

# Newsletter

## RAID ON THE CALEDONIAN CANAL

*Our intrepid Small Boat correspondent, Peter Glover, has sent in this account of his Raid upon the famous Scottish waterway. Thank you, Peter.*

The Caledonian Canal is a magnificent waterway crossing Scotland diagonally from Fort William to Inverness in a SW to NE direction. It passes through the Great Glen - a natural fault created during the glacial period - a total distance of 60 miles.

Three natural lochs - Lochy, Oich and Ness - are joined by 22 miles of man made canal built by Thomas Telford in 1822.

In June this year, I joined a group of people prepared for the Great Glen Raid, a boating event arranged by the French company Albacore, who in previous years had held a similar event on the River Douro in Portugal.

At the start 34 small boats - both sailing and rowing, many from various parts of Europe - met at Corpach near Fort William.

The first day, boats and crews negotiated Neptune's Staircase, a flight of eight locks, leading to Gairloch and Loch Lochy. Overnight accommodation had been arranged in various B&B's or youth hostels, although I slept aboard my 15ft skiff, which is fitted out for dinghy cruising.

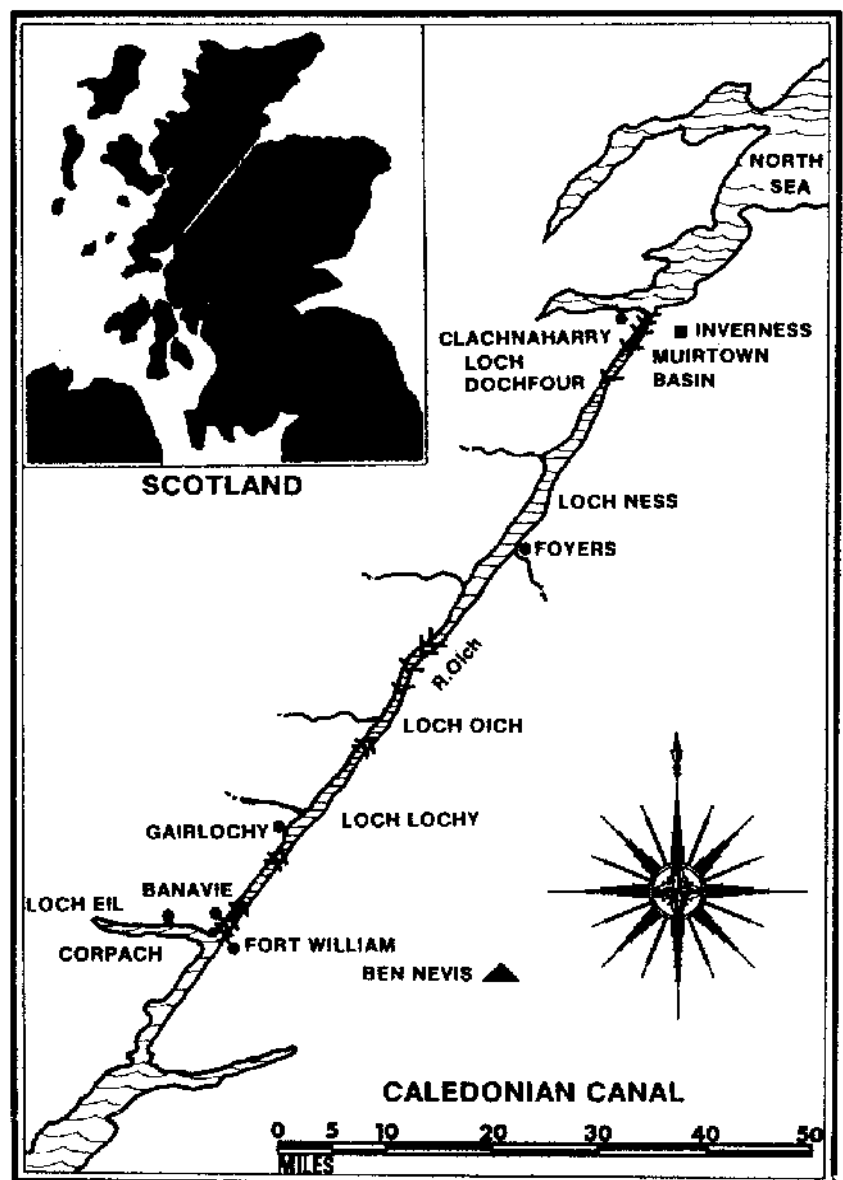
On subsequent days, the fleet of boats navigated Loch Lochy and Loch Oich - at 106 feet the summit level - eventually arriving at Fort Augustus for the challenge of Loch Ness - 23 miles in length and with depths greater than the North Sea. All the boats arrived safely at the far end after a mid-day lunch break at Foyers, the half way mark. We finally arrived safely at Inverness after six days of an adventurous event.

