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Happy 50th Birthday

In the fifty years since its formation, the Society and its members have achieved much. To help celebrate this happy occasion, this issue of the Newsletter is devoted almost entirely to looking back to some of these achievements.

In this issue, we have the first of a series of articles written by Annegret Evans recording the memories of some of the members she's chatted to recently.

Hopefully, readers will find the articles selected for this issue from Newsletters over the last 50 years to be interesting.

Some say "Nostalgia is not what it used to be" but it does no harm to remember (or learn) and reflect upon the past. Maybe lessons can be learnt.

Peter Oates

Chairman's Column

FIFTY YEARS AGO TODAY

The Southampton Canal Society was formed on the evening of Thursday, 1st June 1967 during a meeting at the 22nd Millbrook Scout's Headquarters, Millbrook.

A facsimile copy of the minutes of this first meeting of the Society can be found on [this page](#).

Boat Trip on Basingstoke Canal

To celebrate our Society's 50th Milestone today, we all are looking forward to our cruise on the "John Pinkerton".

Meet at Colt Hill Wharf, London Road, Odiham, RG29 1AL at 2.00pm for the 2.30pm trip. Aelred highlighted the full details in the [May Newsletter](#) including if required, the pre-reservation for a lunch time meal at the nearby Waterwitch Pub.

June Meeting

As a result of the cruise there will be **NO** evening meeting at Chilworth.

July Meeting

This will be the Southampton Canal Society's Fiftieth Annual General Meeting. The formal business will be followed by cheese, wine and a natter.

August meeting

As usual, there will be no meeting in the month of August.

September Meeting

On 7th September, Society member Gordon Osborn will be talking about family cruising in Ireland.

My thanks to Gordon on his informative write up on the talk about "Eling Tide Mill" at the April meeting.

Thank you all for your continued support and in the years to come

Alan Rose



Society members and guests thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the River Wey and Godalming Navigation on Saturday 6 October 2007 celebrating the 40th anniversary. Some of us have not changed!!

Society Website

In recent months, several additions and changes to the Society's web have been made. Some updating and enlargement of the section on the [Southampton & Salisbury Canal](#) have been published but two pages still have to be written. The page about waterway trip boats that appeared in the April Newsletter now has a separate page. Finally, scanned copies of the Newsletter between January 1994 and June 1995 have been added to the Newsletter Archive. Go and have a look [here](#).

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 Jun 2017	Southampton CS	In view of this afternoon's cruise on the Basingstoke Canal, there will be NO evening meeting this month.		Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Thu 1 Jun 2017 2.00pm for 2.30pm	Southampton CS	Celebrating Fifty Years. Cruise on the 'John Pinkerton' on the Basingstoke Canal. See article in May Newsletter .	Colt Hill Wharf, London Road, Odiham, Hampshire, RG29 1AL (SU747519).	Aelred Derbyshire: 01794 651350 Email: aelred41@sky.com
Fri-Sun 2-4 Jun 2017 10.00am-5.00pm	See it for Real Productions	Beale Park Boat & Outdoor Show 2017. Open until 6.00pm Fri and Sat. See website for admission charges.	Beale Park, Lower Basildon, Reading, Berkshire RG8 9NW (SU618778).	Phone: 01296 631 273 Email: info@bealeparkboatandoutdoorshow.co.uk Web: www.bealeparkboatandoutdoorshow.co.uk/
Sat 4 Jun 2017	Wey & Arun CT	"The Poddle" - WACT's annual sponsored walk. 12 mile walk around the Arun Valley. Start between 9am - 10.30am from Ingfield Manor School to Wimborough Green Scout Hut, where lunch will be provided, then back to Ingfield Manor. Possible to do morning or afternoon only. Further details and registration on website.	Ingfield Manor School, Five Oaks, Billingshurst, Sussex, RH14 9AX (TQ088283).	Trust Office: 01483 505566 Email: support@weyandarun.co.uk Web: weyandarun.org.uk/drupal/poddle
Sat 10 Jun 2017 11.00am-5.00pm	Reading BC and Kennet & Avon CT (Reading Br)	Reading Water Fest. Festival of boats, entertainment and stalls. Great family day out. Admission is free.	River Kennet, Forbury Gardens and Chestnut Walk, RG1 3AH. (SU719734)	John Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: swift.john21@gmail.com Mobile: 07533 886917.
Sun 11 Jun 2017 10.00am-3.00pm	Chichester Rotary	Dragon Boat Challenge 2017 The Rotary Club of Chichester Priory has joined again with CancerWise for the fifth dragon boat challenge on Chichester's canal to raise money for charity.	Canal Basin, Canal Wharf, Chichester, PO19 8DT (SU858041).	Email: chichester-dragons@btinternet.com Web: http://www.chichesterdragonboats.org.uk/
Tue 13 Jun 2017 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Annual General Meeting - 2017	Radstock Museum, Waterloo Rd, Radstock, BA3 3EP (ST689549). For location see map here	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: chairman@coalcanal.org.uk
Sun 18 Jun 2017 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk - Brassknocker to Claverton. Alongside part of the Coal Canal and the Kennet & Avon.	Brassknocker Canal Centre, Brassknocker Basin, Bath BA2 7JD (ST781621).	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: history@coalcanal.org.uk
Sat-Sun 24-25 Jun 2017 10.30am-4.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT (Crofton Br)	Crofton Engines Steaming weekend. 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 Jun 2017 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Best Foot Forward. 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 Bloomers, Brook House, High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6DD (SU101938).	Cricklade Town Council: 01793 751394 Web: www.crickladeinbloom.co.uk or mikron.org.uk
Sat 24 Jun 2017 10.00am-5.00pm	The Claverton Group	Claverton Pumping Station. Adults: £6.00, 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 25 Jun 2017 5.30pm	Mikron Theatre	In at the Deep End. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Bring picnic, chairs and blankets. Outdoor show.	Forbury Gardens, Reading, RG1 3EJ (SU718736).	Tel: 01189 372771 Web: mikron.org.uk
Tue 27 Jun 2017 7.00pm	Mikron Theatre	Best Foot Forward. performed at Fordingbridge Group of WIs. Tickets: £10. Indoor venue. Ice cream available in interval.	The Town Hall, 63 High Street, Fordingbridge, Hants, SP6 1AS (SU147141). Please use town car park (The Bartons SP6 1HZ) free after 6pm.	Tel: 014255 650493 / 01425 652172 Web: mikron.org.uk
Wed 28 Jun 2017 3.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Best Foot Forward. No tickets required, cash collection after show. Bar, food and refreshments available. Indoor show.	YHA, 41 Old Steine, Brighton, BN1 1NH (TQ312039).	Tel: 01273 738674 Web: www.yha.org.uk/hostel/brighton or mikron.org.uk
Thu 29 Jun 2017 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre	Best Foot Forward No tickets required, a cash collection will be taken after the show. Bring chairs and blankets. Bar available. Outdoor Show with shelter and Indoor back up.	YHA Bath, Bathwick Hill, Bath, BA2 6LA (ST763645). No parking at hostel. Please park on Bathwick Hill.	Tel: 01225 465674 Web: mikron.org.uk
Thu 6 Jul 2017 7.45pm	Southampton CS	SCS's Fiftieth Annual General Meeting. The formal business will be followed by cheese, wine and a natter.	Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sat 8 Jul 2017	Wey & Arun CT and National Trust	"Dashwood Day" - Celebrating the 150th anniversary of JB Dashwood's adventurous journey up the River Wey to the Wey & Arun Canal towards the Solent. The trip is open to small boats, cyclists and walkers. Please register on website.	Meet at 9.30am at Thames Lock, Weybridge, KT13 8LG (TQ072655). Finishes at Guns Mouth at junction of River Wey and Wey & Arun Canal, GU4 8EH (SU997464).	Details and registration on web: www.weyarun.org.uk/dashwood

