



NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Column

March Meeting

We are pleased to welcome Richard Thomas back to Chilworth. On this occasion Richard will be talking to us about 'The Highland Canals'.

Skittles Evening – 14th March

This is your last call for the Society Skittles Evening to be held at 'The Kings Head' in Hursley, on Friday 14th March 2008. See the advertisement in this Newsletter for full details. If you have booked for this event but either haven't yet paid, or given your food choice to Rogan Olding, you must do this now. If you haven't booked, please contact Rogan immediately to see if there are any vacancies. Full details of the Skittles Evening are contained in the advertisement in this Newsletter.

Proposed Boat Gathering

Further to the item in the last two Newsletters regarding our proposed informal boaters' get-together in the Napton/Braunston area in May, it is likely that six boats will be attending. If you haven't spoken to me yet but would like to meet up with the crews of the other boats, please contact me.

Society Spring Outing

Our outings organiser, Maureen Greenham, has organised a special 'double-header' for us on Saturday 19th April. We start off with a trip on the 'John Pinkerton' on the Basingstoke Canal and then drive to Alresford for the second part of our outing, with a steam trip on 'The Watercress Line'. Full details of this outing are published in this Newsletter. Early bookings to Maureen are essential.

Future Programme

There have been some changes to our forthcoming programme and all our dates to the end of this year have now been filled. On 3rd April Steve Haywood will be presenting 'Fruit Flies Like a Banana', based on his book

SCS Spring Outing

Our spring outing will be to the Basingstoke Canal and The Watercress Line on Saturday 19 April and the cost will be £16 for adults and £8 for children.

Our day begins at 10.30am at Odiham where we board the John Pinkerton for a 2½ hour (approximately) cruise along the Basingstoke Canal. There is a toilet and bar on board. We can take food but not drinks which have to be purchased at the bar. The boat takes up to 50 people so bring along your family and friends. (N.B. There is a chance that the boat may leave from Mychett if a bridge between Odiham and Mychett has not been repaired by

of the same name. Later that month, on the 24th (our May meeting!), we have Clive Field and 'Narrowboats to Norway'. On 5th June Society member Bob Dukes will be presenting a film and talk entitled 'Silk: Myth and Mystery' – describing the history of how silk came from China, attempts to introduce its production in Europe and the UK and then America, and industrialisation etc. Dennis Bright returns on 3rd July with another wildlife talk – 'Wild West Wales'. Our AGM with supporting programme will be held on 31st July (our August meeting!).

Dave Yaldren of the Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society will be showing a film on 4th September and talking about that organisation and the saving, restoration and operation of The Watercress Line. The following month, on the 2nd October, it will be Day-Star Theatre again (*see below*).

On 6th November Paul Barnett will be giving an illustrated talk about 'The Purton Hulks' which were beached along the banks of the River Severn to protect the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal from erosion. And then it's nearly Christmas again – with the annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz on 4th December.

I am sure members will agree that we have an interesting and varied programme for the remainder of the year.

Day-Star Theatre

I am delighted to be able to advise members that Pete and Jane Marshall have agreed to bring Day-Star Theatre back to Chilworth in October. The production will be an adapted version of one of their education performances based on the Second World War – "Put that light out!" which follows the fortunes of Elsie Roberts, a young mother of two, from 1939 to 1945. As usual, the performance will be followed by an American Supper. Full details will be published in a future Newsletter and tickets will go on sale in early summer.

Paul Herbert

19 April).

When we leave the boat we have approximately 2 hours before our train journey at 3 pm and there are several places to eat in Alresford not far from the station, and also places en route.

We have reserved seats on the 3pm train which travels to Alton and returns to Alresford at 4.29pm

Please let me have the names of interested parties and full payment by 5 April.

Maureen Greenham 023 8040 6951
maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com

Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Committee

The House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee is to hold a one-off evidence session on British Waterways, to examine BW's regeneration and restoration role, with particular reference to BW's recent decision to withdraw from the Cotswold Canal Partnership (see letter on page 2). The Committee undertook an inquiry into BW in 2007, through a sub-committee headed by David Drew MP, whose constituency includes part of the Cotswold Canals.

IWA is concerned that BW's actions could lessen confidence in other funding providers as well as regional and local government and its agencies for waterways

projects in general. IWA has therefore called upon BW to reconsider its actions.