The Raid had been a success even though exhausting at times - well

supported by the Scottish and Highlands Tourist Board and associated companies.

In conclusion, I'm pleased to report that the burgee of the Southampton Canal Society was flown throughout the whole length of the canal and survived the katabatic winds of Loch Ness which were very strong at times.

*Peter Glover*



## August Meeting

Attendances at our August meetings are usually lighter than at other times in the year because so many of our members are on holiday. However, those who do manage to get along are always entertained with a variety of interesting talks.

The August meeting this year was no exception when our Chairman, Brian Evans, gave a fascinating illustrated talk, aided by Annegret, on their trip to Southern China in 1998.

They had spent November with their daughter, Annemarie, who lives in Hong Kong. Brian had previously talked to Society Members about that part of the trip and on this occasion he was able to complete the journey which took them into Southern China, accompanied by Annemarie.

Brian's presentation gave an intriguing insight into parts of China not normally seen by tourists, particularly in the rural areas.

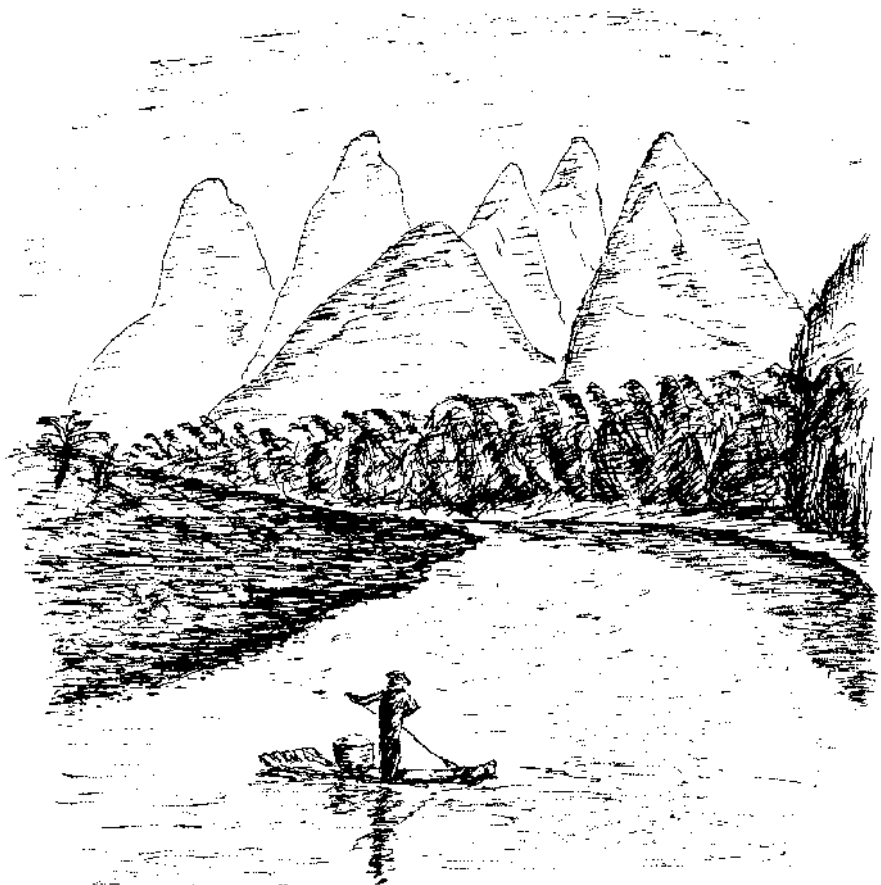
They started off in the University City of Guilin and then, in beautiful hot weather boarded their boat on the River Lijiang which took them to Yangshuo. The river was very busy, about 14 other boats were also making the journey downstream. In addition there were bamboo boats from which women were selling fruit to the passengers of the river boats. Water buffalo in the shallows added to the scene.