In this month's Newsletter space is rather restricted! Whilst the listing for June shown above is complete, a fuller list containing events later in the summer can be found on the Society's website at <http://www.sotoncs.org.uk/events.htm>

Memories



To mark the Southampton Canal Society's 50th 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 and she'll give you a phone call.

In the minutes of the first Southampton Canal Society meeting, handwritten then typed by Laurie Pearce, there's a reference to "Mesdames Sessions, Evans and Pearce" providing the refreshments at the first meeting on June 1, 1967. There is nothing a good cup of tea and biscuits can't achieve. And the tea ceremony has been a permanent tradition of the society for the past five decades.

Britain's canals, the transport system of the industrial revolution, were being left to rot in the 1960s. Canals were seen as too slow. Railway wagons were also seen as too small in the age of the lorry. Canals were being filled in, were overgrown, strewn with rubbish. And the government was working actively against canal restoration. "We had one transport minister, the MP for Worcester," says Brian Evans, "he owned a lorry company." Which meant it was left to activism and outcry by the public in the 1960s.

The first meeting of what would become Southampton Canal Society had 20 people present. An early member Ron Antley, who worked at the Ordnance Survey, was also a Scout leader and allowed the hut of the 22nd Millbrook Scout Headquarters at Millbrook Point to be used. Among those present were Laurie and Joan Pearce, Barbara Hoskins, Brian and Annegret Evans, Mike Smetham, who would become vice chairman, and Bob Rice, who also worked at the Ordnance Survey (OS). The OS would provide other members and work party "navvies" over the next years. David and Margaret Kessler-Lyne, were also present, with David becoming the first treasurer.

Brian is quoted as saying at the first meeting that he thought he and Annegret were the only ones in the area suffering from "canal mania". Fifty years on, they have not recovered. Laurie and others were writing at the time to the then Southern Evening Echo to highlight canal restoration and David says he was attracted in to the society by seeing one of those letters.

"One result of this," he says, was that "the Canal society was born, a small beginning but it did blossom into a fairly large group given that our nearest proper canal was the Kennet and Avon or the Basingstoke. In many ways the Canal Society opened up the world of waterways with its trips and the famous working parties trying to defy time by keeping canal banks clear."

David, who lives with Margaret in Milton Keynes, recalls a trip as a teenager "with some chums" to the Norfolk Broads as lighting the inland waterway spark. "As I delved into the history of the Broads you came across names of people who were connected with the wider waterway movement which widened my interest in the canals. I must have joined the IWA at around that time. The canal system was very much under threat with much of it likely to be closed if it wasn't for the work of the IWA and other related organisations and, of course, us individuals, who made a nuisance of ourselves by writing letters to MPs."

In the 1960s, Laurie and Brian were keen to highlight the waterways that were being filled in or abandoned at the time. They organized talks together, Brian would speak, Laurie run the slides. They created exhibition boards and would head to shows. For Brian, it was his late brother, Don, who at that time supported protests on canals in the Midlands, who first sparked his interest. Don would work for the inland waterways cause throughout his life and was awarded the IWA's Richard Bird Medal in 2004. (Peter Oates was awarded the medal in 2003).

These days, according to the IWA, 10 million people visit canals in the UK every year. Eric Lewis, who we'll hear more of later, began cruising in 1969, and wife Sue in 1970, on a boat called Romulus, a 71 ft 6 inch

converted working boat. "At the time," says Sue, "the Bray, Ward and Skinner families were still carrying."

Since then, Sue and Eric have cruised all the connected waterways with the exception of the Lancaster Canal and the River Derwent and the Pocklington Canal. Slackers.

But why buy a boat, when you can make your own?

"Around 1968," says David, "with Margaret's help I started to build a small plywood cruiser which was eventually launched in 1970. It must have been either an act of faith or an act of complete lunacy. I couldn't and still can't, swim so what on earth was I doing building a boat? I don't know whether Noah considered this when he built the Ark, if not I was in good company. It was eventually launched at Tyle Mill on the Kennet and Avon Canal."



"Marave" about to be moved from Southampton to Tyle Mill for its maiden voyage. David and Margaret Kessler-Lyne are nearest the bow. Near the stern, with the dog, is Joan Pearce and behind her Laurie Pearce.

The Kessler-Lynes would often cruise with the Pearces and member Pete Wheble and his wife, Margaret.

"Our very first work party ever was Sulhamstead," on the Kennet & Avon Canal, says Brian. "It's towards the Reading end of the canal. That's where Pete Wheble started his career in making bonfires." In those days there were no mechanical diggers, just plenty of heavy lifting.

"I remember going to the Deepcut Dig in 1977," says Brian, who at the time was the owner of a cream Triumph 2000. "And Mike, who was always full of good ideas, suggested taking a wheelbarrow on the roof. Except that by the time we went home, it was all muddy. And then it started to rain, so all this wet mud went over the car."

