

Newsletter

Issue 351

May 2001

WELCOME DAY-STAR

Southampton Canal Society is happy to welcome the Day-Star Theatre Company to the Chilworth Parish Hall for another performance. The new play for this year is entitled "**The Hero of Sandy Edge Wharf**" and is being premiered here tonight.

A rural village in Middle England. A canal climbs down a flight of locks to the wharf and pub before continuing on it's way across an embankment. Below the embankment lie the village allotments and the new executive houses. Along the main street can be found a church with a steeple, a general store and post office and an occasional bus service. All in all, Sandy Edge is a pleasant over night stop for the holiday boater

**DAY-STAR
THEATRE**



Stay a bit longer and you might meet the locals. There is the old gardener with pathological weed and insect killing tendencies. There is the self righteous chairman of the Parish Council who owns the shop. There is the vodka drinking, wickedly mischievous Freda from the Old Vicarage. So when Josie Collins

and her two boys decide to tie up their narrow boat in the 'long pound' and make Sandy Edge their home for a while they soon meet the locals and they soon get to hear about the war time legend of the hero of Sandy Edge Wharf.

This is the story of a rural village and the influence of the canal that runs through it. It is also a story of pride and prejudice, romance and heroism..... and its all built on sand

NARROW CANAL OPENS ... BUT TOO NARROW

Once known as the "impossible restoration", half of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was opened between Ashton under Lyne and Wool Road, Dobcross on 9th April. The remainder of the canal, the Standedge Tunnel and the Standedge Visitor Centre will open on May 1st.

There were, however, red faces at British Waterways when it was discovered that Wade Lock, Lock 21W in Uppermill, is too narrow. The British Waterways' narrow boat "Tyseley", used by the Mikron Theatre Company, became jammed in the lock.

The vessel was making its way upstream, ready to be one of the first boats through to Marsden, where the Mikron Theatre Company is based. It passed below High Street Bridge and into Lock 21W. Once in the lock, the front of the boat became firmly wedged between the sides of the lock. It was reported to have been there for three hours until winched back out of the lock. The boat is now moored just below High Street Bridge awaiting revised plans.

The Pennine Moonraker and other boats of around 6' 10" beam have successfully passed

through the lock. "Tyseley" is believed to have a beam of 6' 11¼". The Huddersfield Narrow Canal has a nominal navigational width of 7 feet.

This is going to be a huge disappointment to some boat owners, particularly some of the older boats which may not now be able to reach Standedge Tunnel.

The west side of the lock has a distinctly curved wall to the left, narrowing towards the head gate (see photo). This will restrict the lock for boats around 70' to those with a beam of up to 6'10". Shorter boats of up to 60' with a slightly broader beam may be able to fit into the lock as long as they keep to the tail end. It is not uncommon for locks to have a bowed shape. The right hand wall was rebuilt during restoration and is straight.



The Theatre is putting on a series of performances of a play "Warehouse Hill" to mark the re-opening of the canal at various locations along the canal's route and it will be a big disappointment if they are unable to have the boat present.

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April Meeting

In his young days, Terry Putnam was a fan of steam railways and spent much of his time observing the trains passing on the main line through Berkhamsted, his home town. With the end of steam haulage, he lost interest in trains and turned his attention to working narrow boats. In Berkhamsted he was ideally situated to see them working up and down the Grand Union Canal.

He became fascinated by the colourful boats and their crews and began to find out more about them. Where did they come from and go to, what were they carrying, and by travelling to various points along the Grand Union began to get to know the families aboard.

Fortunately he photographed the boats at every

opportunity and as he followed their travels, mostly between 1965 and 1970, he was steadily documenting the end of regular commercial carrying on narrow boats.

His talk to us at the April meeting, 'Last of the Narrow Boat Families', highlighted the difficulties the crews were up against, with the boats becoming older and failing, poorer and poorer maintenance of the waterways, British Waterways staff indifference and ice in the winter.

Terry showed his irreplaceable slides and told the story in a way which encouraged the audience to join in. A very enjoyable and extremely informative meeting.

Brian Evans

DONATIONS

In recent months, the Society has made a number of donations:

In thanks for the talk in February by Tony Pratt on the Bullion Run and restoration on the Wey & Arun Canal, the treasurer has sent a cheque for £75 towards the funds of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust.

Alan Palmer spoke to the Society in March about the restoration of the wooden narrow boat *Raymond*. A cheque for £50 has been sent to "The Friends of Raymond" to help with further work on the boat.