At Yangshuo a young female guide, Quin Quin, attached herself to the Evans family (how does Brian manage this?) and proved herself to be a valuable asset, both as a guide and as an interpreter. They spent two days cycling the countryside with Quin Quin who even cooked a meal for them in her aunt's kitchen in one of the villages. Brian and Annegret were amazed at the interest that villagers took in them, they often attracted up to 20 people, particularly children.

They had a lot of interesting experiences, all beautifully illustrated with Brian's superb slides. They saw rice wine being made (and of course they bought a bottle) and peanut oil being extracted.

Buffalo and ducks were grazing the paddy fields which were dry in November and this fortunately meant less mosquitoes! They were intrigued by the sight of a local community constructing their own bridge across a river with the women, in sandals, carrying the very basic materials (stone etc) in baskets on yokes.

They had an interesting experience cycling back one evening after dusk. There were many cyclists about without lights, competing for space with lorries and



River Lijiang

Brian Evans 2000

buses. Brian was particularly interested in the local transport scene which included numerous peddicabs (3 wheeled man-powered taxis) and some peculiar 3 wheeled vehicles with an exposed single cylinder engine (which had obviously originated from a wide variety of sources), some of which had no radiator!

It was obvious from Brian and Annegret's enthusiasm during the talk that they had a fantastic trip. We were grateful that they had shared it with us.

*Paul Herbert*

## September Meeting

For many of us it is difficult to bring history to life, but at our September meeting we had some expert assistance when Dr Andrew Russel visited us and gave an illustrated talk on 'Archaeology on the River Itchen'. From items found in recent years, with experience and modern science, particularly in the ability to date them, and know from where they came it is possible to piece together the happenings through the years.

Most of Dr Russel's talk was devoted to the tidal Itchen. But it has not always been so for, not far beneath the mud lies a layer of peat that would only have been laid down in fresh water. One of his exhibits, a deer's antler, came from this layer. It was much larger than anything on an animal today, which suggested to the archaeologist that at some time the weather would have been warmer and the grazing more lush.

From pre-history he passed to the Roman town of Clausentum where remains show that there were

buildings connected with both trading and defence. The Romans came and went, to be followed by other invaders who came to Britain and it seems that the Itchen saw them all.

Wharves have been found and mapped (plenty more to do - any volunteers?) and the remains of old wooden barges have been excavated. Dr Russel pointed out old boats gradually rusting away, they will probably be tomorrow's history.

He finished up with a look at some excavating that took place on the turf-sided Mansbridge Lock on the Itchen Navigation and showed us a very heavy exhibit in the form of a beautifully made iron rod, one of a number which were inserted into the bank to hold timbers in position.

I for one came away impressed with the informative and enthusiastic way in which history could after all be brought alive for me.

*Brian Evans*

## Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz

Only two months to go now to one of our major events of the year - the Inter-Society Waterways Quiz.

As winners of the 1999 Quiz the Southampton Canal Society will again be hosting this popular event, the last at our meeting venue for many years, the St John's Ambulance Hall in King's Park Road, Southampton (see item elsewhere in this Newsletter).

Our teams have been very successful ever since the Quiz started in Chichester in 1993 when the Southampton Canal Society were runners up. The

following year we brought the trophy home to Southampton. In the succeeding five years we won the trophy three times and were runners up twice.

Well, what about the Millennium Waterways Quiz? We are now looking for volunteers for the Southampton Team so please do consider joining up for this very enjoyable event. We only need four people to make up the team so please have a word with Paul Herbert on the Sales Stand (an orderly queue please) or our Secretary, Peter Oates.

As always, the Quiz will be followed by the traditional American Supper when we can all bring our favourite goodies along for everyone to share!

## News from the Sales Stand

### GEOprojects Maps

Members will be aware that the Society's Sales Stand carries a comprehensive stock of the large range of waterways maps published by GEOprojects.

Delivery has recently been taken of the latest editions to this range - The Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the Lee & Stort Navigations.

So, see Paul or Ray on the Sales Stand at Society evenings for your maps. For those members who are unable to get to the monthly meetings, mail order for Sales Stand items can be arranged, just ring Paul on 023 8026 2365.

### Society Polo Shirts

The Society's range of 'badged' clothing - Tee Shirts and Sweat Shirts - has always been very popular and

demand has often exceeded supply, leading to regular re-ordering. Particularly popular were the special sweat shirts marking the 30th Anniversary of the Society, carrying the coloured embroidered logo and the dates 1967 and 1997.

It has been suggested that we extend the range to include a Polo Shirt (viz. a short sleeve casual shirt with collar) to suit both men and women. These would be made in a suitable colour with the Society's logo on the breast pocket.

We obviously cannot order such items on spec. but must have an idea of possible demand before talking to suppliers about colours and costings etc.

If you are interested in becoming the proud owner of a Society Polo Shirt, please let Paul or Ray know on the Sales Stand.

*Paul Herbert*

## ST JOHN'S AMBULANCE HALL - OUR SEARCH FOR A NEW HOME!

Those members able to attend meetings on a regular basis will have seen the signs on the outside of the St John's Ambulance Hall which first advertised the site for sale and then indicated that it had been sold (for development).

We have now been informed by St John's that they have sold the site and have until 31 January 2001 to vacate the premises. They have located land in Millbrook Road in Southampton on which they intend to build a new purpose-built headquarters. St John's have said they have valued our support by hiring the existing hall over the years and hope that we will move with them to their new premises.

However, even with the best estimates, it is unlikely that the new premises will be opened before the summer of 2001 (and your Committee thinks that indication of date is fairly optimistic).

The Society has been based at the St John's Ambulance Hall in King's Park Road for over 20

years. The location has been very central, the facilities ideal for our use, and the hire charges have been very reasonable. It is unlikely that alternative premises will be found at such advantageous rates.

There are two urgent issues that need to be resolved by the Society - to find an alternative temporary venue from February next year, and to decide whether a subsequent permanent move to the Millbrook Road site when the new St John's HQ is opened is desirable/convenient to members. Another issue is that it might be necessary to change our meeting day to fit in with alternative accommodation.

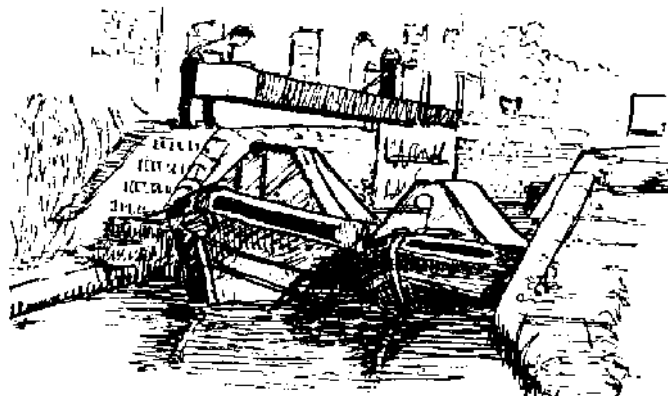
Your Committee would like members' views on the various issues concerning an alternative venue. Attached to this Newsletter is a simple questionnaire which will only take a few minutes to complete. The information gathered will be of great assistance to the Committee and your co-operation in completing the questionnaire would be very much appreciated.

## WATERWAYS DIARY 2000

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 05/10/00 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Frank Stokes will show slides of his visit to Projekt 17 in Germany and to the Shannon-Erne Waterway in Ireland	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Thu 19/10/00 7.30pm	IWA Avon & Wilts Branch	"From the Cradle to the Grave and back again" - A talk about the story of the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canal by Phil Hughes. Venue: Riverside pub, Saltford Marina, Saltford, Bristol.	Bob Kelly: 0117 9744221
Thu 02/11/00 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Navigating where others cannot reach" with Chris Coburn	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
Thu 07/12/00 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz and American Supper	Peter Oates: 01794 517614
First Wed of month	IWA Dorchester Group	Evening meetings. Further details from Graham Pugh.	Graham Pugh: 01305 262305
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



## 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  
St John's Ambulance Hall, King's Park Road,  
Southampton (please see item on page 4)

### Chairman:

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

### Secretary:

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

### Treasurer & Membership:

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

### Committee:

Martin Cripps, Paul Herbert, David Townley-Jones

### Newsletter Editor:

Peter Oates, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey,  
Hampshire, SO51 5RU. Tel: 01794 517614  
Email: [peter@whitenap.waitrose.com](mailto:peter@whitenap.waitrose.com)

### Newsletter distributed by:

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### Society Website:

<http://www.users.waitrose.com/~whitenap/index.htm>

## Society Meetings

Following the talk to the Society by Dr Andrew Russel in September, a donation of £25 has been made with a request that this might be allocated for the carbon dating of artifacts. The Committee would like to thank Tony Coles for making the arrangements for Dr Russel to speak to us.

Don't forget that Chris Coburn will be at our November meeting telling us how to get a narrow boat to various strange places such as Caernarfon. Whilst some might think such antics rather madcap, the publicity and fund raising for waterway causes is undeniable. This promises to be a very good evening.

Whilst arrangements are in hand for more speakers in the New Year, your Secretary would be interested to hear of any subjects (mainly about waterways but not exclusively) that you would like to hear about. Please let Peter Oates know your thoughts and ideas.

## 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 .....

Lee and Stort Navigations.....

Leeds and Liverpool Canal .....

Llangollen and Montgomery Canals .....

London - City and Docklands Atlas .....

Oxford Canal .....

Shropshire Union Canal .....

Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal *with the River Severn and*

*the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal*.....

The Thames Map .....

Trent & Mersey Canal - Map 1 Preston Brook to Fradley Junction..

Trent & Mersey Canal and River Trent - Map 2 Great

Haywood Junction to Cromwell Lock.....

**Ball Point Pens:** Embossed .....

**Burgees:** Navy Blue - screen printed Society logo on each side .....

**Decorated Mugs:** .....

**Notelets:** with drawings of canal and Romsey scenes .....

(by Brian Evans)

**Shopper Bags:** Cotton with screen-printed Society logo each side .

**Society Members Badges:** Enamel .....

**Sweat Shirts:** 30th Anniversary in Light Grey .....

with multi-coloured embroidered Society logo on breast

**Sweat Shirts:** Standard in Navy or Royal Blue .....

with Society logo embroidered on breast

**Tea Towels:** Various colourful designs .....

**Tee Shirts:** Screen printed with Society logo across chest .....

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 01703 262365

## FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

### 5th October 2000

Frank Stokes will show slides of his visit to Projekt 17 in Germany and to the Shannon-Erne Waterway in Ireland

### 2nd November 2000

"Navigating where others cannot reach" with Chris Coburn

### 7th December 2000

Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz and American Supper

### 4th January 2001

To be arranged

### 1st February 2001

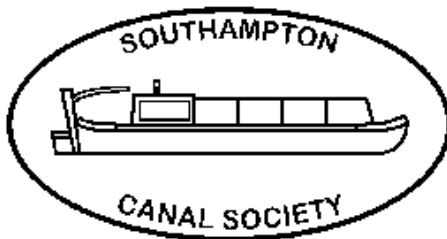
To be arranged

### 1st March 2001

To be arranged

### 5th April 2001

Speaker from the 'Friends of Raymond' talking about the restoration of this wooden narrow boat



## SEARCH FOR A NEW HOME - QUESTIONNAIRE

As you know from an item in the October 2000 Newsletter, the Society has to find an alternative venue for its monthly meetings, owing to the sale of the St John's Ambulance Hall in King's Park Road, Southampton.

The Committee would like to know the opinions of Society Members about this important change. Please find a few minutes to complete this questionnaire.

Name(s): .....

Where do you live (area)? .....

How do you travel to the St John's Ambulance Hall, King's Park Road?

Own transport	Yes/No
Lift with someone else	Yes/No
Public Transport	Yes/No
Walk	Yes/No

Would you be in favour of using a new venue in Millbrook, Southampton? Yes/No

Where, in your opinion, would be a good alternative location for a venue?

.....  
Are you aware of possible suitable alternative venues, if so where?

.....  
If we have to change the meeting day - what days of the week (Monday to Friday) would **NOT** be suitable for you?

.....  
Any other comments? (continue overleaf if necessary)

.....  
*Please return this completed questionnaire to Peter Oates, Secretary, Southampton Canal Society, 27 Northlands Road, Romsey, S051 SRU by 2 November 2000*