In later years, the society would have "Lock 19" on the Basingstoke Canal to restore, and Peter Oates will be talking more on that. Eric, an expert wood turner, would also work with his father-in-law, Wilf Wrapson, on the same canal. A few years later, the IWA would ask the Society to provide support for the Itchen Navigation, a job taken on by Peter Oates.

In the early years, Mike Smetham would organise an auction to fundraise for the society. "So people would bring things along" sometimes things that they didn't want any more, and Mike would auction them off, says Brian. "I remember one member paying a good price on some fluorescent light fittings, another brought a toilet seat. Mike, who always had a good sense of humour, brought a bottle of Romsey Canal Water."

In the next few newsletters, to mark our 50th anniversary, we'll hear more on work parties and Lock 19, the Itchen Navigation, working boats and how a picnic at Foxton Locks led to nine years as society chairman for Paul Herbert.

Annemarie Evans

Minutes of the First Meeting - 1967

SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY

Minutes of First Meeting held on Thursday, 1st June 1967 at 22nd Millbrook Scouts' Headquarters, Millbrook.

The meeting opened at 8.30 p.m. with twenty members present. A variety of Inland Waterways literature and maps were displayed around the hall which provided interest in the subject of the meeting.

Mr Brian Evans gave an introductory talk and stressed the aims of various national associations and societies who were solely responsible for saving Britain's Inland Waterway systems from total abandonment. It was only through public pressure that British Waterways were accepting their responsibilities, if somewhat begrudgingly, and carrying out the minimum of maintenance on the canal system. He went on to say that up to the end of 1966, he thought that he and his wife were the only persons in this area who suffered from "canal mania", but as a result of one or two letters to the Editor in the Southern Evening Echo he realised that there were others similarly affected, and by contacting these other people, a small band of canal enthusiasts became known to one another. As a result of the subsequent "get togethers" it was decided to try and form a local area group of people who were obviously interested in the inland waterways generally, but could do little individually to encourage their interest, as except for the Itchen Navigation and a small section of the Southampton/Andover canal at Romsey, there was no canal proper closer than the Kennet and Avon, a canal whose future, along with others, depends entirely on the campaign being waged to bring about its restoration.

Mr Evans went on to say that he hoped that by forming a local society with a modest annual subscription, it would enable those interested to meet socially once a month and so share our common interest. It was hoped to arrange canal trips and other outings of interest as the Society progressed, and there was also a supply of photographic slides and films of waterways interest that would be shown when the winter evenings came along. He then thanked all those present for coming along to the meeting and asked for any questions.

A short discussion then took place. Messrs Mulholland and Packard hoped that we wouldn't forget about the Itchen Navigation in any of our future campaigns.

Mr Rice suggested that there should be an election of Officers and Committee.

The following Officers were then elected to serve until an annual General Meeting to be held probably in October. All were carried unanimously.

CHAIRMAN Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Kessler-Lyne

MR BRIAN EVANS

TREASURER Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Myers

MR DAVID KESSLAR-LYNE.

SECRETARY Proposed by Mr Smetham
Seconded by Mr Rice

MR .L.PEARCE

COMMITTEE OF TWO Proposed by Mr Smetham
Seconded by Mr Kessler-Lyne
Proposed by Mr Rice
Seconded by Mr Smith

MR.RICE

MISS HOSKING

Refreshments were then served by Mesdames Sessions, Evans and Pearce.

A discussion then followed as to the advisability of having a small annual subscription, this to cover such items as hire of meeting places, stationery, and payment of expenses of invited speakers if desired.

It was proposed by Mr Smetham and seconded by Mrs Sessions that an annual subscription of 10/- be levied, payable at our next meeting.

Carried unanimously.

The Chairman then asked for suggestions as to a suitable name for our newly formed club or society. After some discussion, it was proposed by Mr Rice and seconded by Mr Mulholland that we call ourselves the SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY. It was appreciated that there were members present who lived outside of Southampton, but as Southampton was a central point for us all, we should retain

Minutes of the First Meeting - 1967

Continued from previous page

(cont'd)

its identity. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Secretary was asked to notify the local press of the formation of the Society, and also send a letter to the Ministry of Transport expressing the Society's concern at any attempt of the Ministry to abandon any of our inland waterways when the Minister's report was made public later in the year.

A levy of 1/- per person was taken to cover immediate expenses. 10/- was paid to the 22nd Millbrook Scout Group for hire of the hall, leaving 11/- remaining in the general fund.

The Chairman then closed the meeting. He again thanked all those present for their support and arranged our next meeting for Thursday the 6th July at the same venue.

The above minutes (taken verbatim from the original) were signed by the Secretary, Laurie Pearce, and the Chairman, Brian Evans, at the next meeting on 6th July. The names of members given on another document as attending that first meeting were: Mr & Mrs B Evans, M King, Mr W Mulholland, W R Myers, Miss B Hosking, Mr E Smith, Mr & Mrs F Wheble, Miss B M Gardner, Mr R E Rice, Mr S E Packard, Mr & Mrs K Sessions, Mr M J Smetham, Mr D Kessler-Lyne, Mr R G Antley and Mr & Mrs L Pearce.

Southampton Canal Society - Formation

As Chairman since the formation of the Society, Brian Evans was asked in 1997 to give us the benefit of some of his memories of those early days.

The plans for a society in Southampton came together in the Spring of 1967 after various letters in the local press on waterways by four enthusiasts. Laurie Pearce, David Kessler-Lyne and I had written to the Southern Evening Echo and Mike Smetham to the Romsey Advertiser.

I visited Mike Smetham, at the time living just down the road in Romsey with his parents. I had some seats to fill on the 'Water Ouzel' at Braunston, which I had hired for the Ordnance Survey Cine Club and Mike suggested I phone Laurie Pearce (we did not have a phone at home). David was contacted by post.

I arranged a little meeting at our house, at which Joan Pearce and Annegret were also present. I gave a little slide show and projected a holiday film. Since Mike had not had a letter in the 'Echo', we gave him the task of writing to announce a public meeting.

Colleague and friend Ron Antley offered his scout hut for the meeting which stood by the railway footbridge at Millbrook leading to the shore by the King George V dry dock - no container berths in those days. The hut was soon to be swept away for road widening.

We had a gathering of 20 people turn up in that cosy little wooden hut and began as we have carried on for 30 years - with a mid-meeting break for tea and biscuits.