As a result to two nationwide appeals for donations to waterways projects, two cheques of £100 each have been despatched:

- The Ribble Link Locks Extension Appeal was recently launched by the IWA after they had offered a guarantee of £45,000 towards half the extra cost of building full length (72ft) locks on the Ribble Link which is now under construction. This brand new waterway will enable canal boats to gain access to the previously isolated Lancaster Canal.
- Preliminary work on the Birmingham Northern Relief Road has now started. Foundations for an aqueduct are required for the Lichfield Canal and enlarged culverts need to be provided for the Hatherton Canal. An appeal for £200,000 has been launched by David Suchet, vice-president of the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust. To secure arrangements with contractors, £20,000 is required immediately. As David Suchet said, "We can't afford to wait any longer for the Government to see sense. We must act now to save these waterway routes for the future. Please support us as much as you can and show the Government that destroying the future of our waterways is not acceptable."

MORE DONATIONS

The Committee would again like to thank all those members who have made donations of prizes for the Society's monthly raffle. This enables more money to be raised by the Society which in turn goes toward the donations made to other waterway organisations such as those detailed on the left.

GIVE MORE ...

Brian Evans has written the following asking for a little more towards the Society:

Peter Oates is looking weary. That's because every month he has to put *Newsletter* together all on his own. He even has to reproduce material from other journals. He needs help from you, in the form of a short article, written in biro, pencil, with computer, or on the back of a fag packet, he's not fussy.

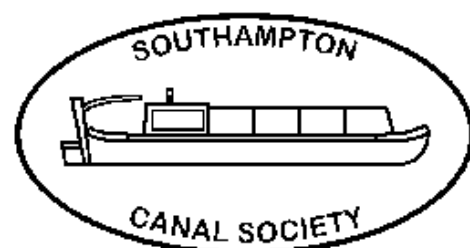
Not an epic on how you travelled from south to north and back in three months. Just short, single experiences, for example —

How you fell in a lock And who you blamed for it

Or how you pinched your finger in the paddle gear And what you said [*this is a family magazine - Ed*]

Or what made you sneeze your false teeth into the wood-burning stove.

Go on, please let Peter have your story.



WATERWAYS DIARY

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton.

Hopefully you can find something to interest you. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then contact the editor.

Date	Organisers	Details of Event	Contact
Thu 26/04/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"THE HERO OF SANDY EDGE WHARF" - the new play for 2001 by Day-Star Theatre. Tickets: £3.00 (This is nominally the May meeting)	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Sun 29/04/01	IWA Guildford & Reading Branch	Guided Walk and Boat Gathering at the Old Woking Palace adjacent to the Old Woking Stream of the River Wey. More details later	Andy Simmonds: 01483 576176
Sun 06/05/01	Wey & Arun CT & IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Wey & Arun Canal, Loxwood - small boat cruise. The W&A Canal Trust annual event to get small boats on the Loxwood section - two working locks and a view of the NEW Drungewick Lane bridge.	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Sun 20/05/01 10.30am	IWA Salisbury Group	Boat Trip on Wey & Arun Canal by Onslow Arms, Loxwood	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 07/06/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	The talk on 'The Waterways Trust' by Roger Hanbury has had to be postponed until October as a result of the rescheduled local elections.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Sun 24/06/01	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	River Adur - Save Ropetackle Slipway Campaign Cruise. Redevelopment of the Ropetackle area spans the slipway and may affect the parking available to boaters. IWA are using it to launch and recover as many boats as possible, with an upriver cruise with the tide.	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Sun 24/06/01 2.30 - 5.00pm	Chichester Canal Society	A Teddy Bears' Picnic - Canal Basin, Chichester. Disco, Pony Rides, Magic Show, Punch & Judy and lots more. They need you and your bear. Admission by ticket only. Children £6, parents free.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sun 01/07/01 2.00pm	Chichester CS	Guided Walk and Strawberry Tea. Meet at Salterns Lock. £3.50 for adults and £3 for children. The faint-hearted get a lift back from the Basin to Salterns Lock.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Thu 05/07/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual General Meeting. Following the official business, John Silman will be giving an illustrated talk on "The History of the Postcard".	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Wed 11/07/01 7.30pm	Chichester CS	Canal History Talk by John Herniman at Chichester District Council Offices. £2.00 includes light refreshments.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sat 14/07/01	Chichester CS	Beer Barrel Races in Chichester Canal Basin. Make up a team of four for £20 and win yourselves a barrel!	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sat & Sun 14 & 15/07/01	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	Langstone & Chichester Harbours - The Gold Run - Milton Locks to Birdham. A 2 day cruise to trace cross harbour route of Portsmouth & Arundel CC's barges. Camping at Emsworth, slipways, car recovery organised for a one or two day stay.	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Thu 19/07/01 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Bruce Hall, Chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust, will be talking about the Thames & Severn Canal. At Salisbury Rugby Club.	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Sat 21/07/01 7.30pm	Mikron Theatre / Chichester CS	Geoffrey Osborne Centre, near Chichester Canal Basin	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
Sun 19/08/01 12 noon to 5pm	IWA Solent & Arun Branch / Chichester Canal Society	Chichester Canal Basin - Annual Canal Water Fair. Boats dressed as pirate ships. The slipway will be repaired so larger boats can be launched in safety. All the fun of the fair - coconut stalls, roundabouts, trips to treasure island, fancy dress, etc	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Fri - Mon 24 - 27/08/01		International Festival of the Sea - Portsmouth Naval Dockyard. IWA Solent & Arun Branch will not be running a stand, but they will have a presence on the water. If you can bring a classic or historic craft of ANY size, please contact Peter	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Sun 09/09/01	IWA Solent & Arun Branch	River Hamble - Warsash & Swanwick to Curbridge & Botley. An afternoon tide allows a visit to the Horse & Jockey at Curbridge and Botley Quay in time for tea and cakes and return in daylight to the slipways.	Peter Boyce: 02392 269642
Thu 20/09/01 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	Roger Squires talking on London Canals and Creeks. At Salisbury Rugby Club	Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 04/10/01 7.45pm	Southampton CS	'The Waterways Trust' - a talk by Roger Hanbury on the Trust, the new charitable organisation which is having a big effect upon the canal system. This talk has been postponed from June.	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Sat 24/11/01 to Mon 24/12/01	Chichester CS	Father Christmas trips from Chichester Canal Basin. Most popular event. Book early in November. Trips offered for adults as well for the kids - with seasonal refreshments included.	Jenny Pine: 01243 670786
4th Thursday of month	Wey & Arun CT	Interesting but not too arduous walks in Sussex come rain or shine. Lunch at well chosen establishment en route or at end. Donation to WACT appreciated.	Don Gibson: 01903 201375
All year	Wey & Arun CT	Cruises on n/b <i>Zachariah Keppel</i> on the restored canal at Loxwood.	John Lisk: 01493 752403.
All year	Chichester CS	Cruises on n/b <i>Egremont</i> on Chichester Canal.	Bookings: 01243 670786

