

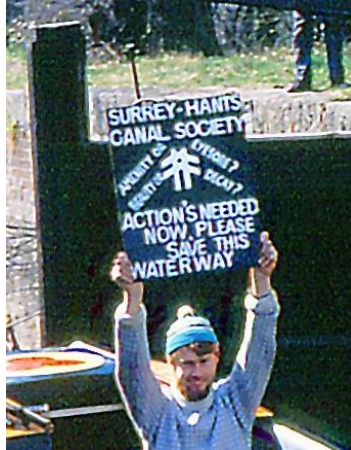


# Basingstoke Canal Bulletin

No. 26 MAY – OCTOBER 2015

## Society Gears Up For 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

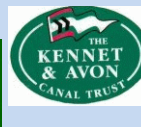
It was in 1966 that Brookwood resident Jim Woolgar published a letter in the local newspaper enquiring if anybody was interested in doing something about the then privately owned, and semi-derelict Basingstoke



Canal. Several people responded and so the [Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society was formed](#). There then followed much campaigning (above), fundraising, and many hundreds of man-years effort which led to the eventual re-opening of the Canal to navigation some 25 years later. Another 25 years on, and the Society is preparing for a major celebratory event in Woking in 2016 to mark this achievement and of course the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. See how you can be involved with this event below.

## Learn about the Canal by clicking these links

- [Join the Society](#)
- [Become Involved](#)
- Sign up to receive future bulletins (if this one was forwarded/downloaded): [Members](#) [Non-members](#)
- [Read previous Basingstoke Canal Bulletins](#)
- [Read the Basingstoke Canal News \(BCN\)](#)
- [John Pinkerton cruising on the Basingstoke Canal](#)
- [The Basingstoke Canal Picture Gallery](#)
- [The History and Restoration of the Basingstoke Basingstoke Canal Wiki Page](#)
- [Basingstoke Canal Authority \(BCA\) Website](#)
- [Joint Management Committee \(JMC\) Papers](#)
- [Map of the Basingstoke Canal](#)
- [John Pinkerton on Facebook](#)
- [BCA Visitor Centre on Facebook](#)
- [See what people are saying on Twitter](#)



Click on the [website links](#) in the Bulletin articles to read more

## Capital Works Continue

It is worth remembering that Hampshire and Surrey Counties are investing £5.6m of capital in the Canal over the period from 2011 to 2017. Over the summer, a lot of repair and improvements work have been going on as part of this capital programme. The recent [Basingstoke Canal News](#) gives the details, but the highlights are: The towpath opposite the Canal Centre, which now looks



much better since it has been piled and surfaced (see above); [Repairs to the towpath downstream towards Frimley Lodge Park](#) (picking up from where the Society left off in 2012) now have also been undertaken, a job needing doing for many years; and the Dogmersfield landslip repair, being done in cooperation with the adjacent landowner – this has absorbed rather a lot of Hampshire capital money, but nevertheless it is hoped to complete dredging and piling during the navigation and towpath closure period from 1<sup>st</sup> November. A major leak in an embankment was detected near Double Bridge in Dogmersfield during the summer and repaired – luckily there was suitable plant nearby and the job could be completed promptly.

The [latest navigation report](#) has announced a programme of other repairs to take place this winter, including reinforcement of the Hermitage weir at St John's, the Rive ditch culvert replacement, structural repairs to several locks and gates replacement, and bed relining at Ash Embankment.

## Society To Hold Celebratory Woking Canal Festival In 2016

As already reported in the recent [Basingstoke Canal News](#), the Society is planning for major celebrations next year of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its formation. 2016 will also be 25 years since the canal navigation was formally reopened in 1991. A boat rally and landside event celebrating both occasions will take place in the centre of Woking, at Brookhouse common, over the weekend of **6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2016**.



Please put these dates in your diaries. It will be called the **Woking Canal Festival**.

We are pleased that we have been approached by the [Historical Narrow Boat Club](#), a nationwide group, who are also celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> next year, and had chosen the Basingstoke on which to mark it. Not only do they wish to participate in our event, but they will also help with the organisation. They expect that (at the time of writing) around 40 of their historic boats will attend, including traditional pairs and trade boats. Woking Borough Council are also supporting and providing resources for the Festival.

Both the Society and HNBC want to have their own “party”, and the schedule of events over the weekend will accommodate this. The Society has yet to decide the details, but we hope there will be an extensive exhibition of restoration photographs and videos, and we intend that those who were involved with the canal restoration will be specially invited. More details about the Festival will be posted over the coming months as plans evolve.

### **Help Needed**

Planning for the *Woking Canal Festival* is now underway, and it is clear there will be much to do.

YOU can help in any of these ways:

- Take a lead role on the organising committee for one or more aspects of the event
- Undertake one or more smaller tasks as a member of a team
- Organise or take part in a community event or display – involving your group / sports or social club / school, or individually
- Let us have your ideas to take the Society into the next 50 years, and involve your children / grandchildren
- Volunteer to help set up the site, steward during the event, and clear up afterwards
- Persuade your neighbours, friends and family to get involved

Please let us have YOUR thoughts and suggestions on how we should celebrate this historic occasion.

If you would like to be involved, or would like to make any contribution at all, please contact me, [Dick King](#) by [email](#) or on 01730 264178.

