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HUNT
& Co

NEWSLETTER No. 264 MAY 1993

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

- 6th May - The Burgundy Ring by Ron & Myra Glover.
3rd June - A.G.M. and Film Night. - Joshua Jones, A Bridge in Time and The Water Highway.
1st July - The Isle of Wight Steam Railway - Past, Present and Future by Jim Loe, Commercial Director, IOW Railway Co Ltd.
5th August - Members slide and Film Night.
2nd September - Wey South - Progress by the Wey and Arun Canal Trust by John Wood, Secretary & Vice Chairman, Wey and Arun Canal Trust.
7th October - The History and Preservation of the Steam Narrowboat 'President' by Richard Thomas.
4th November - An artists view of waterways by Harley Crossley.
2nd December - American Supper and ?
1994
6th January - Another Three Men in a Boat. A late 1950s journey around England's Waterways, in a Thames camping skiff by Roger Hardy.
3rd February - Our Waterways Heritage by Mrs Frances Hart, Chief Executive of the Inland Waterways Association.
3rd March - European Waterways, further travels on film and slide by Hugh McKnight.

FESTINIOG RAILWAY. Following a slide show by members of the Festiniog Railway Society in July 1992, Southampton Canal Society made a donation to that Society. A letter has been received from Bob Smith, Hants and Sussex Group Secretary to inform us that the donation went towards the purchase of an angle grinder for use by the railways permanent way department. (A couple of 1993 timetables are available to be looked at at meetings. See the Chairman.)

DAVID STEVENSON, chairman of the IWA visited us in May 1992 and spoke on 'Threats to the Waterways'. This was followed by a donation of £100 to IWA funds.

David wrote a letter of thanks to us from Maastricht, Holland where he was enjoying a holiday.

SOCIETY OUTING TO BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM. Sunday 4th July.

Coach departs - Eassons Garage, Wodehouse Road 8.00am : Bitterne 8.10 : Civic Centre Law Courts (by BBC South) 8.20 : Shirley High Street (Iceland) 8.30 Avenue (Bassett Ave) 8.40 : Chandlers Ford (Fryern Arcade) 8.50 : Arrive 11.00
To save queuing our party will enter the coal mine in 2 groups - at 11.30 and 11.45 : Boat trip into Dudley Tunnel and the Singing Cavern will be at 3.00pm.
Leave the Museum at 5.00pm and return home approx 8.00pm.
Cost - Adults £14.00 - OAPs £13.50 - Children under 17 £13.00.
Firm bookings, with deposit please, to Eric Lewis.

GOING ON THE SOCIETY OUTING TO THE BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM?

You are invited to visit Alan and Sonja Morse who will be there with their boat 'Geldrose'. Laurie and Linda Pearce also hope to meet us there so look out for them too.

TEE SHIRTS at £7.50 with printed logo and SWEAT SHIRTS at £15.00 with embroidered logo are soon to be ordered. To make sure that your size is among the stock contact Martin Cripps.

BIRMINGHAM CANAL NAVIGATIONS. Jon Sims is organising another 'Southampton Leggers' trip, this time to the BCN. He hopes to visit the central Birmingham area around Gas Street Basin and the Smethick Cuttings. The date of the trip is June 5th, the cost about £10. If anyone is interested please contact Jon direct on Southampton 732868.

BLAKE'S LOCK MUSEUM. Situated on the banks of the River Kennet, the Museum is housed in a range of buildings which are themselves superb examples of Victorian industrial architecture and Reading's decorative brickwork. These were originally part of a pumping station built at Blake's Weir in the 1870s. The life and times of Reading in the 19th and early 20th centuries are captured through numerous early photographs and a wealth of exhibits.

There are reconstructions of a printer's workshop (Parnell's of London Street), a bakery (Huggins of Crown Street) and a gentlemen's hairdresser (Pottinger's of Whitley Street). Local brickmaking, iron founding, Cock's famous Reading Sauce, mineral water manufacturers, Reading photographers, ironmongers, pharmacies, confectioners, fancy goods and toy bazaars, shoemakers and menders and dairies are all included in a wide variety of displays.

