



BASINGSTOKE CANAL NEWS

No. 229 Spring 2011



Editorial



Peter Redway, the Canal Society's Chairman died in hospital on 7th February.

The autumn issue of the Basingstoke Canal News featured a cheerful cover picture of the Society's volunteers taking the new work boat on its maiden trip, and the winter issue had the same gang working on Lock 17 under Peter's supervision.

I find it hard to believe that the current cover will be Peter's last appearance in the News and on the Basingstoke Canal, yet how appropriate that his last canal journey should be on a boat that he conceived, drawn by the work party that meant so much to him and end up where it all started, at Lock 11.

When Peter and Margurite first moved into Redway Cottages, the canal was already in decline and by 1980, Lock 11 was derelict.



However, thanks to Margurite's efforts, a £5000 prize got restoration started and Pete was soon at work, later taking over as the leader of the work party. He went on to become Vice-Chairman of the Society and then Chairman in 1995.



And as far as I could make out, he never stopped thinking about the Canal and ways to improve it for the future. The back-pumping schemes were his idea, his suggestion for a reservoir at Deepcut is mentioned in the development plans for the barracks site and there are many other things in the huge legacy that he leaves behind.

Peter is going to be an extremely hard act to follow, because he did so much, on the practical side with the work parties, attending numerous meetings on behalf of the Society and just thinking creatively about what the Canal needs.

It is pretty clear that no one person is going to suddenly appear to replace him, but that might be a good thing. The Society will be more robust and less vulnerable if the jobs can be shared out between more people. The present Committee could probably take on much of what Peter did, but we need some back-ups so that people can go on holiday or just have a bit of time for other things.

So we need more people to come forward to take on these jobs. We now have three vacancies on the Committee because John Ross and Paul Roper are also standing down. We should perhaps put out job specifications but what we really need is "The right stuff", as the original American astronauts were described - people who are interested in the Canal and want to contribute to its future. We can fit the jobs to suit interests and aptitudes, so please contact someone on the Committee if you would like to get involved. It isn't just work - we have quite a lot of fun as well!

David Cameron's Big Society idea has been operating on the Basingstoke Canal for a long time but it is going to be more important than ever in the current financial climate. The Canal will not survive as a navigation without volunteer support and campaigning.

Keeping the Society going will be the best way of commemorating Peter. Mrs Josie Williams, who officiated at his funeral said it all:

Leave now with peace in your hearts and in charity with one another. You were privileged to know Peter in his richness of achievements. That simple fact is something to remember with joy. It went along with hopes and dreams whose realization now rests upon you, not as a burden but rather as a challenge or stimulus in your own lives. The search to fulfill those dreams will be his best memorial.

Thanks Pete

Cover Picture: A traditional boatman's funeral for Peter Redway. Photo: Roger Cansdale

Peter Redway

Robin Higgs, former Chairman of the Canal Society and long time family friend paid the following tribute at Peter's funeral:

As we remember Peter here today, so too must our thoughts be with the other members of the Redway family, particularly with Margurite, who has lost a husband, and the boys Kevin and Ian, who have lost their father.

But for Peter, living beside the canal as he did for most of his life, how very fitting it is today, to have given him a final journey on the canal he loved, with a traditional boatman's funeral. Today, the canal world has lost a doughty fighter, and is to a degree, diminished by his passing; his was truly such a committed, inspiring and enthusiastic involvement in the restoration of the Basingstoke canal.

Peter was born some 77 years ago, in Holly Cottage, just across the Lye in St John's, not far from where he and Margurite were later to spend their married life together in a cottage built by his grandfather. As a young man, he was very keen to ride a motorbike, so he started his working life as a telegram boy with the Post Office. Then after his National Service, he became a Postman, later transferring to a career with British Telecom. Peter kept his motorbike for work, finally owning a 600cc Matchless twin, only parting with it, I am told, when the boys were born. Peter and Margurite were married in 1957, and as canal restoration work started in the St. John's area in the late 70's, they both got involved, Margurite being largely responsible, in 1980, for winning the SPAR Environmental



Award of £5000 for Lock 11. Around this time too, they became keen narrowboat owners.

Peter joined the SHCS Committee in the early 90's, first being the Vice Chairman, and then in 1995, the year of the construction of the Blackwater Valley Aqueduct, becoming Chairman, a post he held for nearly 16 years. His love has always been with the working party side, which he lead with such vigour and enthusiasm, particularly being involved in the aspects of the canal like water supply and back pumping, dredging, and working on the locks, all aimed at giving the canal a sustainable future as a navigable waterway.

In holding the prestigious role of SHCS Chairman, his responsibilities for championing the cause were wide ranging, and he was undoubtedly held in high esteem in the waterways restoration movement, something which was recognized recently by the well justified award to him of the MBE.

But knowing Peter, I am sure he wouldn't want us to be unhappy here today, but to give thanks for what has been achieved. He would want us to look forward, and carry on with the work to get this canal up and running again as a working waterway for everybody to enjoy.

So, sad as we must be that Peter is no longer with us, let us as a testament to his memory, think of what he achieved, and continue with the work in which he was involved; he would have wanted that. As my wife Heather said, he was simply "one of the best".

Robin Higgs

From Ian Brown, Canal Director:

When I first met Peter Redway I already knew that he was a leading figure in the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society and that he had and continued to put in huge amounts of time, personal effort and commitment into numerous voluntary canal projects.

This was when I first joined the BCA in 2003 as a part time maintenance officer looking after the canal centre. Just talking to him inspired me to want to do more for the canal. Within a short time having become the senior ranger and latterly canal director, I had the opportunity to actually work closely with Peter on many and varied projects. We also travelled together to national events and conferences and the conversation was always lively and informative, tempered

with his a vast knowledge of the canal, boats and waterway management in general.

In all my time in senior management roles working within both the NHS and University environments, I can honestly say that this was one individual of only a few that I truly found to be wholly selfless, totally dedicated and diplomatic in his approach to what he clearly regarded as his chosen vocational path in life after his own chosen working career.

There is an old saying that a true person lives respected and dies regretted and for me Peter was such a person, for whom I came to have the highest regard.

Ian Brown

Notice of Annual General Meeting

NOTICE is hereby given that the Thirty Fourth Annual General Meeting of the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society will be held on Saturday 21st May 2011 in the St John's Memorial Hall, Festival Path, St John's, Woking, Surrey, GU21 7SQ, commencing at 2 p.m.

