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NEWSLETTER No. 270 NOVEMBER 1993

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

- 4th November - An artists view of waterways by Harley Crossley.  
2nd December - American Supper and Mini Exhibition.  
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.

OCTOBER MEETING. 'The History, Restoration and Preservation of the Steam  
Narrowboat President' turned out to be a very interesting and lively evening.  
Our speaker, Richard Thomas, was dressed in narrowboat captain's outfit and  
certainly looked the part. He had many historic pictures of the boat to show us  
then brought us up through the restoration stages. Once this was done he went  
into 'top gear' when recounting his many experiences on board 'President' as a  
qualified captain. Our thanks to Richard and his projectionist for a very  
entertaining evening.

CANAL QUIZ. The quiz between teams from SCS, Chichester Canal Society, Wey &  
Arun Canal Trust and the Solent & Arun Branch of IWA took place in Chichester  
on 9th October.

The SCS team comprised Laura Sturrock, Paul Herbert, Tony Coles and our  
guest Dr Edwin Course. After 5 rounds of questions, 1) local canals,  
2) national canals, 3) international canals, 4) boats & boating and  
5) a picture round of about 50 slides, the SCS team came 2nd.  
The final positions and scores were:-

- 1st Solent & Arun Branch of IWA with 59 points.
- 2nd Southampton Canal Society with 30 points.
- 3rd equal Chichester Canal Society and Wey and Arun Canal Trust with 13 points.

Without the help of an SCS Vice President, Solent & Arun Branch of IWA  
would have had greater difficulty in winning so convincingly. If there is to be  
a repeat next year we suggested that Peter Oates set the quiz to give other  
people a chance.

WHAT A FOUL NIGHT it was for dismantling our exhibition. Well the dismantling  
bit in the warm museum was OK, but getting the material to the cars in  
Eastleigh's flooded streets was a bit of a nightmare. Many thanks to the  
participants - Eric Lewis, Tony Coles, Paul Herbert, Ray Brooks, Dave & Lyn  
Sharpe, Brian & Annegret Evans.

DECEMBER MEETING. American Supper and Mini Exhibition. All members must have a  
few waterways souvenirs. Bring them along for display and we will have our own  
mini exhibition. It would then be interesting to hear how the members bought,  
chose, won, were given or aquired them.

CONGRATULATIONS to our member Derek Bourne - recently presented with a long  
service award for more than 25 years work with Scouting.

OVERLEAF is an account of a cruise undertaken by Laurie and Linda Pearce in  
1993. The story will be concluded next month.  
Our thanks to Laurie for sending us his story.

## ANOTHER 'BITTERNE' CRUISE.

After one or two unavoidable delays we eventually got away at 08.45 on the 12th August 1993 from our garden mooring at Fazely and, except for a stop at Lichfield Marina to take on 12 gallons of diesel, arrived at Fradley Junction at 1pm after encountering heavy showers of rain for the latter part of our journey. We had prudently left the cratch cover in place which turned out to be a wise decision. We decided to moor overnight at Fradley as a change in the weather had been forecast, so woke up next morning to lovely sunshine and set off down the Fradley Locks, through Alrewas (a pretty village), Wychnor, a river section, after which you run parallel to the A38 for some miles until you return to peace and tranquility once again at Braunston Water Park. However we thought we would carry on a bit longer and eventually tied up in Horninglow Wharf at Burton on Trent, or what is left of it, as a section of it was chopped off when the A38 was constructed. British Waterways have now dredged the basin out and installed a Sanitary Station, and local boat rallies are occasionally held there. I understand that the basin was once used by the now extinct Ladyline, as one of their bases, and the mooring pontoons still remain there, if somewhat dilapidated.

Next day, Saturday, we proceeded to Shardlow in 6.5 hours in nice weather, except for a couple of very light showers, so out came the faithful old broolly! It's predecessor reclines somewhere in the Shropshire Union where it was unfortunately blown overboard some years ago - I wonder if some poor soul ever found it with his propellor! We spent Sunday in Shardlow looking at some of the fine old buildings which have been saved by a wise local Council who have designated it a conservation area, and are even restoring some of the old warehouses.

On the way to Shardlow, we negotiated Stenson Lock, which is the first wide lock on the Lower Trent & Mersey, and they continue all the way to Sawley and the River Trent. At one time there was much barge traffic coming up the Trent and Shardlow was a bustling transshipment inland port. Our cooker was given a rest at Shardlow, and we had a fine meal in the Navigation Inn. There is no lack of pubs in such a small village - at least six, from which we patronised three, but not all on the same day!!

Next day we proceeded to Sawley via Derwent Mouth Lock which signals the end of the Trent & Mersey canal, and moored up for the day opposite Sawley Marina - only a short trip of one hour. There is a flood lock on this section which holds back the River Trent when in flood, but on this day both gates were open. The day was idled away doing a tour of Sawley Marina and Chandlery and inspecting Sawley Locks which are now mechanised and through which we would be passing next day.

We awoke next morning to bright sunshine, set off down Sawley Cut to the Sawley Locks where we "patronised" the sanitary station, and thence out on to the Trent, and a short time later we reached the junction with the River Soar, with the Erewash Canal branching off to our left through Trent Lock. At this point the Trent disappears over Thrumpton weir, and boats continue thro' Cranfleet Cut to Cranfleet Lock where we rejoin the Trent and its wide expanse of water which reminded us very much of the River Thames without it's floating Gin Palaces!! It was a lovely day and with deep water under us we reached Beeston Lock in about an hour where the Trent once again disappeared to our right over a large weir. The lock only has a fall of about two feet, but it ensures that the Beeston or Nottingham Canal, is well supplied with water and we found no problems with water depth the rest of the way to Nottingham. As you leave Beeston Lock you pass the extensive factory complex of Boots the Chemists where Sir William Boot first set up business many years ago. We eventually tied up in a public park, complete with mooring rings, and with Sainsburys only just across the park, making it very handy for shopping.

We stayed on our mooring for six days, although 48 hours should have been our limit, but there was no shortage of mooring places so we didn't feel guilty. During this time we walked the towpath towards Meadow Lane Lock which admits you back to the Trent again, saw two water voles in a nearby leat, now nearly extinct due to predation by mink which are fast populating the waterways and about which the authorities are doing nothing. We enjoyed the Canal Museum which has been set up in the old Fellows Morton & Clayton Depot, and generally explored the City of Nottingham with it's Castle, Museums and lace making establishments.