



# BASINGSTOKE CANAL NEWS

No. 230 Summer 2011



## Editorial



The Canal Society's Annual General Meeting seemed to me to go well, being interesting and informative and quite well attended. In particular, John Gibson's talk about the management of the Wey Navigation focussed the spotlight on the problems of the Basingstoke Canal.

The Wey was donated to the National Trust by the Stevens family in 1964 and has a substantial endowment that gives it an income of some £300,000 a year. A similar sum is derived from boat and mooring licences. Income from other sources adds up to give John an annual budget of about £1 million. This allows him to employ about 20 people, who are backed up by some 80 volunteers.

As a result, he is able to delegate jobs to his support staff, who are then able to properly manage the people on the ground maintaining the waterway.

In contrast, Ian Brown's financial situation is such that, with a Canal annual budget of about half that of the Wey, he has very few people to take on management jobs and is faced with having to make 4 of his already small workforce redundant in order to free up money to pay contractors to do maintenance work. He is even proposing that his own job should go, with the canal then managed by someone in a County Council office in, say, Winchester.

As Philip Riley pointed out at the AGM, the funding for the canal is reaching the point where it becomes non-viable. The bottom line will be protecting public safety which will mean ensuring that there are no breaches in embankments or culverts and that the locks remain intact. The only benefit that the public will derive from this

level of expenditure on the canal will be the rather negative one of not having their property flooded.

There will be little or no money for actually enhancing public enjoyment of the canal. If no dredging is done, through navigation will probably become impossible in 20 years time and once there are no boats, the canal will again become a silted up local rubbish tip.

We have to alter the current negative mind-set of the councils that the canal is a liability and get them to recognise that with a bit more support, the public would start to get real benefit from it. It's potentially a wonderful asset, but it needs strong backing.

If Ian got the support he needs from the councils and could

afford the sort of staff that John Gibson has, we might see more boats on the canal bringing in more income instead of the current situation where potential visitors tend to be told that the canal is closed. The Wey's attitude to such requests seems to be completely the opposite – say yes and then decide how to do it.

There are currently so many frustrations besetting the canal that it is hard to see any future for it under the current set-up. Perhaps we should be setting up a Basingstoke Canal Reserved Fund in our accounts, whose only function would be to raise money as an endowment for new owners, be they the new Waterway Trust or, failing this, perhaps the National Trust to join up with the River Wey.

The Wey's endowment fund is about £8.5 million. How much would it take to persuade someone to take on the Basingstoke? Even in today's dodgy financial climate, £10 or £20 million is not an impossible target and a fraction of the worth of many individuals, let alone companies.

\* \* \* \* \*

When it was first published in January 1967, the Basingstoke Canal News was printed on A4 format, probably because that was what the duplicating machine took, and this has been its format ever since.

It does have a number of disadvantages today, in part due to changes in postage charges and rules. To minimise the cost of postage, the newsletters are folded in half (in itself a major pain) and put into A5 sized envelopes. From time to time, some keen postal worker decides that an envelope is too thick and someone gets charged extra. Life would be much easier if the newsletter was A5 size in the first place, like most other canal society and boat club newsletters.

From the editor's point of view, it would give extra flexibility, because at the moment if I overrun a multiple of 4 pages, I have to fill a further 4 A4 pages. With A5 size, only half the material would be necessary.

With all this in mind, I canvassed opinion at the recent AGM as to the size people would prefer and also whether they would like colour printing, as moving to digital printing could make this affordable.

I was agreeably surprised by the results, since I expected some resistance, but nobody voted in favour of the current size, and the great majority would like some colour rather than just black and white.

So from the next issue look out for changes.

# Chairman's page

***Philip Riley, the Society's new Chairman gave this report to the Society's Annual General Meeting:***

## **Peter Redway**

This year has been over-shadowed by the very sad loss of our Chairman, Peter Redway who died in February.

Peter was Chairman for 16 years and led the Society through a difficult phase in the history of the canal during which the euphoria which surrounded the re-opening in 1991 was gradually replaced by the realisation that the lack of essential maintenance had resulted in deterioration of the main structures leading to the closure of the canal in 2009.

Peter accepted the challenge of taking on what amounted to the second restoration of the canal. He led working parties, organised visiting groups and, through his quiet yet persistent approach, was in the forefront of persuading the local authorities to address the formidable backlog of maintenance.

This resulted in the agreement by the County Councils to invest £1,771,000 in a major capital works programme which started this month. This should lead to the re-opening of the canal to through navigation next spring. I cannot think of a more fitting legacy for Peter – he would have been delighted to see boats passing, once again, to Odiham on 'his' canal. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Peter.

## **Canal Finances**

Over the last year the canal has also faced reductions in revenue funding which have compelled the BCA to reduce, yet further, its cost base. The Canal Authority is now in the midst of a redundancy programme which is likely to involve the loss of 4 rangers out of a current ranger force of 10.

It is our fear that the finances of the BCA are approaching the point (and may even be beyond the point) where it has insufficient funding to enable it to maintain the canal as a fully operating navigation. Given that there is unlikely to be any improvement in local authority support over the next few years (and more cuts are likely in 2012/13) the only options available to the BCA are to increase income and attract more volunteers to make up the shortfall in the ranger team.

Attempts to increase income have, so far, failed to produce any significant results. The best short term prospect for the BCA was to upgrade the camping field at Mytchett to boost income from caravans and campers. This would have involved the construction of a new amenity building which would have also served the Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club. However, this project is now delayed for several months because the Surrey Wildlife Trust is insisting on a bat survey as a condition of its support for the planning application.

This is an excellent example of a really promising income-generating project which is being frustrated on what we believe to be spurious grounds. We make the point that without the additional income, the canal will gradually fail and, with it, the SSSI. It is dispiriting to see that the wildlife interests do not appear to recognise this essential fact.

It is also disappointing to note that the Joint Management Committee (which has the ultimate responsibility for the management of the canal) is apparently unwilling or unable to intervene to achieve a resolution of this issue. The Canal Society fear that if a straightforward project such as this cannot get started, there will be little hope of developing other sources of income to offset the reductions in local authority grants.

## **Volunteers**

On the question of volunteers, the Canal Society has, since the completion of the restoration, continued to organise volunteer work parties to improve the navigation and, more latterly, to undertake routine maintenance such as bank-side clearance work and dredging. However, the working environment is now changing and the County Councils are now treating the Canal Society in the same way as any other contractor employed on the canal – with all that implies in terms of paperwork, compliance with regulations, training standards etc.

These issues are being addressed but they come at a time when David Cameron's 'Big Society' is increasingly reliant on a fixed pool of volunteers who are being asked to take on work which was traditionally undertaken by paid staff.

