

# Newsletter

March 1998

Issue 318

## CHINESE JUNK IN BIRMINGHAM CANAL "TORPEDOED AND SUNK"

The IWA recently welcomed the decision by Birmingham City Council to refuse permission for a "Chinese Junk" style floating restaurant in Gas Street Basin. The IWA had taken a lead in opposing the plans for this development submitted by British Waterways, and the Council received numerous letters of objection from across the country. Many organisations and individuals were appalled at this threat to the heart of the canal system.

The massive four storey high craft of incongruous design would have dominated and ruined the heritage value of the basin and was beset with fundamental design flaws. The restaurant would have occupied a large area of water space currently used for moorings and caused difficulties in manoeuvring. There was no proper provision for service connections, supplies, sewerage or waste

*(Continued on page 6)*

### CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

#### **GEOProjects Maps**

Inland Waterways of Britain <b>New!</b> .....	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal .....	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations .....	£3.75
The Broads .....	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen <b>New!</b> .....	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals <b>Coming soon!</b> .....	£3.75
Grand Union Canal (each) .....	£3.75
Map 1 Birmingham - Fenny Stratford	
Map 2 Braunston - Kings Langley	
Map 3 Fenny Stratford - Thames	
Map 4 Leicester Line - Soar - Erewash	
Kennet & Avon Canal .....	£3.75
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals .....	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas.....	£3.75
Oxford Canal .....	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map .....	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal <b>Coming soon!</b> .....	£3.75

**Ball Point Pens** – Embossed .....50p

**Burgees** – Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side .....£8.00

**Decorated Mugs** .....£2.25

**Notelets** – with drawings of canal and Romsey scenes.....£1.00  
(by Brian Evans)

**Painted Canalware** – Range of items from dippers to plant containers  
to spoons – Painted by Linda Pearce **New!** .....Various

**Shopper Bags** – Cotton with screen-printed Society logo each side...£2.25

**Society Members Badges** – Enamel .....75p

**Sweat Shirts** – 30th Anniversary in Light Grey.....£16.00  
with multi-coloured embroidered Society logo on breast

**Sweat Shirts** – Standard in Navy or Royal Blue.....£15.00  
with Society logo embroidered on breast

**Tea Towels** – Various colourful designs.....£2.50 & £3.25

**Tee Shirts** – Screen printed with Society logo across chest.....£6.50  
in Navy Blue - medium, large & extra large  
in Red - medium

Visit the Sales Stand at Society meetings and place your orders with Paul Herbert or Ray Brooks.

### NEWS FROM THE SALES STAND

#### **Painted Canalware**

Our member, Linda Pearce, who with husband Laurie lives at Fazeley Junction, has been painting canalware for some time. She has kindly made available, on a sale or return basis, a selection of her craft for sale on the Society's Sales Stand. Painted items include a watering can, dippers, 'witches cauldron' plant containers, biscuit barrels, spoons, etc. Linda has offered a generous donation to the Canal Society for each item sold.

So, looking for presents for anyone, or even for yourself .... and help the Society at the same time? Just call at the Sales Stand at our monthly meetings.

#### **GEOProjects Maps**

Paul is pleased to announce that a new supply of GEOProjects Maps has been delivered. Apart from replenishing our depleted stocks of some of the most popular maps, new items include:-

- Inland Waterways of Britain
  - Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen
- GEOProjects have also announced publication of two further maps in this series:-

- Coventry & Ashby Canals
- Trent & Mersey Canal

For a full list of GEOProjects maps currently (or soon to be) available from the Society Sales Stand, see the advertisement on the left. To purchase your new maps or to place an order, see Paul or Ray on the Sales Stand.

**SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY**

Established 1967

The objectives of the Society are to foster interest in canals and inland waterways, to assist in their preservation, restoration and development, and to give practical help on waterway projects.

