



# BASINGSTOKE CANAL NEWS

No. 213 Spring 2007



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### Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society Ltd

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## Editorial



We are at the time of year when local council budgets are announced, and I suspect that we shall be getting the usual pleas of poverty from those such as Hart who have failed to contribute their share of the Canal's budget for many years.

I find it somewhat baffling to see headlines in our local paper stating that Hart is planning to spend £600,000 to revamp its sports centres, plus another £101,000 to repair one of them. Why is the local council running sports centres? Why are they not run by a commercial enterprise? After all, their customers can be charged for the use of the facilities, whereas the majority of the users of the Canal (walkers, cyclists, etc) cannot be.

I fail to see why I should contribute to sports centres that I don't use, and have to watch the canal, which probably does just as much for the general health of the local population, falling into disrepair and becoming a risk rather than an asset, because of lack of council support.

I hope I shall be proved wrong about the Canal's funding, but I'm not holding my breath.

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One of the things that has contributed greatly to encouraging the public to use the Canal Centre at Mytchett has been the tea room. Although part of the BCA's responsibilities, it has been run by Jeanette Quay and her assistants. Thanks to their efforts it has gained a well-deserved reputation for providing very good value meals and refreshments. However, the Options Review pointed the need for the BCA to focus its activities more tightly on essential canal work so it was decided that the tea room should be let out as a franchise.

It would have suited the BCA, and Jeanette, and the customers if this could have been given to her to continue her good work, but apparently SCC's rules say that it has to be put out to tender. While this may be essential for major public contracts, it seems to be an incredibly cumbersome system for deciding the running of a small tea shop.

It is to be hoped that common sense will prevail and that the County will not waste too many of its scarce resources or time in coming to a speedy decision. Apart from anything else, the tea room needs to be operating again in time for Easter. Bring back Jeanette!

\* \* \* \* \*

Things look a bit more optimistic for the Canal than they did last year. The final outcome of the Options Review options has still to be decided, but at least the more unpalatable ones have been kicked firmly into touch.

If it is decided that a trust should be set up to manage the Canal, it will be interesting to see who the trustees are. They will need to attract people with business skills as well as canal enthusiasts; some rich philanthropic friends wouldn't come amiss either.

Perhaps though the best argument for a trust would be to get away from some of the bureaucracy, like that afflicting the tea room decision.

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In the last issue, I said that Dieter Jebens was the original editor of the Newsletter. He has pointed out that this was incorrect and that the first editor was June Sparey, who at the time was also secretary of the Society. Apologies to June.

We did invite her to the 40th Birthday Party last year, but unfortunately she was abroad on holiday. She said though that she would come to the 50th!

\* \* \* \* \*

It's coming up to AGM time in a few months. As you will see, we have decided to move westwards this year in the hope of attracting some more of the members from the Hampshire end. Our fingers are crossed, hoping that these will outnumber the people from Surrey who decide that it is too far to go!

Actually, the venue at Fleet Football Club is very good. It is easy to find and has vast amounts of off-road parking space, as well as a bar. If you want to eat out afterwards, Fleet has umpteen restaurants - Italian, French, Indian, Chinese, Gurkha, American and even English.

Doors will be open from 6pm to give an opportunity for socialising before the meeting itself gets under way at 7pm. If you are a new member and don't know anyone, please don't feel shy about coming along - most of us are relatively human and definitely friendly. We also have some films to show of bits of the Canal's history.

And finally, should anyone be at a loose end and feel like helping to run some aspect of the Society's activities, we could do with a couple of new Committee members. Don't sit and wait for the feeling to go away, tell Verna!

# Chairman's Report

A number of individual Management Plans for the canal are overdue for revision and a task which Ian Brown has undertaken is preparing a comprehensive Canal Management Plan for ecological, operational and navigational management. A second draft has been circulated for comments with an objective that the final version is ratified at the next JMC Meeting.

Water supplies and potential new sources are documented, some of which we have initiated, and Ian has negotiated others. When published, this will be the first Management Plan to document water shortages and potential sources. We have commented on some navigation issues and their interaction with ecological requirements. In general the plan recognises the need for leisure, navigation and ecology to work in partnership for the benefit of the canal. This is a difficult balance to achieve but can evolve into a win/win environment where navigation needs and ecological recovery of the degraded SSSI are possible. As a society we restored the canal, so be assured that we intend to strive for improvements beneficial to all user groups.

Water levels are critical for a number of reasons: low levels accelerate deterioration in structures and the canal fabric, aquatic plant life declines as dominant species survive, fish stocks are vulnerable, the navigation closes and the visual aspects of the canal suffer. The IWA consultant, the Society and the BCA are investigating the hydrology of the canal. This study will assist in calculating the water requirements for year-round operation, but the hard part will be to find the supplies. This is a positive start, and other initiatives will follow.

Ecological work at Hermitage Bridge will create a reed margin around the flash; shallows will be created with dredged material between the Nicospan bund and the bank. Planting with re-located reeds will follow. HSBC's sponsorship will contribute to the work in the flash and their volunteers will help improve the path to Bagshot Road Bridge along the north bank of the canal.