It was decided that the Southampton Canal Society should be formed. I was elected Chairman, Laurie Pearce: secretary; David Kessler-Lyne: treasurer and the four committee members were Bob Rice, Barbara Hosking, David Gibson and Beryl Gardner. Newsletter Editor was Bessie Allcock.

Early meetings were held on the second Thursday in the month; I think until we arrived at the St John Ambulance Hall. For a few months we met at 'The Old Thatch' pub at Maybush (the cup of tea and biscuits

were still available), then moved on to the Temperance Institute in Carlton Crescent.

It was only when meetings got too big (can you believe it?) at around 70 plus that we became concerned for the strength of the upstairs meeting room floor and also the fire escape. That was when we looked for an alternative, and John Reed was instrumental in moving us to the St John Hall.

The Society began as a campaign group and we bombarded the press with items about waterways. We have the cuttings to prove it.

Over the years members were present at many canal working parties particularly in the early years. The Kennet & Avon benefited from our labours at Sulhampstead, Tyle Mill, Froxfield, Wooton Rivers and Bath. Peter Wheble was our bonfire king, often blocking out large areas of countryside with dense smoke, and Norman Lucas, who joined the Society at the second or third meeting and still with us, was present at most working parties. We even had a car-load of navvies who drove to Manchester for Operation Ashtack.

Later on, Peter Oates led work parties on the Basingstoke Canal at Ash Vale, Lock 19 and St Johns Woking, but many volunteers were recruited from outside the Society.

The Society exhibition stand was extensively used at Southampton Show, Beaulieu Auto Jumble, Model Railway exhibitions etc with an accompanying sales table partly stocked with traditionally painted items by Joan Pearce.

Over the years we have become widely known and our badge, which was designed by Beryl Gardner, has been seen in many places.

If you feel that my memory has not served me accurately or you would like to relate further items of Southampton Canal Society history, please contact our eager editor Peter Oates.

Brian Evans
SCS Newsletter No 310 - June 1997

Society's Canal Outing - 1967



Above: SCS members on KELSTON before departure from Newbury on 3rd September 1967 (Photo: R Holmes)

Below: KELSTON about to enter Guyers Lock (Photo: R Carey)

Bottom: Returning through Newbury Lock (Photo: R Carey)



The following is an article that appeared in the Society's first Newsletter published in November 1967 and describes our first trip boat outing.

Thirty-two members took part in an enjoyable 4 hour trip on the Kennet and Avon Canal at Newbury aboard John Gould's Motorboat "KELSTON" on Sunday the 3rd September.

Although the weather early in the day at Southampton looked ominous, it changed to dry and reasonably sunny when we met at the old Canal Wharf (now a Car Park) at Newbury at 2 p.m.

After a few photographs taken by Mr. Holmes of Bitterne for publicity purposes, we set off westwards with the diesel engine throbbing away furiously in spite of there being a coil of rope entangled round the propellor shaft, so we were told!

We passed under Newbury Road Bridge and entered Newbury Lock which was unique for it's lever type ground paddles. They purred most efficiently however and we were soon out of the top gates, and through the swing bridge just beyond.

Some delay occurred at the next bridge where we grounded on the usual rubbish which wasn't surprising in view of our 2½ ton load of passengers! We "rocked the ship" and off we went - entering Guyers Lock after about a mile of pleasant countryside. We found this lock and the next (Higgs Lock) in excellent condition and a credit to British Waterways.

On the last pound we were carving our way through silt caused by drainage from the adjacent Hamstead Estate, although this will be overcome in time with the passage of "KELSTON" on regular trips and, dare we hope? other heavy craft.

We passed a Weir and entered deeper water, whereupon we proceeded at a rate of knots through very attractive scenery to Hamstead Marshall Lock - a very pretty spot for a picnic for anyone wishing to visit it by motor car.

The latter lock was the limit of navigation unfortunately, and some members were rather keen to attack it from a working party angle! No doubt this wish will be granted when restoration gets the go ahead.

The return trip was uneventful - the cameras were still clicking merrily, and the scenery remained as attractive as ever. Some members decided to stretch their legs along the towpath which was a botanist's paradise.

A point of interest with two of the locks (Higgs and Guyers) - they were named after soldiers killed in the Battle of Newbury during the Civil War.

The members all enjoyed refreshments at the local headquarters of the Newbury Branch of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust before the return journey home.

We hope that this outing will be the first of many more equally successful ventures made by our Society.

Laurie Pearce
SCS Newsletter No 1 - November 1967

Some delay
occurred at the
next bridge where
we grounded on
the usual rubbish

Mayor of Romsey to go Afloat

As part of its 1996 50th Anniversary celebrations, the IWA Birmingham Branch created a jigsaw map of the country. Individual pieces of the jigsaw were conveyed back to Birmingham by inland water from and by the IWA regions and branches, and reassembled at the International Canal Conference in June 1996. As part of these celebrations, SCS organised an event to coincide with part of the jigsaw taking to the waters of the Andover Canal. This was advertised as follows:

Although billed as a Walk and Barbecue, the event has additional features making it a fitting completion to the Spring Programme of Jubilee Celebrations and guaranteeing an enjoyable day whatever the weather.

The Walk: about 3½ miles in the Test Valley partly along the route forming part of the former Redbridge & Andover and Southampton & Salisbury Canals. This fragment remains in water (about a foot depth) and unpowered boats are not prevented from using it, though levels are maintained by plank weirs here and there. The start of the walk and the base for the subsequent barbecue is Romsey Community School, Priestlands, off Greatbridge Road, Romsey. There is no charge for the walk but if you do not buy a barbecue ticket you might care to make a donation.

The barbecue will be a genuine outdoor charcoal grilled job of chops, sausages, burgers and rolls plus salad and the usual trimmings, with coffee and tea. Of interest to some will be the licensed bar. Should the weather not favour a seat on the terrace overlooking the River Test, you could enjoy your meal in the comfortable lounge. The cost of satisfying the appetite worked up by the walk is £3.50. Please book your tickets in

advance.

Artist Harley Crossley will be exhibiting a selection of his work and reproductions will be available for purchase, including his popular greetings cards. Further opportunities for spending money will be provided by the Society sales stand and a raffle. A skittle alley is available for our use and the aforementioned bar is open until 4.00pm.