Despite all these complications, Canal Society volunteers have achieved some very positive results over the last year. They completed the fitting out of our work boat, the Alan Flight, which was rebuilt using some of the proceeds from a legacy given to us by the late Alan Flight. The work at Lock 17 has almost been completed and work is at a very advanced stage on a new landing stage at Runway's End in Farnborough which will provide a useful embarkation point for passengers on the John Pinkerton attending the bi-annual air show. The canal also received visits from WRG and from the Newbury Working Party Group, who contributed to the work at Lock 17.

In Brookwood, Kathryn Dodington led a very successful work party of Canal Society volunteers and local residents which did an excellent job in tidying up the offside bank in the Sheets Heath area. Duncan Paine led work parties in Odiham (including visiting groups from WRG/BITM and the Kent & East Sussex CRG) which concentrated on off-side clearance and Kevin Redway headed-up a team in Woking which used Belfast Girl to clear the channel of weed and an assortment of supermarket trolleys, bicycles and other

# Chairman's AGM report

articles which had been dumped into the canal. This work was much appreciated by the boat owners who participated in the illuminated boat parade in Woking before Christmas.

## Future of the Canal

In April, Defra published its consultation document entitled 'A New Era for Waterways'. This set out the Government's proposals to move British Waterways into the third sector and to establish it as a charitable trust by April 2012. In due course, and probably by 2015, it is also the intention to transfer the navigations managed by the Environment Agency (principally, the R Thames, R Medway and the East Anglian Rivers) to the new charity.

From the Canal Society's point of view, it is interesting to note that the consultation document mentions that 'the new charity will be set up in such a way that, over time, it may agree to partner or merge with other navigations'. This could provide a very important opportunity for the future of the Basingstoke Canal. The Canal Society's committee has long held the view that, in the longer term, the future of the canal lies with a much larger navigation authority which has the critical mass, economies of scale and range of skills and expertise to manage, maintain and improve the waterway as a fully operating navigation.

Accordingly, the Society is proposing to support the formation of the new waterways charity and to take the line that, at the appropriate time, the canal should be absorbed into the new national charity. I should, however, sound a note of caution. I think it is very unlikely that a transfer could be achieved in anything other than a fairly protracted timescale. It is also to be expected that, as a condition of the transfer, the canal would need to be restored to full operating condition and that the existing local authority funding arrangements would need to remain in place for some considerable time after the move across to the new charity. Having said all that, I think the Government's proposals should be welcomed as they offer an opportunity to identify a long term and sustainable future for the Basingstoke.

## Water supply

I will briefly mention four other issues. Firstly water supply. We continue to explore opportunities to identify additional sources of water for the canal. Over the past year we have commissioned a report by Roy Sutton, the IWA Honorary Consulting Engineer, into the feasibility of using water from the Bourley Reservoirs on the Aldershot Ranges. Armed with this report we will shortly commence discussions with interested parties on the viability of this proposal.

We have also given evidence to the Public Enquiry into the SE Water water resources management plan as we believe that there are grounds for arguing that over-abstraction by the water company at Greywell is reducing the supply to the canal and affecting the SSSI. At Deepcut we are proposing

that surface water is collected in a reservoir to supplement supplies to the Deepcut locks.

## John Pinkerton II

Secondly the replacement for the John Pinkerton. We are still considering a proposal to replace the John Pinkerton with a new trip boat which will fully satisfy the future requirements of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency and provide an even better experience for the many visitors to the canal who enjoy the trip boat each year.

## Canalside developments

Thirdly the Canal Society continues to be a lone voice in its campaign to achieve benefits for the canal from a number of canal-side developments including the Aldershot Urban Extension, the re-development of Deepcut Barracks, the new housing development at Brookwood Farm and the construction of a new headquarters for the World Wildlife Fund at the Brewery Road site in Woking.

In the case of all these developments, we believe that imaginative planning and careful attention to the unique canal-side setting could produce significant benefits for the canal and for the communities it serves. However, we always find that we are struggling to make the case to the planning authorities and I would appeal to you all to help us with our campaign – particularly by lobbying local councillors and, if possible, by assisting us with some of the legwork in getting our points across.

## Ash Lock depot

Finally I will mention the proposal to re-develop Ash Lock Depot. It is now clear that, following the closure of the Deepcut workshop, the future of the dry dock at Deepcut is not secure. We have therefore been working with the BCA and Hampshire County Council to develop the Ash Lock Depot as a future operations base for the canal. We envisage that the developments will include the provision of new wet and dry docks (hopefully covered for year round use), workshops, storage buildings and a new slipway. Finance for this project may be available as 'planning gain' from the Aldershot Urban Extension although it is very early days and we are still unclear on what can be achieved. However, this is an exciting and promising project and we intend to fully engage with the BCA and the local authority in the formulation of the plans.

As always, the future of the canal is beset with uncertainties but I hope you will find, in my report, some positive pointers to the years ahead. I think we owe it to all the volunteers who worked so hard to restore the canal back to life to carry the project forward and I know that this is what Peter Redway would have wanted. Can I close by thanking the Committee for all their hard work over the last year, often in difficult circumstances. Can I also thank you, the members, for your continued support.

*Philip Riley*

# Work Party

The Society's volunteers finished off the clearance work on the offside bank at Odiham and then moved to Eelmoor to install a permanent mooring at Runway's End.

With the sad passing of Peter Redway, leadership of the Work Parties became an urgent matter to resolve and has been a subject of much discussion. The arrangement, at least for the time being, is that Kevin Redway will lead any construction type of work on site, while Martin Leech will try to liaise with the BCA and deal with the risk assessments and other paperwork that is now required. Janet Buckley is assisting with communications.

This seems to be working well if things at Eelmoor are anything to go by. The piling operation was set up using the workboat with much appreciated advice from Dave Battarbee and Rob Locatelli of River and Canal Services Ltd. Rob is co-owner of the dredger *Belfast Girl* that often works on the canal.



Above & below: Pile driving at Runway's End.



Two weekends saw the bulk of the piling completed to a very professional standard that Rob, who makes his living doing this type of work, was very impressed by. Further weekends were spent installing the tie-back reinforcing and the wooden facing strip and reinstating the towpath.



Above: The mooring almost complete with only a wooden capping strip and a layer of road stone left to do.

The mooring will provide a rather better facility for the *John Pinkerton* during Airshow week than the previous temporary landing stage and will be available for any other boats at other times. We are grateful to Rushmoor Council and TAG, the owners of the Farnborough airfield, for the grant which paid for most of this work.

The next job will see a return to Lock 17 to repoint the lock chamber walls. After that, installation of landings on the offside bank either side of the Crookham swing bridge is planned. These will make life a lot easier for boaters, particularly if they are working single-handed.