*Peter Redway*

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## Annual General Meeting

**NOTICE is hereby given that the Thirtieth Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday 12th May at the Fleet Football Club, Crookham Road, Fleet, Hants, commencing at 7 p.m.**

The formal Agenda for the meeting is as follows:-

1. To hear apologies for absence.
2. To confirm the minutes of the Twenty-Ninth AGM held on 22nd April 2006.
3. To approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2006.
4. To appoint the auditors, Hilton and Company.
5. To elect or confirm the appointment of the members of the Board of Directors (Executive Committee).
6. To transact any other business relative to the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

By order of the Board of Directors  
Verna Smith,  
Honorary Secretary  
10th February 2007

### Notes:

- a) This Notice is issued from the Honorary Secretary's address at 63 Avondale, Ash Vale, Aldershot, Hants, GU125NE.
- b) Every member of the Society who is entitled to vote at a General Meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member, to attend and vote in his/her stead. Forms of Proxy can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary.
- c) Only paid-up members are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
- d) Copies of the Accounts can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary prior to the AGM upon receipt of an SAE. In accordance with normal practice the Accounts, when approved, will be published in summary in the Basingstoke Canal News.
- e) **Nomination forms for the election of the Board of Directors can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary.**

***Please note the new venue for the AGM this year.***

***It is not hard to find - on the opposite side of the road from the Fox & Hounds and a quarter of a mile up towards the centre of Fleet. There is a map on Page 10.***

# Work Party

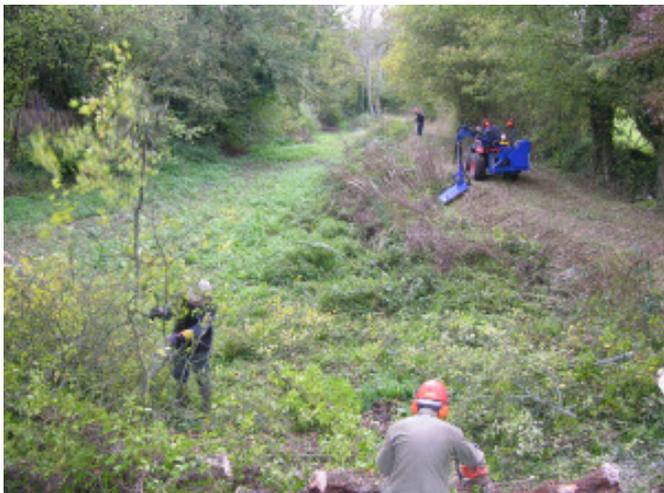
This quarter has produced a mixed range of activities for the working parties - surveys, bank side work and major repair of a lock water bypass system at St Johns.

## **BROOKWOOD**

Survey work for the next phase of back pumping has been carried out at Brookwood locks. The data obtained is being assessed and estimates for the project made. This phase of water supply is included in the draft Management Plan for the canal and fund raising will be required before any start is programmed.

## **WESTERN END**

Towpath work and more extensive clearing between Slades Bridge and Brick Kiln Bridge on both sides of the canal is required and a start was made in early autumn. At that time the canal was dry and access to the off bank was easy.



*Above.* Near the junction with the Brickworks Arm.

By the second working party, the drought had broken at the canal was back in water, and unfortunately some cut growth had not been fully cleared and was partially submerged.

Plans to coppice the hazel growth on the towpath cutting bank have yet to be carried out, but a rotation for cutting has been agreed as part of the improvements we would like to implement.

The concept of the "Last Five Miles" footpath link includes the path over the tunnel and the section of canal west to Penny Bridge. Support from potential partners is growing and the improvements for the canal are feasible.

## **BELOW LOCK 1**

London WRG and KESGRG joined forces for a pre-Christmas weekend on the Canal. The intention was to do bank clearance below Lock 1. It was hoped to be able to remove some trees but permission for this was not received in time.

The Canal is on a raised embankment here, above the large Hackbridge electricity sub-station, so the risk of a bank breach due to a falling tree needs to be avoided.



*Above:* WRG clearing the bank below Lock 1

In fact, the risk of falling trees was highlighted on the Sunday morning when the Byfleet Boat Club's boats returning from the Illuminated Boat Procession found their way blocked by a huge beech tree at Sheerwater (*see Cover photo*). The Society was asked for help and members of London WRG were diverted from Lock 1.

The job of actually clambering about the tree with chainsaws and risking an unwanted cold bath was left to Rangers Peter Bickford and Peter Munt (*Below*). They did a good job and the boats were under way again by mid-afternoon. They left the canal as night was falling.



# Work Party

## LOCK 8, St. JOHNS

Prior to the Christmas holiday a subsidence at the lower towpath side of lock 8 was reported. Rangers attended and made it safe. Talks with the BCA confirmed that the rangers' programme for Deepcut governed the ability to re-open the navigation for Easter. We agreed to repair the by-wash, assuming that a dropped pipe would require a chamber to be built and some back fill. How wrong can you be!

Excavations confirmed sound pipes where the void exited, but the void continued under the quadrant and further excavations revealed cracked and broken concrete pipes above the quadrant. When the excavator tracks broke through the towpath surface we anticipated complications, and we have so far replaced 18 metres of by-wash with 600mm plastic pipes.



Above: Mark Coxhead watching Duncan Paine and Dave Lunn aligning the pipe before concreting and infilling; Kevin Redway and Zak in charge of the excavator.

A second void has been identified above the upper quadrant and the trench floods if the lock is filled, so indications are that a major leak from the lock has flowed under the original pipes washing out the soil and allowing the pipes to

collapse. After three weekends in sequence we intend to continue repairs next working party. The leak also has to be identified and rectified. We have agreed to carry out exploratory excavations after we complete repairs. The client will then need to decide remedial work and specification for completion before Easter.

## FUTURE WORKS

The society workboat will be moved to Ash Lock depot when Deepcut is opened for navigation, so that refurbishment work can then commence. Bridge Barn event will require our support prior to the Festival possibly with some spot dredging.

The Hermitage Flash reed bed will also require work party support with spot dredging in the flash and adjacent areas.