**Chairman:**

Brian Evans, 19 Lansdowne Gardens, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8FN. Tel: 01794 517115

**Secretary:**

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

**Treasurer & Membership:**

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

**Committee:**

Martin Cripps  
Paul Herbert  
Peter Oates  
David Townley-Jones

**Newsletter Editor:**

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

**MEETINGS**

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

**FORTHCOMING SCS EVENTS**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>5th March</b>     | Somersetshire Coal Canal by Roger Halse (Chairman of Somersetshire Coal Canal Society) |
| <b>2nd April</b>     | "Lots to do at the Soo" - A look at North American Waterways with Colin Ward           |
| <b>7th May</b>       | River Lea (Part 2) - Bow Back Rivers by Richard Thomas                                 |
| <b>4th June</b>      | Day-Star Theatre with their new show for 1998 (admission charge)                       |
| <b>2nd July</b>      | AGM and Waterways Videos   |
| <b>6th August</b>    | Members' Slides  |
| <b>3rd September</b> | "A Small Boat on Local Waterways" by Peter Glover                                      |
| <b>1st October</b>   | "Black Country Waterways" with Ron Cousens   |
| <b>5th November</b>  | "An Evening our Chairman" (assuming he still is!)                                      |
| <b>4th December</b>  | Annual Inter-Society Quiz and American Supper  |

**February Meeting**

A calm canal on a fine day would be just about as far as one could get from the journey we learned of at the February meeting. Our speaker, Tom White, has taken part in the BT Global Challenge ocean race aboard the *Courtaulds International* on the trip from Sydney to Cape Town. He accompanied some superb slides with an amusing commentary on what it was like for 12 people to share such a small space for six weeks without sight of land.

Even before getting near the boat each crew member was expected to raise several thousands of pounds for 'Save the Children'.

Taking the shortest route meant sailing down close to the Antarctic Circle and many hours were spent in extreme cold with the vessel constantly pitching about and the deck often as 45° to the horizontal.

Compensations were the superb colours of seas and skies, the sightings of icebergs and the wildlife of the sea and the air, and at the end the achievement of completing such a journey.

However, Tom admitted that there were times when he dreamt of standing at that canal boat tiller on a fine day. He is no stranger to the waterways for in his job with International Paints, part of Courtaulds Group, he has visited many canal boatyards. So if you have problems knowing what best to paint your boat with, we can put you in touch with Tom.

**Society Library:** Sue Lewis has been running the Library successfully for a number of years. However, for domestic reasons, she will be unable to store the books at home after the next AGM in July. Therefore, we need to find a volunteer to look after the stock. Sue is prepared to either continue running the library, to assist the volunteer in any way or to step aside and let the member run the library on their own. Members have found the library useful, informative and entertaining. It would be a shame if it has to close next July. So if you have enjoyed using the library in the past then please consider lending a hand to the Society. Volunteer please!!!

**Can you help?** Chichester Canal Society are desperate for volunteers - from tea and trinket sellers to boat handlers and canal builders. There are jobs for all. If you can help, phone John Cooper on 01243 671051. Ask the SCS Chairman if you would like to see a list of jobs that need doing.

**Help is also needed** at the IWA National Trail Boat Festival this year to be held - not far away - on the Wilts & Berks Canal at Wootton Bassett from May 23rd to 25th. Contact Dave Mitchell 01225 351540. Or if you a towable or rowable boat why not attend as a boater? Entry forms from IWA Head Office on 0171 586 2556 (office hours).

**"If you can lay your hands on a small boat (up to 12ft) ..."** Alan White appealing to everyone to help the Arun Navigation Campaign Cruise and celebrate the IWA Solent & Arun Branch's 20th birthday. This cruise was featured on the front page of last month's newsletter. More information from the SCS Chairman or Alan White on 01243 573765 or email [iwa.solent.arun@dial.pipex.com](mailto:iwa.solent.arun@dial.pipex.com)

**Visit Eling Tide Mill**, walk along the lower section of the Andover-Redbridge Canal, enjoy a pub lunch and see the River Test in Spring. See events guide on page 3.

Distributed by: Hunt & Co, Chartered Accountants,  
123/124 High Street, Southampton, SO14 2AA.  
Tel: 01703 225255

## Events and Meetings in 1998

*The following is a list of waterway oriented events happening around our area. This list proves there is plenty of waterway interest within a moderate distance of Southampton. Something on this list must interest you! Phone numbers of contacts are given at the end of the list.*

**5th March (Thu) - Southampton CS meeting - Somersetshire Coal Canal** by Roger Halse (Chairman of Somersetshire Coal Canal Society).

**10th March (Tue) - Talk on Panama Canal** (provisional) by John Humphries at Westgate Centre, Woking, by Chobham Road Bridge, starting at 8pm. Details from Arthur Dungate.

**19th March (Thu) - The BCN Marathon Challenge** presentation by Chris and Helen Davey. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details Tony Fry.