*Dick King*

## Consideration Of Other Towpath Users Is Key..

A little while ago, [an unpleasant altercation](#) took place between a dog walker and a speeding cyclist in Woking, which was [reported in the local papers](#). In a bid to counter such conflicts, Canal Manager Fiona Shipp decided to adopt the “[Share The Space, Slow Your Space](#)” [campaign on the Basingstoke](#) (*see right*), based on the [Canal and River Trust nationwide educational initiative](#) which aims to allow all users to enjoy our canals by encouraging consideration towards others on the towpath. [Read about this initiative](#), and listen to [Fiona’s interview](#) about it.

However, human nature being what it is, I rather suspect that cyclists will never really be deterred from speeding along the towpath until it is made unattractive, or just impossible, to do so. The only effective solution to this that comes to mind is the use of more radical, and controversial, measures, such as speed bumps and chicanes....





## Work Party Activities

### Regular Workparty

Since completing the [Greywell tunnel portal project](#) in March (reported on in the [last bulletin](#)), the regular Society workparty did a lot of work around the Colt Hill wharf in Odiham in preparation for the [Magna Carta rally](#) that took place there in May. (This rally has been extensively reported in the last [Basingstoke Canal News](#) and on the [Society website](#).) Improvements included resurfacing of around 100m of the towpath and the Colt Hill car park itself (*see right*).



The team then moved to Deepcut, to undertake repairs on the Wilderness weir next to Lock 28 (*see left, nearly finished*).

This structure lies at the extreme end of the Mytchett pound, and is a vital escape route for water should levels rise, but it has leaked when it shouldn't

have for years. A visiting Waterway Recovery Group [started work on this last year](#) but quickly

realised it was a complex job and more than they could finish in the time available. Needless to say, it has taken us longer than we expected. It has been necessary to replace the bed of the channel and one channel wall (*above, left*), and repair the other, and to seal the many leaks in the adjacent bypass chamber. However it is now close to completion.

The opportunity has also been taken to build up with bank protection a low section of embanked towpath with an ominous-looking wash-out just downstream from Lock 28, and that too is nearly done.

### Waterway Recovery Group

A WRG team led by Moose Hearnden visited the Canal over a weekend in July and repaired some brick quadrants on Locks 23 and 24. They laid a concrete foundation for a new quadrant at Lock 23 (*right*) to replace that which had been lost because of previous subsidence behind the chamber wall. We thank

them for their contribution. These jobs will be high on the Society team's list to complete next.

### Engineering Team

Meanwhile, the Society engineering team have been continuing with the refurbishment of the BCA's patrol boat (*left*). Some delay resulted from the theft of the specially purchased outboard from the Ash Lock store, but the installation of a new one (complete with specially designed proprietary theft deterrent) is now completed. Just finishing touches and tests in the water now need to be done. Safety certification for both this boat and also the weedcutter has been obtained.



## Water Supply And Canal Closures

After two years where it was possible to keep the navigation open throughout the entire season, we were not quite so lucky this year. Following a relatively dry Autumn and Winter, supplies like the Broad Oak stream (*right*) dried up, and it was necessary to close the Deepcut flight for two 2-week periods, one in July and the other in August. Navigation resumed when the rains returned, which of course they did with a vengeance....

Why is it that the Canal often has to close as soon as the weather warms up a bit? [This article explains why](#).



## John Pinkerton News



### John Pinkerton Canal Cruises

It seems that this season has been another successful one for the Society's trip

boat operation. The extended range of "theme" or special trips offered on the *John Pinkerton* this year has been popular, and will be repeated in 2016. There has been a healthy take-up of charter trips too.

To take some of the load off our bookings manager (David Horwood) we are working on an on-line booking system for public trips. Development of this is now well advanced, and it will be operational from the start of next season.



## Other News

### 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Ron Coward (*right*), a crew member on the *John Pinkerton* for more than 20 years, celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with wife Doreen during the Summer, by inviting 40 of their family and friends for an afternoon cruise to King John's Castle. We extend our (belated) congratulations to the happy couple.

### 4 Days in August

Fleet resident Chris Scott determined that he would walk the entire length of the Canal in August, and to write a journal about it. [Read Chris's interesting account of his walk, called 4 Days in August.](#)

### Twitter Feed



Twitter means little or nothing to many I appreciate, however it is used extensively by very many people to broadcast about themselves and their lives. I thought it would be interesting to see what people write about the Basingstoke Canal, and have been pleasantly surprised to see what appears on Twitter. Lots of almost exclusively positive comments about the Canal, how many people enjoy walks along it, lots of interesting photos and videos of boats and wildlife etc. I have therefore included a link to the feed on the Society website, on the front page of this Bulletin, and here: [SEE WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING](#). Take a look.



## Forthcoming Events

### • [2015/16 Chobham Illustrated Talks Season](#)

This season's illustrated talks start shortly at [The Parish Pavilion in Chobham](#) with the following:

- **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 8pm – Graham Lewington** – 'History and Restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal'
- **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 8pm – Roger Squires** – 'Leonardo's Canals – Waterways of Milan and the Papia region'
- **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm – Ron and Myra Glover** – 'Trail Boat Festivals on Isolated Waterways around Britain'

For more details about these talks, see the [Talks page](#). Details of talks taking place in the New Year will be posted soon.

## From the Bulletin Editor

Apologies for the long delay since the publication of the [previous bulletin](#). But you know how it is – always something else to do... I would welcome short articles about the Canal from the membership with accompanying photos if possible. Please send them to the [bulletin editor](#).

*Published by The Basingstoke Canal Society*

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*The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society.*

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