Verna Smith is helping with planning for visiting groups. Installation of a landing below Lock 1 is a priority and Ian Brown is looking for help in clearing the undergrowth on the Ash Embankment to allow easier inspection for leaks or signs of animal burrowing that might lead to leaks.

For details of future work parties, please contact Janet Buckley.

## Contact numbers

Janet Buckley	01252 620687
Kevin Redway	01483 722206
Dave Lunn	01483 771294

# From the BCA

The new Canal term contractor has now been appointed. Dyer & Butler will start as soon as possible on the priority plan presented at the last Joint Management Committee meeting in February. This will primarily focus on the Deepcut Flight and mitigation plans for high risk areas identified in the recent structural condition surveys.

Later in the year when it is possible to draw down the water level on the Hampshire Pound, the term contractor will fit a number of standardised stop plank grooves to prime bridge hole locations. This will enable ease of stop plank installation and control over sections during the event of emergencies and repairs.

The BCA would like to point out that this is a fixed term contract for two years initially and is to enable work that requires civil engineering skills which the ranger team do not have. In the future we need to be in a position to use various specialist contractors that will work in harmony with a reduced but dedicated ranger team that will provide the

capacity for a well maintained and sustainable canal.

Ian Brown, Canal Director



Above: Preparatory work at Lock 20 (Photo: Nigel Searle)

## Priority Capital Priority Works Programme 2011 -

No.	Brief description	Estimated start date	Estimated finish date	Notes
1 Hants	Crookham Deepes (Poulter's Bridge)	May 2011	June 2011	Install 20 – 25 metres of soft Bank Protection System – Geo-textile with plant shelf
2 H	Swan Bridge (cutting) Towpath – Suspected Land Slippage.	May 2011		Install 45 – 50 metres of soft Bank Protection System only, followed by building up towpath and cutting back into bank – reprofiling slope.
3 Hants	West Hart Embankment - Extend existing bank protection to address	Oct 2011		Install 15-20 metres of soft Bank Protection System with a Planting Shelf
4 H	Installation of Emergency Stop Gates and or Stop Plank grooves to reduce and control risk down from high to medium. Minimise damage from flooding and reduce ongoing maintenance cost.	Oct 2011		Exact locations to be identified with the term contractor May 2011 onwards
5 H&S	Repairs to culverts?			Repairs are as yet unquantifiable
1 Surrey	Lock 19. Wing walls and bypass	May 2011		
2 S	Lock 20. Wing walls and bypass	May 2011		
3 S	Lock 25. Wing walls and bypass	May 2011		
4 S	Lock Gates Replacement programme	May 2011		Lock 1 upper/lowers, 4 uppers, 5 uppers, 6 uppers, 12 uppers/lowers and 7 uppers/lowers
5 S	Mytchett / Frimley Towpath Bank	May 2011		BCA to initiate and fund the Installation of 1,745 metres of Soft Bank Protection System with a Planting Shelf
6 S	Lock 1 Woodham Bank – offside with junction at the River Wey Navigation	May 2011		Install 278 metres of Soft Bank Protection System with a Planting Shelf



# Canal Ranger activity

One half of a large twin stemmed oak came down blocking the canal and towpath at Blacksmiths Bridge over a weekend recently. The duty rangers were able to clear the towpath within a couple of hours of the phone call, and luckily our workboat was nearby, so we were able to clear the navigation on the Monday. The remaining stem was dangerous to leave so the following day we felled it into the neighbouring field, thankfully owned by the Four Seasons Hotel, who we have managed to build up a good relationship with over the years. *(Right: Felling the second trunk)*

We carried out a routine check on the stop gates installed at Ash Vale Railway Bridge, but were unable to close them, even with the assistance of a winch. This renders them useless as they are supposed to be 'self-closing' in the event of a breach on that section. What was intended to be a 10 minute check of the gates turned into a full day's work as we deployed Sara to explore and remove a remarkable amount of fly-tipping.



*Above: Ranger Sara Murray 'deployed' with stop gates again functional.*

Thankfully we were able to recover about £50 by taking the metal to the scrap yard down the road at Ash Lock.

We are currently planning a two day event with Aspire to improve the Car Park and Slipway at Farnborough Road next month, which will be the fourth year of working with them on this section of Canal. This has been a really valuable and worthwhile partnership and it is shame this is their last year working at Aldershot. Any other companies or groups neighbouring the Canal would be welcome to do the same on their section...please get in touch!

The Woodham and St Johns Flights are open and looking really good, so it was a surprise and a real shame to only welcome two visiting boats to the Easter Rally at Bridge



*Above: 50 quid's worth of rubbish for the scrap yard.  
Why do they go to so much trouble to throw stuff in the canal when it's worth money?*

Barn this year. The vegetation on the canal is a few weeks taller than it usually is at this time so if you see us on a mower in the next few days....stop and say hello!

*Thanks to James Emmett for the report and the photos.*

*In case anyone else is wondering why it always seems to be Sara paddling about in the canal, I asked and was told that she was one of only two BCA personnel to have been measured up for a personal dry suit.*

# Canal Society AGM



The decision to experiment and hold the Society's AGM in the afternoon seems to have been vindicated. The number of members present, about 50, was a bit up on last year, and a vote at the end saw a large majority putting their hands up in favour of an afternoon rather than an evening meeting. Of course, those who might have voted against may not have been there, but I think that this will be the time in future unless we get mass objections.

After the customary apologies for absence and approval of the minutes of the last AGM, our Treasurer Graham Hornsey took us through the accounts for 2010.

Although the number of members was much the same and the subscription income virtually identical to 2009, the overall income was much higher, largely thanks to a £10,000 bequest from the Walker family, a grant from Rushmoor BC for the Runway's End landing stage, and a record profit from the Boat Company.

Expenditure was a bit down on last year. The work party money was largely spent on the work on Lock 17 and the landing stages at Woodham. It was noted that the cost of the newsletter had risen, due to increased printing and postage costs, but steps were being taken to address this (*see the Editorial*). The Other Expenditure item covered the cost of hiring the dredger *Belfast Girl* and miscellaneous publicity costs. Some items of equipment had been purchased - a crane for the work boat and a fuel bowser for the *John Pinkerton*.

Graham noted that the Other Debtor item referred to some trench sheets that had been purchased and subsequently stolen. An insurance claim had been made.

All told there was a profit of just over £15,000 compared to a loss last year of £9,500.

The money in the Restricted Fund was largely the balance of the HSBC grant for environmental work in Brookwood and the Rushmoor grant for Runway's End. The Designated Fund was the money set aside for the replacement trip boat. The Society's money had been placed in several accounts

to take best advantage of the Government protection scheme.

