



The Basingstoke  
Canal Society

# Basingstoke Canal News

No. 265 Winter 2020







## Editorial

May seems a long way off, but this is the last BC News before the Society's AGM, so can I appeal to members to come along and support this event on May 16th (*see page 21*).

The formal business of the AGM, although a legal necessity, is probably the least interesting bit, but only lasts half an hour.

The more interesting aspect is that the meeting is one of the few opportunities that the Society's Committee has to explain to the members what has gone on in the previous year and what the current and future planned activities are. It is also an opportunity for members to meet the Committee, many of whom are new, and to ask any questions.

Some of the new Committee members were of the opinion that the short formal business could be done at one of the Chobham

meetings and that it wasn't worth the hassle of organising a separate AGM on a Saturday afternoon, given the rather poor attendance at the last one.

We have agreed to carry on as before for this year, but if we have another poor turn-out, this could be the last such AGM!

Personally, I think this would be a great pity, not least because groups such as the Boat Company and the Work Party put a huge

amount of effort in each year and deserve a chance to blow their own trumpet about their achievements.

There is also a bit of a revolution going on within the Society, albeit a relatively peaceful one, addressing the way we do business. For a long time after the canal's re-opening, the Society carried on in the same rather informal way that prevailed during the restoration years. That isn't to say that things were done wrong or improperly, but we did rely on people knowing what they were doing and just getting on with it.

For better or worse, we live in a rather different world now and we need not only to do things properly, but to be able demonstrate that we are doing so. So we now have a number of very active groups addressing things like Corporate Governance, Health & Safety, fund raising, events, marketing etc, and the AGM is the only chance we have to explain what is going on. It may not sound very appealing, but the future of the Society depends on it and some of it is actually quite fun.

We have dozens of new members joining each year and it nice to be able to greet them and a great boost to the hard-working members of the Committee and all the subsidiary groups to get a really good turn-out from them as well as the old stagers.

***Please come to the AGM - your Society needs you!***

**Deepcut Village Hall, 2.15pm, 16th May 2020.** (*Map and details on page 21*)

Cover Picture : A swan preparing to repel boarders at King's Head Bridge, Frimley (No harm done). Photo: Roger Cansdale

# Chairman's report

The Society has consistently pressed for the developers of new housing areas close to the canal to make a contribution towards both its capital and revenue costs. It is acknowledged that the newly built properties will make an increased demand on the recreational facilities offered by the canal and the developers should therefore make provision in their pricing for some funding to be made available to the canal. For example, the purchasers of the properties will want to use the canal for walking, cycling, dog exercising and even boating.

It has always been our policy to encourage wider use of the canal (including the towpath) but this increased use incurs a cost. For example, the width of the towpath is sometimes an issue where the towpath is used for both walking and cycling. As we know, this has led, thankfully on fairly rare occasions, to conflict between cyclists and walkers. It is also increasingly evident that the practice of letting dogs swim in the canal has resulted in serious bank erosion in some places. The so-called 'dog holes' have encroached on some sections of the canal to more than half the width of the towpath creating obvious dangers for other towpath users. In our view it is therefore reasonable to expect that developers should be prepared to make some contribution towards making the towpath safer, repairing dog holes and keeping the canal corridor in good condition.

It is, of course, very noticeable that developers are very willing to promote the canal as an important element in their efforts to market their houses. But are they putting anything back? The answer is largely 'no'.

To provide a recent example, the new housing estate currently being built on the former NGTE

site west of Farnborough airfield (now known as Hartland Village), which involves the construction of about 1500 houses, does not yield any direct benefit for the canal despite the fact that the new residents will place increasing pressure on the canal corridor.

We are still scrutinising the planning conditions attaching to this development but it does appear that, although financial contributions amounting to approximately £225,000 were requested for the canal, no funding was offered. By contrast we understand that Fleet Pond (which is an excellent example of a very successful local wildlife reserve) is to receive £2M. Both Fleet Pond and the canal are SSSIs. We would therefore question why the allocation of funding to two outstanding wildlife sites has been dealt with in such an uneven, and indeed unfair, way.

It should also be mentioned that Hart District Council (which is the planning authority for Fleet and is also a member of the Basingstoke Canal Partnership) is very well placed to ensure that the so-called mitigation funds are allocated in a balanced way. This is just one recent example of the way in which the canal is not receiving the support it needs and deserves.

Another development which is progressively coming to fruition is the Wellesley estate on the fringes of Aldershot. This new development has canal frontage and would provide an ideal opportunity to install some canal-related facilities such as a boat basin, café, boat hire base etc. We are watching this development closely but, if our experience with Hartland Village is an example of what we might expect, I fear we will be disappointed yet again.

