



## Chairman's Column

### David James

Further to my announcement at our September meeting, I am very sorry to inform members that we have lost another of our long-time members, David James. He passed away in hospital on 30 August. David had had various health problems over a number of years but there had been no obvious indication that his health was failing. Indeed, at our AGM a month before he passed away he had quite a conversation with me, laced with his usual quirky sense of humour, about the fact he and Margaret were selling their much loved narrow boat to their daughter and son-in-law. Only a few days later Gill and I passed David, Margaret and family on their boat at Braunston. Our thoughts go to Margaret and the family at this very sad time.

### October Meeting

On behalf of the Society I am delighted to welcome back Pete and Jane Marshall and the crew of 'Day-Star Theatre' when we will witness "An Unpleasant Business". After the performance we will, as usual, be enjoying an American Supper.

### Naomi House



In the August Newsletter there was a report on June's Silent Auction and Quiz with reference to a donation of £400 to Naomi House. Our cheque was duly sent and we have received a letter of thanks, of which the following is an extract:

*"Thank you so much for the wonderful donation of £400.00 kindly given to Naomi House Children's Hospice. We are so grateful to everyone at Southampton Canal Society for raising this money at your recent Silent Auction and Charity Evening. Your support means so much to the children and their families that use Naomi House and to the young people who will soon be able to use our new hospice, jacksplace."*

### Membership Subscriptions

A reminder if you haven't yet paid your membership subscription for the current year (£15 for individuals and £22 for couples/family membership), can you please see our Treasurer & Membership Secretary, Anne Coleman, as soon as possible.

### 2008/2009 Annual Accounts

For those members who were unable to attend this year's Annual General Meeting, details of the Society's 2008/2009 accounts (Profit & Loss Comparison

## Society Lunch

The Society's post Christmas/New Year Lunch will take place on Saturday 16 January 2010 at the Blue Hayes Restaurant, Ampfield, Romsey.

At present we do not have details of the menu or the cost but this will be available in October. The menu will be similar to last year's in that there will be choices of vegetarian, fish and meat dishes for the main course and choices for the starter and dessert. I

01/04/07 through 31/03/09 and Balance Sheet as of 31/03/09) were to be re-produced in this Newsletter. However, they are still not available to the Editor at the time of going to press.

### September Meeting

The write-up on Peter Jordan's talk about the Kennet & Avon Canal at our last meeting has been held over to the next Newsletter.

### November Meeting

At our next meeting on Thursday 5 November we will be welcoming Tim Dodwell with 'Life Before WRG'

### 2009 Inter-Society Waterways Quiz



A reminder that at our December meeting, to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will again be hosting the Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz. Our Society is currently the reigning champions and volunteers are invited to form our team. Please contact me as soon as possible.

### Society Christmas/New Year Lunch

As reported in last month's Newsletter, the Society will be holding its second Christmas/New Year Lunch at the Blue Hayes Restaurant at Shootash near Romsey, (the same venue as this year) on Saturday 16 January. Further details are published elsewhere in this Newsletter. Preliminary bookings are already heavy and there are not many places left so, to avoid disappointment, please contact Maureen Greenham (Tel: 023 8040 6951 or email: [maureen.greenham@talktalk.net](mailto:maureen.greenham@talktalk.net)) without delay.

### Colin Ward

I was sorry to hear that Colin Ward, a great supporter of the inland waterways, had died in July. Colin, who was known to a number of us in the Society, was a stalwart of the IWA Guildford & Reading Branch for some thirty years, and there cannot have been any committee or event during that time that he was not in some way involved in. With the demise of the IWA Region Newsletter "Windlass" he became editor of a new Branch Newsletter "Guardian"; subsequently transformed into "Guardians" when joined by the Solent & Arun Branch; and into the current "Cargoes" when the Oxford Branch also joined. It was for long and distinguished service to the IWA that Colin was awarded a Richard Bird Medal in 2005. Many Society members will remember Colin's talk to us about the Canadian waterways – "Lots to do at the Soo" in June 2007.

Paul Herbert

understand that the cost will be slightly higher than last year but not excessively so.

Please indicate your interest in attending the lunch by adding your name to the list at the October meeting or by telephoning me on 02380 406951 or e-mailing [maureen.greenham@talktalk.net](mailto:maureen.greenham@talktalk.net).

Maureen Greenham

# Waterways Diary

The following is a list of waterway events taking place within approximately 50 miles of Southampton. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the correctness of this information, please check with the listed contact who will be glad to confirm and supply further details.

Recently, OS grid references and/or postcodes have been added (where known but not guaranteed) to aid location of the event. If YOU know of an event taking place that should be in this list then please contact the editor.