The walk starts at 10.00am and lunch will be served as and when groups return. This is intended to be a relaxing day at the end of an active month and for once there are no tidal deadlines to meet; so if you don't start walking until 10.30 it will not really matter. But you would not want to miss watching the Mayor of Romsey and well known waterway writer Jon Sims attempt to propel the Jubilee Jigsaw along the canal on its last journey in Hampshire. This will happen at 11.30am.

In view of this activity on the water you may think the day provides an excellent opportunity to put your own small boat over the bank. For insurance reasons such an act cannot be part of the event organised by the Southampton Canal Society and would be entirely your responsibility, just as it is for any member of the public who follows this occasional practice.

Don't forget to support the Society's major event for 1996. Tickets for the Barbecue are now available, either from the Editor or from Brian, price £3.50.

In order to make the catering simpler (and to ensure there's enough food for you!), please buy your tickets in advance.

SCS Newsletter No 296 - March 1996



The brave Town Mayor and Mayoress together with crew Jon Sims and Peter Oates await instructions for the off from Chairman Brian Evans. The jigsaw piece is at Brian's feet.

This event was reported by the Romsey Advertiser under the headline: **Town Mayor and Mayoress travel in the inflatable Mayoral 'barge'**

Was Councillor Charles Mead the first Mayor of Romsey ever to travel on the Andover and Redbridge Canal, when he and the Mayoress joined members of Southampton Canal Society on Sunday and the Inland Waterways Association at New Road, Romsey?

Was the boat that they cruised in, driven by an electric outboard, the first powered craft on that waterway?

A little procession of four small boats whirled and paddled about 500 yards upstream before returning to Romsey "Wharf". Their journey was made easier with deeper water thanks to the effort of the men from the environment agency who had added an extra four inches to the stop planks at New Road.



In a Mayoral barge on the Barge? The Town Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr and Mrs Charles Mead pictured during their ceremonial trip on the old Barge canal on Sunday (Photo: Romsey Advertiser)

The boating was watched by a small crowd of people, about 45 of which had enjoyed a guided walk from Romsey Community School across Greatbridge and Fishlake Meadows, all part of celebrating the golden jubilee of the Inland Waterways Association.

Five hundred miles

"Fifty years of fighting for Waterways," says the poster, in which time 500 miles of canal and river have been restored and returned to public use.

Aboard one of the small boats was carried a large, two feet six inch piece of jigsaw, depicting a map of the Solent and the inland waterways of Southern Hampshire, one of 35 pieces representing the map of England and Wales.

(Continued on page 8)

A Restorer's Report - July 1977

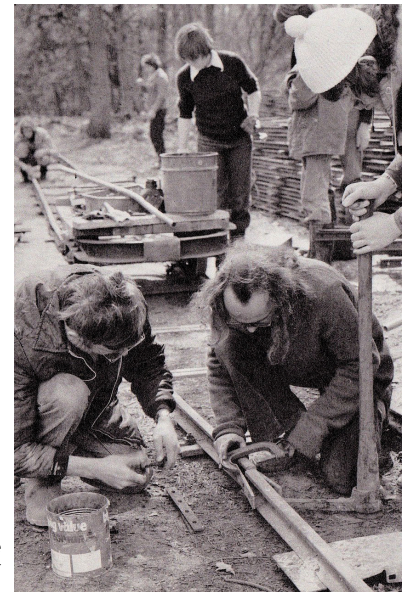
I must apologise for the absence of this 'regular feature' from these pages last month. Pressure of work in connection the M3 Inquiry did not allow me to write a report. For the same reason I only attended the last working party on the Saturday.

At the last two working parties our efforts have been concentrated mainly on track maintenance to keep the trains moving. Although this seems a mundane and non-productive job, it is one that is essential if restoration is to continue at it's present rate. Through the endeavours of the lads on the Job Creation Scheme it is expected that Locks 26 and 27 will be complete by the time that you read this report apart from the installation of gates. Lock 25 is similarly considered complete. Work has started upon Lock 28 (the top lock of the flight) with initial clearance complete, together with the rebuilding of the tail. Saturday 11th June in addition to railway maintenance, saw us doing some landscaping around Lock 25 with the result things look a bit more like the finished canal.

The working party on the Saturday will be at Curzon Bridge. There may be some work at a site nearer than Curzon Bridge but Laurie Pearce will let you know at the meeting. But there is bound to be work at Curzon Bridge on both Saturday and Sunday.

Peter Oates
SCS Newsletter No 102 July 1977

*Volunteers from Southampton laying track on the
Deepcut railway between Locks 25 and 26 in 1977*



Southampton Canal Who?

It's over a year now since Pete Oates talked me into this game. Not that he had much talking to do. Well, could you live in beautiful Birmingham for twelve years without getting to love canals? To live within cycling distance of Fradley Junction and even closer to the poor old Wyrley and Essington; to see the beauty of the long since railroaded Uttoxeter branch near the Churnet valley and then be given the opportunity of saving the Basingstoke Canal from an apathetic end of muddy misery.

I jumped at the chance. Since that first visit last May (1976) my fellow navvies have changed their names and faces with monotonous regularity. Oh sure, in my blind enthusiasm it's easy to utter cries of "Pah! No stamina" or "Scared to get your feet wet" and I realise that it's not anybody's idea of fun to spend a peaceful Sunday afternoon trying to tame a lunatic jack-hammer. But then this appeal is not directed at just anybody.

Let me try and explain myself by a parallel. About twice a year I go and watch the Saints play football. On such rare occasion I am usually treated to derisory hoots of "Part time supporter." However, I explain my crystal clear conscience on the basis that I don't pretend to be a supporter and never claim to owe allegiance to the game other than a fleeting interest. I rarely, if ever, offer any opinions on how the side should be chosen, how the club's money should be spent, or indeed what tactics should be used.

You may understand, therefore, my annoyance at hearing a certain member of your august society grumbling on at great length about how BWB never do anything for canals, about how they would really like to close the whole system and, worst of all, about the apathy of the

general public. Would that this enthusiast spent as much energy toiling on the towpath. There are exceptions of course: Pete and Pam Oates, Charlie and Pauline, and that dog and his humans, one or two others and to these muddy souls my deepest respects.

