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CRT Customer Service

From 7 July 2019, customers will be able to get in touch with CRT's customer service team seven days a week.

The customer service team will now be responding to enquiries from:

- Monday - Friday 8am-6pm
- Saturday 9am-5pm
- Sunday 10am-4pm

All contact channels will be open across telephone, web form, email and social.

The team receives all sorts of enquiries from customers, including reports of damaged lock gates, licence enquiries, finding out if a section of canal is open, incidents of vandalism, and questions about how to get involved with volunteering and where to find information on events happening on the waterways.

New Waterways Ombudsman

The appointment of a new Waterways Ombudsman, Sarah Daniel who is an experienced ombudsman and civil servant, has been announced following an open competition.

Sarah takes over at the end of July when Andrew Walker, who has been in post for almost seven years, retires.

Chairman's Column

July Meeting 2019

This evening, 4 July, we extend a very warm welcome to all Southampton Canal Society Members to their 52nd Annual General Meeting.

Details and the Agenda are in last month's Newsletter - please remember to bring your copy along. (Last month's Newsletter can be downloaded from http://www.sotoncs.org.uk/archive/pdf/JUN_19.pdf). Angela will have a few copies if needed.

Do please feel free to raise any questions or other concerns at the AGM.

And finally, enjoy the Cheese & Wine supper to finish off the evening.

August Meeting

Just a reminder that there will be **NO** meeting in August as the hall is closed, as usual, for it's annual

round of maintenance.

September Meeting

The subject and speaker of this meeting is yet to be confirmed.

October Meeting

On 3rd October, our speaker will be David Farthing who is an expert on William Walker: the diver who saved Winchester Cathedral.

November Meeting

On the 7th November we will be welcoming Andy Lester, from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Thank you all for supporting our Society. Enjoy the Summer.

Alan Rose

Treasurer's Apologies

Our Treasurer, Aelred Derbyshire, send the editor the following email:

We will not be at the Society AGM because we will be in France for my granddaughter's 18th Birthday. Can you please put a note in the Newsletter giving my apologies and saying that if anyone has any questions on the accounts to contact me by email.

Thanks,
Aelred

Woking Town Wharf

The Woking Town Wharf on the Basingstoke Canal (*right*) was officially opened at a short ceremony on Friday 31st May.

Created in 2018, the Town Wharf project was funded as a joint initiative by Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council with a contribution from Basingstoke Canal Society.

The new Town Wharf came about as an idea from Woking Borough Council and the Basingstoke Canal Society to attract visiting boaters to stop off in Woking, the idea being to encourage visits to Woking's many and varied attractions and facilities as part of their longer visit to cruise the

Basingstoke Canal.

The wharf also creates an attractive area for all to enjoy by the canal side, whether it be a lunchtime spot away from the office or a place to get a few minutes peace and quiet or a start point for a jog along the canal.

It also provides a focal base for the Woking trip boat *Kitty* and accessible trip boat *Maggie G* which have provided a new visitor attraction in the centre of Woking enabling all visitors and residents to have an opportunity to explore their local waterway by boat.

<https://basingstoke-canal.org.uk/>

Water Saving Measures

THE Canal & River Trust is updating boaters on water saving measures on the Leeds & Liverpool, Oxford, Grand Union and Kennet & Avon Canals following the rainfall over recent weeks.

Recent rainfall has improved water levels on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. However the reservoirs have not seen enough rainfall to refill them to a satisfactory level. The restricted opening times at Barrowford Locks, Greenberfield Locks, Bank Newton Locks, and Gargrave Locks remain in place as they are solely fed from the reservoirs. Wigan Flight can be prone to vandalism which, when it

occurs, uses a lot of water and can cause problems for both boaters and the Trust's water management. The opening times remain in place to minimise this risk.

In the south of the country, while the Oxford and Grand Union Canals also saw some improvements, CRT is keeping the restricted opening times in place to ensure the canals have the best possible chance of staying open throughout the summer.

Pump problems on the K&A have led to closures and restrictions between Caen Hill and Crofton.

For further details see the [CRT website](#).