The formal Agenda for the meeting is as follows:-

1. To hear apologies for absence.
2. To confirm the minutes of the Thirty Third AGM held on 15th May 2010.
3. To approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2010.
4. To appoint the Independent Accountants, Rutton B Viccajee.
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

Gareth Jones, Honorary Secretary
25th February 2011

AGM Notes:

- a) This Notice is issued from the Honorary Secretary's address at 9 Mytchett Lake Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey GU16 6AW.
- 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 afternoon 2pm start time for the AGM.

Following the formal business of the AGM and the usual reports and award presentation, there will be a talk by John Gibson of the National Trust about managing the River Wey and the use of volunteers on the navigation.

Committee vacancies

There are three vacant seats on the Canal Society's Board of Directors. Philip Riley will take over as Chairman, at least on a temporary basis, but it is hard to define specific jobs that need to be filled because some of the current Committee members do more than one job and would be happy to hand one over. Essentially jobs could be reshuffled to suit the interests of new members. However, the sort of things where more help would be welcome are

- * Administration - ensuring that paperwork for work parties is up to date, looking after insurance cover, etc.
- * Health and Safety.
- * Managing volunteers and work parties.
- * Recruitment of new members.
- * Event organisation.
- * Fund raising.
- * Social event organising.
- * Monitoring of specific aspects of the canal - water supply, ecology, land owned by the Canal Society, etc.

If any of these, or any other aspects appeal to you, please contact the Secretary, Gareth Jones, or any other member of the Committee (contact details on the back page).

John Pinkerton

Surrey & Hampshire Cruises Ltd is reporting an amazing record profit for last year of nearly £32,000.

Of this, £30,647 came from the *John Pinkerton*, completing its 33rd year of operation. £444 was from the Society's sales team and a further £899 was returned to the Society from interest accumulated on the standing loan of £8000 that it provides to the Boat Company to cover winter expenses.

All in all, a brilliant result and a huge credit to all who work so hard to keep the Canal Society's main source of income flowing.

Kathryn Dodington has stepped down from the Company Secretary post, which Nigel Bird has now agreed to combine with his current post of Treasurer. A further change is that Peter Phillips has decided to give up managing the maintenance of the boat after about 8 years and John Wharf will be taking over. Thanks to all of them.

Refresher training sessions for the crew will be held in March and the boat itself will be receiving its biennial out-of-water inspection from the MCA at the end of February.

Hopefully, a successful result will be reported at the Boat Company AGM, which will be taking place at the Canal Centre on Friday, 4th March, starting at 7pm.

JP II

Although the *John Pinkerton* clearly continues to operate safely and in a manner that seems to please the customers, it is getting increasingly difficult to keep the MCA inspectors happy and we also recognise that customer expectations tend to rise as time goes by. For this reason, the Society has been giving active consideration to commissioning a new trip boat.

A number of decisions have been made about the design, as Peter Phillips reports:

Back in 2009 a decision was made to research the possibility of replacing our trip boat, and to achieve this, a committee of six was set up, with Peter Redway as chairman. Since then there has been a series of meetings to answer the following questions: why do we want to replace the *John Pinkerton*; what do we want to replace the *JP* with; and what do we want to achieve with the new boat?

The *John Pinkerton* is now some 33 years old and is still structurally a sound boat; however to keep up with the increasingly stringent demands of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (the regulatory body for passenger

vessels) and with the competition from other organisations running trip boats, it was considered the right time to replace the *JP*.

We thought it was still very important to be able to carry 50 passengers, but as many of you know from experience when we have fifty on board, with a beam of 8 feet 6 inches (2.6m) it can seem crowded. Therefore it was decided that a new boat should have a beam of 10 ft (around 3m). This extra width will give more space for passengers to sit 4-abreast and will also allow walk through access to the helm. The broader beam will still give adequate manoeuvring room, even through some of the more narrow disused farm bridge holes. It is also handy that one of the standard widths of steel plate is 3 metres. (Note that the maximum beam for a boat on the Basingstoke Canal is 13 feet, or 4m.)

We drew up a set of requirements such as type of engine, air draft to cater for low bridges, galley equipment etc, and also looked at different layouts of the cabin, galley, toilet and engine placement along with the possibility of supplying invalid access via an elevator.



With all these requirements on paper and a sketch and model of how we thought the boat layout would look, John Abbot and I went up to the Midlands in late January to discuss our requirements with three different boat yards. All three have promised to come back to us with a time and cost estimate for a new boat within two weeks. None of them see any problem with completing the order and having the boat ready to use for the 2012 season.

So to conclude, we are now waiting for a reply from the boat builders, before presenting our facts to the Boat Company and Canal committees. Hopefully we will place an order around spring/summer of 2011.

Pete Phillips

What will we do with the John Pinkerton when its replacement arrives? In view of the MCA's attitude, selling it as a trip boat is not really an option. Suggestions so far are convert it into accomodation for visiting work parties or cut the roof off and make it into a work boat. Any other ideas?

Work Party



Saddest task ever for the Society's work party was towing the *Alan Flight* carrying Peter Redway on his last journey to Lock 11. They were met there by the entire BCA staff who had turned out to pay their respects to a man who had earned universal respect for his unstinting work on the Basingstoke Canal.



Although a very sad occasion, it was at the same time quietly magnificent and very moving. Peter certainly could not have wished for a better send-off from his family and friends.

More Work Parties

Canal Society Director Kathryn Dodington combined forces in January with other residents of Brookwood and BCA rangers Peter Bickford and Sara Murray to have a blitz on the offside bank in Brookwood that featured a mass of overhanging willow and alder trees.

So effective was the combination of chainsaw-wielding rangers and volunteer tidy-uppers that the work that had been planned for possibly two days was completed by lunchtime on the first.

Kathryn pronounced herself very pleased with the results, as was local Councillor Glynis Preshaw, and they plan to do more work in future.

The end of the navigation between Odiham and the winding hole near King John's castle had also become overgrown in places and these were targeted by visiting Waterway Recovery Groups from Newbury, Bit In The Middle and KESCRG in January. Duncan Paine stepped in to take over the organisation of these weekends because of Peter Redway's illness and we are very grateful for his efforts.

The work boat *Alan Flight* was put to good use in places where access was restricted from the bank and as a result, Pinkerton crews will have a clear view of the approach to the winding hole for the first time in many years.



The whole offside bank from the lift bridge to the winding hole was tidied up and attention then turned to the heavily overgrown stretch near Lodge Copse Bridge.

Looking to the future, our ability to continue to run these very successful, and very necessary work parties depends on finding a replacement, or replacements, for Peter Redway as organiser. At the moment, this is being done on a weekend by weekend basis, which is a bit awkward, so if there are any volunteers, please let us know.

In the meantime, David Junkisen and Kevin Redway are planning the installation of the new moorings at Runway's End. Further details will appear in the Bulletin.