The July working party consisted of eight of us aged between 16 and 24. With the exception of myself they were all apprentice navvies but the sheer effort and enthusiasm of the week-end's work drew praise even from the cynically humoured Frank Jones. I could tell you that we laid 22 sections of concrete pipe for the by-pass weir, that we completed the pile driving on the top sill, that we used the railway to transport clay for the bottom sill and that all in all we left Lock 27 much nearer to useful completion. But then do any of you know Lock 27 and its breathtakingly beautiful setting in the forest of Surrey Heath? I could also tell you that every single one of us (and more) will be back next month because we enjoyed ourselves so much.

"You're with the Southampton Canal Society are you?" asked Frank Jones.

"No chance," we chorused. "We're with the Ordnance Survey."

"What persuaded you to come along then?" he asked.

"Well," said one of our number, "we've just come back from our first holiday on the cut. The canals gave us a great time and we felt we ought to return the favour and do something for the canals."

Need I say more?

Jon Sims
SCS Newsletter No 103 - August 1977

Town Mayor and Mayoress travel in the inflatable Mayoral 'barge'

(Continued from page 7)

Made in Birmingham, the jigsaw pieces were dispersed to all parts of the country to be returned to the city as much as possible by boat.

This piece of jigsaw had already travelled extensively on local waterways and the voyage will continue via the Way and Avon Canal [sic], Rivers Wey and Thames and the Grand Union Canal.

Eleven Mayors are involved with its voyage and greetings letters between them all are also being conveyed by water.

Back in Birmingham all 35 pieces will be assembled up the front of the International Conference Centre to coincide with an international

conference on inland waterways, sponsored by the Inland Waterways Association and British Waterways, from June 26th to 29th.

The Romsey Mayoral Voyage over, boaters and walkers returned to Romsey School for a barbecue and "canal afternoon" in the comfort of the community lounge with publicity stands, exhibition of paintings by Harley Crosley and waterways videos.

Romsey resident Brian Evans, of Lansdowne Gardens, is the chairman of the Southampton Canal Society.

Romsey Advertiser, Friday May 24, 1996
Republished in SCS Newsletter No 299 - June 1996

IWALK

In 1978, a national fund raising event was organised by the IWA in which there were 90 sponsored walks being held on one weekend the length of England and Wales. The money raised was for voluntary restoration projects, and locally the proceeds were to be divided between the IWA National Restoration Fund and the Itchen Navigation and Southampton Canal Societies.

The event IWALK has come and gone and was in my view both a success and a missed opportunity.

On the Itchen Navigation, Sunday June 11th was as fine and sunny a day as we have had so far this year which showed off the beauty of the waterway to its best advantage. 146 walkers participated in the first sponsored walk organised on the Itchen Navigation and almost everyone made the 10½ miles from Winchester to Woodmill. These walkers have promised us £952 and since a number of those who have already sent me their money have been kind enough to include more than they were sponsored for, it looks as though the final total may top £1,000. After a little nail biting and a few anxious moments wondering whether or not our walk was going to be successful, I admit to feeling pleased with the result. May I take this opportunity to thank all those who took part either as walkers or marshals for making the Itchen Navigation Walk the success that it certainly was. To those with hot and/or blistered feet, my condolences and well done - I am sure that it was worthwhile. Already I've had a few enquiries asking when the next walk along the Itchen is to be held. IT's early days yet, not having quite recovered from this event, but it seems likely that we will try and repeat this year's success next year.

Within the Guildford Branch of the IWA, our walk contributed to the

totals of 756 walkers raising £7,460, by far the largest amount for any one branch within the organisation, beating the next (Nottingham) by 100%. The national result was 3,910 walkers raising £31,269 plus whatever is raised by 'Waterways World' whose editor was walking. Whilst this amount of money is not to be sneezed at, I do feel that having organised around 90 walks to take place over the one week-end it is a little disappointing that so few participated. The National IWALK Committee estimated before the event that 10,000 walkers would take part and I feel that full advantage has not been taken of a great opportunity.

However, may I again offer my congratulations and thanks to all those who took part in the Itchen walk. Everyone, walkers and marshals, made for a very creditable performance.

PJO

SCS Newsletter No 114 - July 1978

A further IWALK was organised for 9 June 1985 but this was not nearly so successful, a result that seems to have been reflected nationally:

Considering the amount of work which went into the organisation we were a bit disappointed with the result. 39 walkers and 4 dogs completed the walk along the Itchen Navigation towpath from Woodmill, Southampton to Blackbridge Wharf, Winchester. Although a blustery day everyone taking part seemed to have had an enjoyable time and Peter estimates that the gross income will be around £300.

The Committee decided that Southampton Canal Society would pay the cost of the Minibus used to transport the IWALKers back to Woodmill.

SCS Newsletter No 183 - July 1985

Working Party

Lest you think that the Society's working parties were only involved with the Basingstoke Canal, this report shows the Kennet and Avon Canal featured strongly, especially so before 1976.

The Working Party held on Sunday 11th November, at Froxfield Locks proved to be most successful and the Working Party Organiser was pleased to see so many people - 25 in all - from the Southampton Canal Society. Work was completed on the clearing of the undergrowth around Locks 68 and 69 and also of the coping stones and partly completed work on Lock 70. It is hoped to have another working party on the second Sunday in December, 9th, when work can be finished on Lock 70. Please come and bring some tools - forks, spades, slashers, rakes, cutters.

We will assemble at Froxfield at 10.30 a.m. And depending on the amount of work to be undertaken and the weather conditions, we will continue whilst the light lasts. There is always plenty of bonfire work to be done so those of you who are interested in this aspect should bring a supply of matches and old newspapers.

SCS Newsletter No 59 - December 1973



SCS workers (left to right: Les Russell, Brian Evans and Geoff Crosley?) at Froxfield on 11 November 1973

The Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz

Every year since December 1995 there has been a waterways quiz held in Southampton except in 1999 when it was held at Byfleet Boat Club on the River Wey. These quizzes had their origin in two quizzes organised by IWA held at the Crown pub in Chichester in 1993 and 1994. SCS won the second of these and the quiz came to Southampton and even when we lose the winners seem to ask for it to be hosted here.

Four teams assembled for the Annual Inter-Society Quiz: IWA Solent & Arun Branch; IWA Salisbury Group; IWA Avon & Wilts Branch and Southampton Canal Society. There was excitement throughout the whole contest for only a few points separated the teams at any one time. From time to time, team members were completely stumped by difficult slides which quizmaster Eric Lewis had found among his collection.

Half way through the evening, teams and audience paused to partake of the ample American Supper which, as usual, proved too large for complete consumption.