Time	Organiser	Details	Contact
<b>Fri 25 Sep 2009 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>"An Unpleasant Business" by Day-Star Theatre followed by an American Supper. Tickets: £8.00. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a></b>
Fri 25 Sep 2009 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"Old K&A and Old Reading" a (Powerpoint) slide show with Derek Cann. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@googlemail.com">swift.john21@googlemail.com</a>
Wed 30 Sep 2009 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"Boating Upside Down" - Holidaying on Australia's Murray River By Rob & Julie Dean. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: <a href="mailto:GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net">GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net</a>
Sat 10 Oct 2009 7.30pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Social evening of light-hearted quizzes - not to be taken too seriously! Devizes Wharf, Devizes, SN10 1EB. (SU004617).	Mike Messam: 07776-330828 or Vicki Messam: 07914-790665
Sun 18 Oct 2009 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk (2 miles) - Lower Conygre Pit, Timsbury. Meet: Near the Old Post Office, Red Hill, Camerton, BA2 0PB. (ST681579)	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: <a href="mailto:mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk">mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk</a>
Tue 20 Oct 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Vegetation clearance / Preservation of St. Catherine's Lock, Winchester (SU480273).	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Wed 21 Oct 2009 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Illustrated talk by Tony Pratt - "Lost Wey to the Sea" describing the history and route of the Wey & Arun Canal. Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com">d.millett7@ntlworld.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Thu 22 Oct 2009 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Talk - details to be announced. The Radstock Working Mens' Club, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss 07736 859882 Email: <a href="mailto:lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk">lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Wed 28 Oct 2009 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"The Story of London's Docks" - the Port of London from Roman times to present day by Jeremy Batch. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: <a href="mailto:GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net">GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net</a>
Fri 30 Oct 2009 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"Dipping into the Wells" with Angela Spencer-Harper on her 1st (of many) books. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@googlemail.com">swift.john21@googlemail.com</a>
<b>Thu 5 Nov 2009 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>'Life Before WRG' with Tim Dodwell. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a></b>
Wed 11 Nov 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Otter holt construction near Otterbourne	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Sun 15 Nov 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Vegetation clearance / Preservation of St. Catherine's Lock, Winchester (SU480273).	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Sun 15 Nov 2009 10.00am	Somersetshire Coal CS	Walk (2 miles) - Withy Mills Colliery, Timsbury. Meet: Bottom of Radford Hill at junction with Weekesley Lane, BA2 0QG (ST673578)	Mike Chapman: 01225 426948 Email: <a href="mailto:mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk">mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk</a>
Wed 18 Nov 2009 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Dr Roger Squires will talk about "The River Douro to the Spanish Border." Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com">d.millett7@ntlworld.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Wed 25 Nov 2009 7.45pm	Kennet & Avon CT	"Secret Canals of Britain" - by Stuart Fisher. A canoeist's-eye view of the system. Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury RG14 5AS. (SU472672) Admission free - light refreshments - parking £1. 00	Graham Smith: 01635 580356 Email: <a href="mailto:GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net">GrahamV.Smith@virgin.net</a>
Fri 27 Nov 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Vegetation clearance / Preservation of St. Catherine's Lock, Winchester (SU480273).	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Fri 27 Nov 2009 8.00pm	Kennet & Avon CT	Christmas 'Party' and 'Reading Quiz - illustrated'. All Saints Church Hall, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH. (SU705729) £2.50 to cover hall hire and tea or coffee.	John or Pam Swift: 01189 415540 Email: <a href="mailto:swift.john21@googlemail.com">swift.john21@googlemail.com</a>
<b>Thu 3 Dec 2009 7.45pm</b>	<b>Southampton CS</b>	<b>Annual Inter-Society Waterways Quiz. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).</b>	<b>Angela Rose: 02380 403982 Email: <a href="mailto:info@apas-engineering.com">info@apas-engineering.com</a></b>
Sat 5 Dec 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Otter holt construction near Southampton	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Tue 8 Dec 2009	Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project	Volunteer working party - Scrub clearance in Winchester.	Polly Whyte: 01489 774400 Email: <a href="mailto:pollyw@hwt.org.uk">pollyw@hwt.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk">www.itchennavigation.org.uk</a>
Wed 16 Dec 2009 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Brian Stovold - 'The Wilts and Berks Canal - Past, Present and Future.' Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com">d.millett7@ntlworld.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Wed 21 Jan 2010 8.00pm	Surrey & Hampshire CS	Peter Oates - 'The Itchen Navigation.' Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AZ. (SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: <a href="mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com">d.millett7@ntlworld.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk">www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk</a>
Sun 18 Oct 2009 2.00pm, 15 Nov, 20 Dec 2009 1.00pm	Paul Barnett	Guided tours through the remains of the Purton Hulks led by Paul Barnett, Marine Historian. Donations in aid of Severn Area Rescue Association. or £3.00 per person. Approx 2 hours weather permitting. Meet Purton Lower Bridge, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal (SO692044).	Paul Barnett: 07833 143231 Email: <a href="mailto:barnadillo@aol.com">barnadillo@aol.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.friendsofpurton.org.uk">www.friendsofpurton.org.uk</a>