Above: The Admiral surveys his fleet! The new dredger and workboat with the Society's tug and barge, moored outside Redway Cottages.

## FUTURE WORKING PARTY DATES

DATE	LEADER	LOCATION
10-11 Mar	PR/DJ/DL	Work boat/Tug, Ash Lock
24-25 Mar	PR / DJ /DL	Bridge Barn
14-15 Apr	PR/DJ/DL/R	Ash Lock or Brookwood
28-29 Apr	PR/DJ/DL/KR	Ash Lock or Brookwood
12-13 May	PR/DJ/DL/ KR	Provisional training
19-20 May	PR/DJ/DL/KR	weekends, to be advised

### Leaders:

PR - Peter Redway	01483 721710
DL - Dave Lunn	01483 771294
DJ - Dave Junkison	0208941 0685
KR - Kevin Redway	01483 722206

*Peter Redway*

# Society Dredging Option

After the restoration of the Canal was completed, we assumed that the new Canal Authority would maintain the waterway and our policy of supporting improvements for the canal gained momentum. Over the years water supply became a recognised priority.

The crisis in revenue funding, which came to a head last year, was a gradual process, which the Society had warned about on a number of occasions without success. Maintenance and capital dredging have become a priority; many sections of the canal are extremely shallow with boat movements disturbing the silt. The BCA resources, spread along a 32-mile waterway, will not cope with the maintenance-dredging backlog.

When British Waterways announced the disposal of some of their equipment early in 2006, your Committee were also considering the deterioration of the canal and how best to support and reverse the decline of a very much under-funded navigation. Last year we agreed to bid for a workboat and dredger at the BW auction, a budget was authorised and the early bidding monitored. On the final day we were out-bid; in fact both craft were each sold individually for more than our total authorised budget.

However, last September we purchased an ex-BW workboat (*below*). The hull is sound, as confirmed by survey, but modification and re-furbishing is required before being put into service. This will be done at Ash Lock in the spring.



Now the Society has been able to negotiate a limited dredging capability in partnership with a commercial contractor based near the canal. The agreement is for use of a dredger unit, similar to *Unity*, the BCA dredger. *Unity* has been out of commission for some months following hydraulic failure; it is possible the use of bio-degradable hydraulic fluid has overheated the systems and seals have failed. If this is the case, the BCA is faced with expensive and possibly protracted repairs.



Above: *Belfast Girl* moored opposite the Bridge Barn for the Illuminated Boat Procession in December.

*Belfast Girl*, as the dredger has been named in honour of the wife of one of the owners, was declared surplus to requirements and sold by the Environment Agency last year and made its way onto the Canal before Christmas.

Our agreement with the contractor allows for suitably trained volunteers to use *Belfast Girl* by arrangement, the Society being charged minimum hire per weekend rather than a full commercial hire rate. Charges to the Society compare favourably with excavator hire rates and will basically cover the running costs. Commercial contracts, subject to tender by the contractor, will provide the operating profit for the owners.

Society volunteers' work would include spot dredging, bank protection and back fill at Hermitage flash and small non-urgent works as agreed with the Canal Director. One of its first jobs will be to help fit some new gates on Lock 14.

The County Councils will remain responsible for capital works and dredging contracts, and our objectives are to assist the BCA with revenue works only. Disposal sites for dredgings will be negotiated by the BCA as part of the canal management function, so whilst we have suggested possible sites, we are not involved in the negotiations for their use.

The two essential requirements for a viable waterway, water supplies and a navigable channel are paramount and we will support the BCA to achieve both.

*Peter Redway*

# Christmas in Woking

Woking missed out on its usual Illuminated Boat Procession at Easter, because, of course, it took place spectacularly at the rally at Brookwood in May.

The Byfleet Boat Club decided therefore to organise a pre-Christmas procession in Woking. This took place on 2nd December, starting from Monument Bridge at 5pm.

For the members of the BBC, however, the day had started rather earlier. They assembled at Lock 1 at 9.30am and then had to contend with propellers clogged by weed, plastic bags and the occasional shopping trolley, not to mention impending frostbite. Nevertheless, after about 6 hours they reached Monument Bridge.



Above: The Mayor of Woking meets the Snowman and Father Christmas.

The members of the club deserve enormous credit for the amount of effort that they put into decorating their boats, and in some cases themselves, to produce a superb display. Well done to one and all!



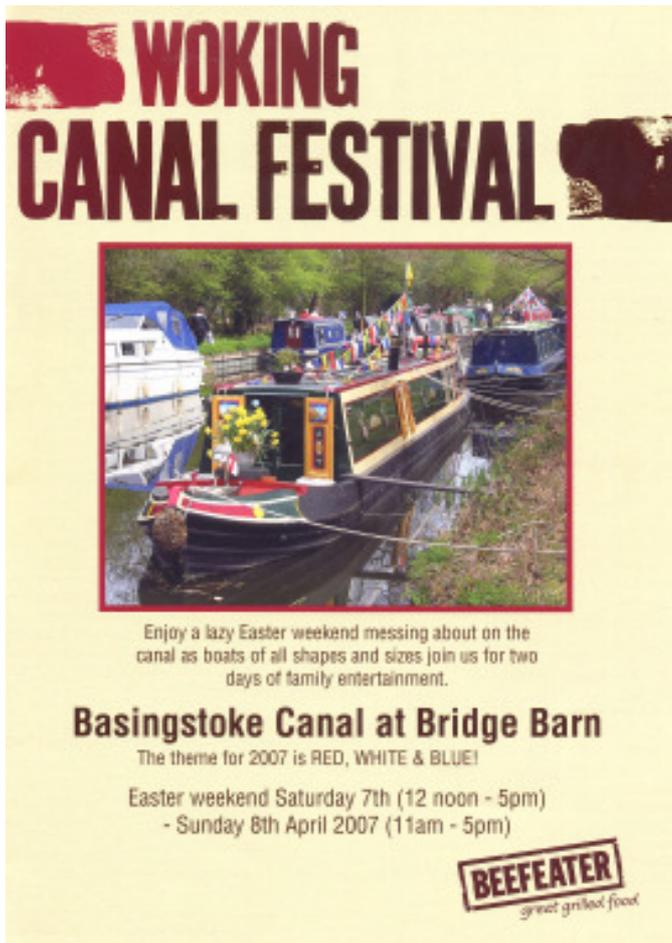
The boats then moved down to the Town Centre (*above*) before setting out for the Bridge Barn. The Mayor of Woking was in attendance, and a good crowd of people turned out to join in the fun (*Right*).

