



# NEWS LETTER

## Chairman's Column

### June Meeting

This evening we look forward to all the "Ups & Downs of the South Pennine Ring" with Gordon Osborn SCS member & committee member.

### Society Boat Gathering

The May Bank Holiday weather was very kind to us as we set up for our BBQ at Flecknoe on the Saturday. We had very good company with Peter and Laura on *Stanton*, Terry and his son Andrew on *Dolly*, Eric and Sue on *Remus*, Paul and Gill with the *Evelyn Broadbent*, Angela and I on *Liberty*.

Sunday morning saw us all cruise down to Braunston and found moorings. After refreshments on the towpath, some of us walked around the IWA Northampton Branch Rally being held in the Marina. We were pleased to see a Canal & River Trust presence with Richard Parry, the chief executive who was listening to other IWA members and joining in on a boat trip.

Our evening meal at the *Boat House* was good. We had arranged to meet up with Pete Boyce and Irene at the Tess Yard on the Braunston Turn on Monday morning.

After Pete's talk in April, it was good to be able to see and touch the wooden boats that are being restored: *James Loader*, *Clent* and *Lucy* which are detailed in the May Newsletter. Also we saw in the sheds where the tools, machinery & materials are kept for the

painstaking work being carried out. It was evident that time for restoration, as always, is a major restraint! After coffee, cake and biscuits we went our separate ways.

*Stanton* stayed in Braunston as it was going into the dry dock at the bottom lock later in the week. *Evelyn Broadbent* was taken to Calcutt for an engine service. The rest of us were going back to the Engine Arm up Napton Locks. But at third lock up the flight there were problems! The spill way culvert had got blocked and water backed up causing the lock tail wall and bank to collapse. This led to the canal being closed as major work was needed to make it safe. We left *Liberty* moored down from the Folly Inn.

The CRT website later said that a temporary repair had allowed the lock to be re-opened within a week and that full repairs will be carried out in the Winter. Unfortunately, Ken and Margaret Froud were not able to join us this year as Margret had hurt her knee and was suffering other ongoing health issues. Angela and I visited them for a chat and cup of tea later and gave Best Wishes to them from all at Southampton Canal Society.

### July Meeting

Our Next Meeting will be on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July Annual General Meeting. This will be followed by Cheese & Wine and a Natter.

Alan Rose

## What lies beneath?

Our volunteers are used to collecting a weird and wonderful array of rubbish from our canals and the towpaths that run beside them. But occasionally they come across something that makes even the most seasoned volunteer raise their eyebrows. Just what, we wonder, is the story behind these items – all found by our Towpath Taskforce teams:

### Weird and wonderful findings:

- A safe (found at Harlesden) full of locker keys and £1 coins
- A polar bear made of wire
- A postman's trolley
- A wheelchair
- A pair of crutches
- The top half of a female mannequin – which gave our team quite a fright!
- A child's sit-in peddle car
- A toy digger
- An aeroplane propeller
- An air rifle

Also worthy of mention is the row of underpants found hanging up along the canal in Willesden!

Then there are the items which you would think are unusual, but actually our teams regularly find them in or near the canals.

And that, we think, is a story in itself.

### More regular findings:

- Child's bike
- Microwave
- Clothes
- Shoes
- Traffic cones
- Motorbike
- Fridge
- Washing machine
- Mattress
- Underwear (you can't help but wonder... how?)

At the end of April, staff from Marks & Spencers joined forces with our staff for the annual M&S clean-up event. Among their haul was a leopard-print thong found on the Rochdale Canal in Manchester, a Flymo on the Kennet & Avon Canal in Devizes and an angle grinder besides the River Severn in Worcester.

Now this all makes quite an amusing tale, but without the efforts of our staff and volunteers, items like this would remain in our beautiful canals and rivers: damaging the natural environment; threatening the local wildlife and of course, spoiling the area for everyone.

So once again, we say a heartfelt thank you to our amazing Towpath Taskforce teams and all of our hard-working volunteers.

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

23 May 2014

## Membership Subscriptions Reminder

Subscriptions for the year 2014/2015 were due on 1 April 2014. This year the joint subscription is £27 and £16 for individuals. I would be happy to receive subscriptions at the next meeting. Many thanks.