Above: The scene before and *Below:* after the tree pruning at Brookwood. It looks a bit stark at the moment but that will change when the leaves come out again.



Left: The work boat's cabin roof makes a useful work platform for tree pruning at North Warnborough.

Below: WRG at work near Lodge Copse Bridge.



Contact numbers

Dave Junkisen	0208 9410685
Kevin Redway	01483 722206
Dave Lunn	01483 771294

Excerpts from a day

Victoria Mason is doing a PhD in the School of Geography and the Environment at the University of Oxford. Her study is entitled "Corridors of Conservation: Fluidity, Recombinant Ecologies and Energetic Materialities." The project seeks to explore the following areas of research interest:

- The relationship between human and ecological interests and processes within corridors promoted for both their ecological value and recreational potential.
- How linear spaces are managed and what interests, technologies and policies shape this management.
- What possibilities exist for more productive and democratic involvement with such areas.

The Basingstoke Canal has been selected as a case study for this research owing to its importance as a space for public engagement with green spaces, its proposed ecological value and the central role played by the social interest groups in the historical restoration of the waterway. Victoria has had several sessions with members of the Canal Society, trying to make sense (heaven help her!) of our motivation and interests. She has also spent some time with the Canal Authority and its rangers, and I invited her to write a bit about her impressions for the newsletter; over to you, Victoria...

As part of my PhD research I have recently spent time shadowing the work of the Basingstoke Canal Authority rangers. I came into this with an interest in the management of corridor environments and one of the things that really struck me is the particular challenge that arises in managing such a narrow linear space, together with the difficulties of constantly working with water.

The days I have spent with the rangers have been extremely varied and consist of regular activities, on-going work and emerging situations. There is therefore no 'typical day', and in writing this piece I thought it would be more representative if I picked a couple of half-day activities that captured a sense of the variety of work carried out on the canal each week. In differing ways these jobs fit into national environmental policies, contribute to the local maintenance of the canal and promote public engagement with the waterway.

Offside Bank Vegetation Clearance

During the remainder of this winter the rangers are hoping to complete an extensive cut of offside vegetation from Broad Oak to Mytchett using a work boat and chipper. On the day I joined them the rangers were working to manage the vegetation along a one mile section just downstream of Broad Oak using a method I soon realised was finely tuned.

One ranger cleared the bank vegetation whilst periodically pulling the boat along, another cut the vegetation at bank level and assisted in moving the wood onto the boat, whilst standing on specially designed planks lowered to water level, and a third fed the chipper. The noise of the chipper and the chainsaws together with the fact that everyone is wearing ear defenders means that communication is largely visual, and through bodily signs.

The trees, hampered by the presence of water, need to be felled onto the boat and therefore it is essential that those working on the boat are attentive to what is happening on the bank and vice versa. It is also necessary to have a sense of where the tree will fall, and how tall the tree will be so that

you can stand accordingly. The rangers quickly become attuned to each others' presence; they are aware of where everyone is and are working together. The presence of the chipper on the boat also significantly reduces the area within which to move, and there was a constant danger of getting in each other's way or standing under a falling tree. Then there was the chipper itself, adorned with warning signs which were reinforced by the clear power of the blades and a roller which had little difficulty pulling in an entire tree.



It certainly made for effective progress, however, and as I turned to see how far we had travelled the piles of chippings were visible indicators of the large amount of vegetation that had been cleared.

As we moved along the offside some areas were more intensively cut back than others as the rangers sought to achieve a balance which opened up the navigation whilst ensuring that some habitat for moorhens, kingfishers and other species was retained.

Embankment Survey

Detailed engineering assessment of the canal's embankments was recently carried out, and areas of potential concern or high risk were identified for routine inspection and monitoring by the rangers, based upon BW

in the life of a ranger

procedure. These surveys take the rangers along the length of the canal, although the majority of the embankments identified are in the Hampshire section, and also provide an opportunity to carry out any opportunistic maintenance or wider inspections.

On the day I accompanied a ranger, for example, we retrieved a bike and an abandoned TV from separate locations along the canal and we were also able to view the impact that recent ice and frost had had upon the extent of Floating Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) in the Woodham flight.

At Dinorben embankment we also checked the status of netting which had been installed on the embankment to deter badger activity (which threatened to undermine the stability of the bank) and has been repeatedly vandalised.

The embankments were not always easily accessible and the day was largely a muddy one requiring us to climb over fences, walk through fields of livestock and take the occasional trip through a bramble patch. When the embankment is reached there are a number of things the rangers are looking for, namely: the presence of running water, the saturation levels of the ground, slumping of the land and the angles of trees and other vegetation. In many ways it is change that is being detected and the experience of the rangers is central to its identification, together with specialist technologies installed at certain sites.

The formalised recognition of risk contained within these surveys can be communicated to the riparian authorities, and contributes toward efforts to ensure the continued funding and maintenance of the canal. Today was also possibly the only time I have ever been chased by sheep.

Mink Trapping

Mink are a feature upon the canal, an invasive species which predate on other species, and have been linked to the decline of the canal's water vole population. A lot of the information regarding mink activity is anecdotal and so in addition to controlling the mink population, trapping allows the collection of information which can be passed to Natural England to improve understanding of mink ecology and geographical distribution.

On this occasion we spent the morning checking a number of mink rafts which had been placed in the Hampshire section.



The floating rafts, which have been built by the Rangers, are initially placed out with trays of a sandy-clay mixture to record footprints, taking advantage of the curiosity of the mink and their tendency to run/swim along the edge of the canal. Once mink prints have been recorded (*Below*), the tray is replaced with a trap, which then has to be checked daily in case an animal is caught.



This job is not one that is necessarily enjoyed by the rangers, and I certainly experienced a degree of unspoken personal relief whenever a trap was empty whilst also realising that mink are in many ways impressive creatures. Despite this, there is recognition that this is a legitimate project which gives biodiversity a "fighting chance", complies with national policy and supports adjacent landowners.

Checking these traps also provided an opportunity to complete a number of smaller tasks along this section of canal, and so this morning's work also involved a quick stop to measure the water levels at Farnborough Road weir and a visit to Odiham castle to identify possible tree work which could be carried out with local volunteer groups.

These excerpts demonstrate the huge variety of work carried out by the rangers, and highlight the fact that often a number of different jobs are performed at the same time. No two days really are the same, and it is only through spending time with the rangers that you can get a true sense of this.

I am therefore extremely grateful to them for allowing me to witness their work and for providing me with an opportunity to reproduce some extracts of the days I spent with them in this article.