*Below:* Final destination, the Bridge Barn.



Photos by Julian Morgan & Roger Cansdale

# Events



**WOKING  
CANAL FESTIVAL**

Enjoy a lazy Easter weekend messing about on the canal as boats of all shapes and sizes join us for two days of family entertainment.

**Basingstoke Canal at Bridge Barn**  
The theme for 2007 is RED, WHITE & BLUE!  
Easter weekend Saturday 7th (12 noon - 5pm)  
- Sunday 8th April 2007 (11am - 5pm)

**BEEFEATER**  
great grilled food

The annual Woking Canal event will return to the Bridge Barn site this year on the Easter Saturday and Sunday, 7th and 8th April. The event will follow the usual pattern with the illuminated boat procession on the Saturday evening, but it is hoped to attract some new stalls this year.

Visiting boats that want to go on up the Canal will be able to do so by arrangement with the BCA and an open day is being planned for them at the Canal Centre on the Saturday after Easter.

As usual, Verna Smith would greatly appreciate any offers of assistance over the Easter weekend and the following Saturday.

Even an hour lets someone else go off for lunch, so please lend a hand. Her phone number is 01252 517622.

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## ***IWA Guildford and Reading Branch AGM***

This meeting will take place at the Byfleet Boat Club, 4, Old Parvis Road, West Byfleet on Monday 26th March from 7.30pm for 8pm start.

The formal business of the AGM will be followed (at about 8.45pm) by a talk from Ian Brown, Director of the BCA, on "the Future of the Basingstoke Canal".

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## ***MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY***

Date: Wednesday 11th July 2007

Time: 7.50pm

Venue: The Canalside Garden of the Fox and Hounds, Crookham Road, Fleet.

Show: "Married to the Job - The life and work of Thomas Telford"

Having explored the lives and achievements of Richard Trevithick and Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Mikron now turns its attention, with the customary blend of humour, song and strong narrative, to another great engineer, Thomas Telford, 250 years after his birth. Without a wife or children, perhaps you could say that Telford was married to his job! In the 21st century, is there room for another of his kind, male – or female?

2007 will be the 36<sup>th</sup> year that the company have toured the waterways of England in their 71 year old narrow boat

'Tyseley' No.183'. Come along by boat, car or foot and enjoy the presentation by this versatile company. Bring a folding chair or rug or just sit on the grassy bank. Indoor back-up in case of rain.

This annual show is eagerly looked forward to by waterways enthusiasts and local people alike. The Mikron Theatre Company have gathered a very loyal following over the years and some cast members have moved on to greater acting careers after their Mikron experience. Don't miss this show as your support is vital to ensure the Mikron's future, as their grant funding is restricted.

Admission is free but there will be the usual collection after the performance. Come early and enjoy a meal in the pub.

For further information please contact David Millett on 01252 617364.

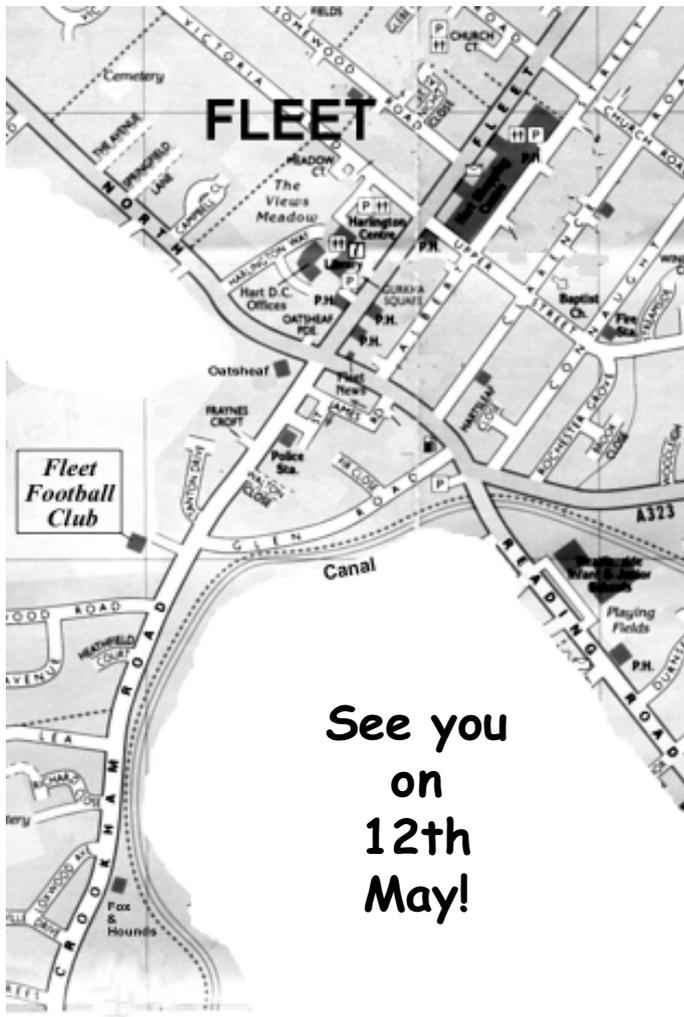
# Events

## Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will be in a new venue this year. The Committee decided that it was time to give the more westerly members a turn by moving to Fleet. The meeting will take place at Fleet Football Club, which was the setting for a Mikron Theatre performance a couple of years ago when weather forced us to abandon the usual Fox & Hounds site.