The accounts were accepted unanimously by the meeting and Rutton Viccajee were re-appointed as auditors.

Mark Coxhead asked whether there had been any pressure from the Charity Commissioners to spend the Society's reserves. The answer was that this had not happened so far. However, the Committee was well aware that charities were supposed to spend their money rather than hoard it, and the purchase of a replacement for the *John Pinkerton* would make a large hole in the funds.

The Secretary announced that with the death of Peter Redway and the resignation of John Ross and Paul Roper, there were only nine nominations for the Committee: Philip Riley, Gareth Jones, Graham Hornsey, Verna Smith, Kathryn Dodington, Peter Wright, Martin Leech, Roger Cansdale and Dieter Jebens.

There were three vacant seats on the Board.

There being no other questions, the formal part of the meeting closed.

Peter Wright, the Chairman of Surrey & Hants Canal Cruises, reported on the boat's 2010 season. This had produced record profits of over £31,000, which included a contribution from the Society's Sales organisation. It had been a relatively cheap year for maintenance with the only major expenditure a new propeller shaft (*Crews, please remember to wind down the stern gland greaser after every trip!*), and no new captains had been trained.

He thought that 2011 would not be quite as good since bookings were a bit slow and there would be money spent on training new captains.

The Robin Higgs Award went to Hugh and Marion Gough who have been taking the John Pinkerton bookings since 1996 as well as crewing the boat.

*Below:* Marion receiving the trophy from Robin





# Society Accounts for 2010

## The Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society Limited

Year ended 31 December 2010

### Income and expenditure account

	2010	2009
Income	£	£
Subscriptions	9,771	9,735
Donations - general	13,772	2,774
Grant received	4,000	-
Profit of boat company	31,276	27,371
200 Club profit	681	705
Other fundraising income	469	159
Interest received	2,420	3,493
	<u>62,389</u>	<u>44,237</u>
<b>Less expenditure</b>		
Projects and working parties	(23,623)	(31,019)
Brookwood habitat creation		(2,721)
Newsletter production and postage	(4,721)	(3,972)
Stationery and office costs	(1,905)	(1,753)
Insurance	(4,392)	(3,332)
Depreciation less profit on sale of asset	(5,436)	(4,445)
Equipment maintenance	(1,179)	(1,190)
Rallies and events	(2,430)	(1,238)
Legal fees		(1,411)
Accountants' fee	(1,804)	(1,660)
Other expenditure	(1,722)	(975)
	<u>(47,212)</u>	<u>(53,716)</u>
<b>Net income</b>	<u>15,177</u>	<u>(9,479)</u>

### Balance Sheet

Fixed assets		
Investment in subsidiary company	100	100
Fixed assets	13,710	12,396
Amounts due from subsidiary company		
Loan	8,052	8,152
Profit for year	31,990	27,371
Other debtor	3,831	-
Cash at bank and in hand	212,726	206,668
Accrued expenses	(2,245)	(1,700)
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>268,164</u>	<u>252,987</u>
General fund	208,182	222,034
Restricted fund	7,729	3,729
Designated fund - John Pinkerton replacement fund	48,713	23,684
Other	3,540	3,540
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>268,164</u>	<u>252,987</u>

# Society AGM

We decided to have a guest speaker at the AGM this year and it was suggested, I think by Kathryn Dodington, that John Gibson, the Navigation Manager of the River Wey, would be a good choice.

How right she was! John gave a very good talk that provided an interesting, and sometimes rather sad, comparison with the operation of the Basingstoke Canal.

The Wey Navigation has been owned by the National Trust since 1964, but the biggest difference, and probably the thing at the heart of many of the other contrasts between the two waterways, is the annual budget, which is nearly twice the size of that of the Basingstoke Canal.

As a result, John has a staff of some 20 people, which enables him to make full use of about 80 volunteers. To manage the navigation, he has a head lengthsman and six others, who each have an assigned length of river, two Thames Lock keepers, a mobile River Warden, six seasonal Relief Weir Keepers, a Navigation Foreman, a Dredger Master, four Maintenance Operatives and even an apprentice. To cope with visitors, there is a Visitor Services Manager, a Wharf Manager and three seasonal staff to deal with visitors during the summer. John also has an Administrative Assistant and an Accounts Supervisor.

This enables him to run a very successful waterway from the offices at Dapdune Wharf in Guildford. Much of its success stems from its basic ethos, which is to try to say yes to requests and then sort out how to do it, and, of course, having some staff usually enables them to be able to.

One interesting idea is their Service Improvement Team, which keeps a semi-independent eye on things and makes suggestions for improvements.

John had obviously heard of the arguments about Sustrans signs along the canal in Woking. Some had appeared without permission on the Wey and had been removed as they were felt to be inappropriate. They always asked the question about signs "Do we need it?" and clearly took a dim view of random signs or fencing going up, no matter whether installed by Natural England, Local Authorities or anyone else. They had refused a request for a Sustrans cycle track on the towpath as the cost was felt to be too high in aesthetic terms. John believed that a towpath should look as if it was made for a man and a horse!

The Wey's other advantage over the BCA is that it is managed by a corporate legal body that can take direct action. The Basingstoke Canal Authority lacks this status, so that things have to be dragged through the County Councils' procedures.



John expressed some concern about the chances of success for the new national Waterway charity, because he doubted whether it would receive sufficient Government funding.

John got a very well deserved round of applause for his talk.

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Philip Riley, as acting Chairman of the Society pending his formal appointment, gave his report that covered the year's activities and the Society's current concerns and which is on pages 3 and 4.

He also mentioned the Society's intention to name Lock 11 "Redway Lock" in memory of Peter and recognition of the whole Redway family's contribution to the canal.

Philip reported that the Society had suffered further losses in that its President since 1971, Lord Onslow, had recently died, and so too had Shirley Trott, a long time active member of the Society.

Philip appealed for help from the membership. There were several interesting and important projects at the moment where assistance would be welcome. Improving the canal's water supply could involve the use of Bourley reservoirs but other parties needed to be consulted before this went forward. Lobbying local councillors about the various proposed canalside developments was another one, as was the possible redevelopment of the Ash Lock site. Help!

Philip concluded his report by saying that the canal was currently beset by uncertainty, but we owed it to the volunteers who restored it to carry on.

He thanked the Committee for its efforts and the membership for its support.

# continued

A fairly brief Open Forum concluded the AGM.

Kathryn Dodington noted that there had been a steady trickle of boats moving off the canal onto the Wey. Boaters felt badly treated - the answer on the Basingstoke tended to be "no", whereas it was usually "yes" on the Wey. Murray Jones said that the canal needed to be looked at as a business with boaters as customers.