Gill Herbert, Treasurer & Membership Secretary

# Waterways Diary

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.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 5 Jun 2014 7.45pm	Southampton CS	SCS member Gordon Osborn with the "Ups & Downs of the South Pennine Ring." Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>
Fri 6 to Sun 8 Jun 2014	The Child Beale Trust	Beale Park Boat and Outdoor Show. Beale Park, Lower Basildon, Reading, Berkshire, RG8 9NW (SU621780). Tickets on the day (cheaper in advance): Adult £9.50, Senior Citizen £8.00, Child £7.50 Family £29.00.	David Read: 01235 538 134 Email: <a href="mailto:info@statelvsolutions.co.uk">info@statelvsolutions.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.bealeparkboatandoutdoorshow.co.uk/">www.bealeparkboatandoutdoorshow.co.uk/</a>
Sun 8 Jun 2014 from 9.00am	Wey & Arun CT	The 42nd Annual Puddle - 12 mile sponsored walk (shorter route also possible). Start from Shalford Mill, near Guildford, Surrey, GU4 8BS (TQ001476). Sponsorship form from contact.	Margaret Darvill: 01483 894606 Email: <a href="mailto:puddle@weyandarun.co.uk">puddle@weyandarun.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/puddle2014.pdf">www.weyandarun.co.uk/puddle2014.pdf</a>
Sun 8 Jun 2014 2.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Guided Botany Walk starting and ending at East Challow Village Hall Car Park, OX12 9SR (SU380882) along the canal to Stockham and back looking at the flora and possibly fauna. Distance approx 1½ miles. Free but £2.00 per head donation to Canal Trust gratefully received.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Thu 12 Jun 2014 7.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	A circular guided walk from The Sack House, Wantage Wharf, Mill Street, Wantage OX12 9GF (SU396881) taking in the route of the Wantage branch and part of the main canal. Distance approx 3 miles – allow 2 hours. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Sat-Sun 14-15 Jun 2014 11.00am-5.00pm	Reading Boro Council /Kennet & Avon CT	Reading Water Fest. On the River Kennet and in Forbury Gardens (RG1 3BD) (SU718736).	Reading BC, Events and Festivals Department: 0118 937 2771 Web: <a href="http://www.reading.gov.uk/events/details/341/">www.reading.gov.uk/events/details/341/</a>
Sun 15 Jun 2014 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Open Day - Timsbury, Paulton and Radford to view the remains of the canal basins. Further details from Derrick Hunt.	Derrick Hunt: 01225 863066 Email: <a href="mailto:derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com">derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.coalcanal.org">http://www.coalcanal.org</a>
Sun 15 Jun 2014 10.00am - 5.00pm	Chichester Priory Rotary Club	Dragon Boat Racing to raise funds for Cancerwise. Chichester Canal Basin, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8DT (SU858041).	Email: <a href="mailto:chichesterdragons@btinternet.com">chichesterdragons@btinternet.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.chichesterdragonboats.org.uk">http://www.chichesterdragonboats.org.uk</a>
Tue 17 Jun 2014 7.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk from Childrey Village Hall, OX12 9UE (SU 362875). Distance about 3.5 miles. Allow 2 hours. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Wed 18 Jun 2014 7.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk - "Trams, Barges & Turnpike" - starting at The Sack House, Wantage Wharf, Mill Street, Wantage OX12 9GF (SU396881), exploring the route of the Wantage Tramway, parts of Wilts & Berks Canal and Besselsleigh Turnpike. Distance: about 5 miles. Allow all evening, with the escape route of buses back from Grove. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Thu 19 June 2014 9.30am	Wey & Arun CT	4½ mile circular guided walk along canal towpath and through village of Loxwood to include visit to Brewhurst Mill. Cost £5, limit of 20 walkers - please book. Canal Centre, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 0RD (TQ041311)	Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: <a href="mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk">canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/walks.php">www.weyandarun.co.uk/walks.php</a>
Thu 19 Jun 2014 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"The Wilderness Trailboat - a 45 year Obsession" by Ian Graham. 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
Sat 21 Jun 2014	Wey & Arun CT	Southland Lock Open Day and Small Boat Rally on the occasion of the official opening of Southland Lock (TQ029317) at midday. Boats to launch at Drungewick slipway (TQ059309) 8.30 to 9.00am - entry form from contact. Free entry - donations always welcome.	John F. H. Taylor-Cram: 02392 250463 Email: <a href="mailto:tractor1936@btinternet.com">tractor1936@btinternet.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/SouthlandsLockform.pdf">www.weyandarun.co.uk/SouthlandsLockform.pdf</a>
Sat 21 Jun 2014 10.00am - 4.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Heritage Open Day at Pewsham Locks, Middle Lodge Lane, Chippenham, SN15 3GH (ST936710). Demos of traditional crafts, children's activities, authentic food, music, canal trail, etc to commemorate the abandonment by Act of Parliament of the Wilts & Berks Canal in June 1914. Free.	Tel: 07899 796369 Email: <a href="mailto:johnsmillican@googlemail.com">johnsmillican@googlemail.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.melkshamwaterway.org.uk/">http://www.melkshamwaterway.org.uk/</a>
Sun 22 Jun 2014 2.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk starting at Childrey Village Hall, OX12 9UE (SU362875) taking in Childrey, West Challow and Sparsholt. Distance about 5 miles, allow at least 2½ hours. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Wed 25 Jun 2014 7.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk exploring the Grove Lock flight starting at the layby (part of old road) on A338 south of Oxford Lane, Grove (SU407902). Distance about 2.5 miles but allow all evening. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Mon 30 Jun 2014 7.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT and Vale & Downland Museum	Brian Stovold, Chair of the local branch of the Canal Trust, discusses "Wantage Wharf, the Sackhouse and the Wilts & Berks Canal." The talk will include slides, maps and a couple of odd exhibits! Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage, OX12 8BL (SU397878). Tickets: £4. Advance booking recommended.	Vale & Downland Museum: 01235 771447 Email: <a href="mailto:museum@wantage-museum.com">museum@wantage-museum.com</a>
Tue 1 Jul 2014 7.00pm - 9.30pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Sack House Open Evening. Wantage Wharf, Mill St, Wantage OX12 9GF (SU396881). Talk to volunteers from the Canal Trust and look at the newly-opened museum. Very short guided walks around the wharf area.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Thu 3 Jul 2014 7.45pm	Southampton CS	AGM followed by Cheese & Wine. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a>