The AGM itself will start at 7pm, but doors will be open from 6, so if you would like to join us for a social gathering beforehand, please do. The club has a bar and we intend to show some videos, including the one made of last year's Brookwood Rally and some historic film of Alec Harmsworth's attempt to reach Basingstoke in 1913.

Please come along and give us and the Canal your backing. You won't get lumbered with anything, but it is important to let the Committee know that they have the support of the membership, even if it can't be as active as it once was. Equally, though, if there are new members who would like to get involved, this is the perfect opportunity to make contact.



## Chobham Social Meetings



The season of social meetings continues until May at our regular venue at the Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham. The meetings will continue at 8pm on the third Wednesday of the month. See map above for the exact location. Coffee/tea and biscuits will be available during the interval. Non-members and friends of members are very welcome.

Wednesday 21st. March 2007

### Richard Thomas - 'The Manchester Ship Canal'

Richard Thomas makes a return visit to illustrate the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal and takes us on a journey from Eastham at the eastern end to Manchester and return.

Wednesday 18th. April 2007

### Robin Higgs - 'The Canal de l'Est and the Rhone au Rhin'

Robin will be showing slides from his barge holidays in 2005 and 2006 in France when his cruises included the Canal de l'Est and the Rhone au Rhin. A great opportunity to see the waterways and countryside of rural France, this time in the South East area.

Wednesday 16 May 2007

### Pablo Haworth - 'The Story of Bailey Bridging'

Pablo will start with detailing the Inglis Bridge of 1914 (which crosses the canal near Farnborough Road. and carries the sewerage pipe) and continues with Donald Bailey's famous design of 1940, ending with showing Eelmoor Bridge over the canal between Fleet and Alder-shot.

For further information: David Millett 01252 617364

# Milestones

It has always been a matter of some regret that the otherwise excellent Milestones Museum in Basingstoke lacks any mention of the Basingstoke Canal. Apparently there was originally an intention to have a short length of waterway and a boat, but the money and space ran out.

Philip Riley has been trying to remedy this for some time and finally succeeded in getting the go-ahead for a temporary display. After a lot of hard work by the Society's archivist, Jill Howarth, as well as by Philip, Pablo and John Ross, who lent his decorated boat *Elizabeth Rose*, this was installed before Christmas. It was opened by Cllr Keith Chapman, Chairman of the Canal JMC (*Right*).

The exhibition will remain until the end of February. There are several panels of photographs covering the history of the canal, as well as a number of artifacts including a Basingstoke Canal token.

In addition to the exhibition, the museum decided to have a Canal Day, when further displays and some craft demonstrations would be put on. This took place on Saturday, 3rd February.

John Ross showed his skills as a painter of traditional roses and castles decoration for boats and their equipment. Although historically this did not feature greatly on the boats of the Basingstoke Canal, it always causes great interest, not least because it looks so simple (*it isn't, I've tried!*) yet produces such spectacular results.



Dick and Alison Snell were also on hand to demonstrate fender making and the crocheting of shawls, etc. In a way they are similar skills involving making knots, but differing rather in the scale of them.



*Above, l to r:* John Ross, Jill Haworth, Cllr Keith Chapman, Tony Harmsworth and Philip Riley

*Below:* Dick and Alison Snell demonstrating fender making and crocheting.



Meridian Television turned up and the Canal got a few minutes of publicity that evening.

Thanks to Jill and Pablo Haworth, who did most of the organising, to the Sales team, who manned (or should I say, womanned?) the stand all day, and to the others who helped. Thanks also to Milestones for staging the event and providing us with lunch.

Perhaps this may lead to a permanent exhibit one day.

# Canal Review

## **Basingstoke Canal Management and Funding Review**

### ***Update and Way Forward with a Clear Steer***

The Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee will be discussing the agreed project plan and recommendations at its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007. This will inform Members of the work undertaken to implement the main recommendations since October 2006. The clear steer also proposes work areas to be taken forward in the next six months prior to the JMC in October 2007.

Work in the last six months has concentrated on developing a formula to ensure a minimum level of funding to operate the Canal as a safe, navigable waterway with the towpath open for recreation, meeting minimum legal requirements. A list of essential activities was prepared as part of the Options Appraisal (appendices 1 and 2 to the October 2006 report to the JMC) and this has been examined further. The Director is currently dividing the list of essential activities with their attendant costs and funding needs between activities to be paid for by the County Councils and activities to be paid for by the borough and district councils.

Under this proposal the County Councils would pay for the structural maintenance of the Canal and the borough and district councils would pay towards other essential operating activities including a number of activities that they possibly could contribute "in kind" as part of their contribution including for example: tree and shrub management, litter clearance, cleaning and graffiti removal, tow path and vegetation maintenance. The activities being paid for or contributed "in kind" could then be the basis of service level agreements between each Riparian authority and the Basingstoke Canal Authority; and the County Councils and the Canal Authority.