Victoria Mason

Basingstoke Canal

A Press Release about the Canal Society volunteer work parties produced an indignant response from one of the BCA's rangers about the lack of publicity for their efforts, so I am happy to make amends.

They have been very busy between Odiham and Dogmersfield, taking advantage of the availability of their workboat at this time of year, for the first time for some while, to do some much needed off-side bank trimming.

They have a well integrated team of three rangers: one with a chain saw on the bank or working off the platform attached to the side of the boat, one feeding trees up to 4 or 5 inches in diameter into a wood chipping machine and one handling the boat. The chipper is a fairly fearsome device that squirts the trees back onto the bank as chippings that provide a useful mulch for the banks. Definitely a machine to be very, very careful of though.

Poulter's bridge leak

Poulter's Bridge (Crookham Deepes) bank leak continues to be carefully monitored by the ranger team. With the water level reduced during the winter and adverse weather period, the leak had stopped. Recent evaluation has placed this in the low risk category and is a job that can wait for the appointment of the term contractor. In any event the water level of the Hampshire Pound will now start to rise to optimum navigation levels ahead of the boating season.

Bank protection can be installed with the water at optimum levels and this will now be carried out during the early summer. This will be more cost effective and makes efficient use of the term contract. Other work identified as a result of the most recent condition surveys will be carried out with no effect on the main boating season on the Hampshire Pound.

Mytchett towpath

The towpath that joins the Canal Visitor Centre and Frimley Lodge Country Park is in a very poor state of repair. A recent risk assessment has been carried out and certain areas will now need to be cordoned off until repairs are carried out.

The Canal Director has made an application for funding to Surrey Heath Borough Council to see if they can help with either making their full revenue contribution or making up the shortfall with a capital project grant. The BCA will prioritise the need for installing bank protection this year but with severely restricted resources are limited in what can be done in the short term.

Kevin Daley of the Mytchett, Frimley Green & Deepcut Society has started an on-line petition urging Surrey Heath BC to pay the full amount requested so that the towpath can be repaired (go to <http://petitions.surreyheath.gov.uk/BasingstokeCanal/>, but only local residents please). An application for funding from Surrey Heath's Community



Fund may also be made.

Locks

Several sets of new lock gates have been delivered and those for Locks 12 and 26 have been installed. The term contract for canal maintenance work should be in place in April and the first job will be repairing the wing walls of Locks 19 and 20, which should start in May.

Ash Lock has been closed for inspection and maintenance work on the road bridge, but this should be complete by the time this newsletter is published.

Dogs and towpaths

Dog walking is a very popular use of the canal towpath and, provided that the owners keep them under control and pick up what their pets leave behind, causes no problem.

What is causing an apparently increasing problem is owners allowing or even encouraging their dogs to swim in the canal. In fact it is the exit from the canal rather than the actual swimming that is the problem. Once the dogs' claws have torn away the protective covering of vegetation, the bank rapidly crumbles away and massive holes, or wash-outs, develop. These are the cause of the current threat of closure of the towpath between Frimley Lodge Park and the Canal Centre, but they have also appeared elsewhere.

In addition, the dogs themselves could be in serious danger of catching a canine version of the potentially fatal leptospirosis and current vaccines are becoming ineffective. Perhaps it is time to put up some signs discouraging this practice, both for the sake of the canal and the dogs.

Authority activity

Another successful Santa Cruise event

The BCA team have only just recovered from running the Santa Cruises 2010. Once again the event proved extremely successful, with the event selling out in record time: 159 trips, 1908 spaces in just over three weeks!

For those who are unaware of our annual event, the Santa Cruises involve families taking a short boat trip down the canal before getting off at the jetty with the little ones leading the way through the woods to find Father Christmas in his grotto. The children who have been good receive a present, the naughty ones receive nothing (not our policy I am afraid!). Once they have seen Father Christmas, it is back through the woods to the awaiting boat, then back to the canal centre for hot drinks, mince pies and colouring activities for the children.

The Santa Cruises help to not only generate much needed income to maintain the canal (just over £18,000 for 2010's event), but helps to promote the canal itself. It seems to be

that every year people are coming from farther afield, with one family coming from as far as Cheltenham!

The weather certainly caused a few issues for poor old Santa's helpers. Ice proved to be a daily problem and the snow forced us to cancel one day of trips for the first time ever. Despite these issues, the families certainly appreciated the effort made by all the staff to keep the event running, leaving some very kind words of appreciation. In fact the event was so successful, we have already started to receive enquiries for this year's event!!

On another note, the BCA team will be saying goodbye to both Sue Vickery, our Administration Officer, and Julia Smith, our Visitor Services Officer. Sue is going to be a Registration Officer and Julia will be working for Enterprise car rental. They have both made a great contribution to the BCA team and will be greatly missed. We wish them the best of luck in their new jobs.

CANAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT

The 2011 subscriptions are due on 1st March. If you are a cash payer you will have received a reminder letter and I look forward to receiving your payment shortly. As a reminder the subscription fees are as follows:

Adult £10, Family £12, Senior £5, Senior (pair) £7, Group £15, Junior (under 18) £3, Life £120.

I hope you will all continue to be members as we need your support.

A warm welcome to the following members who have joined us in the last few months:

Mark Munson of Basingstoke
David & Pauline Weston of Wokingham
Jon Newman-Smith of Ash Vale
David Sanger of Odiham
Tony Millett of Wimborne
John Webb of Bagshot
Stephen Phillips of Fleet
Alfred Bloxsome of St John's, Woking

Doreen Hornsey
Membership Secretary

FOR SALE

Terry Harrison print of Poulter's Bridge with the John Pinkerton.

Offers to Mrs R Westbrook, telephone 01747 822345



Minn Kota Model 35.
12 volt Electric Outboard Motor.
25 lbs thrust, ideal for small dinghy
or Canadian canoe.

£40 ono. Roger Cansdale
Telephone 01252 678608

Athai for sale



After much soul searching, Dick and Alison Snell have decided that it is time to part company with their much loved narrow boat *Athai*. Unfortunately this is largely because Dick has health problems which he fears will frustrate his ability to continue maintaining *Athai* as he would wish.

Details of Athai are as follows:

Built new for Dick and Alison in 1980 by Dennis Cooper of Canal Transport Services (CTS) at Norton Canes, *Athai* has a hull length of 39' 9". Last surveyed for insurance purposes in July 2007 when the hull was found to be in good condition. This is perhaps unsurprising because Dick and Alison have docked and blacked the hull every other year throughout its life (including the base plate!). In addition, *Athai* has recently passed her BSS examination and has a certificate valid until March 2015.

Within her (nearly) 40' length *Athai* is very much modelled on a traditional narrow boat. Starting from the stern, the steerer's position has traditional speed wheel control and push-pull gear change. A slightly shortened version of a

traditional back cabin contains a Tor Gem stove and cross bed. The back cabin was fitted professionally by CTS, whereas the rest of the boat was fitted out by Dick and Alison.

The engine room housing a Petter PH2 diesel is next, followed by a loo and shower compartment. The rest of the accommodation comprises the main cabin with convertible double berth, gas cooker, solid fuel stove, fridge, sink and worktops etc. There is a front cockpit, and in the bows are the gas locker and water tank.

Dick says that *Athai* is a boat of character that would appeal to the enthusiast, rather than someone seeking a run-of-the-mill 'average' narrow boat.

Athai is moored at the Canal Centre at Mytchett, and if any Society member is interested in viewing the boat with an interest in becoming her next owner, Dick and Alison can be contacted on 01428 712936 or by e-mail at dick@tillerpin.co.uk.

Athai has been a major part of the Basingstoke Canal scene for the last 30 years and Dick and Alison have taken the boat to almost every rally held on the canal during that time, often winning the award for Best Presented Boat. It would be very nice if she was to remain based here.

Events

CHOBHAM SOCIAL MEETINGS

The new talks season restarted in October and will now be continuing to May 2011 as we have an additional speaker. Sadly, our speaker for the April meeting, Runnalls Davis has passed away, but one of our Directors, John Ross, has kindly agreed to step into the breach. The venue will be as usual at The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, near Woking. Meetings start at 8pm on the third Wednesday of the month (See map right for the exact location). Coffee/tea and biscuits will be available during the interval. Non-members and friends are very welcome to come along.

Wednesday 16th March 2011

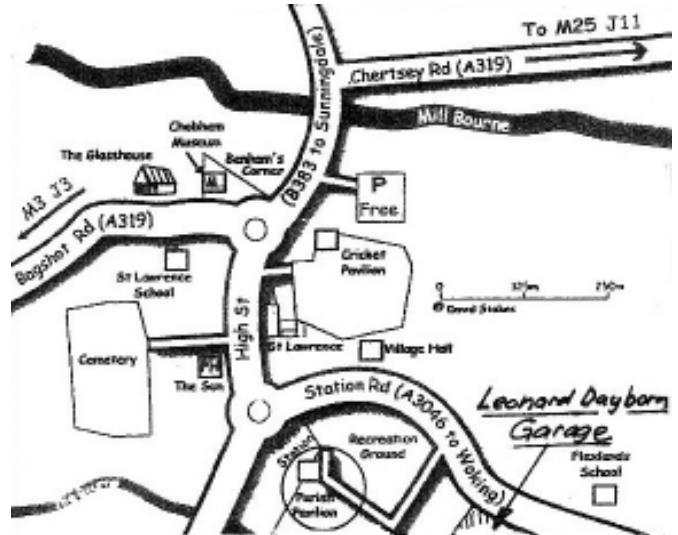
Roger Clay - 'The Hidden Avon'

Roger from the Stratford and Warwick Trust will talk about the stretch of the River Avon above Stratford-upon-Avon up to Warwick with a description of the proposed restoration scheme. There will be some slides of the existing navigation as well.

Wednesday 20th April 2011

John Ross - 'Roses and Castles - Canal Boat Decoration'

John Ross, one of our Society's Directors, who built and decorated 'Elizabeth Rose', his Mirror dinghy with the Rosie and Jim theme, is a fully accredited journeyman in decorative painting with the Waterways Craft Guild. He will be discussing the history of canal art and will demonstrate the painting of Roses and Castles. He will also bring along an exhibition of canal ware.



Wednesday 18th May 2011

Pablo Haworth - The Making of the Forth Bridge at Walton-on-Thames'

Pablo Haworth, a longstanding Society volunteer, will be coming along to talk about the history of the bridge at Walton-on-Thames which was designed in 1933 but built in 1953. The designer was Archie Hamilton, a New Zealander and Pablo will describe what led up to its design and how it was put together.

For further information on this talks programme, please contact David Millett on 01252 617364 or e-mail: d.millett7@ntlworld.com

MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY 2011 VISIT

The annual visit of the Mikron Theatre Company will be on Sunday 3rd July at the usual venue of the Fox and Hounds, Crookham Road, Church Crookham, Fleet at 7.30pm.

The show this year will be 'Hell and High Water' - Three men had a vision and hundreds toiled to make it a reality. It is the story of the building of the Bridgewater Canal in 1761 and the urgent need to get coals to Manchester,

Full details will be in the next edition of the Basingstoke Canal News and in the Bulletin.

BRIDGE BARN EVENT

As we go to press, there is an element of doubt hanging over this year's annual Easter gathering at the Bridge Barn in Woking.

The number of boats attending has been falling in recent years, for understandable reasons, and we may be getting to the point where we should perhaps put it on hold for a year or two.

More details in due course on the Society's website and in the e-mail bulletin.

Navigation

There has been a feeling for a long time that the process of bringing a boat onto the Basingstoke could, and should, be made easier. Kathryn Dodington recently set down the boaters' frustrations and recommendations in a paper that was submitted to the BCA and the Canal User Group. The following is an abridged version:

Basingstoke Canal Access and boaters perceptions

Background

The main boating organisations that use the Basingstoke Canal, namely – the Surrey & Hants Canal Society (S&HCS), the Byfleet Boat Club (BBC), the Basingstoke Canal Boat Club (BCBC), the Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs (AWCC) and The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) have separately had major concerns that the BCA has lost focus on the boating users of the canal.

The four boating organisations want to offer the BCA practical help to achieve a positive perception for boating on the canal.

Also being discussed by the boating organisations is the potential to generate additional regular income for the BCA and in particular the creation of long term moorings.

Introduction

The priority of this paper is boating, and as stakeholders in the canal we wish to get it fully navigable from its junction with the River Wey to its current terminus near Greywell and it is therefore vital that we get the Deepcut flight permanently open for navigation. Nothing said here should detract from this priority.

We do however believe that the eastern section of the canal to Brookwood can be made much more accessible relatively easily within the total scale of the works necessary to get the whole canal functioning for boaters.

It needs the BCA, with the support of the boating organisations, to focus on getting this stretch of the canal used by boaters. This will then feed on into the remainder of the canal when the restoration of the Deepcut flight is complete.

Boats will help keep the channel clear from vegetation and they will keep the water moving to encourage fish and plant life.

Current Problems

The Basingstoke canal requires boats to be escorted through all flights of locks with the exception of the single lock at Ash. Wherever similar restrictions apply on other waterways in the UK (and these are relatively rare with approximately 9 examples elsewhere on the system) they are a major restriction to navigation.

As well as the need to be escorted, the current lock opening times are a problem. They mean it is impossible to enter the canal and reach Hermitage on the same day whilst keeping to the timings given by the BCA.

In addition to the restricted opening hours and the requirement to be escorted there is a statue that any boat new to the canal must have its Boat Safety Certificate and Insurance Certificate inspected at Lock 1. Other waterways assume compliance or ask for an owner's declaration.

There is a requirement to book a passage but no guarantee is given that the canal will be navigable – whilst this is standard practice elsewhere there are restrictions with the Basingstoke being so isolated it does add another restriction. Locks are secured by a non-standard padlock.

This canal is difficult to navigate where the overgrown state of the Woking pound does cause major problems for any boat coming up from the River Wey. Even at times of year with growth dying back it is not easy and very slow. In the growing season the pound resembles more of neglected and overgrown marshland than a through navigation.

The canal is very shallow in places making progress very slow and below some of the locks deeper draft boats struggle to gain any forward progress. This is bad at the best of times and can be very problematic when the above restrictions are in place.

Summary of problems

- Restricted hours of opening
- BCA escort required
- Passage booking required
- Paperwork assumed not to be in order
- Locks secured by a non-standard padlock
- Navigable channel overgrown and shallow in places

Desired Position & Recommendations

We want to achieve a situation where it is possible to just turn up and travel on the Basingstoke as with every other waterway. If assisted passage remains a requirement we believe this could be achieved by use of the boating club and canal society volunteers rather than using rangers.

The only real issue should be the enforcement of proper licensing to enter and remain on the canal

Specifically the boating organisations want to achieve and recommend the following measures, which can be implemented in the short term and would have a major positive effect on the image and experience of using the Basingstoke canal:

- Ideally there should be no timing restrictions on the

on the Canal

locks and they should have a security system operated by a standard waterways key. These to be opened by boaters and re-secured in the normal way. We would like to understand why there needs to be opening and closing times on the Woodham, St Johns and Brookwood flights.

- If restrictions do remain in force then the BCA should seek volunteers from its boating organisations to implement them. This would free up its rangers for more productive work and provide the potential to increase opening times. It would then be feasible to plan a cruise from The Wey to Brookwood in a day.
- Remove the necessity for an escort through the locks. We don't understand the need to have a ranger escort a boat through the locks. The assumption that this is to help overcome any issues associated with the current state of the navigation but this will not be necessary if the recommendations below are implemented.
- Organise working parties of volunteers supported by the BCA to clear debris from around and in the fourteen locks at Woodham, St Johns and Brookwood. This would require relatively limited equipment and training of volunteers and would substantially improve the appearance, water quality and likelihood of a straightforward passage through the locks. It would also be the quickest way to show that some TLC is being given to the canal.
- Organise clearing of weed, pampas grass etc. to create a pleasurable cruising experience by providing a good navigable channel. The eastern end of the canal to be given attention before and as necessary during the 2011 cruising season.
- Publicity by the boating organisations to their members and the BCA to the public that the canal is open and they are welcome to cruise. Boating is fundamental to the future of the canal and should be encouraged not discouraged. Boats help keep the canal in good order for the benefit of all users.
- Currently if a boater rings the BCA to ask about a passage they will invariably be met with "the canal is closed" rather than "the canal is open as far as Hermitage", i.e. a glass half empty response rather than a glass half full. Everyone should be encouraging the use of the canal by boaters. There is no danger of exceeding the boat count imposed 20 years ago by Natural England. It always seems that the administrative staff at Mytchett discourage boating rather than seeing it as important in preserving the canal as well as the public image of the Basingstoke canal.

- Boat safety and compliance paperwork should be assumed to be in order for all boats visiting the canal – non-local boats will have come from the Wey or Thames where declarations will have been made. The BCA should enforce compliance for all boats moored long term on the canal.

Licence Fees

The boaters who wish to use the canal are more than comfortable to pay a reasonable amount to use the canal based on the time that they are on the waterway. In the same way those who moor on the canal are equally comfortable with paying their dues provided the canal is kept navigable. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy that a well-used canal will be easier and cheaper to maintain.

Mooring and licence fees must be enforced as they are on all other navigations and not an option as they seem to be at the moment. Once it becomes known that licences will not be enforced then it is likely that abuse will become wide spread. There is a lot of comment and ill feeling about this in the local boating community. It would seem that licences for those visiting are quite rightly enforced while those staying on the waterway have a looser enforcement regime. This must be costing the BCA substantial loss of income, is very bad for the reputation of the BCA and is causing wide spread unrest to those who are paying their fees.

Long Term Moorings

We believe that there is substantial potential for long-term moorings, particularly on the eastern section but in due course on the Hampshire pound. This would be a major income generator and would make the canal a much more vibrant and used waterway and help it integrate into the national network.

The good news is that Ian Brown, the Canal Director, is very keen and supportive of the paper's suggestions and is proposing what he has termed an Open Access Policy.

He told the JMC that further discussion and agreement on taking a more "open access approach" forward that will quickly evolve into the boating clubs proactively managing the navigation element will now take place.

So there we have it - the BCA's manpower resources are shrinking so it will be up to the boaters to find volunteers to manage access to the Canal. Exactly how this will be done remains to be seen and we are waiting for the BCA to arrange a discussion.

The ball though is clearly in our court. If we don't do this successfully, we will have no one to complain to but ourselves!

Towpath

Joint Management Committee

The February meeting of the JMC had the usual series of reports presented, but relatively little discussion, perhaps because it was all too clear that there was very little room for any alternatives to what was being proposed.

On behalf of the BCA, Ian Brown reported that he had submitted proposals for restructuring the organisation to the Counties. The background to this is that the BCA has an annual income of about £0.5 million, but after paying for wages, premises and transport, he has less than £40,000 left to spend on maintaining the canal. He estimates that he needs £200,000, so clearly something has to go to free up funds. That something is likely mostly to be people. The changes in the BCA are expected to be completed by June, so we shall have to wait and see exactly what remains.

Ian reported that the term contractor would be appointed for a 2 year period in April. 27 initial applicants were whittled down to 6 for the final tender. Work is scheduled to start in May on a list of known but quite do-able problems. The target date for re-opening the whole canal is early spring 2012, but this is clearly dependent on not finding any new problems. The survey of cuttings is complete and has identified 3 areas requiring attention, most in riparian ownership, which may cause delays while negotiations take place. The survey of weirs, sluices and culverts will be completed in the spring.