Tie a knot in your handkerchief to remind yourself!

Next meeting: Thursday 24th May at 7.45pm.

Speaker: Jon Sims on "Escargot and other DIY boats"

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:

1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm
Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton

Chairman:

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FUTURE MEETINGS

We were unable to book our meeting at Chilworth Parish Hall on the 3rd May as the hall was to be used as a polling station in the forthcoming local elections.

Now those elections have been postponed to 7th June. This disrupts another of our meetings when Roger Hanbury, Chief Executive of the Waterways Trust, was due to talk to us. Roger has many commitments and this talk has had to be postponed until the October meeting.

As a "last minute" replacement, a new speaker has been arranged for the 24th May. Local writer Jon Sims was instrumental in getting *Escargot*, the pedal powered canal cruiser, built and launched. This boat was crewed by WRG volunteers who pedalled it from Dudley to the IWA National at Henley-on-Thames in 1997. Jon will also be talking about other small boats he has known and loved.

The date for the general election has yet to be fixed. Your secretary will tear his hair out if it's on 5th July!!

CANAL SOCIETY SALES STAND

GEOProjects Maps:

Inland Waterways of Britain	£4.75
Basingstoke Canal	£3.00
Birmingham Canal Navigations	£3.75
The Broads	£3.75
Caledonian Canal & the Great Glen	£3.75
Coventry & Ashby Canals	£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
Lee and Stort Navigations.....	£4.75
Leeds and Liverpool Canal	£4.75
Llangollen and Montgomery Canals	£3.75
London - City and Docklands Atlas	£3.75
Oxford Canal	£3.75
Shropshire Union Canal	£3.75
Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal with the River Severn and the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal.....	£3.75
The Thames Map	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal - Map 1 Preston Brook to Fradley Junction..	£3.75
Trent & Mersey Canal and River Trent - Map 2 Great Haywood Junction to Cromwell Lock.....	£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)

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 - or ring Paul on 023 8026 2365

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

26th April 2001

"THE HERO OF SANDY EDGE WHARF" - Day-Star Theatre.

24th May 2001

"Escargot and other DIY Boats" by Jon Sims. *Escargot* is the pedal-powered canal cruiser built by local boat builder Colin Jones. Jon will also cover his love of small boats.

7th June 2001

The talk on 'The Waterways Trust' by Roger Hanbury has had to be postponed to the October meeting.

5th July 2001

Annual General Meeting. Following the official business, John Silman will be giving an illustrated talk on "The History of the Postcard".

4th October 2001

'The Waterways Trust' - a talk by Roger Hanbury on the Trust, the new charitable organisation which is having a big effect upon the canal system.