Work has also been undertaken on alternative funding formula options for of apportionment of the revenue funding between the borough and district councils. A range of alternative components of a revised funding formula have been considered. A key measure was raised in how "community and eco-socio benefit" derived by each riparian partner is reflected in the formula. British Waterways have developed a model based on users of their Canals to attribute funding. The key here is having detailed data of exactly how many users navigate the Canal in each district, and how many walkers, cyclists, anglers or canoeists use the towpath or canal for recreation purposes in each district. This information currently does not exist at that level, although an aspiration is to compile this in the future.

The Canal Director is now working with colleagues to deliver a much fairer, proportioned and balanced formula that would form a sound basis for service level agreements and a more formalised funding approach.

Once this is complete, Environment Department colleagues in each authority will be consulted to agree a consistent basis on which to overlay population data using the 2001 census output area level statistics and thus determine population density within the two parameters (1.5 miles and 5 miles) and within each district. Following compilation of this data it will then be possible to compute the impact this would have on future revenue contributions from each riparian partner. It is essential that any model is consistent in its computation bearing in mind data is being compiled by both owners, and that the approach and outcome is fair, clear and transparent for riparian partners to consider.

It is proposed to hold a meeting with officer representatives of all the local authorities before the JMC on 23 March 2007 to discuss the proposed division of activities and to discuss the apportionment options. In the Director's opinion, this is the best way forward but it will require a positive commitment by the funding partners and if achieved for the 2008/9 financial year will provide a good degree of financial stability from which we can build, develop and take forward the essential elements that should provide continued sustainability of the Basingstoke Canal.

Discussions have been held with the two Wildlife Trusts as to their potential involvement in conservation, educational and community based projects. Both Trusts would be interested in being actively involved and have considerable experience to offer. The Canal Society will also be a major player in this and will continue to be actively involved in key projects to improve the Canal such as back pumping schemes, water retention and habitat improvement, and assisting the authority in establishing the Western End as a Local Nature Reserve in order to protect it and the last five miles into Basingstoke as a recognised walk with appropriate interpretation.

The Surrey County Council Structural Engineering Team prepared a project brief for an asset inventory and full condition report on the Canal. It is proposed that the two County Councils will now proceed to commission this work which is likely to take two years to complete. After this a full asset management plan will be established as part of the overall strategic management of the Canal.

It is proposed to undertake further work now to establish more accurately additional costs and potential savings if a Trust were to be set up to manage the Canal. The legal format of such a Trust will be considered along with staff implications. The suggestion that a new Trust could be a navigation authority will also be further explored.

*Ian M H Brown*  
Canal Director

# *Society Accounts for 2005*

**The Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society Ltd Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2005**

	<u>31.12.05</u>		<u>31.12.04</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income from charitable activities</b>				
Subscriptions	11,380		9,145	
Donations	3,373		4,307	
Fundraising events	5,804		2,782	
Sales	30		238	
Water Appeal				
- grants received	23,000		-	
- other donations	<u>2,322</u>		<u>2,410</u>	
		45,909		18,882
<b>Other income</b>				
Sundry receipts	953		-	
Surrey and Hampshire Canal Cruises Ltd				
- covenanted income	19,655		20,660	
Interest received	<u>371</u>		<u>661</u>	
		<u>20,979</u>		<u>21,321</u>
		<u>66,888</u>		<u>40,203</u>
<b>Expenditure in support of charitable activities</b>				
Guidebook production	-		3,125	
Postage and telephone	2,533		1,663	
Printing and stationery	4,713		6,752	
Publicity and advertising	1,596		558	
Travelling	190		63	
Subscriptions and donations	785		558	
Licences and insurance	2,520		2,675	
Sundry expenses	662		670	
Bank charges	83		4	
Projects and working parties	6,338		2,556	
Equipment maintenance	1,154		2,126	
Backpumping project	9,961		21,452	
		<u>30,535</u>		<u>42,202</u>
		36,353		(1,999)
<b>Governance costs</b>				
Auditors' remuneration		900		881
<b>Net profit/(loss) for the year</b>		<u>35,453</u>		<u>(2,880)</u>
<b>Accumulated reserves brought forward</b>		39,181		42,061
<b>Accumulated reserves carried forward</b>		<u>£74,634</u>		<u>£39,181</u>

*Our apologies for the delay in publishing the accounts for 2005. As noted previously, this was caused by the demise of our auditors. At the EGM held in January, the re-formed Hilton & Co, who finally did the 2005 accounts, were appointed as auditors for the 2006 accounts. The format of the accounts differs slightly from previous years, but now conforms to the new requirements of the Charity Commissioners.*

# Water supply



Above: The terminal basin of the Canal at the end of the 19th century

1904 the Basingstoke Council diverted this water and used it for purposes of their own conveying it into the River Lodden some distance away (near Red Bridge Lane in Old Basing) and thus depriving the Canal of its main supply. An inspection of the property shews the grave consequences of this Action on the part of the Corporation and since it took place without any authority on the part of the then Canal Owners and apparently without any right whatever it is a matter calling for your serious consideration as to whether or not some steps should not be instituted to compel the reinstatement of the Canal water supply."

An accompanying letter from the Company's solicitors notes that

"In particular the Basingstoke Corporation have done works which have resulted in abstracting or diverting from the Canal the water which is necessary for its use. This is a matter of great importance and will require careful enquiry."

A list of actions arising from the survey was drawn up by the Canal Company; the last stated

"The Secretary to instruct the Solicitors to write the Clerk of the Basingstoke Council setting out the facts stated in this Clause and giving notice that the Canal Co claim compensation for the damage that has been done to the property and that a claim for a specific amount would shortly be delivered and furthermore that it may be found necessary for the Directors in the interests of the Canal Company to institute proceedings to compel the reinstatement of the Canal Water Supply."