Philip Riley



# Work Party

The weekend Canal Society Work Party has been out regularly twice a month for the whole weekend. This period, having finished the new landing stage and water point at Ash Lock, the work boat *Alan Flight* was then moved up the canal to the Barley Mow, where we have a safe mooring at a member's garden landing stage.

Post installation can only be done during the winter months according to the Environmental Agency, so will have to stop by the end of March even if we have not completed the work, as happened last year.



The work party then split into two groups; a small but skilled group adjourned to Farnborough Road wharf where they have continued to install more posts for the permanent mooring that we are building there, using funds left in a legacy to the society (*above*).

When the full length of the mooring has had all the posts installed, the whole work party will then return to the site to install the board walk.

In the meantime, the remainder of the work party are taking advantage of the winter months when there is no bird nesting happening to attempt to keep the off bank clear, especially on the sections that the *John Pinkerton II* uses. We spent a couple of weekends moving upstream from Barley Mow and cutting back and burning some of the worst of the overgrowth on the off bank (*opposite*).



We also spent a short time inserting some posts in the canal to fence off some concrete bags which we could not extract but which are believed to be responsible for the very expensive damage to the propeller on *John Pinkerton* (right), as it is situated just where the boat finishes its turn at Barley Mow (below).



*Alan Flight* then had to be moved back to Fleet for the middle weekend of January as a visiting Waterways Recovery Group (WRG) came and



finished the rhododendrons opposite and upstream of the Fox and Hounds in Fleet.

By the last weekend in January *Alan Flight* had been moved up to Colt Hill, Odiham for more off bank work moving upstream from there and past Lodge Farm.

February's work then continued this split team operation, of post driving at Farnborough road and off bank clearance moving up to Odiham (King John's) Castle.

Regrowth of sapplings after cutting is a constant problem, so two members of the Work Party will be attending a stump treatment course to allow them legally to use herbicidal plugs to kill off the stumps after cutting.

This should remove the need for a great deal of work in future.

We may sell logs, but we are not in the coppicing business!



While the BCA Rangers have had their hands full dealing with more than three dozen trees blown over by the February gales, there has been a good deal of contractor activity on the canal this winter, largely focussed on the new bridge at Woking and the inspection and rectification of the upper locks. As the photos below show, a lot of work has been done on the footings of the new bridge at Chobham Road, but there is a great deal still to do if the canal is to re-open by Easter.



*View east*



*View west*





# the canal

Lock work began with inspections last year at the top end of the Deepcut flight and Ash Lock. Since then contractors have been attending to the various bits of dodgy brickwork revealed when the water levels were dropped.

Wing wall brickwork seems to suffer as much or more than that in the actual lock chambers.



There is quite a lot of new brickwork to be seen now at the top end of Deepcut.

There is now a new ramp and set of steps leading up from the towpath at Curzon Bridge.

*Thanks to the BCA for photos on this page and opposite top.*





# Ash Lock work



A temporary dam using plastic sheet and scaffolding poles has been installed across the canal just above the winding hole at Ash Lock to allow work to be done on the upper wing walls and other parts. (Right)

A large cavity can just be seen in the photo above at the bottom of the offside wall.



The drained section has revealed a good deal of rubbish in the winding hole that will hopefully be removed before it is refilled. It also affords a good view of the excellent job done by the Society Work Party in installing the new water point and landing there.



# ***Pinkerton report by Dick King***

With the new John Pinkerton cruising season only a few weeks away, bookings for charters and public trips are filling the diary rapidly. Some early birds have booked to kick off the season on 11<sup>th</sup> March, and the Mother's Day public trip (22<sup>nd</sup> March) was sold out half-way through January. This was so popular we were encouraged to add an addition cruise in the morning. And we look forward to welcoming our friends from Air Charter, and their guests, for the Farnborough Air show week.

So the portents of another record breaking fundraising season are looking favourable.

Over the winter, as well as required maintenance, a number of improvements have been implemented, including the addition of an on-board card payment system. The original purpose-built tables serve well for the majority of trips, but for the themed trips where food is served, and we carry less passengers, it was thought that an alternative table with a larger surface would add a touch of luxury. This falls in line with other operators, for example the Wey & Arun Trust, and would give us even more flexibility in setting out the cabin for our passengers. The souvenir window has been revamped to give a cleaner and more interesting display. Additional lighting and a bit of general TLC complete the winter tasks.

The JP crew are our most important asset, beside the boat, and we thank all those who crewed last year, and have signed up for the annual training sessions during March. We are sorry to lose a few of our longer serving members who have decided to retire, but welcome newcomers to take their place. New crew always welcome!

## **Boat Company Annual General Meeting.**

Our annual meeting will be held at the Canal Centre on 13<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm. Past, current and newcomer members are welcome to attend. The formal part will review the past season and announce the year's JP fundraising result, and less formally, gives members the opportunity to meet up again before the season starts.

Brochures for Charters and Public & Theme Trips are available now from the Barn behind the Waterwitch by appointment with a committee member. Anybody is welcome to volunteer to distribute these around the district, and further afield.

## **Monthly Evening Cruises for Canal Society Members and Volunteers.**

We will continue with these cruises as it is a useful way for new and old members to meet others, and inform volunteers in more detail about the various opportunities available on the canal.

These will take place on the following dates, departing from Colt Hill wharf, Odiham at 7pm:

20<sup>th</sup> April

18<sup>th</sup> May

22<sup>nd</sup> June

13<sup>th</sup> July

17<sup>th</sup> August

21<sup>st</sup> September

The trip is FREE, so no excuse not to come and join us; please pre-book online.



# *JP II trips by Cheryl Richards*

## 2020 Public and Theme Cruises on the John Pinkerton II

A taste of what's in store for 2020 on John Pinkerton...

The cruising season starts in less than a month with our first ever **Mother's Day** cruise (22 March), which has proven extremely popular.

You'll find some old favourites: Cruises to **Old Thatch** cottage to visit the garden on NGS open days (Sunday 7 June and 6 September); **Cream Tea** cruises with live piano accompaniment (Wednesdays 10th June, 8th July, 9th September); **Trad Jazz & Ale** (Friday 11 September) and **Sea Shanties & Ale** (Friday 2 October), both with fish and chips supper;

The popular **Tapas and Wine Tasting** cruise is back, this time with live acoustic guitar music (Friday 12 June).

The underlying theme of food, drink and music continues in two new cruises:

**Grand Café Afternoon Tea**, with prosecco and live piano accompaniment (Friday 29 May, 17 July)

**Gin Tasting** cruise, with nibbles and live music from "Four in a Bar" (Friday 15 May)

The theatre cruise this year, **"It's up to us now!"**, commemorates the role the Basingstoke Canal played at the beginning of WW2, 80 years ago. Two nights of drama, comedy and song, with a fish and chips supper. (Friday 10 and Saturday 11 July)

Children will especially enjoy the Easter egg hunt on the **Easter Sunday** cruise (12 April) and the **Pirate Treasure Hunt** during the summer holidays (Wednesday 19 August).

If you can't decide whether to walk the towpath or cruise the cut, there are two trips in August when you can do both and enjoy a ploughman's lunch in the middle. **Ramble and Cruise** or **Cruise and Ramble** (Tuesday 4, Thursday 27 August)

If you fancy an **extended cruise** (about 8 miles, 4 hours) to see a different part of the canal, you can book a seat when the boat moves up to Fleet in July for the Farnborough Airshow, or when it returns to Odiham the following weekend. Sadly, as there is no longer a public weekend at the Air Show, we won't be running public trips to see it.

But we will be in Fleet for the Late May Bank Holiday weekend, with shorter trips from the Fox and Hounds pub (about 1 ½ hours) on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

And if you just want to relax and enjoy a few hours cruising through the beautiful Hampshire countryside, there are regular **public trips** on Wednesdays and Sundays throughout the season, and Fridays as well in August.

Most of these public trips go out for an afternoon cruise, but this year we're running one on the **evening of Midsummer Day**, 24 June. If you have never cruised the canal in the light of a long summer's evening, this is a trip not to be missed.

More information, times and prices can be found on the website at [JohnPinkerton.co.uk](http://JohnPinkerton.co.uk).



# Kitty

Kitty is at Bridge Barn undergoing her annual maintenance.

- The cooling system has been topped up with antifreeze and the engine then run for while to ensure that it had been circulated.
- The tarpaulin is in place over the aft deck. This tarpaulin should enable the wood to dry out to make possible spot repairs and the applications of another coat of Danish oil.
- The stern counter will be re-painted white.
- New under seat locker doors are being fitted.

## Publicity

New brochure has been printed.

## 2020 season

We will start again from beginning of April, and run extra Friday trips July, August and first 2 weeks of September.

Kitty has already been booked for the Woking BC Living Well Programme and the Heritage Open Day trips organised by The Lightbox.

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## Join the crew!

**The Boat Company is still looking for volunteers to assist (and hopefully, lead) the maintenance teams and also to help with bookings.**

Cheryl Richards has been doing this as well as assisting with crew training, acting as a skipper on both the JP11 and Kitty and doing a bit of winter maintenance, as seen here, varnishing the JP11's window frames. We need more like her! She is also currently the focus for receiving lengthsman reports.

Anybody interested should contact Dick King at [jpchairman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:jpchairman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)



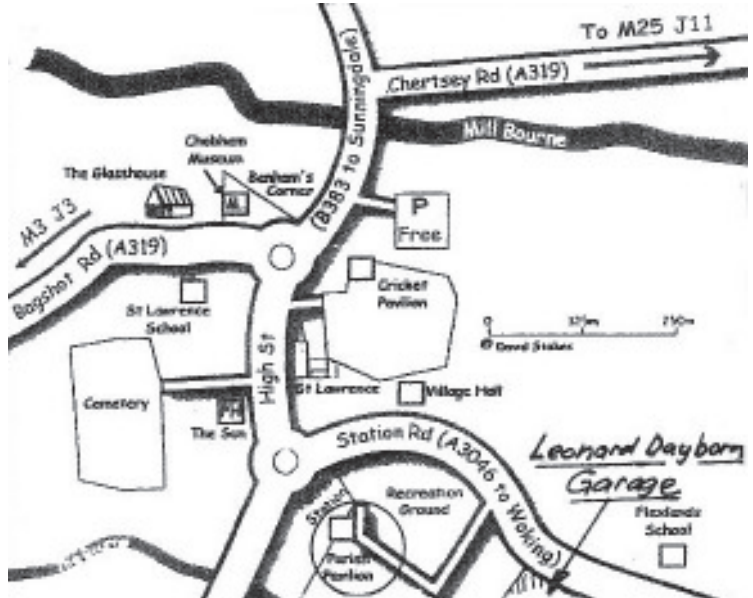


# Events

## Winter 2019/2020 Chobham Talks programme.

As usual meetings will be held in the Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Chobham, near Woking. GU24 8AJ. Talks will be held on the third Wednesday of each month from October until April, starting at 8pm.

Talks will frequently cover topics related to canals and boats but some will be of a more general interest, particularly to local residents.



18<sup>th</sup> March.

Alan Norris:

### **Woking's Railway.**

Alan describes the coming of the railway to Woking in the 1830's and how the London Necropolis Company's cemetery at Brookwood affected the town's development. The talk will also include the Brookwood Cemetery railway and the Bisley Tramway.

15<sup>th</sup> April.

Tim Knox:

### **The Electric Boat Association.**

Tim is a committee member of the Electric Boat Association and owner of Mothership Marine. He will tell us about the association, the advantages of electric propulsion for canal boats and the current state of electric boat technology.

*Talks will resume in October and an interesting programme is already planned for Chobham.*

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### ***Talks at the Western End?***

*It has been suggested that a similar series of talks might be popular with members at the western end of the canal. If anyone would like to seek out a suitable venue and take on the job of finding some interesting speakers (not necessarily all about canals), please let us know.*



# Events

## MIKRON THEATRE COMPANY VISIT

Date: Saturday 27th June 2020

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: The Waterwitch garden, London Road, Colt Hill,  
Odiham, RG29 1AL Tel: 01256 702778



### ‘ATALANTA FOREVER’

Written by Amanda Whittington    Directed by Marianne McNamara

**Game on! It's 1920, and in post-war Britain, women's football is big news.**

Across the country, all-girl teams are pulling huge crowds in fund-raising games for wounded soldiers. Huddersfield amateurs Ethel and Annie take a shot at the big time. Teammates at Atalanta AFC, they're soon tackling new football skills, mastering the offside rule and kicking back at the doubters.

Come and cheer for Atalanta as our plucky underdogs learn how to play the game, take on the legendary Dick Kerr Ladies – and find the toughest opponent of all is the FA.

*Come along by car or boat and enjoy another great show. Bar and food available. Bring garden chairs and/or blankets.*

*Make a diary note now so you do not miss the show*

For further information contact David Millett on 01252 617364 or email [d.millett7@ntlworld.com](mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com) or visit [www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

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## SALES

Denise Smith has finally stepped down as Sales Manager and we are looking for someone to take on the job of looking after mail order sales. When the new website is operational, customers will be able to pay with PayPal, but we will need someone to actually send off the books, etc that have been ordered. Not a terribly demanding job, particularly if you have a convenient local Post Office. Let me know if you would like to help ([roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)).

# Canal d'Orléans



Paddy Field, who was the Director of the Basingstoke Canal when the BCA was first formed, had a great liking for France and helped to develop a relationship with the Canal d'Orléans. This led to an informal twinning between the two canals, which at one time seemed likely to be formally recognised.

The two canals are not unlike insofar as both fell into dereliction and have been, or are being revived. The Canal d'Orléans is about 100 years older and about 10 miles longer, but has still to re-open. It links the Canal de Briare to the River Loire. The western end is referred to as the Loire "versant" (slope) and the eastern as the Seine versant. Grignon has a basin on the summit level which would be a perfect venue for a boat gathering (*Right*); it has a couple of very nice restaurants nearby!

The relationship between the canals seemed to be going well,

and several exchange visits took place, including one to the Society's 40th anniversary rally in 2006, and there was even talk of a combined application for some EU funding. Tony Davis, who was very active in the IWA, was one of the main instigators. However it all then faltered, partly because the restoration in France stalled (no volunteer work allowed) and partly because of the desperate state of the Counties' finances in the UK.

Happily, things seem to be stirring in France.





# Canal d'Orléans

*It seems as if the previous liaison between the Basingstoke Canal and the Canal d'Orléans may be about to be revived, judging by the following messages from Tony Davis and Jacques Cotteray:*

Hello Roger and Maggie,

I have just spent some time in hospital getting over a fall, and have only just returned to pick up my New Year post, including this very interesting one from Jacques Cotteray, which I attach with this e-mail, for yourself, and for various copyists that I have a note of. I sincerely hope that you can add any names yourself, and for the copyists to include any friends/ boat owners/ boat clubs that might be interested. Names to Roger Cansdale for the moment please, until I get sorted. And thank you Roger.

It does seem that our friends in France have adopted a very sensible position within which to invite us. Firstly in the final year of their dredging and restoration— from the main line at Montargis to the large basin at the upper end (13km I think) at Grignon, which they hope will be 2021, they are inviting as many of us who may be interested; and those that have boats may be interested; to come to the venue next year, without the burden of bringing boats, to stay with locals; and to be taken on a tour of the venue. This seems a very sensible arrangement and without a commitment at this stage.

From what I know of this location along their canal, I think they will be thinking of an event along the following lines (for lock sizes, timing etc.)

1.Trailable craft

2.Transportable craft like dinghies, traditional rowing boats, canoes/kayaks, etc.

3.Any steam boats, etc, we can invite for traditional interest

4.A few large craft (like narrow boats) but probably limited in view of lock sizes.

5.Any holiday hire boats (there are three bases on the main line locally).

6.Possibly camping vans. They have camp sites locally.

7.And any loyal friends, you know, to meet there.

From what I can see of Jacques' letter (and particularly the English translation accompanying it) it does seem that it will be a serious business, and there will no doubt be a little food and drink! I know they have an event (of traditional small Loire river craft along here every second or third year), and I think they want to introduce British Canal Craft in 2022 and are looking for a good show from us (as the main attraction!). So could those that are, or may be, in receipt of this e-mail, circulate it to persons or bodies who could be interested. There is certainly no harm in having a "run-past" without boats next year. I think the quickest way to Montargis is Eurostar to Paris (Nord) then direct from Paris (Bercy). Or by ferry Portsmouth to Caen.

But first of all could names (and e-mails) be passed to Roger Cansdale, whom I will join when I am well enough, and we will take it from there. Meanwhile I have politely replied to Jacques Cotteray to show our possible interest. Roger, I think you may have several JMC and BCA names already on your list. And thank you for your help.

Tony Davis.

# Vive l'entente fluviale!



*Tony Davis's boat at Montargis in 2008 for the Caravane de Loire event.*

Dear Friends,

Following our various exchanges, I'm back to try to answer your last enquiries.

We suggest you to meet us in Orléans in 2021 for a festivity whose date we will advise you. We could welcome a small group of about fifteen people, without boats, who would be hosted by the members of our association.

During this stay, we could carry out a reconnaissance of the Seine section, which should be undergoing restoration work, and meet to eventually consider the basis of an "entente fluviale".

This Seine part will be reopened to navigation in 2022 and we hope that you will be able to come with a few boats for the official inauguration of this section, at which you will be the guests of honour. The date is not yet fixed, but as soon as I know about it I will inform you.

In accordance with your request, the opening of this section will allow boats to access the

main network of the Centre France region on the Briare, Loing and Seine and Paris as well as the Canal Latéral à la Loire opening onto the Nivernais and Bourgogne canals...

Hoping that you will be able to give a favorable response to this proposal, we are counting on you to be our ambassadors.

Believe, dear friends, in the expression of our best feelings and the joy of seeing you again very soon.

Jacques Cotteray

*Good to know that our friends in France are not holding Brexit against us!*

*If you are interested in taking part in the visit next year or the event in 2022, please let me know ([roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)). Tony Davis has been quite poorly, so we also wish him a speedy recovery.*



# Canal visitors

Members of the Byfleet Boat Club are hoping to come up the Canal at Easter, but their ability to progress beyond Woking will depend on the contractors completing the installation of the new cycle/foot bridge at Chobham Road.

The Cotswold Canal Trust are also planning a visit by boat to the Basingstoke Canal in May. The current plan is for them to arrive at

the Canal Centre on 27th May for an informal barbecue organised by the Society, followed in the evening by a talk about the history of the Basingstoke.

If anyone would like to do a bit of lock-wheeling for them or help with the barbecue, please contact our former Secretary, Terry Inskip at [terryinskip@virginmedia.com](mailto:terryinskip@virginmedia.com)

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## Dogs!

Some 8 years ago, our Work Party spent a long time repairing the towpath at Frimley Lodge Park and the repair work was subsequently continued on down to the Canal Centre by contractors. Over £100,000 was spent.

The damage had been caused by dogs swimming in the canal and then clawing their way out onto the sandy bank. In places the towpath had been reduced to half width. The repairs involved some sheet metal piling but were mostly done using wooden posts supporting nicospan nylon webbing, which was then back-filled and the towpath resurfaced. Steps to allow dogs to exit the canal without wrecking the towpath were introduced at intervals.

Sad to say that the dogs and their owners seem to be ignoring these and appear to be intent to destroying the towpath again.

What should we do? Ban dogs swimming in the canal would be a good idea, but how to enforce it? Are the steps not dog-friendly? If so what would be better?



Damage to the towpath caused by dogs, right next to the steps provided for them!



# Lime Burning - a Canalside

There still remains solid evidence of a once thriving lime burning industry beside the Basingstoke Canal near Norris Bridge - also known for reasons that will become obvious, as Pyestock Bridge.

The source of raw material being the huge chalk pit at Odiham (SU 735 506), from where it is said chalk had been dug since Roman times. The construction of the canal provided transport, now all that was required was an easily accessible landing and loading area with an ample supply of timber, peat and brushwood to fuel the kilns, preferably on common land and free of charge.

The first location downstream from Odiham with level banks, not part of the large estates of 'landed gentry' was near Norris Bridge (SU 833 536). Here the bank was firm and level, with ample fuel, mostly on common land. No roads led to the site but transport was to be entirely by canal barge, for both the incoming raw material, chalk, and the finished product, lime, in its many forms. The barges carried output to customers in the developing South London suburbs for horticulture and building purposes.

Labour was available from nearby villages with sufficient skills except for the most essential work of gauging timing and temperatures which would have been the responsibility of the lime burner. Typically, census returns for 1861 give the occupation of Steven Lunn of Crondall as 'lime burner'.

Lime burning 'clamps' would have been familiar to local agricultural labourers, a simple construction perhaps similar to clamps used

for storing root vegetables in winter. These were described as 'Pye' or 'Pudding Pye Kilns' probably because of the alternate layers of chalk and fuel. One can imagine the burner saying to one of the labourers "The fires are burning low. Get more pye." Or perhaps, "Go to the Pyestock" and so giving the name to the nearby Pyestock Hill.

When the supply of fuel was exhausted a new kiln would have been constructed rather than brushwood being carried over long distances and there is a suggestion that a similar kiln was built beside the canal near the Frimley Bend taking advantage of the Deepcut and Blackdown heath and woodland.

Under this method, rather than building a brick or stone structure, quality was probably difficult to control and as such the product was probably mostly used for fertilizer.

Once the firing operation had started the kiln would have required constant attention. So accommodation for living and sleeping on site would have been constructed and a well dug to supply fresh water. Hot meals would have been possible by shaping an oven close by the side of the kiln.

But what evidence is there? A map, possibly dated c.1817, shows the canal at Pyestock Bridge (built 1792) with a Lime Kiln marked approximately 100 m. north of the canal in a wooded area (later called Pyestock Wood) west of Eelmoor Marsh, (see fig. 1)

A later, mid-c.19th map, (see fig.2) shows the same location where the kiln was previously marked in a rectilinear enclosure with 'well'



clearly marked. The War Department purchased the land and built a Warders Quarters in the enclosure and much later maps show the buildings and the 'w' becomes 'p' for pump. The well and pump are extant though the well is capped for safety.

The site of the Warders Quarters was later to become the Forest Hut Cafe open to all and very popular with locals (*Right*). For soldiers from Aldershot Camp, Norris Bridge was 'bounds' beyond which was 'out of bounds', so a pass was needed.



Fig.1 Map c.1817 shows location of Lime Kiln near Pyestock Bridge. Note the absence of the Aldershot - Fleet road A path leads from the kiln to clearly marked Ively Road.

Remnants of wooden structures are recorded in the vicinity of the well which may relate to previous accommodation for workers living and sleeping on site, but after nearly 200 years are more likely structures for keeping pigs and chickens.

Clearly, mooring took place at this flat location,

as a 30 - 35m stretch of the canal bank had been reinforced with wooden stakes supporting side battens which, although now rotten, are still very much in evidence. Also, compacted chalk remains on the path leading from the canal bank.



Fig.2 Map shows location of enclosure marked with position of well.

What would have 'killed off this cheap and simple rural enterprise? Most likely the increasing demand of an expanding Metropolis and the arrival of steam power, where, as John Masefield wrote "Dirty British Coaster butting thro' the Channel with a cargo of .....Tyne Coal" delivering a more efficient fuel direct to the Kentish and Surrey chalk downs beside the Thames Estuary.

# Vacancies

## Chairman

We are still seeking a replacement for Philip Riley as Chairman of the Canal Society. Ideally we would like to follow the previous pattern of promoting someone with a proven track record of involvement with the canal and the Society; in the past this has usually been the Vice-Chairman. However, none of the current committee feels willing and able to take the job on. We have also had no response from the general membership to previous appeals, so we are currently being forced to look outside the Society.

It seems a shame that a society with nearly 1000 members should come to this, so if there is anyone in the Society who would be willing to come forward, however reluctantly or diffidently, please contact Ken Sankey at [ken.sankey@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:ken.sankey@basingstoke-canal.org.uk).

## Treasurer

We are also looking for a replacement for Guy Faller as Treasurer. We were fortunate with Guy in having someone who was both a canal enthusiast and a qualified accountant, but for this job the canal enthusiasm is perhaps less important than being at home with accounts and money. Again, if anyone is interested, please contact Ken Sankey.

## Lengthsman Organiser

This is definitely a job for a canal enthusiast and someone able to deal with people of all sorts. Mike Gordon has done a stunning job of organising a team which now numbers about 70 people, who regularly walk the canal and report back any problems. This has been invaluable to the BCA in the aftermath of the storms in February, reporting the location of fallen trees so that the Rangers don't have to go looking for them.

After a recent knee replacement, Mike has decided to hand over the job of central coordinator liaising with the BCA to a new pair of hands; Cheryl Richards is currently doing this, but given all her other involvements (*see page 10*), we really need someone else. If interested in this, or in joining the Lengthsman scheme, please contact Mike at [lengthsman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:lengthsman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk) or contact Fiona Shipp at the Canal Centre (01252 370073).

## Boat Company

Dick King and Ian Moore are always looking for people to help run our two trip boats, either by crewing them, maintaining them or doing the admin jobs such as taking bookings and organising crews. If interested, please contact [jpchairman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:jpchairman@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

*These are the essential positions that we need to fill to keep the Society going, but there are many other activities that could bring benefit to the Society and the Canal if we can find people to do them. These include helping to build links with local councils, schools and businesses, fundraising, and organising and supporting events. If interested, talk to Ken.*



# Annual General Meeting

**NOTICE is hereby given that the Forty Third Annual General Meeting of the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society will be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in the Deepcut Village Centre, Swordsman's Road, Deepcut GU16 6TB, commencing at 2.15 p.m.**

The formal Agenda for the meeting is as follows:-

1. To hear apologies for absence.
2. To confirm the minutes of the 42nd AGM held on 18th May 2019.
3. To approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019.
4. To appoint the Independent Accountants.
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  
Celia Griffiths, Honorary Secretary

28th February 2020

## Meeting Venue

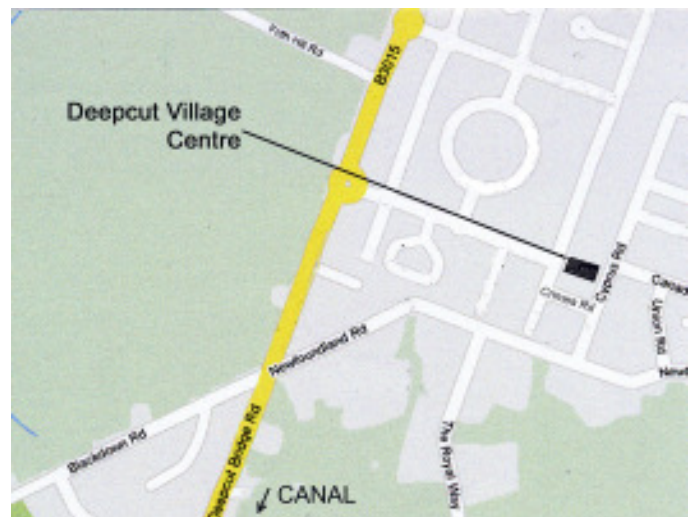
**The Deepcut Village Centre** is again the venue for our AGM. It is not hard to find and there will be signs off the main Deepcut Bridge Road.

Turn off onto Newfoundland Road, follow this round, turn left when you come to Cyprus Road and then immediately left into Crimea Road. The hall and ample parking is on the right.

Following the formal business of the AGM there will be reports from the Chairmen of the Canal Society and Boat Company, and the Work Party and presentation of the Robin Higgs Award. An open forum will allow questions to be asked.

### *AGM Notes:*

- a) This Notice is issued from Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1WA.*
- 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.*



# BCS Membership

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT

As Spring approaches it's time for Membership renewal. You should have received an invitation to renew your membership by now. If not, please contact me via the details inside the back cover. Many thanks to those that have already paid or changed their Standing Orders to reflect the new subscriptions rates. And a **big thank you** to those who have submitted an additional donation, so far over £1000 has been raised.

You may have noticed a code on the envelope label this month. This is your Membership No. and an indication (Y or N) if we have an email address for you. If it's an N and you do have an email address, please let us have it; just ping an email to

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

We will keep it securely, won't pass it on and will only use it to contact you.

As ever, a warm and appreciative welcome to those that have recently joined the society:

Connor Austin of Farnham  
Chris Badham of Farnham  
John Collins of Hartley Wintney  
David Cooper of Frimley  
Jane Costigan of Odiham  
Colin Dickinson of Woking  
Tom France of Farnborough  
Heather Miller of Fleet  
Jonathon Miller of Woking  
Susan Miller of Guildford  
Richard Mortimer of Basingstoke  
Simon Neate of Odiham  
Mark Trinder of Woking  
Jack Watts of Fleet  
Julie Tanner from Camberley  
Barry Chen from Farnborough

Best Regards  
Andy Beale

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## 200 Club

The 200 Club was wound up at the end of 2019 due to dwindling interest. Here is the final set of winners.

Thanks to everyone who has taken part in this fund raising activity for the Society and thanks also to the organisers who have had to battle with increasingly difficult bank procedures.

Please don't forget to cancel any standing orders.

### December

Mrs V A Ovington	£40
Mr W A Carter	£15
Mr M Leech	£10
Mr H F Ray	£10



# BCS information



The Bulletin is now up to Issue 43.

If you want to keep up with the latest news about the canal, please click on the Friends button on the Society

website at [www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk](http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

To join the Society, please contact the Membership Secretary, Andy Beale, whose contact details are below.

The annual subscription is Adults £15, Junior £0, Family £20, and Group £30 payable on March 1<sup>st</sup> each year. Life membership is a one-off £200.

**Date for next copy 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

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Editorial Team: Editor: Roger Cansdale\* 29 Knoll Road, Fleet, Hants GU51 4PT  
e-mail: [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)

01252-678608

**Presidents:** Tim & Elizabeth Dodwell

**Chairman:** Philip Riley\*

**Vice-Chairman:** Ken Sankey\*

Neil Sutherland\*

**Hon. Secretary:** Celia Griffiths\*

**Hon. Treasurer:** Guy Faller\*

*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](http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/directory.htm)**  
*or by telephone on 0796-4357442*

**Membership Secretary:** Andy Beale

**Working Party Information:** Janet Buckley\*

**Trip Boat Manager:** Dick King\*

**Trip Boat Bookings:** Team

e-mail: [jpbookings@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:jpbookings@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

**Sales Manager &**

**Mail Order Sales:** Roger Cansdale (Temporary). e-mail: [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com)

**Events Coordinator:** Frances Bonnington e-mail: [basingstokecanalsocietyevents@gmail.com](mailto:basingstokecanalsocietyevents@gmail.com)

**Website Manager:** Martin Leech\*

**Press Officer:** Roger Cansdale\*

**External Talks Organiser:** Roger Cansdale\*

**Lengthman Organiser:** (Mike Gordon)

**Archivist:** Rev David Tonkinson

**Chobham talks:** Graham Deavin & Alan Norris

e-mail: [talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:talks@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

**Director:** Ian Moore\*

**Director:** Jeff Hill\*

**Director:** Kevin Redway\*

**General Canal Society contact number: 07305 340547 (New number)**

**Basingstoke Canal Authority**

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

01252-370073

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

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



# Dry dock



New gates for the dry dock, one with a gate paddle replacing the original ground paddle and the other an extended handle for the balance beam to overcome the dock's awkward shape.