The waterways display covers Reading's close links with the rivers Thames and Kennet, and the Kennet and Avon Canal. It shows aspects of the town's commercial life, the once thriving mills and wharves, and the boat building and fishing industries. Navigation introduces the rivers' locks, weirs, ferries and bridges. Recreation on the river is vividly portrayed in its heyday of pleasure boats, regattas and the popular pastime of angling.

A major feature of the Museum is a traditional gypsy ledge caravan, by the famous makers Dunton and Sons of Reading. Built about 1910, this particularly ornate caravan has been restored to its original colour scheme with rich decorative gilding.

A temporary exhibition area features a varied programme of displays relating to Reading's waterways, trades and industries and other features of the Town's life in the past.

Blake's Lock Museum, Gasworks Road, off Kenavon Drive, Reading.

Open: Tuesday to Friday 10.00am to 5.00pm, Saturday and Sunday 2.00pm to 5.00pm, Bank Holiday Mondays 2.00pm to 5.00pm. ADMISSION FREE.

HISTORIC MAP. A marvellous new large folding map, covering all the navigations of England and Wales, even those authorised but not built, can be used to chart the phenomenal growth of the canal system during Canal Mania, two centuries ago.

Different types of navigation are distinguished, with opening dates, along with major structures, such as lock flights, tunnels and lifts. The only compilation of its kind, this map should remain an essential reference work for many years to come.

Double sided in two colours and folded in a clear plastic wallet, price £4.95. Published by M & M Baldwin, 24 High Street, Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster, Worcs, DY14 8BR.

MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY. We have details of the 1993 National Waterways Tour. The tour starts in Rochdale on the 1st May and ends at the National Waterways Festival at Peterborough over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

'Local' dates are all in August:-

Monday 2nd at Thatcham - The Swan, Station Road.

Wednesday 4th at Newbury - Newbury Boat Company, Greenham Lock Cottage.

Thursday 5th at Bradford on Avon - Canal Tavern.

Friday 6th at Newbury - The Waterside Centre, Northbrook Street.

Saturday 7th at Woolhampton - The Rowbarge, Station Road.

Saturday 14th at Fleet - Fox and Hounds, Crookham Road.

Details of the full programme are available from the Chairman.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN. Some years ago, the early sixties to be exact, we used to visit friends in Harrow, Middlesex for the occasional weekend. On one summer Sunday in 1963, our friends suggested a visit to a canalside pub, which turned out to be the one at the Three Locks, Soulbury, on the Grand Union. When I saw the lovely old canal bridge (no longer there!) and the old lock beams etc. I was taken back in time and wanted to know more about our canal inheritance. The landlord of the pub told me of that winter freeze up when all the working boats were frozen in for nearly three months, and as a result, the canal carrying trade was dealt a death blow. I obtained all the canal literature I could, joined the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and the IWA, and the same year hired a British Waterways boat called 'Water Lupin' from Juxon Street Wharf in Oxford. I persuaded my parents to join us, and in spite of much inclement weather, we thoroughly enjoyed it and repeated the holiday the following year to Llangollen in a boat from Inland Hire Cruisers at Christleton near Chester. The rest is history and my ambition to have a narrowboat moored at the bottom of my garden has been realised!