## Who's stealing water from the Chichester Canal?

Concerns have been raised for Chichester Canal after water levels fell dramatically again this week. Part of the canal between Birdham and Donnington has been drained of water, prompting the Environment Agency (EA) to carry out the second investigation in three months to determine why water levels continue to fall.

In July, the water level dropped 4ft below its usual depth and hundreds of rotting fish were discovered in the stretch of the canal by Hunston Bridge. The EA said low oxygen levels in the water had caused the fish to die.

Resident Julian Moores, who lives by the canal at Pump Bottom Farm in Appledram, said the water had again dropped between 3ft and 4ft.

"I am so angry this has happened again," he said. He believes a water extraction pump has gradually been taking the water. I cannot understand why the Environment Agency is doing nothing

about the pump that has been extracting water from the canal practically 24 hours a day. It is irresponsible. This time there is nothing – there are no fish left to die because they were all killed last time the water levels fell."

Mr Moores added: "There needs to be accountability from whoever is extracting water from the canal."

Farmers who live by the canal are legally allowed to extract water for their crops from the canal during part of the year.

After the last investigation, the EA said it would look into whether the correct amount of water had been taken by farmers. Joe Giacomelli, from the EA, said: "The first investigation did not reveal why the water levels had fallen. We are concerned it has happened again. Another investigation will now be carried out to try to establish the cause."

*Sussex Express, 4 September 2009*

## Voles cause Chichester Canal restoration to grind to halt

Small, furry animals have caused the long-running restoration project at Chichester's 187-year-old canal to grind to a temporary halt.

The problem is with water voles, the creatures which inspired the character Ratty, in the children's classic *Wind in the Willows*. Disagreements have emerged over how they should be provided for on the canal, where the population is said to be thriving. This is unlike other parts of the country where there has been a dramatic decline.

Voles are a legally-protected species and landowners are obliged to look after their habitat. But West Sussex County Council, which owns the three-mile waterway, has been accused of being too rigid in its interpretation of the legal situation.

The long-term aim of restoration, widely supported in Chichester, is to restore the canal's link with the sea, allowing boats to sail in via a lock straight up to the canal basin, not far from the city centre. But major expenditure including work on road crossings and improvements to the sea lock, possibly running into millions, will be needed before the final objective can be achieved. Meanwhile, volunteers have been working on improvements to the towpath and eroded banks.

But the scheme has temporarily stalled because of the voles, although the county council is saying it hopes work can resume during the coming winter. Critics of the county's stance on voles maintain they can be fully provided for in a substantial wildlife 'corridor', on the opposite side to the towpath.

Rick Travis, a former chairman of the Ship Canal Trust, who was

closely involved in the volunteer restoration work, before a halt was called by County Hall, believes the council is adopting an 'overkill' approach. His view, shared by some other volunteers, is the non-towpath side should be left to nature, but there should be a compromise over the towpath itself.

"Deliberately providing habitat on the towpath side, as planned by the county council, seems counter-productive, and potentially quite cruel, because the animals might well be disturbed," said Mr Travis.

This was because the towpath was used by a lot of walkers – many of them with dogs, which could well chase after animals – as well as by many cyclists.

"I, and others dedicated to the restoration, wanted a firmer edge for the bank on the towpath side, where there has been some erosion over the years," he said. "We were widening the towpath and repairing the eroded sections to make this firm edge, which will be very desirable in the future, with boats coming through and people wanting to stop."

The county council wanted a soft, muddy edge, and the volunteers were told to stop work on the bank itself. "I think the approach it is taking is too rigid," Mr Travis added.

He pointed out similar conflicts could arise over the stretch of canal between the Birdham Road and the sea lock. This was leased from the county council by Premier Marinas, and was outside the area where the volunteers had been working. But a county survey had shown this stretch was also potential vole habitat.

*West Sussex Gazette, 31 August 2009*

## Funding for Navigation Authorities

IWA has made the first moves to launch a national campaign in defence of navigation authority budgets and Grant-in-Aid funding following the recent announcement of the cuts to British Waterways Grant for 2010.

A recent review by consultants KPMG estimated that British Waterways is under-funded by about £30m per annum just to keep its waterways in good condition and it currently has a backlog of some £200m in maintenance requirements. The situation is getting worse. In 2010/11 British Waterways is to be given nearly 17% less grant than this year (a reduction from £57.4m this year to £47.8m next year). In addition The Environment Agency estimates that its maintenance backlog is about £30m. Its funding gap is worse per kilometre than British Waterways (£12,000/km compared to £8,200/km - 2007) and stands at £9.6m. But the

expectation is that it too will receive reduced Government grant, exacerbating its financial shortfall.

Speaking at IWA's national festival at Redhill, Clive Henderson, national chairman, called on waterway supporters to work together at grass roots level to forge local partnerships with all waterway organisations, community groups and businesses and to gain support locally for better funding for the waterways, and to identify issues that are affecting the operation, maintenance and safety of the waterways in their local communities.

The campaign is called 'SOS 2010' - Save Our System 2010. Organisations wishing to get involved should use the SOS link on the IWA home page at [www.waterways.org.uk](http://www.waterways.org.uk) – or contact their local IWA branch.

*IWA Head Office Bulletin - September 2009*

# 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.

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**Society Website:**

<http://www.sotoncs.org.uk>

**Meetings:**

Normally 1st Thursday each month at 7.45pm. (See Waterways Diary.) Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184.

## Canal journey not so fine and Dandy...

PASSENGERS on a horse-drawn canal boat trip were stunned when the giant shire horse pulling them along lost his footing – and ended up in the canal.

The impromptu dip happened when the huge grey called Dandy stumbled and fell into the Grand Western Canal in Tiverton, Devon.

The plunge was only the fourth time a horse had taken a tumble on the canal in 30 years. The unexpected sight of a horse swimming greeted the tourists Dandy had been pulling aboard the canal boat Tivertonian.

Despite the initial shock, Dandy was uninjured and onlookers said he seemed to be enjoying himself in the water – and was in no hurry to get out.

The seven-year-old fell in as he negotiated a 90 degree bend in the canal and the angle of the rope connecting him to the boat became too tight.

Amazed holidaymaker Graham Smith was taking pictures of the canal when he saw the 2,000lb horse tumble into the water. His photographs show what a struggle captain Don Gardener had to get a reluctant Dandy out on to dry land.

Londoner Mr Smith was in Devon for the bank holiday weekend and was strolling along the canal when Dandy tumbled in.

"I was just about to take a photo of the bridge, barge and horse together, but as I put the camera to my eye, Dandy fell in. "I couldn't believe it. I wasn't the only one taking photos – soon, everyone was trying to get a snap of the horse paddling in the water.

"The horse had turned around and was heading back to Tiverton, and they had to coax him out at a shallow part of the canal."

Phil Brind, from the Tiverton Canal Company, said it had a strict code of conduct which was followed by the horsemen when an animal went in the water. He added it was the skill and expertise of the canal boat operators that prevented Dandy being injured.

Dandy was eventually encouraged out of the canal where it was shallow, and he was allowed to relax for half an hour before being put back to work for the return journey to Tiverton.

Mr Brind said: "It's one of those things that has happened in the past and will happen again – but it's very rare. When horses pull barges round a bend like that, there's a lot of force from the rope pulling them towards the canal.

"The vast majority of times, there are no problems but this time, a car horn startled Dandy and he pulled forward and he then lost his footing and tumbled in. The Grand Western is only 3ft deep. The trickiest part was getting him out."

Mr Brind added: " One of the joys about the canal is that if a horse slips and falls over, they land on a surface which won't cause them any injury unlike if they were on tarmac or any other harder surface. The horsemen did a really good job of making sure the horse was OK and followed the code of conduct superbly."

Records show that the barge horses are very sure-footed – only four have fallen in over the last 30 years.

The last horse to take an unexpected tumble was Prince, who fell five years ago. Prince is now retired and being looked after in Cullompton, Devon.

Dandy has been working with the canal company for just over a year and it is thought he will have learned to take the corner easier next time.

*Western Morning News, 9 September 2009*

## National Waterways Museum

Local newspaper reports have suggested that the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester Docks might close at the end of September unless volunteers can be found to run it.

The museum's budget has been much reduced after British Waterways saw a £10-million cut in its budget for the coming year. The cuts have forced BW to direct all available funds to operating the nation's canals, and led to a reduction in its annual grant to The Waterways Trust.

The museum, which once employed four full-time and two part-

time staff, is now run by one full-time manager and one part-time staff member. It is already now closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, and has cut its opening hours.

Gloucester Civic Trust has offered its support to help save the museum and plans to move its visitor information point from College Street to the foyer of the museum in Llanthony Warehouse. But the Trust said it would need to attract several volunteers to help keep the business running and return to seven-day opening.

*IWA Head Office Bulletin - September 2009*