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 4 Jul 2019 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual General Meeting. Nominations for Officers or Committee Members (together with a seconder) should be sent to the Secretary by the meeting on 6th June 2019.	Chilworth Village Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sat 6 Jul 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Tue 9 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. Tickets £12. Tickets via contact. Bar available. Outdoor Show with shelter.	Bourne End WI, Spade Oak Farm, Coldmoorholme Lane, Bourne End, SL8 5PS (SU884876).	Tel: 01628 531521 or 07860 405000 Email: bourneendwi@yahoo.com Web: mikron.org.uk
Wed 10 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after the show. Food and bar available. Outdoor show with shelter in case of bad weather.	The Bounty, Bourne End, Bucks, SL8 5RG (SU888869). By the River Thames - see pub's website re access.	Tel: 01628 520056 Web: www.thebountypub.com or mikron.org.uk
Thu 11 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. No tickets required, cash collection taken after show. Food and refreshments available. Bring chairs and blankets. Outdoor show. Bar and food from 5.30pm. Please do not bring your own food and drink.	The Teapot Tearooms, Britchcombe Farm, Uffington, Faringdon, SN7 7QJ (SU308871).	Tel: 07800 637917 or 01367 820260 Email: rdewilton@yahoo.com Web: www.facebook.com/TheTeapotTearoomandgarden or mikron.org.uk
Fri 12 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Bring a picnic, chairs and blankets. Outdoor show. New venue.	Hurley Riverside Park Picnic Grounds, Hurley Riverside Park, Hurley, Berks, SL6 5NE. (SU824839).	Tel: 01628 823501 Web: www.hurleyriversidepark.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Sat 13 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. Tickets £10.00 - available from The Council Office, Ockwells, 113 High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6AE. Bring chairs and blankets. Bring your own refreshments. Outdoor event with indoor alternative in the case of bad weather.	Cricklade Bloomers, Riverside, High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6DD (SU101938). To be confirmed.	Cricklade Town Council: 01793 751394 Web: www.crickladeinbloom.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Sat 13 Jul 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sun 14 Jul 2019 2.00pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Bring a picnic, chairs and blankets. Outdoor show.	Caversham Court Gardens, Church Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AD (SU709748).	Tel: 01189 372771 or mikron.org.uk
Wed 17 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Food and bar available. Bring chairs and blankets. Outdoor show.	The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	Tel: 0118 971 2213 Web: www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge or mikron.org.uk
Thu 18 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets. Outdoor show with indoor backup. Gates open from 6pm for picnics.	Eyot Centre, Wargrave Road, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3JD (SU766823).	Tel: 01491 578658 Email: davemcewen@btinternet.com Web: mikron.org.uk
Fri-Sun 19-21 Jul 2019	TTBR (Ltd)	Thames Traditional Boat Festival. A celebration of all that's best in British boatbuilding and craftsmanship evoking the nostalgia of boating from a bygone era.	Fawley Meadows, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2HY. (SU761835).	Web: www.tradboatfestival.com Email: admin@tradboatfestival.com
Fri 19 Jul 2019 7.30pm-9.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT, Crofton Branch	"The Secret Spitfires". In 1940, the Germans succeed in destroying the Spitfire factories in Southampton. But unknown to them, the British decide to build Spitfires in secret. This film will be followed by a question and answer session. Tickets: £10.00, any tickets unsold online via Eventbrite will be available on the door.	The Assembly Rooms, Marlborough Town Hall, Marlborough, SN8 1AA.(SU188691).	Tel: 01672 870300. Web: www.croftonbeamengines.org
Sat 20 Jul 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sun 21 Jul 2019 3.00pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. Tickets: £13 (concs £11). Refreshments available or on the door. This is an indoor show. Tickets from Mikron - see their website.	Donnington Parish Hall, Stockbridge Road, Donnington, Chichester, PO19 8QT. (SU854035)	Tel: 01243 839994 Web: mikron.org.uk
Tue 23 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Food and bar available. Bring chairs and blankets. Outdoor show.	The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	Tel: 0118 971 2213 Web: www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge or mikron.org.uk
Thu 25 Jul 2019 3.30pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. Afternoon show. Tickets £12.50 (£8 Child Ticket Concs.) must be booked in advance from Sue 01491 835631. Bistro menu available at extra cost on the day (no need to book). Refreshments, beer and food available. Outdoor show.	Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ (SU613916).	Tel: 01491 835631 Web: www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk or mikron.org.uk

Continued on page 3

Waterway Events (continued from page 2)