It is a bit doubtful whether anything substantial was actually done because the London & South Western Canal Company was wound up in November 1909, and the last boat to reach Basingstoke was in 1910. Alec Harmsworth never used this end of the Canal during his ownership and the terminal basin was sold off in 1936. The River Lodden is presumably now buried in a pipe somewhere under the Festival Place shopping centre.

It would be interesting though to know what the source of canal water was and whether it might still be available.

We might need it for the K&A link.

Dieter Jeben's move has thrown up another interesting piece of the Canal's history. This time it is a copy of a report of a 1908 survey of the Canal for the London & South Western Canal Co Ltd. This was one of the more dubious companies that ran the canal, involving the notorious swindler Horatio Bottomley MP and the also fraudulent Ernest Hooley. It appears that the company did not actually own the canal, which had been bought in 1905 by William Carter. The company name itself is suspicious since the Basingstoke cannot be considered a south western waterway, and it appears to have been designed to imply a totally unwarranted connection with the respectable railway of that name. Bottomley clearly never missed a money-making opportunity as Clause 149 of the survey states that "There are also a number of large advertising boards erected on the property by Mr Bottomley in connection with the publication "John Bull" and we are not aware that any payment is made therefor."

Despite all this, the survey seems to have been a thorough piece of work. It reveals a situation very similar to that which confronted the latest restoration – encroachment on Canal land by adjoining properties, people dumping things in the Canal, others taking water out, locks in bad repair and some parts with no water, etc.

One of the most interesting bits concerns the terminal wharf at Basingstoke. Clause 139 states:

"Prior to 1904 the Canal was fed at this Wharf by a continuous stream of considerable volume conveyed through a pipe into the North Arm at the head of the Canal. In or about

- Good to see that autumn working parties have cut the towpath west of the Greywell Tunnel so that it is very easy to walk along this section again. Thanks to Peter Redway for organising this. It is interesting to see some unusual animals in the field at the back of the towpath at Penny Bridge. These are alpacas which seem quite at home in the Hampshire countryside.
- The very professional looking Society exhibition at Milestones has been attracting many visitors. This is probably the best display the Society has put on for many years with many panels of photographs, artifacts, a DVD film and the colourful Rosie and Jim display of John Ross's mirror dinghy. Congratulations to Jill and Pablo Haworth, Philip Riley and John himself for the hard work put in. John has taken on the position as the Society's Exhibition Manger and this has been an ideal introduction for him.
- It has been announced that work will be starting soon (or may have already started) at King John's Castle and towpath at North Warnborough. This has been talked about for years and is very welcome as the towpath has been deteriorating for a long time. The castle itself and its surroundings are not a great advert for HCC so the completion of the work and interpretation of its history in a proper fashion will be a improvement. Mooring will also be a lot easier with proper waling and a re-surfaced towpath.
- With the clearance of the offside bank in places at Tundry Pond, it is now possible to see across the Park whereas before one could only get glimpses from the canal and towpath. During the winter the birds and wildfowl are in abundance.
- Now that the house near the offside bank of the canal between Sandy Hill bridge, Winchfield and Broad Oak, Odiham is nearly completed it is really apparent what a blot it is in a very quiet and rural part of the canal. The Society objected to the location and stated that it should have been built at the Black Barn site in the middle of the Park well away from the canal. However it went ahead and perhaps it will not be quite such an eyesore when the trees are in leaf in the summer.
- The Society has been asking Hart District Council to instigate a review of the canal Conservation Area Statement between Crookham Village and Pondtail Bridge, Fleet for the last year or two. This is essential as a result of the allowing on appeal of the development by Reading Road Bridge, Fleet in the Canal Conservation Area. As the Statement was dated 1987 the Inspector did not attach much weight to it. The Council are to review all their Conservation Areas and the Canal Statement will be undertaken in 2008-9.
- The massive campaign nationally about the government's funding cuts to British Waterways has mirrored our local campaign last year. The 2 hour Adjournment Debate in Westminster Hall in December was attended by no less than 35 MPs from all over the country. However, the government has not changed its position so the cuts both this year and for the next few years will continue. We asked our local riparian MPs to sign the Early Day Motion and those that were able to did.
- The budget season is well under way locally and we can only hope that those councils that are not paying their requested contributions under the formula do not make any additional cuts. It is interesting to note that boaters make up only about 4% of the users of the canals nationally and it may be even less locally. It is the non-paying users who make up the majority. These include walkers, cyclist, canoeists, photographers, artists, and those interested in the natural history of the canal.
- With the Basingstoke Canal running right through the increasingly built up area between Byfleet and Fleet the canal is a very important leisure and recreational resource for tens of thousands of people. It also serves as a drainage function and there are health and safety implications where the canal is on an embankment and there are houses alongside such as is the case in parts of Fleet and Church Crookham.

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### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT

May I take this opportunity to remind everyone that the 2007 subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Those of you who pay by cheque or cash will have received a reminder and I look forward to receiving your subscriptions shortly. If you pay by Bankers order, please make sure that you are paying at the correct rate, i.e. £10 Adult, £12 Family, £5 Single OAP, £7 2 x OAP, £3 Junior and £15 Group. If you joined the Society after 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006, then you do not need to pay again until March 2008.