Philip Riley agreed. Proposals for improving access to the canal for boats had been made last autumn and apparently accepted by the BCA, but we were still waiting for a meeting to be arranged to take it forward. Nothing had been done either to provide new moorings for boats despite the potential demand. Nevertheless, he had some sympathy with Ian Brown trying to do an impossible job. He felt that the Joint

Management Committee and current management structure were not fit for purpose and the point had been made, and possibly accepted at the last JMC meeting.

Margurite Redway reported that when Kevin had helped his friend to bring a boat onto the canal recently from the Thames, even the keeper at Thames Lock on the Wey had been surprised to hear that they were going up the Basingstoke, because he understood that it was closed. There needed to be more publicity to let people know that although some parts were closed, it was still possible to get up to Brookwood.

The afternoon ended very satisfactorily with a raffle in which the Editor won a bottle of wine! Thanks to the Coxhead family for this and for running the refreshments.

## John Pinkerton

The boating season is well under way, so busy times for the Boat Company and its volunteers. A series of crew training days was held to refresh the crew's knowledge of the boat and how to deal with potential, albeit unlikely, emergencies such as man overboard.

*Below: Crew training discussions: Man overboard!.*



Earlier in the year, the winter maintenance team had been busy, as John Wharf, the Team Leader recounts:

Inspections by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) are cyclical and not every test is required every year (thank goodness). This year, the John Pinkerton required an external and internal hull inspection, the removal and inspection of the propeller shaft, and a "running check". The first and second items of course required the boat to spend a period in the dry dock at Deepcut.

The hull inspection was straightforward with no issues found by the MCA. Even the perennial concern with the second

hull seemed this year not to be an issue. After removal of the prop shaft by the evergreen pair of Bob Power and John Abbott (*Below*), some wear was evident and although the



MCA offered an alleviation for one year only it was decided to replace it, thus removing the burden of replacing it next year from any potential buyer (we have a replacement JP scheduled for next season) or ourselves. A supplier was identified and amazingly produced a replica of our shaft in three days, including delivery. It was fitted successfully and the boat taken temporarily to the Canal Centre where other routine maintenance was performed and the running inspection performed for the MCA. This also was satisfactory and the boat received a clean bill of health and its passenger carrying certificate for the new cruising season.

# Obituaries

## The Earl of Onslow

The Canal Society's first and only President died on 14th May. He had been suffering from cancer.

He was invited to become our President in 1971, soon after he inherited his title on the death of his father. The November/December issue of the newsletter carried the following article:

### APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT

The committee is pleased to announce that the Earl of Onslow has agreed to become the society's first President. The Earl, who is 33 years old, succeeded to the title in June this year. He is well acquainted with the Basingstoke Canal and its problems, and is very interested in waterways, having spent cruising holidays on canals in this country and in France.

We are very fortunate to have the Earl as our President, not just because of his interest in what we are trying to do, but because his family name figures very largely in the Act of Parliament under which the Basingstoke Canal was built. He has said he intends to be active on our behalf, and we hope that he will enjoy the post.

The committee decided it was time the society had a President to lend weight and support to our cause earlier this year. This has proved to be particularly necessary now, since we understand that negotiations by the Surrey and Hampshire County Council to buy the canal have reached a very delicate stage. A strong lobby for the canal to be bought by compulsory purchase order is building up, with Woking Council having suggested this course of action to the county councils.

Our President has joined us at a most interesting time in the society's history, and we are most grateful to him for taking the job on.

Lord Onslow did indeed take an active interest in the canal and was instrumental in getting it transferred to public ownership. One of his first appearances on the canal as President was in 1972 at the ceremony at the Ash Vale barge yard to mark the completion of the second set of lock gates by volunteers. He turned out for many such occasions and we had the pleasure of his company on the John Pinkerton several times, including, of course, when he acted as host to the Duke of Kent when he re-opened the canal in 1991.



*Above: Lord and Lady Onslow meeting HRH The Duke of Kent at the Canal Re-opening in 1991*

He also memorably accepted an invitation to our 1981 Annual General Meeting, assumed that he would be chairing it, rather to the surprise of the Society's Chairman, and did so in a very brisk and efficient way.

As seems often to be the way with Old Etonians, he was not lacking in confidence, nor in a sense of duty. As a result he took up the cudgels over a number of issues and was quite prepared to do battle with his own party, the Tories, when he felt it necessary. In recent years he found himself heavily involved in trying to make sense of the various measures being proposed to reform the House of Lords. He had no problem with the idea of its reform because he recognised "the illogicality of having any power over my fellow citizens just because my forebear got tight with the Prince Regent", but he objected strongly to some of the proposals. He was chosen to be one of the hereditary peers to remain in the Lords in recognition of the amount of effort that he put into his duties as a member of the House of Lords.

His obituary in one of the newspapers described him as "a politician of implacable bloody-mindedness, humanity and, let's use the word, class."

The Canal Society has lost a very doughty champion. We send our sincere condolences to Lady Onslow and all his family.

# Obituaries

## Shirley Trott

Very sad to report the death of Shirley after a long period of illness.

Shirley and her late husband Vic joined the Society in 1968 and rapidly got involved in its activities, both practical and organisational. They started with the work parties clearing the channel and then moved onto the rebuilding of Lock 25 at Curzon Bridge. Vic joined the Committee and they helped to organise the annual sponsored walks as well as some of the events, such as the Woking 150 Festival, where Shirley was usually to be found running the tombola stall.

They were keen boaters and even after Vic's untimely death in 1994, Shirley continued to bring Tristan III to the rallies. She received a tankard for the Best Decorated Boat at the Bridge Barn in 1998. Shirley often appeared on these occasions dressed in traditional boatwoman's costume and was one of the rare people who managed to look right in it.

*Right: Shirley and Vic on Tristan III at the re-opening rally.*



## Dick Harper-White

Dick passed away recently after a short illness.

Many people will know Dick from his canal painting, for which he was justly renowned. However, his involvement with the Basingstoke Canal went back to the early days of its restoration when he was the leader of the group of IWA Guildford & Reading Branch members who restored Lock 1; completion of the lock walls was reported at our AGM in 1987. Dick continued to work for the branch, only finally retiring last year.

*Below: Dick showing his work to the Mayor of Woking and Peter Redway at the Bridge Barn in 2000.*



## Dennis "Joe" Lyons

Joe was one of the original members of Mike Hammersley's "Day Crew", the band of mainly retired people who operated the John Pinkerton on weekday mornings and afternoons. He finally retired 30 years later in 2007, not because of his age but because of the ill health of his wife.

Joe himself has now passed away at the age of 94.