On 19th February, Neil Edwards, IWA chief executive, wrote to Michael Jack MP, chairman of the Select Committee, expressing the Association's concerns and urging him to re-open the inquiry into BW, with particular reference to the position of the Cotswold Canals, how the decision came about and its future implications. The swift move by the Select Committee to reopen its inquiry appears to indicate that it shares these concerns.

February Meeting

Harry Arnold – ‘The Changing Face of the Waterways’

It was a great pleasure to welcome Harry Arnold to our February meeting. Harry's background in the waterways had been detailed in our previous Newsletter but he briefly gave us an outline. He also explained that he doesn't normally give talks unless 'his arm is twisted ... which (he claimed) it was!'

Harry explained the title of his presentation – he had been taking waterways photographs for many years and he would be showing us scenes from some of his early photographs and then the same location in recent years – in other words, a 'Then and Now' series. He told us about some of the problems he experienced taking his photographs. Whilst he loves trees, they certainly get in his way, especially when trying to get a shot from the same location as his original photograph!

Harry told us about his company 'Waterway Images' which has a vast collection of waterways photographs – in fact its website refers to some 2,500,000 images! (www.waterwayimages.com)

He showed us so many photographs of waterways all over the UK that it is impossible to describe them all here, though I was busy that evening listing them all. There were some evocative shots of locations that cannot be recognised today, such as the former steelworks on the Dudley Canal – now the site of the giant Merry Hill Shopping, Leisure and Commercial Complex; and various former boat building yards and docks.

There were interesting historic photographs such as Braunston at the end of Willow Wren and the 1923 Boatmen's' Strike, and Norbury Junction on the Shropshire Union Canal in the 1963 'Big Freeze' – when large numbers of narrow boats were stranded for many weeks.

Many thanks Harry for visiting our Society and for giving us such an interesting evening.

Paul Herbert

British Waterways Withdraws from Restoration Partnership

The following is the text of a letter sent to Trust members from the Cotswold Canals Trust Chairman, Elizabeth Payne, on 12 February 2008.

On the 3rd July 2001 at the Stonehouse Court Hotel Dave Fletcher, the then Chief Executive of British Waterways, announced to prospective partners that BW had a firm intention to restore fully the Cotswold Canals. In 2002 BW became the lead partner and over the past 6 years has frequently reiterated this intention.

It is with deep regret that I have to inform you that during the morning of Monday 4th February 2008 I received a telephone call from Robin Evans (currently BW Chief Executive) explaining that the BW Board had decided from April 2008 to withdraw from the Restoration Partnership together with the £6 million it had pledged to the Phase 1a Heritage Lottery project funding package to restore the canal from Stonehouse to Brimscombe Port. BW made this decision without consulting with, or prior warning to, its partners.

BW gave as its main reason for withdrawal the necessity to concentrate its scarce resources on repairing the breach (and other structures) on the Monmouth & Brecon Canal at a cost of £15 million. In its press release BW was silent on whether or not any attempt had been made to obtain alternative funding so as not to jeopardise the Cotswold Canals project.

During the past 6 years much has been achieved. A great deal of work went into preparing the successful HLF bid for Phase 1a. The Big Lottery bid for Phase 1b (Saul to Stonehouse) was equally demanding in time and although ultimately unsuccessful the Big Lottery development grant of £250,000 resulted in a significant amount of preparatory work being undertaken which will be extremely useful as restoration progresses in the future.

The local BW Regeneration Team has introduced many initiatives designed to meet Heritage Lottery funding criteria. Volunteers, including work parties from the Cotswold Canals Trust and Waterways Recovery Group, have made considerable progress in removing trees and undergrowth from the line of the canal. Recently BW awarded contracts for the removal of the Ryeford infill and the restoration of Oil Mills bridge (these will be completed before BW's withdrawal). The freehold lengths of canal owned by Gloucester County Council were also transferred to BW within the past few weeks.

Last Autumn we were particularly heartened by BW's apparent determination to complete the Phase 1a Project by a significant strengthening of the Regeneration Team. In the last edition of the

Trow magazine the Regeneration Manager announced three senior appointments and in the enclosed Spring 2008 Trow a very recently appointed Project Manager dedicates himself to the Cotswolds restoration.

It was with incredulity, therefore, that BW's partners received the news of withdrawal. Clearly this is potentially a serious blow to the restoration in general and to Phase 1a in particular. I have to say, however, that the remaining partners are very positive and Stroud District Council and the Waterways Trust have already pledged to continue with the project.

The Cotswold Canals Trust will shortly attend a meeting of the Partnership Board, to be convened by its Chairman Roger Hanbury, when we will press for the following actions to be taken as a matter of urgency:

- The reconstitution of the Cotswold Canals Partnership, without BW, and the appointment of a credible Lead Partner. To seek additional funding partners
- Urgent talks with Heritage Lottery and the South West Regional Development Agency to ensure that funding is not diverted elsewhere
- A review of BW's costings for Phase 1a (£35 million in total) to see if efficiency savings can be made and costs reduced by a much greater volunteer input
- To determine the future status of those lengths of the Stroudwater & Thames & Severn Canals recently handed over to BW by the Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation and Gloucestershire County Council.

Needless to say informal discussions are already taking place with our partners and our very supportive local MP David Drew (who has described the withdrawal as a 'bolt from the blue'). The Inland Waterways Association is outraged by BW's decision and is already campaigning on our behalf at a national level.

Clearly the next few weeks, and months, will be extremely challenging. We are fortunate, however, that very recently the Trust appointed Ken Burgin as its Chief Executive. I can assure our members that Ken and I, with the support of Trust Council, will work unremittingly to ensure that the restoration of the Cotswold Canals comes to fruition.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Payne, Chairman

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.

If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then please contact the editor.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
Thu 6 Mar 2008 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"The Highland Canals" with Richard Thomas. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Fri 14 Mar 2008 7.30pm	Southampton CS	Society Skittles Evening. The Kings Head, Hursley, nr Winchester. See advert on back page.	Rogan Olding: Tel 02380 263660 Email: olding@freenet.co.uk
Wed 19 Mar 2008 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	George Fleming - "Waterways at War". Parish Pavilion, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey.	David Millett: 01252 617364
Thu 20 Mar 2008 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Paul Barnett will be giving an illustrated talk about "The Purton Hulks". beached along the River Severn to protect the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal from erosion. The Green Dragon, Alderbury, nr Salisbury, Wiltshire.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841. Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Sat-Sun 22-23 Mar 2008	Basingstoke Canal Authority and SHCS	Woking Canal Festival and Bridge Barn Rally. Bridge Barn Pub, Bridge Barn Lane, Woking	BCA: 01252 370073 Email: info@basingstoke-canal.co.uk
Wed 26 Mar 2008 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"The Manchester Ship Canal" by Richard Thomas. The Stone Building, Newbury Wharf, Newbury, Berks.	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Fri 28 Mar 2008 7.45pm for 8.00	Kennet & Avon CT	"Imperial Airways" by Ken Hussey. Turnham's Farm Hall, Little Heath Road, Tilehurst, Reading.	John or Pam Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: johns@360swift.com
Sun 30 Mar 2008 11.00am	Cotswold Canals CT	Around the Cotswold Canals Guided Walks - "Over The Top and Old Father Thames Part 2". Meet at Tarleton Bridge, Coates (OS Ref S0967002). £5.00 towards restoration.	Richard Attwood: 01453 792021. Web: www.cotswoldcanals.com
Thu 3 Apr 2008 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Steve Haywood with "Fruit Flies Like a Banana" based on his book of the same name. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Wed 16 Apr 2008 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	"The History of Tooley's Boatyard in Banbury" with Matthew Armitage. Pavilion, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey.	David Millett: 01252 617364
Sat 19 Apr 2008	Southampton CS	Spring outing will be to the Basingstoke Canal and The Watercress Line. Cost: £16 adults, £8 for children. Meet at Colt Hill Wharf, Odiham at 10.30am. See article on page 1.	Maureen Greenham: 023 8040 6951 Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com
Thu 24 Apr 2008 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Narrowboats to Norway" by Clive Field. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton. (NB This is the "May" meeting)	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Fri 25 Apr 2008 7.45 for 8.00	Kennet & Avon CT	"The story of Bailey Bridging" with Pablo Haworth. Turnham's Farm Hall, Little Heath Road, Tilehurst, Reading.	John or Pam Swift: 0118 941 5540 Email: johns@360swift.com