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# Waterways Diary (Continued from page 2)

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 3 Jul 2014 7.00pm	Wilts & Berks CT	Circular guided walk from Grove Recreation Ground, Cane Lane, Grove, Wantage OX12 0AA (SU398895). This walk takes in the remaining part of the Grove Lock flight not covered on the 25th and a diversion up to Crab Hill. Distance about 3 miles - allow 2 hours. Free, but £2.00 per head donation for the Canal Trust gratefully accepted.	Brian Stovold : 07946 524928 Web: <a href="http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/">http://www.wbct.org.uk/home/full-calendar/</a>
Mon 7 Jul 2014 7.45pm	Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Soc	"Itchen Village, Itchen Ferry and the Diaper family" by Cheryl Butler. Underhill Centre, St John the Evangelist Church, St John's Road, Hedge End, SO30 4AF (SU488125).	Carol Burdekin: 01962 855200 Email: <a href="mailto:info@hias.org.uk">info@hias.org.uk</a>
Thu 17 Jul 2014 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Boules & BBQ. 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
Fri 18 Jul 2014 7.30pm	The Bounty	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Collection after show. The Bounty, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5RG (SU890871) Food and refreshments available.	The Bounty: 01628 520056 Web: <a href="http://www.thebountypub.com">www.thebountypub.com</a>
Sat 19 Jul 2014 7.00pm	Henley-on-Thames Allotment Assoc	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets. Gates will be open from 6pm for picnics. Collection after show. Eyot Centre, Wargrave Road, Henley on Thames, RG9 3JD (SU770820).	Eyot Centre: 01491 578658 Web: <a href="http://www.henleyallotments.org.uk">www.henleyallotments.org.uk</a>
Sun 20 Jul 2014	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - The Combe Hay Inclined Plane. Meet: Layby near Bridge Farm, Combe Hay, BA2 7EE (ST745604).	Derrick Hunt: 01225 863066 Email: <a href="mailto:derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com">derrickjohnhunt@btinternet.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.coaicanal.org">http://www.coaicanal.org</a>
Sun 20 Jul 2014 7.30pm		Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets. Collection after show. Sonning Lock House, Thames Street, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6UR (SU752754). Please park in the village and walk to the lock.	Tel: 07710 224008
Mon 21 Jul 2014 7.30pm	The Bounty	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Collection after show. The Bounty, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5RG (SU890871) Food and refreshments available.	The Bounty: 01628 520056 Web: <a href="http://www.thebountypub.com">www.thebountypub.com</a>
Wed 23 Jul 2014 7.30pm	The Rowbarge	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show. The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	The Rowbarge: 0118 9712213 Web: <a href="http://www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge">www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge</a>
Thu 24 Jul 2014 9.30am	Wey & Arun CT	2½ mile circular guided walk along canal towpath and through village of Loxwood to include visit to Brewhurst Mill. Cost £5, limit of 20 walkers - please book. Canal Centre, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 ORD (TQ041311)	Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: <a href="mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk">canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/walks.php">www.weyandarun.co.uk/walks.php</a>
Fri 25 Jul 2014 7.30pm	Cricklade Bloomers	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." Cricklade Bloomers, Brook House, High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6DD (SU101938). Bring your own refreshments. Outdoor event with indoor alternative for inclement weather. Tickets £10.00 from The Council Office, Ockwells, 113 High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6AE.	Cricklade Town Council: 01793 751394 Web: <a href="http://www.crickladeinbloom.co.uk">www.crickladeinbloom.co.uk</a>