Laurie Pearce.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1st APRIL 1993



<u>INCOME</u>	<u>1993</u> £	<u>1992</u> £
Subscriptions	329.00	240.00
Sales	60.50	249.80
Refreshments	58.44	50.80
Draws	173.90	169.81
Donations	45.72	6.00
Library	8.97	7.00
Sponsored Walk	56.50	-
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	733.03	723.41
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EXPENDITURE

Hire of Meeting Room	150.00	150.00
Lecture Fees and Costs	51.30	34.66
Donations and Subscriptions	445.59	196.00
Stationery	4.80	2.02
Outings	10.00	-
Bank Charges	15.59	45.36
Library	-	2.55
Goods for Resale	14.79	132.19
Sponsored Walk	69.50	-
Postage (Membership)	6.00	-
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	767.57	562.78
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SURPLUS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	-	160.63
EXCESS EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	34.54	-
Balance brought forward	750.79	572.73
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	716.25	733.36
Deposit Account Interest	11.07	17.43
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	727.32	750.79
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BALANCE SHEET as at 1st APRIL 1993

ASSETS

Stock	15.24	19.53
Deposit Account	550.52	336.89
Current Account	152.35	327.70
Cash in Hand	9.21	66.67
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	727.32	750.79
	=====	=====
Represented by:-		
Accumulated Surplus of Income over Expenditure	727.32	750.79
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Accounts subject to Audit.

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY.

1. 'Inland Waterways of Great Britain' - 2nd Edition - June 1947.
Compiled by W. Eric Wilson, D.S.O. Presented to SCS by Gerald Davies of the Surrey and Hants Canal Society.

This book is the forerunner of Imray's 'Inland Waterways of Great Britain and Ireland' and is a list of Canals and Rivers with their details.

There are some interesting prices quoted - eg. At certain places on the Norfolk Broads 'For mooring along the banks and elsewhere, a charge from 1/- to 2/6 per night may be made.'

2. 'Thames Waters' by Roger Pilkington. Presented to SCS library by Gordon Sennett of Romsey.

3. 'Britains Inland Waterways' by Roger Wickson (1968). Presented to our library by Laurie Pearce. This book is a good introduction to Britain's Canal system.

BOAT TRIPS. If anyone is contemplating a boat trip aboard 'John Pinkerton' on the Basingstoke Canal or on the Kennet and Avon Canal from either Newbury or Kintbury the Society has brochures for both.

A MILLION TO ONE, - OR MORE? It is rare for me to be in the right place at the right time but for once....

While staying a weekend in Buckingham we went for a walk to Wolverton Aqueduct which carries the Grand Union Canal over the River Ouse in a metal trough.

The chances of seeing a pair of working narrow boats these days are slim, but arriving at the Canal for the first time in about 20 years and a pair passing within 30 seconds of us getting there is probably many millions to one.

Chuckling my camera bag on the grass I quickly took a couple of shots as the boats crossed Wolverton Aqueduct, then pushing Angina aside, raced to the top of the embankment to take more.

We then passed through the accommodation tunnel and hurried after them to Cosgrove Lock. There they were held for a minute or two while another boat went on ahead, so we were able to catch up and take a whole sequence of photos while they were worked through the lock. (Now the worry - hope I set the camera correctly, didn't shake etc., hope the film is OK.)

Speaking to the boatmen we learned that the boats were travelling back to Stoke Bruerne from Leighton Buzzard where they had been used as overnight accommodation for rugby club members who had wanted to celebrate the last match of the season and had feared that they would not be fit to drive home the same evening.

The narrow boats will soon be going to Birmingham to pick up a load of baled waste paper to be transported down the Grand Union Canal to Dickinson's paper mills for recycling. It appears that Birmingham Corporation are keen to use the Canals when they can but this traffic only becomes economical when volunteer crews man the boats.

On arriving back at Buckingham I found that I had a spectacles case with no specs inside it. "I'll bet you dropped them down when you took the first photo Dad, and then scrambled off without them."

So back to Cosgrave and walked to the exact spot. There were my specs on the grass just a yard from the path. Luckily no one had stepped on them.

There were comments such as "It's surprising what a couple of narrow boats can do to an old chap."

Brian Evans.

Thanks to Laurie Pearce for his 'How it all Began', whose turn next Month? and to our Chaiman. It makes my job a lot easier.

Tony Coles.