He had a very distinguished career in the Scientific Civil Service which began when he joined Aerodynamics Department at RAE Farnborough in 1937. He ended his days at RAE as head of Space Department at the time of Britain's Blue Streak, Black Knight and Black Arrow rockets. The last of these was UK's only satellite launch vehicle. Joe was also asked for advice about the wrecked oil tanker *Torrey Canyon* by PM Harold Wilson in 1967 and recommended bombing it to try to burn the 120,000 tons of oil that it was carrying.

Joe later moved to become the Director of The Road Research Laboratory. Mini roundabouts were one of the innovations of his time there.



## Bridge Barn rally

The Easter rally at the Bridge Barn pub in Woking enjoyed much better weather this year, but there were fewer boats. Our usual supporters, the Byfleet Boat Club had, not unreasonably, decided to do something different for a change and had gone off up the Thames. The closure of Deepcut stopped any of the boats on the two top pounds coming down and sadly quite a lot of boats from the lower reaches have moved off the canal.



However, Dick and Brenda King brought the newly refurbished *Nancy Bell* back for a visit and it was good to see *Finch*, *Tug No. 1*, *Spirit of the Night*, and *Winter Lily*. *White Heather* also paid a brief visit.

Peter Coxhead, who has been involved with the organisation of this event since its inception, said that he thought that the entertainments provided for the visiting public were the best ever. Bands played, dancers danced, rides were available on the *Maggie G* and a miniature train, and the pub did a roaring trade.

The Best Decorated Boat competition was judged, as usual, by the Mayor of Woking. Cllr Iqbal awarded first prize to Dick and Brenda King with *Nancy Bell* and second to Peter Harman with *Spirit of the Night* (Below).

The mayor also took a ride on the train, joined by Society Chairman Philip Riley and Peter Coxhead (Below right). (Photos by Martin Leech & Roger Cansdale)





# the Canal

## MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY

Date: Sunday 3rd July 2011

Time: 7.30pm

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

Show: **HELL AND HIGH WATER -**

***Three men had a vision and hundreds toiled to make it a reality.***

In 1761 there were two earthquakes in London, a transit of Venus was observed in 120 locations around the world, George the Third was crowned King and, on July 17th, the first boatload of coals was borne smoothly along the Barton Aqueduct over the River Irwell on the Bridgewater Canal - the engineering wonder of its age.

In the turbulent times of the Industrial Revolution, Manchester's demand for coal was insatiable and there was an urgent need to get it there quickly and cheaply. Mikron's new show for 2011 takes us back to 1761, when three men had a vision and hundreds of others toiled to make it a reality. Over rivers, under rock, through "Hell and High Water", they proved that determination can literally move mountains.

2011 will be the 40th year that the company have toured the waterways of England in their 76 year old narrow boat 'Tyseley No.183', although time does not permit them to bring it up the Basingstoke Canal even if it was open.

Normally the Company budget to provide 70% of their

## Fox & Hounds Rally

Fleet's only canalside pub will play host to another event on Saturday 17th September, when the annual rally sponsored by the Basingstoke Canal Boating Club will take place.

The usual stalls and visiting steam launches should be there.

income through box office, donations and gift aid from their friends, and 30% from grants. Now, with the severe cuts in public spending, this 30% in grants has been withdrawn so this year will be a very difficult year to make ends meet.

As usual, come along by car, boat or on foot and enjoy another Mikron masterpiece. Bring along a folding chair or rug or just sit on the grassy bank beside the canal.

The Society always looks forward to this annual visit and a good attendance will help the company financially in this exceptionally difficult year for them.

Make a diary note now so you do not miss the show. Admission is free but there will be the usual collection after the show. Come early and enjoy a meal before the performance (Available 12pm to 8pm telephone 01252 663686). Indoor back up in case of rain at the Fleet Football Club, just up the road towards Fleet.

For further information contact David Millett on 01252 617364 or email: [d.millett7@ntlworld.com](mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com)

## National Waterway Charity

The Government's proposals to move British Waterways into the Third Sector and establish a national waterways charity or trust look as if they will become reality, and the initial Board of Trustees has just been announced:

**Tony Hales**, British Waterways' chairman (Chairman)

**Lynne Berry**, boat owner and chief executive of WRVS

**John Bridgeman**, British Waterways vice chairman and leading expert in competition and fair trading

**Jane Cotton**, change management expert and a deputy chief executive and HR director of Oxfam

**John Dodwell**, long-term waterways campaigner and former chair of the Commercial Boat Operators Association

**Tom Franklin**, leading advisor on open spaces and chief executive of the Ramblers

**Nigel Hugill**, British Waterways board member and property expert

**Simon Thurley**, historian and chief executive of English Heritage

This gives the Basingstoke Canal one positive connection with the new body in that John Dodwell, with his brother Tim, helped to organise the 1962 boat rally at Monument Bridge in Woking.

We wish then well in making a go of the new status, and let's hope that if they succeed, John and his colleagues may look favourably at taking the Basingstoke under their wing.

# The continuing tale



Above: Pride of place for Nancy Bell at the Bridge Barn Rally at Easter.  
(Photo: Martin Leech)

I have been bitten by the sailing bug for many years, starting in dinghies and progressing to coastal sailing. I came late to canal boating when we bought a trailable fibreglass cruiser for use on the Basingstoke Canal (and others). Although never intending to go for a narrowboat, the advert by SHCS for the sale of Nancy Larcombe's Nancy Bell in December 2010 struck a chord, and I had to take a look! Initial inspection showed that although the Colecraft hull was basically sound (Nancy had thoughtfully produced a survey), and had a running engine, the interior had deteriorated through damp and water penetration, especially round the chimney, and aft hatch. It was obvious that it was only fit for complete strip-out and rebuild – something that could not be completed in a reasonable time whilst on the water, even if a mooring were available. A couple of months passed before the ice on the canal had melted to allow transit from Mytchett, and to make arrangements for a road closure at the Old Coal Pens to operate a crane. Lift-out and transport to my home was the start of a very enjoyable, but intensive, year to complete the restoration.

Five days after arrival, I had a bare hull and a large pile of debris. The area round the chimney was badly rusted, and had to be cut back to sound metal, before welding in new. The edge of some of the window cut-outs were eroded, and on checking the sizes of available windows, I realised that I could enlarge these to cut out rusted bits, and also let in more light. All corroded metal was treated with Ferton, and during the early dry part of the Summer I was able to get undercoat and topcoats on the cabin sides before fitting the new windows. Unknown areas in the engine bay and bilges were made easier to access by removing the engine, and treated as required.

Early concerns of the concrete ballast and possible associated rust fortunately proved groundless. I had been warned that I might have to Kango out the concrete, as was necessary on a similar Colecraft which I saw at Pyrford marina, after it had been sunk for a while. I didn't relish this, and was grateful for no signs of rust. However, I did provide extra ventilation under the floor by raising it on bearers, supplied by a vent in the forward bulkhead. This also provided some space for ballast to aid trimming when re-launching.

The original layout had a starboard corridor, with boudoir and small bathroom aft, followed by lounge area and forward galley. I opted to keep a similar layout, adding a shower and calorifier aft, with a more open-plan arrangement for double berth and

lounge. I dispensed with the solid fuel stove in favour of an Eberspacher diesel heater supplying radiators. A matching sink and high-level oven and hob completed the U-shape galley forward. At present, storage is probably minimal as we will mostly be doing short trips; as we gain experience, we will be able to add as necessary, where convenience dictates a suitable place.

With my limited woodworking skills, and for ease and quickness of installation, I opted for tongue and groove pine. The ceiling was painted white to reflect light, and the lining of the upper cabin walls was varnished; painted plywood was used for the rest of the lining. To compliment the pine, varnished sapele was used for cappings, and to construct cabinet doors and drawer fronts.

From Nancy's diaries, I determined that the Petter engine, new in 1990, had run for about 4500 hours, so whilst it was out, I did a top overhaul. One cylinder's valves showed signs of compression loss, so they were lapped in, and I had the injectors overhauled.

During December and January, little work was possible due to the cold, but late February, early March I was able to complete much of the trimming carpentry and finish painting.

My biggest worry now was the BSS examination, as this could halt any re-launch plans. In reality, it started well as I had fitted a bubble tester for the gas system, which earned quick brownie points. Answers to various questions produced the comment "You've been reading the (BSS) book!", and led to a pass, exactly one year after finishing stripping out. The only downside was the ventilation calculation. I hadn't

# of the Nancy Bell

realised that vent grilles had their 'open' slots measured with a vernier gauge, producing an area considerably less than 4 x 6 sq ins! However, all I need to do to improve in future is to move the cutout in the rear door from low level to high level!

Once we had the lorry carrying Nancy Bell at the top of our narrow lane (5hrs work!), it was an easy drive to Shepperton marina to crane her in. As it was late, we had a relaxing meal out, and slept uneasily till I could get up to check the bilges the following morning – all fine! We had a smooth cruise to Thames Lock, and down The Wey to our mooring above Pyrford lock.

Brenda and I decided that our first 'snagging' trip should be the following weekend to Bridge Barn for the rally. We had a very pleasant trip in fantastic weather, not even having to disappear down the weed hatch. This was the first time we had negotiated the Woodham flight, taking a couple of hours with the help of rangers Peter and James. During the weekend we were able to attend to some of the things still left undone – stowing gear and putting up curtains.

Warned of the 'Best decorated boat' competition, I had had time to organise some bunting, so duly erected, we awaited the judges, not really knowing what to expect! To our delight, we found we had won an Easter egg. To celebrate, I bought one of Dick's V-fenders for NB!

Many boaters have recognised Nancy Bell in the short time afloat, and seem pleased that she has a new lease of life. I hope I will do her justice. My thanks must go to SHCS members for enabling me to even consider tackling such a project. It proved to be interesting, sometimes testing, but always thoroughly enjoyable. Thanks also to Byfleet Boat Club members for support and advice, enabling me to be offered a mooring with a minimum of delay.

*Nancy Bell in fact won the prize for Best Decorated Boat at the rally so many congratulations to Dick and Brenda for such a successful conclusion to all their hard work. Best wishes for many more years of fun with the old girl!*

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## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT

Many thanks to all the members who have paid their 2011 subscriptions. We still have around 50 members who have not yet paid and, if you are one of these, I would be very grateful if you could let me have your membership payment as soon as possible. Just as a reminder, the fees due 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:

Des & Joyce Randall of Fleet  
Alasdair Provo of Fleet  
Joyce Keynes of Fleet  
Paul & Jan Donnelly of Fleet  
Craig Shanks of Fleet  
Gerald Jarvis of Fleet

Amy Southee of Old Basing, Basingstoke  
Peter Bell of Alton  
Rosemary Beynon of West Byfleet  
Vivian & Mary Dainton of Fleet  
Gordon Jackson of Worplesdon, Guildford  
Stephen Pope of Crowthorne  
Vivienne Ovington of Blackwater, Camberley  
Francis Jacques of Woking  
Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club  
George Beauchamp of Fleet  
Mark Stevens of Woodham  
Judy Procter of Woodham  
Kevin Redway of Woking  
Ian Redway of Woking  
Stuart & Eileen Royston of Odiham  
Andrew Lewis of Fleet  
Derek Taylor of Yateley  
Graham Nicholson of Aldershot

Doreen Hornsey  
Membership Secretary

E-Mail: [Membership@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:Membership@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

*The sudden boost to the number of new members in Fleet is thanks to Doreen's husband Graham, who dropped membership leaflets into local houses by the canal. If anyone else would like to do this in their neighbourhood, let us know and we will supply the leaflets.*

# Letters

## From Margurite Redway

Dear Roger,

I would like to say thank you, to everyone, for all the cards and letters I have received, more than 70 in all.

Your kind thoughts and words mean a lot to Kevin, Ian and myself.

I also want to say a big thank you to you Roger, and David J, Brian S, Verna, David W, Kathryn, Robin and Philip for making sure I had transport every weekday to visit Peter. To give up your afternoons and sometimes into early evening for those three weeks as you all did, was appreciated far more than I can put into words. Thank you all. And a special thank you to Kathryn, who, having taken me to see Peter, and been home less than an hour, rushed back again to the hospital with the boys and me when the phone call came to say Peter had taken a turn for the worse, and stayed to bring us home much later.

I would also like to thank Rodney and Byfleet Boat Club for their help at the reception after the funeral. With thanks again to Kathryn for arranging the refreshments.

Thank you all

Margurite

*Donations in memory of Peter have now reached a total of £1275.*

## From John Ross

Dear Roger,

On behalf of the Jubilee Sailing Trust I would like to pass on their sincere thanks to the people who made very generous donations after my short appeal during the interval at the Chobham talk last month on painting Roses and Castles. The appeal was to raise funds to be able to send soldiers returning from Afghanistan with severe mental and physical disabilities on a voyage to assist in their rehabilitation back to civilian life. One of their major problems is they feel embarrassed and feel that we are also embarrassed about their disabilities.

Last month four soldiers from the Grenadier Guards with horrific injuries went on a week's voyage around the Canary Islands, sailing on the 3-masted barque Lord Nelson. They were treated as equals alongside able bodied people. They hauled the ropes, steered the ship, cleaned and prepared meals and did assisted climbs up the rigging on their 311 mile voyage. It proved to them that they are accepted back in society and did wonders for their rehabilitation working as a team again.

The headlines in the national press read "Lord Nelson himself would have been proud to have heroes like these men in his crew."

The aim of the JST is to "change people's lives" and the donations of £81 I collected will help to send more Service personnel on another voyage.

For more information visit [www.jst.org.uk](http://www.jst.org.uk).

Many thanks

John

## Apology

A small batch of envelopes containing the last issue of the Newsletter was inadvertently sent out unstamped. As soon as reports started to come in, I did manage to track down one lot at the Weybridge sorting office before the Royal Mail delivered them, but I didn't have time to get to all the sorting offices. We do apologise most sincerely to those people who had to pay excess postage and thank all those who kindly said that they didn't want a refund.

Thanks and apologies also to several people who have been surcharged by the Royal Mail in the last few years because

one of their staff had decided that the envelope containing the newsletter was too thick. Presumably, the folded newsletter had sprung apart slightly. This seems to happen to about 0.1% of the circulation, but is nevertheless irritating if you happen to be one of the random victims.

Hopefully this will stop when we switch to an A5 format for the newsletter that will not need to be folded.

Roger Cansdale  
Editor

From Society Newsletters No. 97 June 1981 and No. 98 August 1981

- ★ At the AGM held in April, chaired by our President, the Earl of Onslow, over 200 members filled the St. Andrews Hall, Frimley Green for a meeting that was more of a reunion than an AGM. An atmosphere of unity, a sense of achievement and a feeling that the Society is making a bigger contribution to the canal's restoration than ever before. An important step forward, to which the Society has, at least, been the catalyst, is the formation of the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee which will meet for the first time in the autumn.
  - ★ Members from both County Councils, the riparian Boroughs and Districts, and user interests will give the latter a direct say in how the canal should be run. The Committee will include two representatives from the Society, and one each from boating, angling, natural history and rambling interests. Another development is the Society's changing role from a purely voluntary labour support group to an employer - we now pay the wages of five full time workers meaning an annual sum of £22,000 in wages alone and a total of £48,000 to include, plant, materials and other planned expenditure. As a result more fund raising activities are urgently required.
  - ★ With the Cowshot Manor Bridge at the tail of Lock 17 on the Deepcut Flight needing major restoration, an appeal has been launched to raise £5,000 towards the cost. 20,000 bricks are required costing £3 000 plus a further £500 for the special semi-circular capping bricks for the parapets, plus £1,500 for contingencies. We are fortunate in being able to obtain the necessary labour as part of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) Youth Employment scheme.
  - ★ The 1981 Canal Canoe Tourist Trial on 5th April attracted 450 canoeists and kayakers and was again organised jointly by the Westel Canoe Club and the Society with increased help from the Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club. Before the start, Cllr Derrick Silvester handed over to Charles Hicks, chairman of the BCCC, a canoe suitable for disabled or handicapped people to be introduced to canoeing. This was purchased with funds from the Hart District Council Silver Jubilee Fund.
  - ★ Found at the bottom of Lock 24 after draining - one brand new motorbike and a dead fox! Was Basil Brush in a rush?
  - ★ The restoration of the derelict remains of Broad Oak Bridge at Odiham by the Society was officially celebrated at a re-opening ceremony on 11th July when the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, the Earl of Malmesbury unveiled a plaque recording its restoration. The new bridge is an exact replica of the original structure built 187 years ago. Funding of £14,000 was raised by the Society, with contributions from HCC and various charitable trusts. Following the opening ceremony, the Society entertained guests aboard the 'John Pinkerton'.
  - ★ The Earl of Malmesbury, whose estate is at Greywell over the tunnel, took more than a passing interest in the event. At the ceremony he recalled memories of catching crayfish in the canal at Mapledurwell and later, as an Army Land Agent, meeting Mr A J Harmsworth who he described as 'a fascinating and unique man'.
  - ★ At a ceremony on 4th July at Lock 19 on the Deepcut Flight Mike Fellows WPO (Working Party Organiser) was presented with a cross to wear round his neck called the DSO (Deepcut Service Order). The presentation took place on the occasion of the end of volunteer involvement in the restoration of the Deepcut Flight and to pay tribute to the part groups of visiting volunteers played in rebuilding Lock 19. 70 or so people turned up for the merry social occasion, with food provided by ladies from the Society.
- The scene looked splendid with bunting and balloons surrounding the lock which had taken three and a half years to restore.
- Robin Higgs (our Chairman) and Mike Fellows expressed the Society's gratitude for the work put in by visiting groups, including the Southampton Canal Society (under Peter Oates), the Kent and East Sussex branch of the IWA (under Ken Parish) and the London branch of the Waterway Recovery Group (under Andy Chapman). Individuals thanked in addition to our own Working Party Leaders were Jim Chisholm and Alan Flight who have managed to maintain our ageing plant and machinery in a usable working condition.
- ★ "What do you know about your country, in this case Hampshire? Mr Mark Hicks of Crookham is believed to have had the longest working career in one job in Britain. He stated at the age of 10 with the Basingstoke Canal Co. and was still working as a bailiff four days before he died 82 years later. He died in July 1966. (By courtesy of the publishers of the Guinness Book of Records)". (Printed on the back of a packet of walkers Crisps, bought in Birmingham in 1973.

# SHCS notes

The Canal Society's Committee is now three short of its nominal membership. This means that we may not have the effort to pay attention to some of the issues affecting the canal. If you feel that you could contribute and would like to get involved in safeguarding our waterway, please contact any of the Committee below.



Thanks



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.

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Editorial Team: Editor: Roger Cansdale\*

29 Knoill Road, Fleet, Hants GU51 4PT

01252-678608

e-mail: roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com

### President:

### Chairman:

**Philip Riley\***

### Vice-Chairman:

### Hon. Secretary:

**Gareth Jones\***

### Hon. Treasurer:

**Graham Hornsey\***

### & Gift Aid manager

### Membership Secretary:

Doreen Hornsey

### Working Party Information:

Janet Buckley

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Marion Gough

### Events Organiser:

Verna Smith\*

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Denise Smith

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### Lengthman Organiser:

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### Working Organiser:

Peter Coxhead

### VP & Chobham talks:

David Millett

### Director

Kathryn Dodington\*

### Director

Dieter Jebens\*

### Director

Martin Leech\*

***The officers of the Canal Society may be contacted by e-mail via the Society's website at***

***www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/directory.htm or by telephone on 0796-4357442***

### Basingstoke Canal Authority

**General Canal Society contact number: 0796-4357442**

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

01252-370073

Canal Society Internet Website: **www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk**

Canal Authority Internet Website: **www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk**