



Chairman's Column

September 2013

This evening on behalf of our members we welcome Adam Comerford, Hydrology Manager of the Canal & River Trust & fellow SCS member Gordon Osborn, a modeller with ABP Mer.

They are presenting a joint talk about the science of managing water, when there is too little water and when there is too much water.

This is just what we all have been wanting to know, when our boats run a ground.

October Meeting

"Why archives?" is the subject of the October presentation by Elaine Kirby, who is Archivist for the

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust based at Devizes.

Elaine will explain why records from the last 200 years have been kept for the future. A selection of photographs will finish the evening.

November Meeting

Our November meeting will feature Day-Star Theatre with their play "The Making of Geoffrey Phelps." For details of this production see page 3 of this Newsletter.

Tickets can be booked tonight for the price of £10.

Well, the Summer has been excellent, warm and sunny just as it should be.

Alan Rose

French take the axe to canal views

The 17th century Canal du Midi in southern France is often portrayed as Europe's most beautiful waterway, and a unique symbol of harmony between Man and nature.

Now, however, it is the source of discord and anguish after a decision to fell the plane trees that line its banks; a move prompted by the spread of a devastating fungus, but denounced by critics as "ecological genocide".

Villages along the 150-mile canal, opened in 1682, during the reign of Louis XIV, fear that the tree cull could drive away the 50,000 tourists who use the waterway every year. There is also the matter of who should stump up the €200 million (£170 million) for new trees to be planted. With national and local government reluctant to pay, *Voies Navigables de France* (The Waterways of France) has appealed for private donations, but the first three weeks brought in only 30 cheques, for sums as low as €20.

As so often when things go wrong in France, blame is being pinned on the US. Specialists say that the fungus, *ceratocystis platani*, arrived in the country in the munitions boxes used by GIs during the Second World War. It was first detected along the Canal du Midi in 2006, and 4,200 trees have been chopped down since then. Another 10,000 will be felled under the latest programme, which got under way this month [August], and officials believe that all 42,000 trees along the canal will have to come down in the next 20 years.



The Canal du Midi near Agde

"It is an ecological genocide," said Jean-Paul Delachoux, Mayor of Pommevic, a village on the canal near Toulouse. "It will take at least 20 years for the canopy to rediscover its splendour."

Cetev, a company in Toulouse, says it has developed a fungicide that may work - and Yves Bastié, Mayor of Sallèles-d'Aude, another village on the canal, is furious with *Voies Navigables de France* for apparently refusing to test it. "Nothing's certain, but it's worth a try, rather than sitting back and watching the trees fall," he said.

Adam Sage, *The Times*, Saturday 31 August 2013

Itchen Navigation Footpath Closures

Further to last month's news about the Itchen Navigation Footpath, the following information appears on the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust website:

At Brambridge, bank erosion between Kiln Lane and Highbridge Road has resulted in the footpath being closed. The Friends of the Itchen Navigation Volunteers, working with HIWWT and Rights of Way staff, are working on a repair, but work is not yet complete.

At Withymead Lock near Bishopstoke, a footbridge made dangerous by vandalism has been removed. Working with the Environment Agency and HIWWT, HCC Rights of Way are redirecting available financial resources to facilitate its replacement.

Further information can be found at <http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/pages/circular-walks.html>

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
Thu 5 Sep 2013 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Water Management and Modelling." Adam Comerford, Group Hydrology Manager, CRT and Gordon Osborn, SCS member and Modeller with ABPmer, will present a joint talk about the science of managing water both when there is too little water and when there is too much. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Sat 14 Sep 2013 10.00am	Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society	A linear guided walk (approx 6 miles) along part of the old Portsmouth and Arundel Navigation, from Barnham Court Farm, Church Lane, Barnham, PO22 0BP (SU956034) to Hunston. Bring a packed lunch. Parking at start.	Adge Roberts: 01903 721762 Email: adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk
Sat - Sun 14 - 15 Sep 2013 2.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	Heritage Open Days. Guided walk from Gunpowder Store, Stonebridge Wharfside, Shalford.(SU998465) along part of the old route of the Wey and Arun Canal Approx 2.5km, 1.5 hours. Please book in advance at the Canal Centre in Loxwood. Parking as below.	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sat - Sun 14 - 15 Sep 2013 2.00 - 4.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	Heritage Open Days. The Gunpowder Store, Stonebridge Wharfside, Shalford. Open with displays on the history of the Wey & Arun Canal and Chilworth Gunpowder history. Parking at Broadford Business Park, Shalford GU4 8EP (SU998466) (behind Parrot Inn, on the A248)	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sat - Sun 14 - 15 Sep 2013 9.30am - 4.00pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	Heritage Open Days. Guided tours around the Combe Hay Lock Flight. Parking: Layby near Bridge Farm, Combe Hay, Bath, BA2 7EE (ST74560)	Tony Yates: 07748 113832
Sun 15 Sep 2013 11.00am - 4.00pm	Wey & Arun CT	Heritage Open Day. Brewhurst Mill, Brewhurst Lane, Loxwood. Teas and goods for sale. Toilet. No parking at the mill. Please park in the Trust's car park behind the Onslow Arms, RH14 ORD (TQ041311) and walk down the towpath.	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sun 15 Sep 2013 10.00am - 4.00pm	Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society	Poyntz Bridge open. Situated approx. 200 yards south of the canal basin, Chichester. Possibly the only working, single span 1820 cast iron swing bridge in the UK. At 2.00pm guided walk around the canal basin led by Alan Green. Chichester Canal Basin - PO19 8DT (SU859041)	Chichester Ship CT HQ & Shop: 01243 771363 Web: http://chichestercanal.org.uk
Wed 18 Sep 2013 10.00am	Wey & Arun CT	3½ mile circular guided walk along canal towpath and through village of Loxwood to include visit to Brewhurst Mill. Cost £4, limit of 20 walkers - please book. Canal Centre, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 ORD (TQ041311)	Loxwood Canal Centre: 01403 753999 Email: canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk Web: http://www.weyandarun.co.uk
Sat 21 Sep 2013	Basingstoke Canal Boating Club	Fox and Hounds Rally. On canal behind the Fox & Hounds, 71 Crookham Rd, Church Crookham, Hampshire GU51 5NP. (SU803530)	Mrs J Byrnes: 01252 676833 or 07747 000519
Sat - Sun 28 - 29 Sep 2013 10.30 am - 5.00pm	K & A Trust	Crofton Beam Engines. Annual Steam Gala . Site entrance: adults £4.00 (no concessions), under 16s free - Entrance to engines in steam: adults £6.00, seniors £5.00. Free parking. Crofton Pumping Station, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW. (SU261622).	Tel: 01672 870300 Web: http://www.croftonbeamengines.org/
Thu 3 Oct 2013 7.45pm	Southampton CS	"Why Archives?" by Elaine Kirby, K&ACT Archive Administrator. Elaine will explain the role of an archivist. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Wed 16 Oct 2013 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	'Brooklands into the Second Century' by Tim Morris who will describe and illustrate the history of this famous establishment, from its earliest motor racing days of 1906 right through until the present time. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AJ SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 17 Oct 2013 7.30pm	IWA Salisbury Group	"The Bedford and Milton Keynes Canal" by Paul Leech. The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3AR. (SU182275)	Ron & Myra Glover: 01722 710322 Email: glover.3@btinternet.com Jon Van de Geer: 01722 412841
Thu 17 Oct 2013 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	'The Planning & Construction of the Somersetshire Coal Canal Part 1' with Patrick Moss. Radstock Working Men's Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Thu 7 Nov 2013 7.45pm	Southampton CS	Day-Star Theatre will be performing a new play "The Awakening of Geoffrey Phelps." More details to follow. Chilworth Parish Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. (SU410184).	Angela Rose: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com
Wed 20 Nov 2013 8.00pm	Basingstoke CS	'The Rivers and Canals of Brittany' with Graham Deavin. The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8AJ SU974615).	David Millett: 01252 617364 Email: david.millett@basingstoke-canal.org.uk
Thu 21 Nov 2013 7.30pm	Somersetshire Coal CS	'The Southern Branch of the SCC & the Conversion to the Somerset & Dorset Railway' with Duncan Harper. Radstock Working Men's Club, The Street, Radstock, BA3 3PR. (ST688547)	Patrick Moss: 07736 859882 Email: lazydaysafloat@yahoo.co.uk Web: http://www.coalcanal.org
Every day until Sun 6 Oct 2013 10.30 am - 5.00pm	K & A Trust	Crofton Beam Engines. On static display every day except on steaming dates (see above). Admission:- Adults £4.50, Seniors £4.00, Child under 16 accompanied by adult free. Crofton Pumping Station, Crofton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3DW. (SU261622).	Tel: 01672 870300 Web: http://www.croftonbeamengines.org/

Iguana found on Kennet & Avon Canal

An iguana has been found on the historic Caen Hill Lock Flight in Devizes, Wiltshire. The discovery was made just in the nick of time too, as a lawn mowing team were working in the area at the time.

Members of the public discovered the reptile by lock 44 of the Kennet and Avon Canal and reported it to our staff, who rescued it from an untimely end.

A local vet has given 'Lucky' the iguana a clean bill of health, as he was suffering from dehydration and it was not known when he last feed. 'Lucky' has now been adopted by a staff member from the Trust and is enjoying his new vivarium with a heat pad for warmth and is tucking into a special treat of strawberries, watercress, asparagus, peas and pods.

Alan Giddings, a lock keeper from the Trust, who helped to rescue Lucky, said: "It was quite a shock to see him amongst the vegetation, but if we had left him where he was, he could have been killed by the grass cutting team who were working on the

flight at the time."

Unusual animal sightings

Laura Plenty, ecologist at the Trust, added: "The canal has hundreds of different species of wildlife living on it, but never have we known it to be home to an iguana. It's exciting to find it, but also concerning because we can only think that he must have been someone's pet. Maybe the owner had enough and just let him go, or maybe Lucky made a dash for freedom and is being sadly missed. Either way, the canal isn't suitable habitat for an exotic animal which needs specific looking after."

An iguana is the latest in a line of unusual animal sightings on the Kennet & Avon Canal in Wiltshire this summer, with bearded dragons and grass snakes cooling off in the water, also being spotted.

Canal and River Trust News, 27 August 2013

The Making of Geoffrey Phelps

In November, our friends at Day-Star Theatre will be paying us another visit. This will be their fifteenth visit to Southampton since they helped us celebrate at the Society's 30th Anniversary party in 1997.

They will be presenting their play, first performed this year, entitled "The Making of Geoffrey Phelps."

The main character, named in the title of this production, had lived all his life with his mother, Edith until, with increasing dementia, she moved to the Journeys End Retirement Home where he dutifully visits her four times a week.

He is a quiet, unassuming man who has worked in the post room of a firm of solicitors since he was 16. He has never had a girlfriend, a computer, a mobile phone or an email address. He has no particular friends and has never travelled more than a few miles from his home.

He is content with his uneventful and mundane life.



On his 53rd birthday his mother dies, he is made redundant from his job and he learns he is to be evicted from his flat. These life changing events awaken Geoffrey to a new and cynical world, but, with the unexpected appearance of his long lost aunt Winifred who appears to live on a boat in the garden of a hotel, he also discovers a hidden truth about his family as well as a burgeoning friendship, and a taste for real coffee.

Another bitter sweet look at everyday life from Day-Star Theatre.

Tickets will be available as from the September meeting from Angela Rose (contact details on page 4) or from other committee members, priced £10. The show will be followed by the customary American Supper.

The editor has already seen this play and he can assure readers that it is well worth putting a note in their diaries to see the play on Thursday 7th November at 7.45pm.

Government invests £10 million improving canal towpaths

Walkers, cyclists and boaters are set to benefit after it was announced that the Department for Transport will be investing £10 million into improving over 37 miles of towpath along the canals in Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester.

The improvement will allow easy access along the canal for the thousands of people who visit the waterways each year and include resurfacing worn out towpaths, installing easy access ramps for pushchairs and mobility users and upgrading signage along the canals. There will also be some repairs made to canal bank walls making it easier for boaters to moor along the many miles of canal in city centres.

Funding was secured through the Department for Transport's City Cycle Ambition Grant scheme. We supported funding bids submitted by Birmingham and West Yorkshire Metro and Transport for Great Manchester for improvements to cycle ways and towpaths.

The project is due to be completed by 2015 and will involve the towpath being improved along the:

- Birmingham & Fazeley Canal
- Grand Union Canal – Birmingham
- Worcester & Birmingham Canal
- Birmingham Main Line Canal
- Leeds & Liverpool Canal
- Ashton Canal

Tony Hales, chairman of the Canal & River Trust, said: "This is a tremendous outcome and I am delighted we have been successful in helping to secure this huge amount of money which will go directly into upgrading our canal towpaths, making them easily accessible for everyone to come and visit.

"The canals are used for a wider variety of uses today than at the height of the industrial revolution, with ever more people boating, walking and cycling along them. Towpaths provide wonderful green routes, linking busy towns and cities with the countryside, and this investment will improve them for everyone who enjoys them."

Canal and River Trust News, 14 August 2013

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.

President:

Brian Evans.

Chairman:

Alan Rose, 33 Brackley Way, Totton, Hampshire SO40 3HP. Tel: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com

Secretary:

Angela Rose, 33 Brackley Way, Totton, Hampshire SO40 3HP. Tel: 02380 675312 Email: alanjrose@btinternet.com

Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Gill Herbert, 25 Rosemoor Grove, Chandler's Ford, Hampshire, SO53 1TB. Tel: 02380 262365. Email: p_herbert1@sky.com

Committee:

David Townley-Jones, Aelred and Sue Derbyshire, Gordon Osborn

Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:

Peter Oates, 39 Church Street, Nether Heyford, Northamptonshire, NN7 3LH. Tel: 01327 341798. Email: scs@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.

Society Website:

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

Google Trekker to capture our canals and rivers

For the first time the Google Trekker, which enables the capturing of Street View imagery via a backpack in remote locations, will start to capture the country's 200-year old canals and rivers. The Trekker will be on loan for the first time in the UK, to document our canals and rivers.

Starting on the Regent's Canal in London this week, we'll spend a month walking the Trekker over 100 miles to capture footage of some of the country's most scenic waterway locations.

With the Trekker designed to capture 360 degree imagery in public locations, which the Street View car and Trike can't typically reach, the narrow waterway footpaths and bridges are ideal places to trial the Trekker. Some of the previous locations it has captured include the Grand Canyon, the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa and a few of the world's highest peaks.

21st-century technology

A 4ft, 40lbs backpack, fitted with a 15-angle lens camera, takes 360 degree pictures every 2.5 seconds, which are then added to Street View, available through Google Maps.

With more organisations all over the world loaning out the Trekker, armchair-explorers, travellers and history enthusiasts will soon be able view many remote and hard-to-reach places, which they may never have discovered on their own.

Some of the locations we're going to capture include:

- The entire length of the Regent's Canal, which runs through the heart of London, past some of the capital's famous landmarks
- Bingley Five Rise, one of the Seven Wonders of the Waterways, and the steepest lock flight on the network



- The blacksmiths workshop at one of the most picturesque canal villages, Stoke Bruerne, on the Grand Union Canal

Wendy Hawk, corporate partnerships manager of the Canal & River Trust, said: "We're delighted to be the first people in the UK to get the Trekker on our backs – it's fantastic that our 200-year old network is being given a different lease of life thanks to cutting edge, 21st-century technology. The footage we get will allow millions of people from all over the world to see our canals, rivers and towpaths, and will hopefully encourage some people to make a trip to see them."

Pascale Milite from Google, said: "We are thrilled to be collaborating with the Canal & River Trust on such a fun project, and we hope to help boost the discovery of and make these historical canals accessible to more people in the UK and across the world through Street View technology."

The Trekker loan follows work last year to enable people from around the world to see some of the wonders of Britain's canals, rivers and towpaths, when the Google Trike mapped Caen Hill lock flight in Wiltshire and the Grade I listed World Heritage Site around Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in North Wales.

*Canal and River Trust
News, 14 August 2013*