**23rd March (Mon) - IWA Guildford & Reading Branch AGM**, followed by **Limehouse to the Medway by Narrow Boat** by Norman Woolley. Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey (off A321 Frimley - Guildford road) starting at 8pm. Details Tony Davis.

**2nd April (Thu) - Southampton CS meeting - "Lots to do at the Soo"** - A look at North American Waterways with Colin Ward. Details from Eric Lewis.

**4th - 19th April - Easter Bunny Canal Trips** on the **Chichester Canal**. Children may bring their parents / grandparents. Find the bunny and collect an Easter Egg. Boat leaves Canal Basin at 10.00, 11.30, 1.00, 2.30 and 4.00. Fare: Adult or child £4.00. An Easter present for every child! NB whilst children of all ages are welcome to participate, these trips are aimed principally at the under 10's. Booking essential - Edward Hill on 01243 783150.

**5th April (Sun) - Beaulieu Boat Jumble** - the ultimate boat bits boot sale. Follow the signs - or the car ahead!

**8 April (Tue) - Talk on The Foxton Inclined Plane** by Mike Beech (Curator of the museum of the Foxton Inclined Plane Trust). Held at Westgate Centre, Woking, by Chobham Road Bridge, starting at 8pm. Details Arthur Dungate.

**18th - 19th April (Sat & Sun) - Working Party** at Murtry and Coleford Aqueducts and other sites near Frome held by **Dorset & Somerset Canal Study Group**. Details from Derrick Hunt on 01761 434618.

**19th April (Sun) - Informal walk** along the lower section of the **Andover and Redbridge Canal**, taking in a visit to the **Eling Tide Mill** and a pub lunch. Meet at the Tide Mill at 11am. Please let the guide, Peter Boyce, know you're going.

**20 April (Mon) - "Kennet and Avon Heritage Lottery Fund"** by John Laverick (BW Project Manager). Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey (off A321 Frimley - Guildford road) starting at 8pm. Details from Tony Davis.

**3rd May (Sun) - Drungewick Aqueduct Cruise** - the **Wey & Arun Canal Trust** will be holding a small boat cruise on the Loxwood / Drungewick section of the canal. A rare chance to take your own boat on this restored section. Details of cruise available from John Lisk.

**7th May (Thu) - Southampton CS meeting - River Lea (Part 2) - Bow Back Rivers** by Richard Thomas. Details from Eric Lewis.

**10th May (Sun) - Arun Navigation Campaign Cruise**. This is the 16th running of the Pulborough - Pallingham Sponsored Small Boat Cruise but with a new name. See article on the front page of last month's newsletter or contact Alan White.

**21st May (Thu) - The Canal du Midi** by Frank Stokes and Dereck Johnson. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

**23rd - 25th May (Sat to Mon) - National Trail Boat Festival** at Wootton Bassett on the **Wilts & Berks Canal**. This is a premier event in promoting the Association's aims and objectives, and supporting local canal societies and trusts. If you can't make the National at Salford this year why not try this one! Free admission. Details from John Allen on 01793 853909.

**4th June (Thu) - Southampton CS meeting - Day-Star Theatre** with their new show for 1998 (admission charge). Details / tickets from Eric Lewis.

**7th June (Sun) - "The Poddle"** is the **Wey & Arun Canal Trust's** sponsored walk. Mostly on the Surrey sections of the canal. Details from John Lisk.

**7th June (Sun) - Chichester Canal Guided Walk and Cream Tea**. Starts at 2.00pm at Salterns Locks, Birdham. Details from John Cooper.

**13th - 14th June (Sat & Sun) - Beaulieu Classic Boat Festival** at Buckler's Hard. Boats, trade show, rowing pageant. Organised by Classic Boat Magazine.

**??? July (???) - IWA Salisbury Branch** are organising a boat trip sometime/somewhere in July. Details Tony Fry.

**2nd July (Thu) - Southampton CS AGM and Waterways Videos**. Details from Eric Lewis.

**5th July (Sun) - Chichester Canal Guided Walk** (as above).

**8th July (Wed) - Illustrated talk on The Chichester Canal - Its History** by Edward Hill at Chichester District Council Offices at 8pm. Details from John Cooper.

**11th July (Sat) - Chichester Basin Barrel Races** organised by the Chichester Canal Society. Teams of paddlers in spectacular racing. Details from John Cooper.

**18th July (Sat) - Mikron Theatre** at Chichester. Performances start at 8.00pm. Details from John Cooper.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Events & meetings in 1998

(Continued from page 3)

18th - 19th July (Sat & Sun) - "**Optimist**" sailing for youngsters at **Chichester Canal Basin**. Opportunity to try sailing. Details from John Cooper.

25th - 26th July (Sat & Sun) - **Littlehampton Regatta**. Many attractions (including IWA Branch stand and cruise). Organised by Littlehampton Harbour Board - contact Paul Naish on 01903 721215 (office hours).

26th July (Sun) - There will be a return **cruise** from **Littlehampton to Arundel** in support of plans to create public moorings at Arundel for visiting boaters. Details from Alan White.

6th August (Thu) - Southampton CS **Members' Slides**. Details from Eric Lewis.

9th August (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Guided Walk** (as above).

23rd August (Sun) - **Chichester Canal Water Fair and Steam Boat Rally**. NB Please note change of date from that announced last month. Many attractions on and off the water. Parade for all types of boat; chance to cruise the canal in your own boat. Hire a skiff or ride the trip boat. Chichester Canal Basin 12.00 to 5.00. Contact John Cooper (or Alan White if you would like to help run the IWA S&A Branch stand).

28th - 31st August (Bank Holiday) - **International Festival of the Sea** at Portsmouth Dockyard. Find the IWA S&A Branch stall among 400 other stands and a thousand other boats. Ticket hotline and information on 0870 909 1998. If you would like to help on the IWA stand contact Alan White.

29th - 31st August (Bank Holiday) - **National Waterways Festival**, Salford on the Manchester Ship Canal. Details from IWA Head Office 0171 586 2556 (office hours).

3rd September (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - A Small Boat on Local Waterways** by Peter Glover. Details from Eric Lewis.

12th - 13th September (Sat & Sun) - **Godalming Working Boat Rally**. Details Mike Adams 01483 773512.

17th September (Thu) - **Canalside Camera** by Jon Sims. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

20th September (Sun) - **Beaulieu River Small Boat Cruise**. This will be upstream to the top of the navigation from Bucklers Hard. A launching fee of £6.00 is payable but the river is extremely attractive. A gentle cruise and picnic followed by a cream tea in

the village. Details from Peter Boyce.

1st October (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - Black Country Waterways** with Ron Cousens. Details from Eric Lewis.

5th November (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - An Evening with our Chairman** (Brian Evans - assuming he still is!). Details Eric Lewis.

19th November (Thu) - **Canalware Painting** by Bocraft. Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury at 7.30pm. Details from Tony Fry.

28th November - 24th December - **Father Christmas Trips** daily on the Chichester Canal. Details from John Cooper.

4th December (Thu) - **Southampton CS meeting - Annual Inter-Society Quiz and American Supper**. Details Eric Lewis.

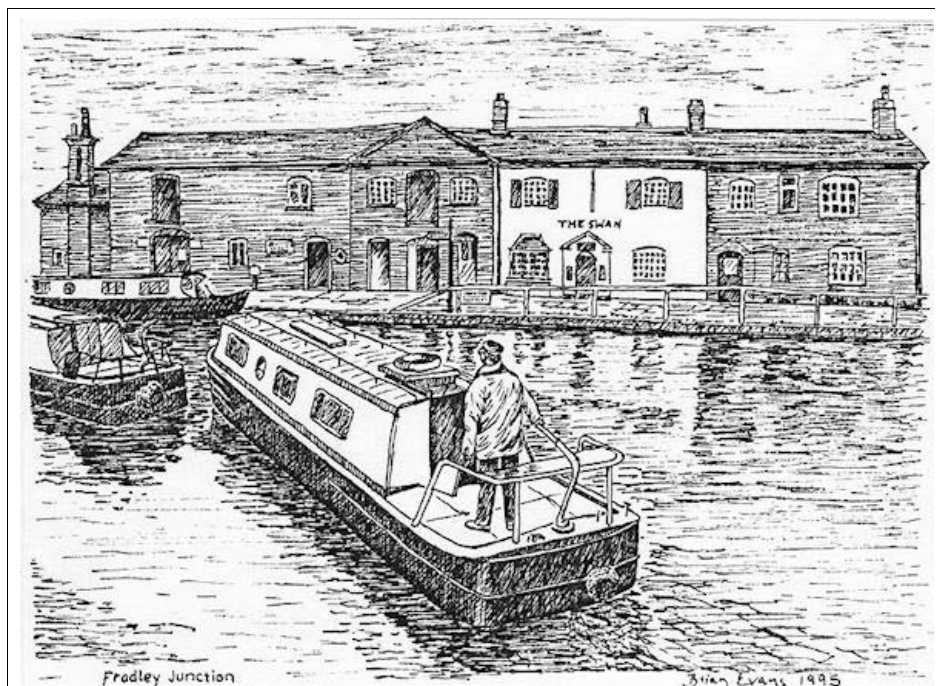
First Wednesday in most months - **IWA Dorchester Group** meets. Information Graham Pugh 01305 262305.

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

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

### Telephone numbers of contacts are:

Peter Boyce (IWA Solent & Arun Branch) 01705 269642  
 John Cooper (Chichester Canal Society) 01243 671051  
 Tony Davis (IWA Guildford & Reading Branch) 01932 844261  
 Arthur Dungate (Surrey & Hampshire CS) 0181 737 4896  
 Tony Fry (IWA Salisbury Group) 01722 710192  
 Eric Lewis (Southampton Canal Society) 01703 860384  
 John Lisk (Wey & Arun Canal Trust) 01493 752403  
 Alan White (IWA Solent & Arun Branch) 01243 573765



Fradley Junction

Brian Evans 1995

## Revealed - An EC Directive to be released on 1st April 1998

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU rather than French, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, and strongly lobbied for by the German government and the new member Austria, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phase-in plan that would be known as 'EuroEnglish'.

In the first year, 's' will replace the soft 'c'. Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard 'c' will be dropped in favour of the 'k'. This should klear up konfusion and keyboards kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome 'ph' will be replaced with the 'f'. This will make words like 'fotograf' 20% shorter.

In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be ekspektd to reach the stage where more komplikatd

changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of the silent 'e's in the language is disgraceful and they should go away.

By the fourth year, peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing 'th' with 'z' and 'w' with 'v'. During ze fifz year, ze unesesary 'o' kan be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou' and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

After zis fifz year, ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech ozer. ZE DREM VIL FINALI KUM TRU!!

*The above has been reproduced, with acknowledgement, from the latest (Spring) edition of the Chichester Canal Society Newsletter. It must be true!!*

### DAY-STAR THEATRE

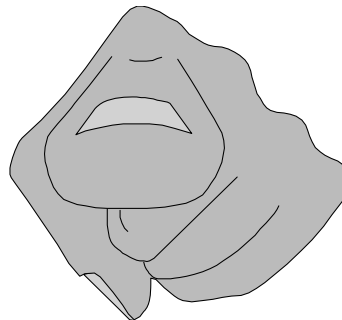
After last year's performance at our Birthday Party, Day-Star have been booked to appear again next June. They will be performing their new

production for 1998. Light refreshments will be available after the performance. Unfortunately, we shall have to make an admission charge this time to cover the not inconsiderable costs. Initially, tickets

are being offered exclusively to SCS members at a price of **£2.50** until the end of March. Thereafter, tickets will be available to the public at a charge of **£3.50**. **Get your tickets from Eric Lewis - NOW!**

## Have YOU written to John Prescott yet?

You may remember that in the November 1997 newsletter we appealed to members to write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions about the decision not to provide navigable crossings for the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals where they are to be crossed by the Birmingham Northern Relief Road. This decision was contrary to the recommendations of the Inspector at the Public Enquiry into the construction of the new road.



If you haven't written yet, please cut out the form at the foot of this page. Fill it in, pop it in an envelope and post it off to:

The Rt. Hon. John Prescott M.P.  
Secretary of State for the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
The House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Prescott,

I / We petition you to modify your decision and make it conform to the Report published by the Inspectors of the B.N.R.R. Enquiry by requiring MEL to provide complete crossings for the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals which are presently undergoing restoration.

Yours sincerely

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Doing this is a small cost for you to support the Lichfield and Hatherton enthusiasts who are willing to get out there and do the real work.

It is a fact that the number of letters written to the Government about the Latton crossing was a major factor in the change of fortunes on the Thames & Severn Canal.

A few minutes of your time and YOU can make a difference!

Thank you.

## NO JUNK IN THE CANAL

*(Continued from page 1)*

disposal, and the only access was along a narrow towpath with no space for vehicle parking.

On technical grounds, the IWA submitted advice from a naval architect indicating that the proposed replica Junk's design was top heavy, unstable and would capsize. To enable it to float, it would have needed a draft substantially deeper than that of the canal. For stability, it would have to have to be fixed in place, in effect becoming a building and not a boat at all.

Philip Sharp, Chairman of IWA's West Midlands Region said, "We are appalled at the insensitivity of BW's commercial management in promoting a development that would have destroyed the heritage of an internationally important site. Their motivation would appear to be simply to make money by exploiting the public property they hold in trust to the detriment of the historic environment, existing residents, future visitors and the reputation of Birmingham for quality canalside development. IWA is pleased and relieved that Birmingham have rejected this misguided project and calls on BW to instigate an internal investigation into how their reputation has been damaged by this fiasco."

*IWA Press Release 23/2/98*

## Trouble on t'Canal

*The following is taken from a joint press release issued by Oldham and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Councils on 9th February, entitled 'Battle to save £23m canal deal'.*

Haggling over money could pull the plug on the £23 million project to restore the Rochdale Canal across the Pennines. For months the property company that owns the canal has been refusing to agree the terms put forward by the Trust and refused to sell the canal. But if the Trust cannot buy the canal it may lose the £11.9 million of Lottery grant towards the restoration work promised by the Millennium Commission. And if the grant fell through it could mean that a similar amount from English Partnerships would be withdrawn, leaving plans to restore the canal high and dry.

Now leaders of the councils are appealing to the Government to get restrictions on the canal restoration deal (to get the money, the Canal Trust must own the canal) relaxed to allow it to go ahead. And they are asking the Millennium Commission to extend the deal deadline rather than give the Lottery money to another project - possibly the Millennium Dome in Greenwich.

Speaking on behalf of the Trust, Councillor Allen Brett, Deputy Leader of Rochdale Council, said, "We have been haggling over details for months. Now we have got to the stage where we feel that Town Centre Securities is holding us to ransom with demands that would allow it to make money out of a scheme that should be for public benefit, not private profit. In effect the company wants us to pay more than a million pounds simply for the right to restore the canal. This is totally unacceptable."

*IWA Head Office Bulletin - February 1998*

## Kennet & Avon Canal Progress

The western approach to High Bridge on the River Kennet in Reading has been realigned as part of the Oracle Development. This removes one of the most dangerous accident spots on BW's waterways.

BW are in discussion with Newbury District Council regarding Newbury Parkway Bridge and regeneration of Newbury Wharf. It appears highly unlikely that the bridge, the lowest on the waterway, will be rebuilt but options to replace some of the oversized supporting beams to increase headroom are being looked at.

Installation of fibre optic cables along the K&A from Newbury to Bath will commence in March. A contractor for the work has yet to be appointed.

Six major projects are underway on the K&A as the first round of work under the Heritage Lottery Fund award:

**Bath Valley:** 1.7km of channel and waterway wall is being reconstructed with PVC membrane and concrete protection in the Claverton area. The finished works will show minimal concrete surface and incorporate a land drain under the canal bed to take away ground water from the adjacent hillside. Depth of water in the middle will be 1.3m and increased to 1.45m on completion of the whole Bath Valley works.

**Martinslade Embankment:** 9m long heavy duty piles are being driven both sides of the channel to prevent further leakage and are being driven below the natural ground level, thus being invisible when work is complete. Lock 22 (at the bottom of Devizes locks) has been reduced to its foundations and is being rebuilt using a combination of reinforced concrete and brick facing. The accommodation bridge at the foot of the lock is being reconstructed due to structural failure.

**Dredging:** Seven sections are being dredged by two contractors. The contracts specify an 8m width at the base of the navigation channel and a depth of 1.37m.

**Lock Repairs:** 13 pairs of gates are being renewed. Toney Lock was completed ahead of schedule before Christmas. Tyle Mill, Crossing Lock and the Seend Flight are currently being worked on.

**Culvert inspection:** The remaining culverts on the Canal are being inspected so that a programme of necessary work can be drawn up.

**Aldermaston Weir:** Repair work is being undertaken, managed by the Environment Agency.

In January, a serious breach risk was identified just west of Bathampton Swing Bridge. Stop planks and a coffer dam have been installed and the water level reduced. Works on this section, which had been identified for later years under the HLF programme have been brought forward and should be completed by Easter.

Major works on the Kennet & Avon identified for winter 1998/9 include five major embankment repair contracts, culvert works, Wootton Rivers back-pumping installation, 7 areas of dredging and lock gate replacements at Locks 62 to 65.

*IWA Head Office Bulletin - February 1998*