Sun 27 Apr 2008	Cotswold CT	Canamble - sponsored walk to include the whole of Phase 1A of the restoration. Starting from Ebley Mill, Stroud.	Sponsor forms - Tel: 07811 529230 Email: canamble@raash31.co.uk Web: www.cotswoldcanals.com
Wed 30 Apr 2008 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Newbury Branch AGM + K&A review. The Stone Building, Newbury Wharf, Newbury, Berks.	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net
Thu 15 May 2008 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Roger Cansdale from the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society will be talking about "The Basingstoke Canal - Past present and future". The Green Dragon, Alderbury, nr Salisbury, Wiltshire.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841. Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover3@gotadsl.co.uk
Thu 5 Jun 2008 7.45pm	Southampton CS	*** CHANGE OF TALK *** Bob Dukes will present a talk with film entitled "Silk: Myth and Mystery". The history of how it came from China, getting silk production going in Europe, UK and America, industrialisation, etc Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sun 8 Jun 2008	Wey & Arun CT	The "Poddle" Annual sponsored walk. Full details yet to be announced.	Tel: 01403 752403 E-mail: office@weyandarun.co.uk Website: www.weyandarun.co.uk
Thu 3 Jul 2008 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Dennis Bright with another illustrated wildlife talk "Wild West Wales". Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.	Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: info@apas-engineering.com
Sat-Sun 5-6 July 2008 10.00 - 5.00	Cotswolds CT	Saul Canal Festival. Adults: £6.00 accompanied children (under 16): free. Saul Junction, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal Nr Frampton-on-Severn, Gloucestershire GL2 7LA	Festival Administrator: 01285 643440 Email: scf-info@junctionevents.org.uk Web: www.junctionevents.org.uk
Sun 16 Mar 1.00pm, 6, 20 Apr, 25 May, 8, 22 Jun 2008 2.00pm		Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett, Marine Historian . Meet Purton Lower Bridge, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (OS ref S0692044) .	Tel: 07833 143231 Email: barnadillo@aol.com
21 Mar - 28 Sep 2008 10.30 - 5.00	Kennet & Avon CT	Crofton Pumping Station open every day for static viewing. See below for steaming weekends. Adults £4.50, Seniors £4.00, Children £2.50, Families (2 adults & 2 children) £11.00, Children under 5 free	Tel: 01672 870300 Email: er23fc45@CroftonBeamEngines.org Web: www.croftonbeamengines.org
22-24 Mar, 3-5 May 24-26 May, 28-29 Jun 2008	Kennet & Avon CT	Crofton Pumping Station - Steaming weekends. Adults £7.00, Seniors £6.00, Children £2.50, Families (2 adults & 2 children) £16.00, Children under 5 free	Tel: 01672 870300 Email: er23fc45@CroftonBeamEngines.org Web: www.croftonbeamengines.org
23 Mar - 25 Oct 2008 10:00 - 5:00 (4:00 Weds)	Kennet & Avon CT	Claverton Pumping Station open every day for static viewing of the waterwheel and pump. See below for pumping days. Admission £2.50, Children under 16 free, but all children must be accompanied by an adult	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org
23-24 Mar, 27 Apr, 5, 25-26 May, 8 & 22 Jun 2008 10:00 - 5.00	Kennet & Avon CT	Claverton Pumping Station - Pumping days. Admission £4.00, Children under 16 free, but all children must be accompanied by an adult.	Tel: 01225 483001 Email: enquiries@claverton.org Web: www.claverton.org

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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Society Website:

<http://www.whitenap.plus.com>

Meetings:

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm. (See Water-ways Diary.) Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton.

Winning Picture

On the right is a copy of Lynn Olding's winning picture in the January photo competition.

Well done, Lynn.



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SKITTLES EVENING

THE KINGS HEAD, HURSLEY on FRIDAY 14 MARCH 2008 at 7.30PM

£10 PER HEAD INCLUSIVE OF BUFFET (Menu: Chicken curry, Lasagne or Sweet & sour chicken)

Bookings and further information from

ROGAN OLDING Tel: 023 8026 3660 Email: olding@freenet.co.uk

SOCIETY SPRING OUTING

BASINGSTOKE CANAL



Departing on the John Pinkerton from Colt Hill Wharf, Odiham at 10.30am for 2½ hr cruise

THE WATERCRESS LINE



Departing from Alresford Station at 3.00pm for Alton and return at 4.29pm

SATURDAY 19 APRIL 2008 - Adults: £16 Children: £8

Bookings and further information from

MAUREEN GREENHAM Tel: 023 8040 6951 Email: maureen.greenham@dsl.pipex.com