The BCA has submitted comments on three canalside development proposals, the Aldershot Urban Extension, the Deepcut Rural Village Development and Brewery Road Car Park in Woking, where the World Wildlife Fund has now been given planning permission to build its new headquarters. (The Canal Society has also made inputs on all these projects.)

The Honorary Treasurer, Mike Walls, then presented the budget for 2011/2012. This was based on assumed full contributions from all the stakeholders and showed a balanced projection with no further drain on the reserves. Unfortunately, this was immediately blown out of the water by the disclosure that Surrey Heath would be falling £16,283 short of their share, Runnymede £8,869 and Rushmoor about £2000; the position of Guildford was unknown at the time. Woking and Hart were paying in full, the latter thanks to contributions from the parishes.

The result of this will be that this time next year, if expenditure is as forecast, the reserves will be down to about £4000 and the canal will be bankrupt some time in 2012, unless the measures that Ian Brown has proposed are successful.

It was not a happy note to close on.

Water supply

The shortage of water on the canal is a problem that has been recognised virtually since it opened. The two back-pumping schemes provide some relief to the lower end of the canal, but they are limited by the Environment Agency abstraction licence and by the cost of running the pumps. Using off-peak electricity would reduce this very significantly but would require the installation of remote monitoring and switching equipment, which the BCA is currently unable to afford. The Canal Society has offered to look at pay for it if a case can be made, and discussions are to be set up with the BCA.

Peter Redway's suggestion of a reservoir at Deepcut now appears in the brief for the Deepcut Rural Village Development. If it succeeds it would negate the need to back-pump the 3 Brookwood locks, so this project is probably going to be on hold.

Discussions with various parties on the use of some of the Bourley Reservoirs between Fleet and Aldershot indicate that a couple of them could be available to supply the canal. However, before any money is spent on progressing this further, it will be essential to get firm agreement from Natural England that the water is of acceptable quality and not requiring any prohibitively expensive treatment to satisfy the requirements of the SSSI.

Of more immediate concern is the abstraction of water at Greywell by the Water Company. They have a licence to take 6 million litres a day from the aquifers, but pumping has been suspended for several years. It is estimated that 1 million litres a day could be lost to the canal if pumping resumes and support for opposing this will be sought from Natural England at the forthcoming Conservation Steering Group meeting.

Volunteers on the Canal

The kerfuffle over permission for volunteers to work on Lock 17 that we reported in the last newsletter, seems to have been resolved.

The problem arose because various people who had been managing this work went sick at the same time, so that it was suddenly dumped in the laps of others unfamiliar with what was going on. Understandably, they started from scratch and did things in a rather more formal way than might otherwise have been the case.

In any event, there is now a better understanding, certainly at least on the part of the Canal Society, of what is required in terms of paperwork and hopefully what has been sorted out will serve as a template for subsequent projects.

Titbits

Another pub fire

Following on from last year's fire at the Swan in North Warnborough, yet another canalside pub has been seriously damaged by fire. This time it was the Row Barge in St John's, where a fire that seems to have started in the kitchen left gaping holes in the roof. The pub is closed until further notice.



Crookhan Village shops

In years gone by, Woodman's Store near Pondtail Bridge in Fleet was a very convenient source of supplies for passing boats, but it has been shut for some time. However, an alternative is now available in Crookham, a few minutes walk from Malthouse Bridge; turn left into the village as you come up the steps from the towpath.

Under previous owners, the Crookham village shop failed to prosper, but it has been transformed under the current management. Not only is it now open when you need it, but it also has a wide variety of locally produced food and other goods. During the snows of early last year it was the only shop in Fleet, including the supermarkets, that still had stocks of bread and milk, thanks to some enterprising work with a 4x4.

It also has a very efficient Post Office and an expanding catering side that can now provide lunch as well as morning coffee and afternoon tea.

Well worth a visit - they deserve to succeed.

A few yards further on is Lesley's, the long established village newsagents. They are open from very early until about midday.

Perseverance

The Canal Society's ancient steam powered dredger finished its restoration work in 1992 and after much soul-searching it was decided to send it to the Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port, who were to refurbish it and use it for dredging the basins at the museum.

Sadly this has not happened and with current pressure on funding, it seems increasingly unlikely that it ever will. They have a lot of historic boats that are much easier to restore than a complicated piece of machinery like *Perseverance*.

The dredger is still sitting in the museum yard with much of it exposed to the elements as in the photo that I took some 12 years ago.



The museum have apparently been in discussion with the Kennet & Avon Trust about the possibility of transferring the dredger to them. Although this is in breach of our agreement with them that it should be offered back to us if the museum no longer wanted it, it might well be the best solution to ensuring its long-term future.

It is envisaged that *Perseverance* would be taken to Crofton, where a group of steam enthusiasts already work on the famous beam engines. They have workshops and machine tools and a visitor infrastructure is already in place there.

Although it would be nice to have it back on the Basingstoke, it is unsuited to maintenance dredging and modern H&S requirements, and the canal itself has a multitude of problems demanding our more immediate attention.

Crofton is only about 35 miles from the end of the Basingstoke Canal, so it would not be too far to go for any of our local steam enthusiasts and, who knows, maybe one day it could pay a return visit. We shall be keeping in touch with developments and offering such help as we can.

- Good to hear that Hampshire County Council have re-affirmed that last year's agreement for £872,000 of capital improvement works on the Hampshire section of the canal is safe and will not be subject to any reduction in the overall announcement of cuts county wide. £383,000 is earmarked for this financial year 2010-11, £339,000 for 2011-12 and £150,000 in 2012-13. This should enable the backlog of improvements to be substantially completed within this timeframe, and encourage Hart District Council and the riparian parishes in Hart to continue their funding. Hopefully by the time you read this the new term contract will have been signed.
- It is excellent news that bankside working parties have re-started on the Hampshire section this winter, both by Canal Authority rangers and by Canal Society and visiting group volunteers. Visiting groups have included the Newbury Working Party Group, Waterways Recovery Group (BITM) and the Kent and East Sussex Canal Recovery Group. All the latter groups were involved in the original restoration of the canal and it is very pleasing that they are continuing to support this essential work along the canal. Late last year Society volunteers, residents from Brookwood and canal authority rangers tackled some essential offside bank clearance along the Brookwood section of the canal.
- Interesting to hear that the our neighbours the Wey and Arun Canal Trust have applied for planning permission to build a new visitors centre at Loxwood, where the Trust's trip boats are based and carry around 10,000 passengers a year. The new building will be eco-friendly and will be the base for information and displays about the canal, local tourist information, a waiting area, ticket office and a disabled toilet. The project will be privately funded with funds that would not in the normal course of events have been given to the trust for canal restoration.
- Those of you who subscribe to or buy the Waterways World magazine will have seen the excellent article on the River Wey Navigation and the Basingstoke Canal in the February edition. As well as a section on the fall and rise of the canal it describes the whole length of the canal with some excellent photographs. The article mentions the current problems of the canal but briefly mentions the planned work to restore the canal to good order. It states in the final paragraph that potential visitors should not be put off by some adverse publicity as it is really a canal not to be missed and is used by hundreds and thousands of local people annually who walk, cycle or fish or enjoy the nature conservation aspect of the canal.
- The historic rotting Wey barge 'Perseverance IV', which lies at the National Trust Wey Navigation base at Dapdune Wharf Guildford may well be restored in due course rather than be broken up. It is at present owned by the Museum of London but is being transferred to the National Trust with some funds to kickstart its restoration. However, initial funding of £200,000 is required and an appeal will be launched in the spring. The National Trust already have the 'Reliance' at Dapdune Wharf, the barge being restored many years ago, and is now a visitor attraction which one can walk through. In the meantime donations can be made through www.justgiving.com/perseveranceIV
- At the meeting to discuss the restoration John White came along, being the son of Steve White - one of the last captains of barges which used to operate on the Wey Navigation and which traded to and from London's docks. John not only crewed on the barges but also worked with Ray Edwards on barge building and repairs at Dapdune Wharf in the 1960s, thus providing a link with the current project to save 'Perseverance IV'.
- In a few years time the development of the MOD sites, that border the canal at Deepcut and Aldershot, can, with the benefit of imaginative designs, provide an excellent canalside environment for the residents of the developments and for other visitors to the area. The proposed developments should make a feature of the location and provide many benefits that are sorely needed along the canal. As the Society has always said, the canal is a 'green lung' through an increasingly built up area and is, and can be more so, of great benefit to current and future residents.
- It was reported in a recent local paper in Woking that a Woking man, who waded into the Basingstoke Canal after spotting a body floating in the water, is to receive a national lifesaving award of a Royal Humane Society Testimonial, personally approved and signed by the Society's President Princess Alexandra. Roger Thompson went into the canal, managed to get his head above water and then fire-fighters helped to pull the man up onto the bank. Mr Thompson's efforts saved the man's life.
- In early January a cyclist was punched, kicked and robbed of his mobile phone whilst cycling along the canal towpath from Woking town centre towards Goldsworth Park. He came across a group of five men, who after the assault, made off in the direction of Goldsworth Park. Hopefully this is a very isolated incident, and Police appealed for any possible witnesses or anyone with information to contact them.

From Society Newsletter No 96 April 1981

- The Basingstoke Canal restoration is now well over half way to completion with only nine miles of the 32 mile navigation still to be dredged and nineteen out of twenty nine locks restored or under way. At the eastern end of the canal, the number of work sites is growing with work taking place at Lock 1 and Lock 5 and work just about to start on Lock 11 at St John's. In addition bank clearance is under way in this area and Surrey County Council has rebuilt a let-off weir and tackled some of the most difficult dredging.
- Along the centre section of the canal British Rail have completed extensive work in relining the Frimley aqueduct and Stan Meller's railway group has laid a mile of narrow gauge railway track along the Ash Embankment which will be used to transport thousands of tons of clay to repuddle the embankment. This work is being done by Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society volunteers and other visiting groups plus Hampshire canal rangers. At the western end the steam dredger crew are making steady progress westwards towards Fleet.
- The end of March will see the commencement of yet another scheme sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission to the tune of almost £103,000. This will involve the employment for twelve months of 32 young people under the expert supervision of Martin Smith, Jim Reid and Robert Mew, the resident supervisors together with two others yet to be appointed. Patrick Bere, our long suffering carpenter will also be involved. Over all of them will be Project Manager Frank Jones.
- The work will involve building overflow weirs on the Ash Embankment and at Ash Vale station, completing the ancillary works on the Deepcut locks such as bollards, ladders and stop plank grooves plus work on the three Brookwood locks. The committee has also approved the expenditure of £5,000 on the restoration of Cowshott Manor Bridge over Lock 17 by the MSC employees. It will be rebuilt to the same profile as the old bridge. Separately the gate building programme will continue unabated.
- Canal rangers and staff of Hampshire County Council have contributed towards a small-leaved lime tree which has been planted near Ash Lock in memory of the late Roy Fowles. He started as a voluntary worker and later as an HCC ranger he mended and operated a drag line crane below Lock 25 at Deepcut where he created an island on the edge of the canal which be protected as a nature reserve and bird sanctuary. Before joining the HCC canal staff he was a fireman at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough.
- Hampshire County Council will take no action on dredging the Greywell section of the canal until the Ash Embankment is re-opened and water is run down into the Surrey section. It was decided to wait until the end of the year so that the effect on the water supplies can be assessed as a result of feeding the top length of the Surrey section from Ash to Deepcut. The Society has been pressing for the Greywell length to be dredged to clear the spring heads in the bed of the canal as the springs constitute the canal's main source of water.
- Robert Aickman, the founder and Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association recently passed away. His name is synonymous with the upsurge in interest in canals as it was he, who after reading L T C Rolt's classic 'Narrow Boat' suggested forming the IWA. The Basingstoke Canal held a special place in his affections as he was heavily involved when the campaign to restore it was started in 1948. Two years ago the Society's proposals on the formation of a Trust to manage the affairs of the canal was submitted to him for comment before being submitted to the County councils.
- Last year's Sponsored Walk raised about £5,000 and it is hoped that this years walk on 17th. May will raise even more. It only needs 500 walkers to get 10 walkers to sponsor them at 10p per mile to raise £5,000 so it should be possible to beat this. These funds are very important as the Society's commitments this year will be larger than ever. Much of our expenditure will be on wages for the full time supervisors who supervise the Manpower Services Commission teams. Without these funds progress will be that much slower.
- Thanks are due to Mr. Holliday of the Construction Industry Training Board for sending seventeen young people under the supervision of Mr. Miles to rebuild a chamber wall on Lock 14 during December 1980.
- A permanent compound formed of two ex-railway containers is being erected beside Lock 11 to house tools, plant and materials.

Editor

I have moved house. My address is now
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01252 678608
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Roger Cansdale

SHCS notes



The canal bulletin is now at Issue 3.

***If you want to receive it, don't forget to send us your E-mail address.
A message to membership@basingstoke-canal.org.uk will do it.***

If you are a NON-MEMBER (or complimentary BCN recipient) then please go to the Society's home page at <http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/>, where the bulletin signup form can be seen on the right.



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 1st each year.

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