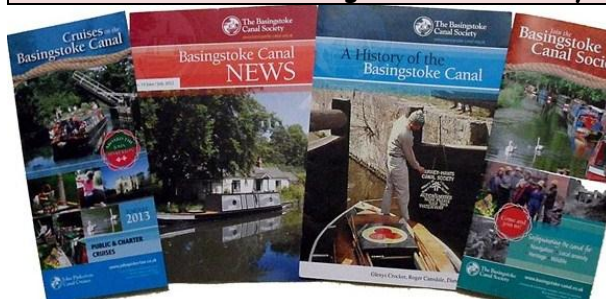




BASINGSTOKE CANAL BULLETIN

No. 16 November / December 2012

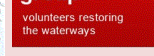
New Name and New Image for the Society



As has been [previously reported](#), the Society has decided to change its name to reflect the canal that we represent, ie to “**The Basingstoke Canal Society**”. Also, the trip boat company will also become “**John Pinkerton Canal Cruises**”. These will be effective from January 1st 2013. The Society has also undergone a rebranding process, and over the next few months the [Society’s website](#), this bulletin, the [Basingstoke Canal News](#), leaflets and other collateral will be given a fresh and colourful new look, as shown by the mockups above. Hilly Beavan, of Lawrence and Beavan design and marketing consultants, was engaged to develop the new branding and artwork. For more, please read the latest [Basingstoke Canal News](#).

Learn about the Canal by clicking these links

- [Join the Society](#)
- [Contact the Society](#)
- [So.. What does the Society do?](#)
- [Society Website](#)
- Sign up to receive future bulletins (if this one was forwarded/downloaded): [Members](#) [Non-members](#)
- [Read previous Basingstoke Canal Bulletins](#)
- [Read the latest Basingstoke Canal News \(BCN\)](#)
- [John Pinkerton cruising on the Basingstoke Canal](#)
- [The Canal in pictures](#) • [Bridges/Locks in pictures](#)
- [The Canal “then, later and now” pictures](#)
- [Basingstoke Canal Wiki Page](#)
- [Basingstoke Canal Authority \(BCA\) Website](#)
- [Joint Management Committee \(JMC\) Papers](#) **NEW**
- [Map of the Basingstoke Canal](#)
- [John Pinkerton on Facebook](#)
- [BCA Visitor Centre on Facebook](#)



Society purchases Colt Hill Barn and Mooring

After an inordinately protracted legal process, the Society recently completed the purchase from Hampshire County Council of the mooring where the John Pinkerton trip boat is kept near the Colt Hill wharf in Odiham, and the adjacent barn. The Council indicated its intent to sell off this 18th century building and land a couple of years ago, which also includes a narrow frontage along the Canal at the end of the Waterwitch pub garden. The Society was concerned that if this site was sold off to another buyer, then it would lose the secure mooring spot for the JP without any immediate prospect of finding another suitable location, therefore placing the trip boat operation and future revenues at risk. Therefore the Society chose to pursue its purchase. We have been able to do this since we fortunately received a couple of bequests recently and also have been supported by Hart District Council who donated to the Society £5352 towards this venture (see [local newspaper report](#)).



Karen Murray, Hampshire CC’s director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (*above*), and Keith Chapman, vice-chairman of the Canal’s Joint Management Committee (*right*) received a cheque from the Society’s chairman Philip Riley outside the barn. We are told that HCC will treat the money from the Society for this purchase as a windfall and will direct it to works on the Canal.

The Society workparty now needs to set to and undertake a number of repairs, particularly to the roof where tiles have been dislodged by tree growth, and will in time install new piling along the length of the landing, replacing the [temporary scaffold structure](#) that was recently constructed.

[Click here to join the Surrey and Hants Canal Society](#)

Society and Visiting Work Parties



The regular workparty has at long last completed all the work it currently intends to do on the towpath at Frimley Lodge Park (a short distance north of the Canal Centre). The works undertaken included installation of 400m of fabric on posts ("soft") bank protection and



widening of the towpath, laying a hard-wearing pavement (*above left*) and the construction of a new landing stage near the Guildford Road Bridge (*above right*). An existing landing stage near the model railway club buildings was also refurbished. These works were paid for by the proceeds of a £25000 fine imposed on a local company by the Environment Agency, which Surrey Heath BC as administrators determined should be used on a community project. The Society has also donated around £1000. For more pictures of these works, please click [here](#) if you have Powerpoint on your PC (then press F5), and [here](#) if you don't. (*Note: these files will take a few seconds to download - Ed*). It was hoped that the entire section of 900m or so bordering the Park south to the Canal Centre would have bank protection and towpath widening treatment, but unfortunately funds and time ran out. As a result, a lot of eroded bank repair remains to be done along this stretch.