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Society:

David & Susie Burke of West Byfleet  
David Ellison of Mapledurwell  
Chris Clarke-Williams of Basingstoke  
Anthony Maunder of Greywell Parish Council  
Michael Davies of Addlestone  
Paul & Gill Herbert of Chandlers Ford  
Paul Sanders of Blackwater  
Annie Wellesley-Wood of North Warnborough  
Patricia Hill of Tadley

*Doreen Hornsey, Membership Secretary*

From Society Newsletter No 73 April 1977

- Illtyd Harrington, an Inland Waterways Association Honorary Life Member, a member of the British Waterways Board, a Deputy Leader of the Greater London Council and the first Chairman of the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council, was the guest speaker of the Society's AGM.
- He spoke about a possible government grant application for the restoration and improvement of the Basingstoke Canal towpath that could be made under a new policy recently announced by the Countryside Commission - 'Footpaths and Recreation'.
- Referring to canals in general he stated 'This priceless heritage is in grave danger of being relegated to the bottom of the pile. We must protest, agitate, and re-create our waterways. Otherwise our children and our children's children will condemn us, for this is a priceless heritage'.  
*(30 years on, financial problems both locally and nationally, are causing another crisis)*
- The Society's Honorary Treasurer, Peter Youngs, reported a healthy financial situation. He mentioned a £1000 donation from Johnson Wax of Frimley and said capital purchases for 1976 totalled £5,700. The passenger boat appeal stood at £2,375 and the Sales Manager, Peter Fethney, reported a Sales profit of £700.
- Surrey County Council have published their Restoration Plan. A priority is the repair of the Ash Embankment with Hampshire County Council being urged to undertake the repair of the breach which occurred during the 1968 floods. Woking dredging is to start shortly and the three bridges are to be repaired or re-built. The old footbridge (*see right*), which once spanned the Wey Navigation at New Haw to the Basingstoke Canal towpath will be replaced with the agreement of the National Trust. Four new locks will be tackled this year.
- Hampshire County Council's Consultative Document on the alternatives for the extent of navigation, car parks, moorings, speed limits and picnic areas has been issued for public comment.
- The Report by the Guildford branch of the Inland Waterways Association on the canal in Woking has been published. This report shows how the canal can be improved and integrated into the life of the community. Planning, access, moorings, facilities, slipways and improvements to the Town Quay are among the issues covered.
- An application by the Society for a grant under the Job Creation Programme has been approved by the Manpower Services Commission. Valued at £34,663 plus £775 for running costs and transport, the scheme for restoring locks on the Deepcut flight of 14 locks will create jobs for a supervisor, wages clerk, six craftsmen and eighteen young school-leavers for a period of 26 weeks. SCC will be providing building materials.
- The Society organised a Fashion-Go-Round in conjunction with Marks and Spencer at the Army Boxing Centre, Aldershot on the 22nd February. This was enjoyed by nearly 1000 people and was like a musical rather than a fashion show. Thanks are due to Marks and Spencer for donating the show from which the Society gained £1,210 for its funds.
- As this edition went to press it was announced that the Trip Boat Appeal Fund had reached the target of £10,000. The total reached was £10,300 including the donation of an engine valued at £2,000. Thanks to the tremendous support from members and friends of the Society, the boat builders, Hancock and Lane (Daventry) Ltd started work on the 68 foot traditional style canal narrow boat on the 10th March.
- An Army plan to construct a bailey bridge and re-open Curzon Bridge to vehicles has been criticised by the Society. Such a bridge would be alien to the environment and would prevent access to the towpath for restoration work on the Deepcut flight of locks.



# SHCS notes

## E-mail

In the last issue, I invited members to let me have their e-mail addresses as an aid to rapid communication. About 6 did so and thanks to them for taking the trouble to do it. However, I cannot believe that they are the only members connected to the Internet, so could I appeal once again to members to drop me an e-mail if they would like to be able to receive messages from the Society this way (including, for the first time with this issue, a colour version of the Newsletter). Contact me at [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com).



Anyone interested in joining the Society should contact the Membership Secretary, Mrs Doreen Hornsey, whose contact details are listed below. The annual subscription is Adults £10, Junior £3, OAP £5, Family £12, 2 OAP £7, and Group £15, payable on March 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

## Date for next copy 30<sup>th</sup> April 2007

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*Editorial Team:* Editor: Roger Cansdale\* 01252-616964  
e-mail: [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)

*President:* The Earl of Onslow  
*Chairman:* **Peter Redway\***  
*Vice-Chairman:* **Philip Riley\***  
*Hon. Secretary:* **Verna Smith\***  
*Hon. Treasurer:* **Graham Hornsey\***  
**& Gift Air manager** e-mail: [grador@totalise.co.uk](mailto:grador@totalise.co.uk)

*Membership Secretary:* Doreen Hornsey e-mail as above

*Working Party Information:* Peter Redway\*

*Trip Boat Manager:* Peter Wright\*

*Trip Boat Bookings:* Marion Gough 01962-713564

*Sales Manager &*

*Mail Order Sales:* Denise Smith

*Exhibitions Manager:* John Ross

*Website Manager:* Andy Beale

*Talks Organiser:* Roger Cansdale\* e-mail: [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)

*Press Officer:* Dieter Jebens\*

*Lengthman Organiser:* Graham Hornsey\*

*200 Club organiser* Jim Johnstone

*Archivist:* Jill Haworth

*Working Organiser:* Peter Coxhead

*VP & Chobham talks:* David Millett

*Director* Roger Ilett\*

*Director* David Lloydlangston\*

*Director* Bob Malcolm\*

*Director* Jonathen Wade\*

*Director* Peter Wright\*

**Basingstoke Canal Authority**

Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey GU16 6DD

01252-370073

Canal Society Internet Website: [www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

Canal Authority Internet Website: [www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk)