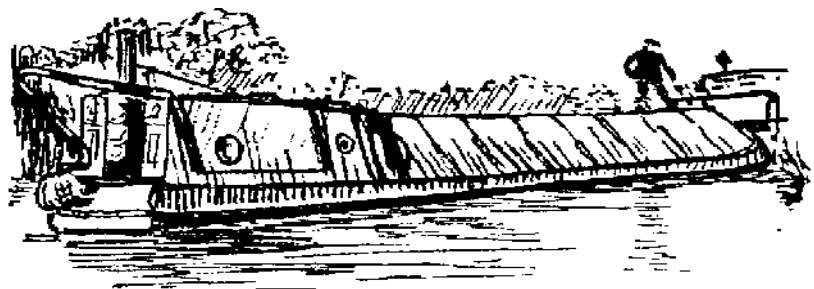
Congratulations to the Guildford and Reading Branch and well done to ALL the teams - nobody was disgraced in this closely fought match. Hopefully, we'll meet again in 12 months time.

Also well done to Jon for setting the questions - not an easy job, especially when there are so many experts around looking for the slightest mistake. Martin Cripps, standing in for the absent Chairman, presented Jon with a book to express our thanks.

As usual, our members did not let us down by providing another wonderful American Supper with a marvellous array of food to be consumed. All in all, an excellent evening.

Dorothy Acaster

It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce that our member, Dorothy Acaster, passed away peacefully in the Countess Mountbatten Home at the beginning of December after a three month illness. She and her husband, Frank, were married for 57 years. Although the Acasters were unable to attend Society meetings recently, they have been members for many years. At this time of sadness, we all offer Frank our sincerest condolences.

**Members' Slides Evening**

Please remember that you will have the opportunity of showing some of your slides at the March meeting. You should put together between 10 and 20 pictures that might be of interest to other members. To help with the organisation, please let Eric Lewis know your intention by the February meeting.

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IWA Meets the Minister

Richard Drake, IWA's new National Chairman, and Neil Edwards, met with Alan Meale, MP, the new Waterways Minister on November 19th along with representatives from the Association of Waterway Cruising Clubs, National Association of Boat Owners, Residential Boat Owners Association and the Royal Yachting Association.

The meeting covered a wide range of topics concerning both British Waterways and Environment Agency waterways but key topics discussed included the future of British Waterways and funding the backlog of repair works for both navigation authorities. Long standing concerns such as navigable culverts for waterways under restoration were also considered, but the Minister blamed the Lichfield & Hatherton BNRR debacle entirely on the previous Conservative Government and insisted that nothing could now be done.

The Minister was at pains to offer assurance that our worst fears of franchising for BW should be discounted and the Government is now considering two options for BW's future - one being the BW 'Trust' idea favoured by BW management and the other being a Public-Private sector partnership which would see some of BW's activities put out to tender with private sector contractors. An announcement on a final decision is promised before Christmas - probably during the week commencing 14th December. This will be followed by a period of consultation.

The previously announced inland waterways 'daughter paper' to the

Government's white paper on Integrated Transport, published in the summer, is not now expected to be made available until the end of February, following which there will be a further round of consultation with all interested parties. The paper is expected to cover a wide range of inland waterways issues, including responses to recent IWAAC recommendations.

The Minister was very positive on future prospects for the carriage of freight on inland and coastal waterways. He indicated that even greater cuts in freight transport by road would be needed in the next 20 years if the Government was to achieve the reductions in pollution

that were now considered the bare minimum to meet the various international agreements that Government had signed up to.

It also emerged during the meeting that there has been widespread opposition to the proposed new controls on water abstraction which were put forward in the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' recent consultation paper. However, the opposition has come from industrial and agricultural lobbies with few inland waterways interests supporting the concerns raised by IWA, although BW has expressed very deep concern.

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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 NEW!	£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
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals.....	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75
Oxford Canal	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal COMING SOMETIME!	£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.

Change of Address

Since 28th September, the address of IWA's Head Office has been:

Inland Waterways Association
P O Box 114
RICKMANSWORTH
WD3 1ZY

Tel: 01923 711114 Fax: 01923 897000

The following have recently changed:

E-Mail: iwa@waterways.org.uk

Web: <http://waterways.org.uk/index.htm>

WATERWAYS DIARY 1999

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton during the first half of this year. 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.

Thu 07/01/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Water mills and Windmills by John Silman. Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

Tue 12/01/99 8:00pm. *Surrey & Hants Canal Society* - Argentina, Patagonia & the Andes by Robin Higgs. Meeting at Westgate Centre, Woking. Contact Arthur Dungate on 0181 737 4896

Sun 17/01/99 10:00am. *Somersetshire Coal Canal Society* - Somersetshire Coal Canal Walk from Camerton to Radford. Meet at Camerton Heritage Centre. Contact Roger Halse on 01249 652846

Thu 21/01/99 7:30pm. *IWA Salisbury Group* - Group AGM followed by slides / talk. Meet at Salisbury Rugby Club. Contact Tony Fry on 01722 710192.

Mon 25/01/99 8:00pm. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - President No.195 by Richard Thomas. Meeting at Byfleet Boat Club. Contact Paul Fisher on 01372 843569

Thu 04/02/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Ups and Downs of Belgian Waterways. Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

Tue 09/02/99 8:00pm. *Surrey & Hants Canal Society* - Direct TV from Alexandra Palace by Arthur Dungate. Meet at Westgate Centre, Woking. Contact Arthur Dungate on 0181 737 4896

Thu 18/02/99 7:30pm. *IWA Avon & Wilts. Branch* - Waterway and Steam videos by Mitchell Videos. Meet at Sabrina, Bristol Docks. Contact Di & David Payne on 0117 987 9456

Mon 22/02/99 8:00pm. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - Waterways Nostalgia by Aileen Butler. Meet at Byfleet Boat Club. Contact Paul Fisher on 01372 843569

Thu 04/03/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Members' Slide Evening. Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

Tue 09/03/99 8:00pm. *Surrey & Hants Canal Society* - Roosting Bats & Waterways by Frank Greenway. Westgate Centre, Woking. Contact Arthur Dungate on 0181 737 4896

Thu 18/03/99 7.30pm. *IWA Salisbury Group* - To be announced. Contact Tony Fry on 01722 710192.

Mon 22/03/99 8:00pm. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - Branch AGM followed by Canal Artefacts by Norman Woolley. Meet at Byfleet Boat Club. Contact Paul Fisher on 01372 843569

Thu 01/04/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration by Clem Barnett.

Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

Mon 19/04/99 8:00pm. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - Supporting rights of inland navigation by Chris Coburn. Meet at Byfleet Boat Club. Contact Paul Fisher on 01372 843569

Sat 01/05/99. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - Backwater Cruise on Old Woking Stream of the River Wey. Boats up to 50ft long. Visit site of Tudor palace. Non-boat owners may be able to hitch a lift. Contact Andy Simmonds on 01483 576176.

Sun 02/05/99. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - St Patrick's Stream Cruise on River Thames. Contact Andy Simmonds on 01483 576176.

Sun 02/05/99. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - "Beyond the Tunnel" walk on Basingstoke Canal. Contact Andy Simmonds on 01483 576176.

Sun 02/05/99. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch / Wey & Arun Canal Trust* - Canoe and Dinghy Paddle at Loxwood, Wey and Arun Canal. Contact Andy Simmonds on 01483 576176.

Mon 03/05/99. *IWA Guildford & Reading Branch* - Towpath Walk from Newbury to Kintbury on Kennet & Avon Canal. Contact Andy Simmonds on 01483 576176.

Thu 06/05/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - Day Star Theatre. Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

Thu 20/05/99 7.30pm. *IWA Salisbury Group* - To be announced. Contact Tony Fry on 01722 710192.

Thu 03/06/99 7:45pm. *Southampton Canal Society* - AGM followed by Waterway Videos. Contact Eric Lewis on 01703 860384

First Wednesday in most months - IWA Dorchester Group meets. Contact Graham Pugh on 01305 262305.

Throughout the year - Wey & Arun Canal Trust run cruises on n/b *Zachariah Keppel* on the restored canal. Information from John Lisk on 01493 752403.

Throughout the year - Chichester Canal Society run cruises on n/b *Egremont* on the canal from Chichester. Information from John Cooper on 01243 671051.

For Sale

36ft Narrow boat. 1/4" steel BSC. 1700 hours only Lister Canal Star. Regularly docked and serviced. Permanent plus convertible double beds. Heron stove. Full size cooker. New fridge. Shower. Paloma water heater. Porta Potti. Radio cassette. Cratch. Front and back covers. Full inventory. Plenty of storage. Anchor etc. Reluctant sale! £14,500 ono. Tel: 01827 706839.

Laurie Pearce, 39 Mill Lane, Fazeley, Tamworth, B78 3QD

Laurie and Linda Pearce also have for sale 1 or 2 long throw Wey windlasses. If any Society member would like them, the Pearces will make a donation to the Society.