The team moved on to work on the St John's flight and Woking pound more recently. Some bollards were installed between Locks 10 and 11, and also a significant amount of overhanging tree clearance was done here. This gave us the opportunity to put our [recently-acquired second workboat, Fly II](#), into action for the first time. They also cleared some junk from the channel between Bridge Barn



and Monument Bridge. A not inconsiderable, but also not unusual, horde of 16 bicycles and 6 shopping trolleys was fished out over this couple of miles, along with assorted old furniture and other scrap (*right*). A motorcycle was also retrieved from near Lock 2.



Following a request from the BCA, the team also deployed the dredger *Belfast Girl* to



raise a section of low-lying bank near Monument Bridge which has threatened to breach for a while (*left*), not helped by local youths digging trenches for fun. Further work still needs doing here, but the risk of flooding Horsall Common has been averted.

The voluntary team working on the BCA's weedcutter restoration, led by John Wharf (*left*), has got under way again at the Ash Lock depot in the last few weeks. A scaffold and galvanised sheet shelter has been erected to allow work to continue out of the elements, which has proven to be rainproof if not particularly pleasing aesthetically. The problems that we were having with the hydraulic pump are now understood, with help from regular workparty member Ian Carmichael, and it has been confirmed that all the hydraulic components work. The next major job, though already started, will be to refurbish the electrics that connect the controls in the cab to the hydraulic valve mechanism in the stern compartment. This will go on while the craft is being rubbed down and repainted. The cutter blades (clearly seen in the photo) will also need removing and replacing.

The next **regular Society work party** will take place again in the New Year, on **January 12th/13th and 26th/27th**. If you would like to know more about what we do and maybe come along and join us, then please contact Janet Buckley at workparty@basingstoke-canal.org.uk or on 01252 620787.

We welcomed the [Newbury Working Party Group](#) (NWPG) back to the Canal during November, led by Bill Nicholson. Using the Society's other workboat, the *Alan Flight* (right), they undertook a lot of overhanging tree and branch clearance along the section between Swan Bridge in North Warnborough and Lodge Farm Bridge, which will certainly ease navigating the trip boat along there. They also removed the fallen tree that has been blocking part of the winding hole at the Colt Hill wharf. Our thanks go to Bill and his team.



Other works on the Canal



Some progress has been made by the term contractor on the Deepcut flight in the last few weeks. The upper gates on Locks 24 and 25 (left) have been replaced, and those on Lock 16 have been removed, pending replacement. (There is also some outstanding gates replacement to be done at Locks 13 and 14 in Brookwood. Lock 13 is currently usable, but the gates here are in such a state that boaters are requested to vacate their boats and seek ranger assistance to pull them through.)

In addition, some areas with leaks, for example the voiding behind Lock 20 resulting in a fountain into the lock chamber, really need to be addressed before the Deepcut flight is reopened. The Society has urged

Surrey County Council and the BCA to direct as many resources as possible towards making the restoration of



navigation to the whole canal a priority, even though money available to the end of the term contract in March is tight. The Counties' plan is that, barring serious unforeseen problems, the flight will be reopened experimentally in the Spring, accepting that some leakage is inevitable. Recently, the term contractor Dyer and Butler has mostly been concentrating on works in Hampshire, and in particular on the installation of new stop plank grooves (see the [last bulletin](#) for an explanation) at the Pondtail Bridges and

Coxheath Bridge, both in Fleet. Work had started at Pondtail (left) and drainage of the section between the bridges started. Stop plank grooves already exist at these locations but are rather inaccessible under the bridge arches, making rapid deployment of the planks difficult in an emergency, for example if there were a breach in one of the embankments locally. The new sets will be easier to get at. The intention was that these works were to be completed before Christmas. However, D&B have had a bit of bad luck on this site which has resulted in a delay. Firstly, the inflatable dams used (the blue bags in the top left of the photo above) were vandalised and have had to be repaired. Then there was a suspicion that unexploded war-time ordnance may exist in the area, resulting in the attendance of a bomb squad and bringing activities to a dead halt. More recently, not everything went smoothly when loading a digger intended for bank repairs onto the BCA workboat (above right). We hear that work will now be suspended until the beginning of January and completed around the end of February during which time the Canal will be closed, and that the water level in the Hampshire pound will be lowered a further 6"/150mm (to 10"/250mm below datum) over this period.



John Pinkerton News

Preparatory Training for the New Trip Boat

In October and November about 30 JP crew members took advantage of additional training to hone their skills in anticipation of our new, wider, boat. Each session allowed time for individuals to practice winding, mooring, and transiting a bridge hole in both forward and reverse gear, ably supervised by an experienced crewman. Most sessions took place at Odiham, although for a couple, when the wharf was otherwise in use, a quick trip to the Castle solved the problem. The photo (right) shows how John Wharf and Tim Cadle created a 'widened' JP to make everybody think. Feedback from participants was very favourable, and all seemed to enjoy it, whatever the weather threw at them. More sessions later for those who missed out. Grateful thanks to all supervisors to enable our training.



Dick King, SHCC Chairman

New John Pinkerton ("JP2") begins to take shape!

An update on progress with the construction of the JP2, from Pete Philips, on behalf of the project team comprising Pete, Nigel Bird and John Abbot:

Since my last summary on the build of our new boat things have progressed at a steady if not supersonic rate, but only a little behind the build schedule. By 23rd October 2012 the boat's hull had been constructed even if the sections were still only tack welded together. This triggered the first visit by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) inspector to check that the build was being carried out as per the MCA approved plans, including to check the correct gaps between the plates and also that the plates were of the correct thickness. The boats plans and the supervision of the build by the MCA is the responsibility of the surveyor Aine Doherty from their Cardiff Office. Having supervised the plans and the build are to MCA standards at the end of the build she should be able to issue us with the all-important *Certificate of Build*.



At the beginning of November Lambons, the builder, informed us and the MCA that around about the middle of November they would be ready for the second MCA



inspection, which meant the superstructure and all welds would be complete for inspection prior to painting. This took place on the 18th November, and I was amazed how quickly they had got to this stage (*above right, and left*). Anyway the MCA were happy thus far and so the next stage could begin.

Since then the metal work of the boat has been cleaned and as of the week ending 23rd November the boat has received two coats of a grey primer with a third coat to follow.

The new Beta Marine engine with gearbox should be dispatched to Lambons imminently, and at the time of writing Lambons, the MCA and the Society are in discussion on the interior flooring, wall and ceiling cladding etc which all again have to meet MCA requirements for a commercial boat.

Just as a interesting side bit of information, the MCA build requirements for our boat are based on the stringent International Maritime Regulations (Solas – Safety of Life At Sea) and this stems from the reports on the Titanic sinking and lots of tragedies since - so I am waiting to find a clause that we must have a device to avoid icebergs....

Pete Phillips

New John Pinkerton Virtual Tour

In a previous bulletin it was indicated that, if possible, a virtual tour of the new JP would be made available for all to see, but there seemed to be technical issues with this. However, a [slideset](#) has now been made that shows various views of the layout of the new boat, based upon the design package used by builders Lambon. To get an idea of how the boat will look and the facilities provided, please click [here](#).

Water Strategy Group activities

Boat Counters on the Basingstoke Canal

Another article from John How, leader of the Water Strategy Group. He poses the question "Why have boat counters when the Canal has so few boats?", and explains why - Ed:

The owners of the Canal (Hampshire and Surrey County Councils) have made significant investments over the last two years and plan to do so again over the next few years, and to change the image of the canal to that of being 'open for through navigation'. The Water Strategy Group is investigating how to ensure adequate water is in the Canal to allow through navigation for the whole year and thereby attract more boaters. All possibilities are being considered to retain water or find new sources of water supply, particularly during the dry season (if we ever have any in the future!!). These investigations have required discussions with Natural England (NE), to ensure we continue to protect the eco-systems of the SSSI. The [Conservation Management Plan](#) for the Canal (see Appendix 6, page 114), proposes that 780 to 1300 boat movements per year are appropriate to support the SSSI. Fewer than 780 movements results in too much weed growing (*which can clearly be seen as a problem at the moment, for example in Woking – see photo below - Ed*), whilst more than 1300 movements per annum might have a detrimental effect, but this needs to be re-evaluated once this limit is approached. Generally speaking, we currently need more boats to support the SSSI.



Anticipating increased boat movements in the future, Natural England have donated funds to install two sets of boat counters. One set is located just above Lock 6 in Woking, to log boat movements generally related to entry to and exit from the Canal (*see left*), and the second set is located in the Hampshire countryside at Dogmersfield, away from the majority of any trip boats (*below*).

The boat counters have been designed and manufactured specifically for the Basingstoke, as no proprietary equipment is available. The requirement is to count and log boat movements both upstream and downstream. This requires a boat to pass through two beams that are nominally 4m to 6m apart, hence each

set of boat counters requires two boxes on each bank, one pair for each beam. The system is designed to exclude wildlife such as swans, people waving hands across the beams and exclude non powered boats such as canoes, rowboats etc. Data is then transmitted by a 3G signal to a hosted website, where the information can be presented in a variety of tables/graphs, all to be available to the BCA Rangers and for regular reports to NE as part of the Conservation Management Plan. Naturally, we look forward to the canal steadily regaining a reputation for being 'open for through navigation' and boat movements approaching the present maximum of 1300 per year, though accept there is much to be done to reach this point. Watch this space!!



John How

Note: We agree these boxes don't look very wonderful, and at some point they will be painted to tone down their visual impact –Ed

Help needed with Depth Survey Equipment and Methodology

Over a period, the Canal has silted up, resulting in part from the extensive tree cover, and this has obvious implications for navigation and ecology, but also on water supply. When the Canal was built, the Hampshire pound was designed to be around a foot deeper than the Surrey section, so that the waterway would act as its own reservoir. With the steady accumulation of detritus, and no substantial dredging programme for many years, the effectiveness of the Canal as its own reservoir has diminished over time.

It has been planned to do a detailed depth survey along the length of the Canal for some while. A depth survey would enable the Water Strategy Group and the BCA to plan a long-term dredging programme, and identify areas in which to concentrate spot dredging. One way in which depths could be measured from a workboat is with a ruler, and then to transcribe the measurements and location manually. However many hundreds of readings would need to be taken and this is very labour intensive and potentially inaccurate.

The WSG is looking to anybody out there who may have experience of, or have access to, equipment that would speed up this task. Ideally, it would be something that is equipped with a GPS locator and could be towed along behind a workboat, and measure the depth and profile of the canal bed via a connection to a laptop. The maximum depth of the Canal varies typically between about 1m and 2m. If you feel you could help or provide any useful information, please contact the [bulletin editor](#) initially.

BCA News

A request from the Canal Manager:



Hi Martin. You suggested I should send you a more formal request for volunteers to help with the Sanata Cruises. We have mostly covered ourselves as we are due to start tomorrow, but can always use extra hands particularly with looking after the families while they are in the visitor centre and serving refreshments and clearing up/preparing for each new group. Anyone wishing to help should contact Dean Wall directly at the canal centre on 01252-370073 or email him at dean.wall@hants.gov.uk.

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager



Forthcoming events

Here are some dates for your diary:

- The 2012/13 season of the [*Chobham Social Meetings*](#) is taking place at The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, at **8pm** on the **third Wednesday** of the month. Non members and friends are very welcome. Refreshments will be available at the interval. Please email [David Millett](#) or call him on 01252 617364 for more information. For a map and for more details about the talks, please refer to the latest [Basingstoke Canal News](#). This season's talks continue with the following:

- **Wednesday 19th December - Roger Squires BEM** - 'Passage to Astrakhan'
- **Wednesday 23rd January (Note: not 16th) – Peter Halman** – ‘The Thames from Oxford to Windsor’
- **Wednesday 27th February (Note: not 20th) – Ron and Myra Glover** – ‘Down the Rhine and Up the Neckar’
- **Wednesday 20th March – David Saady** – ‘The Ribble Link and the Lancaster Canal’

Please note the changes of date.

Contributions to the Bulletin are welcome..

Short articles about the Canal with accompanying photos if possible would be appreciated. Please send them to the [bulletin editor](#). The copy date for bulletin articles is the **last day of each month**. Publication (if it occurs) will normally take place towards the end of the following month. Please also let the [bulletin editor](#) know if there are any articles or information you would like to appear in future bulletins.

May we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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