The quiz resumed and eventual winners were Southampton Canal Society - though only just. The team members were presented with the 'new' quiz trophy.

Everyone had an exciting, jolly and interesting evening. Our thanks to the Lewis family: Eric for all the preparation and performing the quizmaster's job, Sue for keeping score and to Peter the projectionist.

It was great to see so many IWA friends who had travelled long distances to be with us. A little more support from our own Society members would not have gone amiss.

Thanks to Ray Brooks for resurrecting the 'silver' cup and painting canal roses onto it. Also thanks to Eric Lewis for turning a beautiful wooden plinth to carry the cup and for obtaining and attaching engraved plates noting the winning teams of all the Inter-Society Quizzes that have so far taken place.

SCS Newsletter No 317 - February 1998

Dedicated Chairmanship

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

With the visit of the IWA Chairman, Audrey Smith, it was decided in committee to make a donation of £100.00 to the IWA Jubilee Appeal. Normally, a donation is made at a later date but we decided on this occasion to make a 'splash' and present the cheque at the end of the meeting.

I was a bit surprised when asked to make the presentation after the tea break. A bit unusual, but never mind, anything to keep the committee happy.

Well, I handed over the cheque, but there was not a lot of 'splash'.

Imagine my surprise when I was called back to the front and Audrey made a presentation to me on behalf of Southampton Canal Society members. As someone said, "He was nearly at a loss for words." Quite true.

I would like to thank members, both those who financed and those who secretly arranged the purchase of the beautiful framed print of the picture by Alex Prowse to give to me for 30 years as SCS Chairman.

There have been times during those 30 years when Society matters became a bit like hard work. There has been occasional disappointments. Sometimes I have felt cross, even angry. But mostly it has been fun and the last thing that I would have expected was reward.

To me, our Society is part of a wide movement contributing to the betterment of the waterways. Waterways which I feel are beneficial to the environment, contribute to the quality of recreation for many and in some areas provide civilised transport. I hope that I will always be able to support that movement.

Annegret was highly delighted with her beautiful pot plant. While she is hardly likely to get me to a meeting early, as Audrey suggested on the night, she has always been a big support and over

the years has completed endless hours of typing.

So thank you all, members, once again for your generosity.

Brian

SCS Newsletter No 308 - April 1997

Brian served as Chairman for further four years. As the incoming chairman, Paul Herbert, said at the 2001 AGM:

"Brian has been Chairman since the Society was first established in 1967. Throughout his 34 years as Chairman the Society, under his leadership, has achieved much. Whilst no longer a Society that goes out to physically restore canals it is, nevertheless, still very active in its campaigning for the waterways and providing financial assistance, albeit in a small way, towards their continued use and restoration."

BRIAN'S VIEW

As AGM's go the July meeting was quite well attended. With nothing controversial, and willing horses for the committee, chairing my last AGM was an easy and enjoyable duty.

One part of the proceedings surprised Annegret and me when we were presented with two nice narrowboat pictures, wonderful keepsakes to remind us of our time "at the top". Having received a gift at the Society's 30 year mark, we would not have expected anything further. We both thank Society members very much for their generosity.

Also "Thank You" for making me your president. As I wrote in my annual report, I always felt that being chairman gave me status and privilege, now I think that I am in an even better position, both of these without the chairman's jobs. I feel also it is an honour to be president and as such I stay close to the workings of the Society, and as always I aim to make a positive contribution to the work of the Society.2

Brian Evans

SCS Newsletter No 354 - August 2001



IWA Chairman Audrey Smith presents Brian Evans with his print on 6 March 1997

Good Reading

The only book to be published by the Society was the duplicated 20 page booklet about the Itchen Navigation. Almost the only mention of it in the Newsletter is this from the month after publication:

Books are costly these days so use your library tickets to their best advantage.

"Journey of the Swan" by John Liley is one you must read being a familiar theme of an ex-working boat travelling the Canal system and Thames and in the "Flower of Gloster" class (you must have read that one by now) with obvious enthusiasm and wit and to quote from the book would be to spoil your pleasure in reading it yourselves (Southampton Library 386.46-0942).

Yet another to look out for is "Hold on a Minute" by Tim Wilkinson (386-

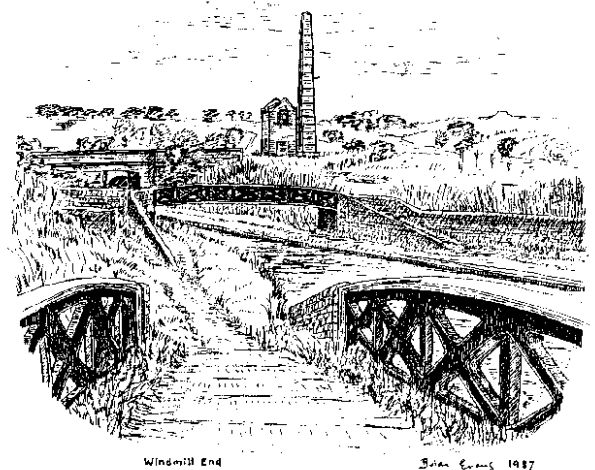
20942). A business man and his fashion model wife rent a pair of boats, carry cargo and live with people of the cut with the funny and not so funny experiences and difficulties involved.

Finally "The Itchen Navigation" (30p) is a survey by Society Members of our Local "Cut" including some history and finishing with observations and recommendations which could keep us out of mischief for years to the possible detriment of our work on the Basingstoke Canal.

We are thankful for members like Messrs. Crossley, Froud, Hockley and Oates for their "expedition" and putting their findings to paper for the benefit of less active members and the general public alike.

Len Durrant

SCS Newsletter No 99 - April 1977



Windmill End

Brian Evans 1987

We must also remember Brian's contributions to the Newsletter from time to time of pen and ink sketches, mainly of canal scenes, although some other themes associated with transport have also appeared. The picture above of Windmill End first appeared in SCS Newsletter No 340 - April 2000.

Day-Star Theatre

Visits by the Day-Star Theatre (aka Pete and Jane Marshall) have become something of an institution. They first performed at one of our meetings as the entertainment at our 30th Anniversary Party in June 1997. Their visit in 2016 was their 18th trip to Southampton.

Our 30th Anniversary Party was celebrated in style by about 75 members and friends with a visit by the Day-Star Theatre Company and an excellent buffet.