Sat-Sun 26-27 Jul 2014 10.00am-5.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Newbury Br)	Newbury Waterways Festival at Victoria Park, Newbury, RG14 2DW (SU473673). The main part of the event will be on Sunday.	Graham Smith: Tel: 01635 580356 Email: <a href="mailto:newbury.secretary@katrust.org.uk">newbury.secretary@katrust.org.uk</a>
Sat 26 Jul 2014 6.30pm	Reading Boro Council	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show, bring picnic, chairs and blanket. Collection after show. Forbury Gardens, Reading, RG1 3EJ (SU718736).	Reading BC, Events and Festivals Department: 0118 937 2771
Sun 27 Jul 2014 7.30pm	Basingstoke CS	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Indoor show. Beer available. Collection after show. Fleet Football Club, Calthorpe Park, Crookham Road, Fleet, GU51 5FA (SU803535).	Verna Smith: 01252 517622
Mon 28 Jul 2014 7.30pm	The Trout Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show, with shelter and indoor backup. Bring chairs and blankets. Beer and food available. Collection after show. The Trout Inn, St John's Bridge, Faringdon Road, Lechlade On Thames, GL7 3HA. (SU223990)	The Trout Inn: 01367 252313 Web: <a href="http://www.thetroutinn.com">www.thetroutinn.com</a>
Wed 30 Jul 2014 7.30pm	The Rowbarge	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show. The Rowbarge, Station Road, Woolhampton, Reading, RG7 5SH (SU572664).	The Rowbarge: 0118 9712213 Web: <a href="http://www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge">www.brunningandprice.co.uk/rowbarge</a>
Sat 2 Aug 2014 3.00pm	B&NES Allotments Association	Mikron Theatre - "Till the Cows Come Home." This is an outdoor show with shelter. Bring a picnic, chairs and blankets. Refreshments available. Collection after show. Bloomfield Road Allotments, Bear Flat, Bath, BA2 2AB. (ST745637)	B&NES Allotments Association: 07867 532512 Web: <a href="http://www.banes-allotments.org.uk">www.banes-allotments.org.uk</a>
Mon 4 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Goring Lock, Goring, RG8 9AE. (SU596808) Bring your own chairs and picnics. We'll perform under the bridge if it's wet! Collection after show.	Mikron Theatre Office: 01484 843701 Web: <a href="http://www.mikron.org.uk">http://www.mikron.org.uk</a>
Tue 5 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Oxford Science Park	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Indoor show. The Oxford Science Park, Heatley Road, Oxford, OX4 4GE. (SP539021) Tickets £11.00 (£9.00 concs) on weekday mornings from Sadler Building Reception Tel: 01865 781 300 or on the door. Refreshments available 5.30pm - 7.15pm and in interval.	The Oxford Science Park: 01865 781300 Web: <a href="http://www.oxfordsp.com/news-mikron.asp">www.oxfordsp.com/news-mikron.asp</a>
Wed 6 Aug 2014 7.30pm	Waterfront Café	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show with shelter and indoor backup. Waterfront Café, Benson Marina, Benson, OX10 6SJ. (SU613916) Tickets (£12) must be booked in advance. Food and refreshments available. Collection after show.	Waterfront Café: 01491 835631 Email: <a href="mailto:info@waterfrontcafe.co.uk">info@waterfrontcafe.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk">www.waterfrontcafe.co.uk</a>
<b>Thu 7 Aug 2014</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>There will be NO August Meeting: Hall unavailable.</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: <a href="mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com">alanjrose@btinternet.com</a></b>
Thu 7 Aug 2014 7.30pm	The Plough Inn	Mikron Theatre - "Troupers." Outdoor show, bring chairs and blankets. Collection after show. The Plough Inn, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, OX14 4QH. (SU545937) Food and drink available.	The Plough Inn: 01865 407738 Web: <a href="http://www.theploughinnlw.co.uk">http://www.theploughinnlw.co.uk</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.

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Brian Evans.

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Angela Rose, 33 Brackley Way, Totton, Hampshire SO40 3HP. Tel: 02380 675312 Email: [alanjrose@btinternet.com](mailto:alanjrose@btinternet.com)

**Treasurer & Membership Secretary**

Gill Herbert, 25 Rosemoor Grove, Chandler's Ford, Hampshire, SO53 1TB. Tel: 02380 262365. Email: [p\\_herbert1@sky.com](mailto:p_herbert1@sky.com)

**Committee:**

David Townley-Jones, Aelred and Sue Derbyshire, Gordon Osborn

**Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:**

Peter Oates, 39 Church Street, Nether Heyford, Northamptonshire, NN7 3LH. Tel: 01327 341798. Email: [scs@sotoncs.org.uk](mailto:scs@sotoncs.org.uk)

**Meetings:**

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Diary). Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184.

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

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

## How I Caught the Canal Bug

*This month we have the first part of an article by Laurie Pearce about his boating on the inland waterways. Thank you for this contribution, Laurie.*

It all started back in 1968 when friends with whom I was staying in Harrow took me out to a pub alongside the Grand Union Canal. It turned out to be the pub by the Soulbury Locks and I was enchanted by the scene and was determined to learn more about our inland waterways. The landlord told me that all the canal boats had been iced up for three months that winter which had literally decimated the trade.

I discovered that my nearest canal was the Kennet and Avon which, although derelict in parts, boasted a strong Association whose aim was to restore the canal to full navigation. I then joined the Newbury Branch whose headquarters was the old Stone Building on Newbury Wharf which was owned by BWB at the time.

My first boat was an 8ft fibre glass dinghy which I bought for £20 locally. I then acquired an old second hand outboard engine plus a roof rack for my car in order to transport my boat. I found that there was clear water at Tyle Mill where the Kennet flowed towards Sulhampstead Lock so, together with some friends, we launched *Pounder*, the name I had chosen for it, over the canal bank below Tyle Mill Lock. With four occupants there was little freeboard, but we proceeded mainly with the current until we were confronted by the weir before the cut to Sulhampstead Lock which was just a sea of solid weed! We hastily turned and returned to Tyle Mill feeling quite pleased with ourselves that we had navigated a part of the K&A! I gave no thought of having a licence at the time!

Over the next few months we navigated a stretch at Newbury and at Honey Street where renewing shear pins on the outboard was not our favourite pastime!! We also attended a rally at Pewsey where our third crew member was a dummy representing Barbara Castle who was Minister of Transport at that time.

In due time I became ambitious, sold *Pounder* which is still in being on the Hamble River, and bought a Microplus cruiser and

trailer from a gentleman in Chandlers Ford. I attended rallies at Reading and another on the Slough Arm of the Grand Union, but decided that I would advance ambition further, so sold the Microplus and bought a second hand 18ft Callumcraft. By this time I was in possession of a BWB cruising licence, but didn't require a mooring licence as the boat was kept in my garden! Both my last two boats were named *Bittern*, the secretive bird which nests in the reed beds.

With the Callumcraft we ventured further afield: this being possible having a trailable boat and the fact that I was still working. We went up to Wales with fellow members Peter and Margaret Wheble and launched the two boats at Govilon Wharf on the Brecon & Abergavenny Canal. Except for the after effects of eating a poisoned cream bun in Brecon, the holiday was a great success although I also had the misfortune to fall in the canal. Other trips were on the Oxford Canal for a few days, launching from a slipway near Kidlington, and a two week round trip taking in the Thames, Grand Union and Oxford Canals.

The highlight of our trips was attending the 1973 IWA Rally at Ely in the Fens. We launched at Oundle on the River Nene where we obtained our licence to navigate the Middle Levels. This proved to be a most interesting experience with the guillotine lock gates of the Nene to add to one's pleasure!!

We were accompanied on this trip by the late Joan and John Reed, SCS members who had moved to Braunston with their Holt Abbott cruiser [*seen recently near Braunston – Ed*]. Much fun was had at Salter's Lode where we entered the River Ouse and made our way the short distance to Denver Sluice. Two other SCS members also attended the Rally, David and Margaret Kessler-Lyne, in their home built cruiser *Marave*.

There was much ill feeling from the local fishing fraternity who were not used to seeing such a large number of boats navigating the Fens and angry exchanges were often made!!

*Laurie Pearce*

*To be concluded next month*

## Annual General Meeting 2014

In accordance with the Constitution, notice is hereby formally given of the Southampton Canal Society's Annual General Meeting on the 3rd July 2014 at Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth Road, Chilworth, Southampton at 7.45pm.

Any member may request an item to be included on the agenda of the AGM by giving at least fourteen days written notice of the item

and its nature to the Chairman, Alan Rose (contact details can be found at the top of this page).

Please note that the papers associated with the AGM (Agenda, Minutes of last year's AGM, Officers' Reports and the Society's Accounts) will be published in the July Newsletter.