Date/Time	Organiser	Details	Venue	Contact
Thu 25 Jul 2019 8.00pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. Evening show. Tickets £12.50 (£8 Child Ticket Concs.) must be booked in advance from Sue 01491 835631. Bistro menu available at extra cost on the night (no need to book). Refreshments, beer and food available. Outdoor show.	Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ (SU613916).	Tel: 01491 835631 Web: www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Fri 26 Jul 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Outdoor show. Bring chairs and picnics. "We'll perform under the bridge if its wet!"	Goring Lock, Goring, RG8 9AE (SU596809).	Tel: 01484 843701 Web: mikron.org.uk
Sat-Sun 27-28 Jul 2019 10.30am-4.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT, Crofton Branch	Summer Steampunk steaming. Details and tickets from website.	Crofton Beam Engines, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW (SU261623).	Web: www.croftonbeamengines.org
Sat 27 Jul 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sun 28 Jul 2019 3.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Beer and food available. Outdoor show with shelter. Bring chairs and blankets.	The Plough, High Street, Long Wittenham, OX14 4QH (SU545937).	Tel: 01865 407738 Web: mikron.org.uk
Thu 1 Aug 2019	Southampton CS	NO MEETING. As always, there is NO August meeting as the hall is closed for maintenance.		Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sat 3 Aug 2019 1.00pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Refreshments and food available. Gates open from 12pm for picnics. Outdoor show. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets.	Bloomfield Road Allotments, Bloomfield Road, Bear Flat, Bath, BA2 2AB (ST745637).	Tel: 07867 532512 Web: www.banesallotments.org.uk or mikron.org.uk
Sat 3 Aug 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sun 4 Aug 2019 2.00pm	Mikron Theatre	All Hands on Deck. Tickets Full: £13.00 Concs: £11.00. Bar available. Indoor show.	St Mary's Church Hall, Church Street, Fordingbridge, SP6 1BB (SUI45138).	Tel: 07980 374971 Web: www.forestlive.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Tue 6 Aug 2019 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Redcoats. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Beer and food available. Outdoor show. Bring chairs and blankets.	Plough Inn, Wolvercote Green, Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8BD (SP495096).	Tel: 01865 556969 Web: www.theploughoxford.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Sat 10 Aug 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sat 17 Aug 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sat-Mon 24-26 Aug 2019 10.30am-4.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT, Crofton Branch	August Bank Holiday steaming and Crafters & Makers Fair. Adults: £8.00 Concessions: £7.00 Children under 16: Free.	Crofton Beam Engines, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW (SU261623).	Web: www.croftonbeamengines.org
Sat 24 Aug 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Sat-Sun 31-I Aug-Sep 2019	Wilts & Berks CT	Melksham Food and River Festival. Looking to welcome a good cross section of boats on the water. In the park, in the region of 80 stalls, plus live music, cooking demonstrations and much more.	The King George V Park, Lowbourne, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 7ED. (ST907641).	Paul Lenaerts: 07855 887547 Email: paul.lenaerts@wbct.org.uk Web: www.melkshamfoodandriverfestival.co.uk
Sat 31 Aug 2019 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Pumping day. Adults: £6.00, Accompanied Children under 16 free, no concessions.	Claverton Pumping Station, Ferry Lane, Claverton, Bath, BA2 7BH (ST790643).	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
Thu 5 Sep 2019	Southampton CS	Speaker to be confirmed.	Chilworth Village Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com

June Meeting

"Goslings' Gallivants Part Two" with Paul Gosling

Society members and visiting guests welcomed Paul Gosling to the Society's June meeting on the 6 June. Paul presented a wide range of subjects from around the UK including cranes, trains, buses and coaches. Locations from Penzance, Falmouth and St Mawes in the south to Fort William and Mallaig on the West Highland line.

There were memorable images of a Black Five engine taking on water outside Southampton Station, the Union of South Africa steaming through Millbrook and Princess Elizabeth pulling the Royal Scot train.

Water related topics included:

- Loch Katrine and the trip boat the Sir Walter Scott;
- Paddle steamer Waverley on an excursion from Dunoon through the delights of Argyll and Loch Long;
- Deck games at sunset on the SS Shieldhall, cruising on Southampton Water;
- Portsmouth and the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.
- Cruise ship, Aida, a regular visitor to Southampton carrying welcome visitors to the City.

£4million Highways England grant to Cotswold Canals Trust

Restoration volunteers have been given a £4million boost to help reinstate a length of canal which was lost to road builders 50 years ago.

Cotswold Canals Trust has been awarded vital funds by Highways England to restore parts of the Stroudwater Navigation including waterway, locks, bridges and wetlands which were destroyed when the A38/A419 roundabout and M5 were built in the late 1960s west of Stonehouse.

A five mile section of canal between Thrupp and Stonehouse has already been restored and Stroud District Council, Cotswold Canals Trust and partners are working on connecting that stretch to the nation's inland waterway network at Saul. After winning £872,000 of development funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund last year, it will find out early next year whether it will receive a further £9 million to fully restore the stretch between Stonehouse and Saul.

The £4m from the Highways England Environmental Designated Funds Scheme was welcomed by Jim White, Chair of Cotswold Canals Trust. "The Highways England award is extremely welcome and will significantly progress the overall project by bringing forward several of the major engineering tasks in the programme," he said.

The work will enhance the cultural heritage and historic features near to the M5 and A38 and increase biodiversity with more than 30 hectares of wildlife habitats and improved flood prevention measures. Much of the work will be done by an army of volunteers. Cotswold Canals Trust estimates that the wider Cotswold Canals Connected (CCC) project, to which this scheme is linked, will use approximately 700,000 hours of volunteer work and support new apprenticeships through contractors.

Sean Walsh, route manager for Highways England, said, "We are delighted to support this project which will restore the missing mile to the nation's inland waterway network. When the work is finished there will not only be a restored canal, but also a great walking and cycling route, and environmental improvements, all of which will attract more visitors to the area, and so help the local economy.

"Our designated funds programme was developed so that we can



Artist's impression of part of new canal to pass under A38/A419 roundabout

invest in improvement projects like this, which go beyond traditional road building and maintenance and have a positive impact on people and communities, as well as protecting cultural heritage and leaving a positive legacy for future generations."

The Cotswold Canals Trust aims to restore for the benefit of the whole community, the Cotswold Canals as a navigable route from the River Severn to the River Thames. The "Missing Mile" at Junction 13 of the M5 forms part of the larger 4 mile long project, Cotswold Canals Connected. This was awarded a Stage 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF) grant in 2018 to prepare surveys, detailed designs, costings and project plans.

A Stage 2 grant application will be prepared in Autumn 2019. The overall project cost is estimated to be £23.4 million. Success in this HLF application is partly dependent on raising the outstanding "funding gap" of over £1 million. Cotswold Canals Trust (CCT) is co-leading the project with Stroud District Council (SDC) as the accountable body and with key partners Gloucestershire County Council and the Canal and River Trust.

The Highways England funding comes from one of the company's ring-fenced pots of money worth £675 million, which enable it to provide environmental, social and economic benefits to the people, communities and businesses who live and work

alongside its road network. There are designated funds to support the environment, air quality, growth and housing, innovation, and cycling, safety and integration, with £225 million dedicated to environmental improvements.

Strategically, the project aligns very closely with Highways England's cultural heritage aims. The construction of the strategic road network of the M5 and A38/A419 roundabout had the direct impact of severing the Stroudwater Navigation route. The restored canal will increase awareness of and access to a historical asset, provide a leisure amenity benefiting education and wellbeing and meet Highways England's stewardship of the heritage assets obligations.

<https://cotswoldcanals.com/>

EA to keep control of its inland waterways

A DECISION not to transfer management of Environment Agency inland waterways to the Canal & River Trust has been made.

This comes after long-running discussions on the future of the 1010km of navigable waterways in England covering the Anglian waterways, Upper Medway, non-tidal Thames, Wye and Rye Harbour.

The news will come as a blow to many boaters who had supported the idea of bringing all canals and navigable rivers under one management, however the decision is supported by the National Association of Boat Owners (NABO).

A joint message on behalf of the Environment Agency and Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) stated: "The decision has been made not to transfer these inland waterways at this point in time. The Environment Agency will therefore continue to retain responsibility for these inland waterways and their assets.

"To support a sustainable future for these waterways, the Environment Agency will be developing a long-term funding and business plan, and will be supporting the delivery of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan."

The IWA has campaigned for the navigations managed by EA to be transferred to CRT "as a solution to the funding crisis affecting Environment Agency waterways".

While funding for Canal & River Trust was guaranteed for 15 years from 2012, budget for the navigation function of the Environment Agency is still subject to cuts to Defra grant-in-aid.

"The transfer of the Environment Agency waterways to Canal & River Trust would provide a more sustainable, innovative and efficient inland waterway system for more than two thirds of the waterways of mainland UK," stated the IWA

"The larger organisation would have more clarity of purpose and ability to partner with others with overlapping objectives in public leisure and awareness of the resource inland waterways represent. The transfer will potentially also reduce pressure on the public purse, as the combined organisation is freed from the constraints of government controls and able to better focus on customer requirements and effective asset management."

A spokesman for NABO stated: "NABO has been consistently against this move and supports this decision by the EA.

"We believe that CRT directors and senior management have enough on their plate coping with constant reorganisation and trying to get on top of the maintenance of its existing infrastructure without being diverted with the complex needs of the EA navigations."

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 Village 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.

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

World Heritage Canal

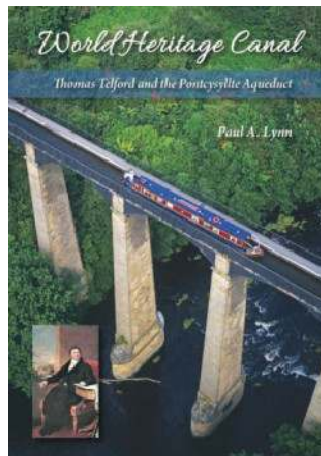
A book about Thomas Telford and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct by the author Paul A Lynn was published in May. A press release follows:

- ⇒ A fascinating mixture of historical, personal and engineering insights into the life and work of Thomas Telford
- ⇒ A modern guide to the Llangollen Canal and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

Thomas Telford was arguably the greatest civil engineer Britain has ever produced. This book reveals his humble beginnings and then describes his self-propelled rise from journeyman stonemason to famous canal engineer.

In 1793 Telford was appointed principal engineer on the Ellesmere Canal (now the Llangollen Canal) in North Wales. An 11-mile section of the canal, including his magnificent Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, has recently been granted UNESCO World Heritage status, putting it in the company of such international icons as the Taj Mahal, the Statue of Liberty, and the Tower of London.

Completed in 1805, the aqueduct represented a stupendous advance in civil engineering; but it was designed for canal boats and tucked away in



a relatively unfrequented valley. Following a rapturous opening ceremony and initial commercial success, a decline of the canal system from about 1840 onwards made it look increasingly redundant. The richly-deserved UNESCO award has put the aqueduct and its canal back in the limelight.

This is a personal and professional story, putting Telford's work into its historical and social context, showing him as a remarkable mix of good-natured ambition, talent and resilience. Today there is great interest in Britain's transport infrastructure. The 19th-century engineers who did so much to pioneer and improve it are rightly seen as heroes. It will be appreciated how much is owed to Telford and others for creations that have stood the test of time, built with courage and daring, in an age when major construction projects relied heavily on pickaxes, wheelbarrows, and an extraordinary amount of hard physical labour.

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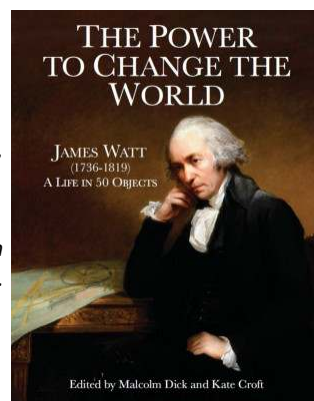
<https://www.whittlespublishing.com>

The Power to Change the World

"Those who consider James Watt only as a great practical mechanic form a very erroneous idea of his character: he was equally distinguished as a natural philosopher and a chemist, and his inventions demonstrate his profound knowledge of those sciences, and that peculiar characteristic of genius, the union of them for practical application."

Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829), inventor and chemist in 1824.

James Watt (1736-1819), transformed the steam engine – the most significant invention of the Industrial Revolution. Without Watt there would have been no locomotives, steam ships or factories where machines were energised by coal. Watt was, however, much more – a scientist who also conceived the concept of horse-power, made the first commercial copying machine and gave his name to a unit of power –



the Watt. We should not only celebrate him as a practically minded genius. He was shaped by friends and family and influenced by his Scottish and Midlands environment. Watt was fashioned by Enlightenment thinking, but his business interests were interconnected with transatlantic slavery and, in a revolutionary age, he was politically conservative. After his death Watt's reputation was forged into a heroic embodiment of the modern age by those who came after him.

This fascinating, complicated and iconic figure is depicted and considered in *James Watt – A Life and Legacy in 50 Objects* edited by Malcolm Dick and Kate Croft and published by History West Midlands Ltd to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the death of James Watt in 1819. Paperback, price £20.00

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