



# BASINGSTOKE CANAL BULLETIN

No. 1 November 2010


## Welcome....

to the first [Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society](#) electronic bulletin. For over 40 years, the Society has been communicating with its members by means of a hard copy newsletter, the [Basingstoke Canal News](#) (BCN) which is published quarterly. However, a lot can happen in three months so we have decided to supplement the newsletter with a free email bulletin like this. We have also decided that these bulletins will be available to anybody who has an interest in the Canal, with the hope that readers who are currently non-members may be encouraged to [join the Society](#).

We encourage you to forward these bulletins to your friends, family and colleagues and get them to [sign up](#) (at no cost!).

Bulletins will be sent out roughly every month and so will provide more up-to-date news of things happening on the Canal, together with reminders of forthcoming events. So here goes...

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## Structural repairs

The fact that the Basingstoke Canal is in need of repair and maintenance will not have escaped those who walk it or live nearby. There is need for day-to-day maintenance, for example tow-path and weed clearance, cutting back overhanging trees etc; and for major works to remedy significant weaknesses in the lock structures, embankments etc.

A detailed and wide-ranging structural survey of the Canal has been carried out in recent months. The survey has identified a number of serious defects in need of attention. In conjunction with this, the Surrey and Hampshire County Councils have between them identified £1.6m of capital funding over the next three years for structural repairs. The Canal Society was pleased to learn about the funding being allocated this year, but was dismayed to hear that the County Councils were not expecting to place a "term contract" for the remedial work before next year. The Society has made some very strong protests about this delay. The good news is that it has been confirmed that the following works totalling around £400,000 will now take place from November 2010 to March 2011, while the term contract is being finalised:

### Hampshire:

- Embankment repairs at Ash, Chatter Valley, Dogmersfield and near the Fox and Hounds at Fleet
- Bank slip repair at Swan Cutting

### Surrey:

- Raising and reinforcement of offside bank near Lock 1
- Structural repairs at Locks 15, 19 and 20 (similar to those being done on Lock 17 – see below)
- Lock gate repairs at Locks 1,4,5,6,12 and 17 (once structural repairs are complete)
- Winding gear modifications and safety barrier installation at Locks 1,2,3,6,7,11,12,14 and 15

The Society will be kept abreast of progress through the involvement of Peter Redway, the Society's chairman, with the Canal Asset Management Working Group (the responsible oversight committee).

Ian Brown, the Basingstoke Canal Authority Director, is at pains to point out that work on the Canal has not stopped while the term contract is being awarded. Already during this financial year 5 sets of lock gates have been replaced (£50,000), the Deepcut towpath has been reopened following repairs to the land slip and bank (£100,000), and the West Hart and Old Swingbridge embankments have been repaired (£90,000). He is hopeful that the term contract will bring with it a better deal for the Canal as a whole.

## Volunteering News

### ***Brookwood***

Residents of Brookwood have raised concerns about the state of the Canal there, in particular bank overgrowth and invasive weeds, and as a result a local volunteer group is being organised to rectify matters.

Bank clearance work will start in the New Year in Brookwood under the leadership of Kathryn Dodington (a SHCS committee member) and with the aid of the Local Residents Association. The aim is to start on the weekend of 8/9 January 2011. The Canal Society's insurers have confirmed that anyone working on a Society sponsored work party will be covered by our various insurance policies. The tree cuttings will be disposed of later by means of a wood chipper.

If you would like to be involved with cleaning up the Canal at Brookwood, please email Kathryn at [brookwood.cleanup@gmail.com](mailto:brookwood.cleanup@gmail.com)



*A section of the overgrown Brookwood pond.*

### ***Lock 17***

This lock, one of the Deepcut flight of 14 locks, was identified by the structural survey as being in need of significant renovation. We are indebted to the "[Bit in the Middle](#)" Waterways Recovery Group summer working party for having started this work. *(They call themselves this because of the general geographical focus of the membership - the home counties mainly, but some come from far afield - Ed)*. Completion of the upper wing wall rebuild and brickwork pointing and replacement in the lock chamber has now been taken over by the regular SHCS working party, operating as an unpaid contractor to the BCA. The expectation is to have the structural repairs finished during December ready for the replacement of the lower lock gates.



*Repairs to the upper wing walls of Lock 17 under way by the SHCS working party*

### ***Runways End***

Installation of the permanent moorings near Eelmoor Flash at the back of the Farnborough Airfield is planned to start in the New Year, again by the SHCS working party. The Society has received a grant from Rushmoor Borough Council for this work.

### ***Working Party Dates***

The regular SHCS working party meets every second and fourth weekend of the month (ie every two weeks mostly). Recent projects have included the complete overhaul and fitting out of the *Alan Flight* work boat, repairs to the *Belfast Girl* dredger, and the installation of a drinking water supply at Brookwood. This is the latest plan for where they will be operating over the next few weeks:

- 13th/14th November – Lock 17
- 11th/12th December - Lock 17
- 27th/28th November - Lock 17
- Jan/Feb 2011 – Runway's End

We are also expecting visiting volunteers to help on the Canal as well: the [London Waterways Recovery Group](#) (WRG) will arrive in November, and the [Newbury Working Party group](#) and the "[BITM](#)" WRG will be on the Canal in January. Top of the list of jobs for them to do is bank clearance in the Odiham area (along the *John Pinkerton* trip routes), where the *Alan Flight* work boat will be put to good use.

If you would like to become involved with the Society working parties then please email [Peter Redway](mailto:Peter.Redway@shcs.org) or call him on 01483 721710. No qualifications other than enthusiasm are required. If you think you could team lead a working party in your area, then Peter would also like to hear from you.

## Other News

### *John Pinkerton*

The [John Pinkerton](#) trip boat brings in the majority of the Society's income. The boat can accommodate up to 50 people and 2-3 hour trips run mostly from Odiham, crewed by volunteers. In 2009 nearly 200 trips took place and a record £27,000 was raised for the Canal. The profits pay for, among other things, plant and materials for structural repairs by the work parties. With this year's season now at an end, another profits record is being forecast.



*The Society's trip boat, the John Pinkerton*

If you would like to help crew the JP, then please email [Peter Wright](#) or phone 01344 772461.

Plans for a modern replacement for the JP (which has been operational since 1978), including improved disabled access and other facilities are well under way.

### *Forthcoming events*

Here are some dates for your diary:

- Chobham Social Meetings at The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, take place at **8pm** on the third Wednesday of the month. Non members and friends are very welcome. For further details, please call David Millett on 01252 617364. (Please see the BCN for a map.)
  - **17<sup>th</sup> November 2010** – Ron and Myra Glover – ‘The Ups and Downs of the Belgian Canals’
  - **15<sup>th</sup> December 2010** - Patrick Moss - ‘The Somersetshire Coal Canal’
  - **19<sup>th</sup> January 2011** - Liam D’Arcy Brown - ‘The Grand Canal of China’
- Illuminated Boat Procession. Lightbox to the Bridge Barn in Woking, **27<sup>th</sup> November 2010** starting at 5pm.

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- If you are a NON-MEMBER (or complimentary BCN recipient) then please click [here](#) to go to the Society's home page – the bulletin sign-up form can be seen on the right.

If you would like to become a member of the Canal Society then please visit the [Join the Society](#) page.

If you do not want to receive further copies of the SHCS bulletin, then please click on the link at the end of the message to which this document was attached.

## We welcome your feedback

Since this is our first foray into electronic newsletter production, we would welcome any comments you may have about this bulletin. In particular, is there anything you would like to see in it? Please send your feedback to the [bulletin editor](#).