We have no picture of their 1997 performance but above is one of their production "Put that light out!" taken at Chilworth in October 2008

I far as I know, the Society had never before hosted a performance by a theatre company - even one with only two performers. (If I'm wrong, I'm sure Brian Evans will put me right!.) Duffy and Jane Marshall provided us with a performance of their new play *Something in the Water*. As usual

they managed to portray a good variety of well characterised individuals; I, for one, lost count of the number of costume changes that they made but it must have been around twenty - each!!! As one member said to me: "thoroughly entertaining." Thank you Day-Star for helping to make our evening enjoyable.

After the performance, the meeting turned its focus towards the wide variety of marvellous food that had been prepared. This was obviously well received as by the end of the meeting it was nearly all gone.

It was particularly good to see such a good turn out, especially by those people who don't normally attend our meetings for a variety of good reasons. It was also very gratifying to see so many old and new friends meeting up, sometimes after an interval of a few years, swapping reminiscences and catching up on the news. The atmosphere was very lively and friendly.

I feel that the Committee worked well as a team in organising the evening and providing the food. I'm sure everyone will wish to join me in thanking them for their efforts. However, we must not forget to thank also the other members who contributed on the night towards a very successful evening.

If you were unable to attend, I'm sorry but you missed a very good evening. Hope to see you all at the next anniversary (if not before).

Peter Oates

SCS Newsletter No 311 - July 1997

Southampton Boat Show

The IWA first had a stand at the Southampton Boat Show in 1969. Having assisted for many years, Peter Oates took over running it in 1993 and continued to do so until he moved from Hampshire at the end of 2005. Without the help of SCS members over all these years, it would have been impossible have a stand at the show.

September this year saw the 34th Southampton Boat Show held at Mayflower Park. Whilst this event is predominantly for sea water boaters, the Inland Waterways Association has had a stand at each show since Year 2. The Southampton Boat Show is important for the IWA, not only for the sales that can be made but also for flying the 'canals flag'. For seven or eight years (he cannot remember just how many) our Secretary and Newsletter Editor, Peter Oates, has been responsible for running the stand. Not an easy task. One of Peter's duties is to round up a volunteer band of helpers to assist him in staffing the stand and many of these come back year after year.



Laura Sturrock and Ray Brooks on duty in 2002

Many Southampton Canal Society members are willingly roped in to assist Peter (and Ray Carter from IWA HQ) to erect the stand before the Show; staff it over the ten day period that it is open to the public, and then dismantle it on the last evening.

The most demanding task, in my view, is the actual setting up and dismantling of the stand. This year the former took five of us nearly all day to complete, though the breaking down is a lot quicker at around two hours.

The actual attendance duties on the stand are far less onerous and quite enjoyable. Apart from selling waterways books, maps and other items, there are numerous enquiries from people thinking of taking holidays or moving more permanently onto the canals in England and abroad.

So, if you are interested in helping out on the stand next year, just have a word with Peter.

Paul Herbert

SCS Newsletter No 366 - October 2002

Meetings

In its fifty years, the Society has held its meetings in only 5 different venues and two of those together saw meetings on only six occasions.

The first meeting was held at Millbrook Scouts HQ in June 1967 and meetings seem to have been held there for about 4 months before it was demolished making way for road "improvements." One or probably two meetings took place in a room at "The Old Thatch" in Old Shirley but that was only temporary.

From December 1967, the Society moved to the Temperance Institute in Carlton Crescent. Meetings were held there for a number years in an upstairs room. As membership grew, the numbers attending meetings also grew. Members became concerned that the fire escape was

inadequate and wondered if the floor had been built to take so much weight. With so many people in the room meetings were often hot and sticky - but not stuffy. So on again to the St John Ambulance Hall in Kings Park Road starting in November 1973. This was the first regular meeting to be held on the first Thursday of the month, most meetings before this were on the second Thursday.

The January 2001 meeting was the Society's 327th (and last) in the St John Ambulance Hall in Southampton before moving out to our new (and current) home at Chilworth Parish Hall.

Before January 2010, the Society had 12 meetings every year without

(Continued on page 12)

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

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

Membership

When the Society was formed in June 1967, 20 people attended. Annual subscriptions were fixed at 10/- (50p) for Single members, 15/- (75p) for Husband & Wife, and 5/- (25p) for Junior (under 18) members.

By the time of the first Annual General Meeting, one year later, the membership total had reached 60 and passed the hundred mark in 1971. By February 1972 this had further increased to over 130. The total seems to have fluctuated between 130 and 150 until at least 1981 when the lower figure was reported to the AGM.

The annual subscriptions did not rise until 1976 when rates became: Single 75p, Husband & Wife £1.00 and a new Family category cost £1.25. Juniors remained at 25p - interestingly 30 Junior members were reported in 1974 and 7 Family memberships in 1980.

This was the year that increases in the rates started to rise more frequently. In 1983 the Husband & Wife rate seems to have been

subsumed into the Family category (£3.50) and Junior members had a 100% rise to 50p which in 1987 disappeared from the rates list.

In June 2000, Single membership rose to £7.00 and the Family (or Joint) rate became £10.00. The next decade saw rates rise nearly every year so that from April 2011 Singles were charged £15.00 and the Joint fee was £25.00. Since then there has been only one rise to the current levels of £16.00 and £27.00.

Whilst rises or falls to membership numbers were referred to terms such as "numbers have remained fairly static" or "we lost two members and gained three new ones," I could only find one mention in the Newsletter after 1981 to an actual number and that was 49 in 2013. Unfortunately, it seems that our Society is not alone in suffering a reduction in membership.

Peter Oates

Meetings

(Continued from page 11)

fail. The meeting for that month and also in December 2010 had to be cancelled as result of bad weather.

True that Chilworth Hall is not available if or when an election is held (usually May) nor during August when the Hall is closed for maintenance and improvement. This was usually solved by holding the due meeting a week early. However, this practice was abandoned in 2012 and the Society now holds 10 meetings each year. The next meeting in Chilworth Hall (in July 2017) will be the 588th (instead of the 601st).

Peter Oates

Right: An early horse-drawn boat trip on the River Wey below Godalming. Date unknown



Annual General Meeting 2017

In accordance with the Constitution, notice is hereby formally given of the Southampton Canal Society's Annual General Meeting on the 6th July 2017 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 above).

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.