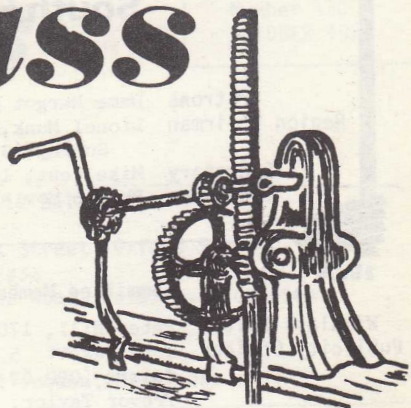


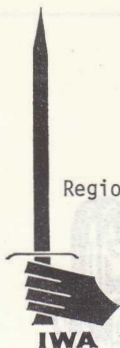
windlass

Number 130
October 1975



INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

South East Region



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Cover Photo

Loves Bridge on the Wey & Arun - complete with rebuilt parapets
and restored towpath. Photo: Courtesy of Wey & Arun Canal Trust

windlass

Number 130
OCTOBER 1975

the Journal of the South East Region of the
Inland Waterways Association, published six
times yearly

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Printed by WRGPrint, 11 Ashwood Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex



Branch News

Names and addresses of Branch Chairmen and Secretaries are given on the inside front cover.

CHELMSFORD BRANCH

Barge 'Susan' Things now look much more hopeful for the preservation of *Susan* a former timber lighter, but more recently used as a maintenance boat on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation. This vessel is - apart from a similar vessel - the last of the old traditional lighters which used the navigation for nearly 200 years. The Branch have been anxious that it should be preserved because of its industrial archaeological and maritime interest. This is heightened by the fact that the original design is now believed to be based on that of a now extinct design of lighter which was formerly used in medieval times in the Blackwater estuary and possibly elsewhere on the East Coast. Certainly the only craft known to have resembled them were those used on the former Gipping Navigation.

As a result of extensive publicity, a number of people have offered to become members of a barge restoration group (none responded to either of the announcements in *Windlass*!). In the meantime, an automatic electric bilge pump has been loaned by the River Stour Trust and has been fitted into the vessel to prevent it sinking.

Victoria The navigation company's new hire cruiser *Victoria* is now proving to be immensely popular and has been in constant use throughout the summer. It has been hired to such diverse groups as Football Clubs, Rotary Clubs and Salvation Army! At least one wedding reception has been held on board - a novel way of being launched into matrimony! The Branch is hoping to hire the vessel shortly for a cruise. Members interested should contact the Branch Secretary.

Branch Punt Members of the Branch will be aware of the existence of a Punt purchased to help with the maintenance of the Chelmer & Blackwater Canal. During the summer months it has been overhauled by a faithful, albeit small, band of helpers and is now riverworthy, and presenting a handsome appearance.

So far, at least, it has not proved necessary to use it for maintenance purposes and the Branch Committee has therefore decided to make it available for general pleasure use by Branch members.

It has now been placed on the premises of the Chelmsford Boating Club, right in the centre of Chelmsford, a mere stone's throw from the Cathedral and Shire Hall (if you are a champion at throwing stones). The paddles are kept by Larry Newall-

Smith at 2 Parker Street, Chelmsford (another stone's throw away) but it's best to phone him up a day or so before, to make necessary arrangements. His phone is Chelmsford 60490.

The punt will take 4-6 persons, depending on weight, and is just the thing for a lazy paddle upstream through Central Park, or downstream along the canal for which it is licenced to use the locks.

Maintenance As part of their policy of keeping the waterway in good working order the navigation company are currently installing new lock gates at Cuton Lock, Springfield and it is understood that this will be followed by dredging parts of the upper section. The Branch is planning themselves to remove silt and other debris from the two cuts leading to the boat rollers at Kings Head Meadow which at present is the sole link between the canal and the rivers running through the Chelmsford Town Centre (the Branch eventually wishes to see this replaced by a lock). The Branch has recently taken over the maintenance of these rollers from Chelmsford District Council.

Events All meetings to take place at the Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, Essex, commencing at 8 pm:

Thursday 13 November Mystery evening with slides and films.

Thursday 11 December Special Christmas meeting.

GUILDFORD BRANCH

General Meetings A meeting has been arranged for the benefit of those members who live in the south of the Branch area. It will be at Worthing Sixth Form College, Bolsover Road, Worthing, which is situated very close to Durrington Station, on Wednesday, 10 December at 7.30 for 8.00 pm. This will be a joint meeting with the Wey and Arun Canal Trust. The programme for the evening will be a double bill featuring firstly an illustrated talk by Mr B.O.Ratcliffe, Manager of the Wey Navigation, on that waterway, and secondly a talk and progress report, also illustrated, by Mr Gerry Nutbeem on the work being carried out on the Wey and Arun Canal.

Kennet and Avon Following the mention in the last issue about the unfair nature of BWB's 3-month minimum licences, particularly as they affect visitors to the K and A, we can report a little progress. Firstly the Inland Waterways Amenities Advisory Council have agreed to investigate the matter; and secondly we understand that BWB have promised to take a further look at their short-term licences for next year.

Middle Thames Those of you who have suffered from some of the very long holdups at Romney Lock, Windsor, this summer (up to 2 or 3 hours at peak periods) will take some comfort from the fact that there are now definite proposals to rebuild it, but unfortunately not until the winter of 1976/77.

Itchen Navigation Your Branch Committee have been investigating what remains of this waterway, and an article on its history and present condition appears elsewhere in this issue.

Wey Navigation The result of last year's Public Inquiry into the new Guildford Bypass (known as the Burpham/Ladymead Diversion) has just been published. This affects the amenities of the Navigation particularly in the Burpham area, where the new dual carriageway road is planned to run very close to the river in two places.

Sadly the Secretary of State has confirmed the line of the new road. The IWA gained two small concessions. One relates to landscaping and the other to the realignment of the new side road over Bowers Lock Cut. If anyone is interested in reading through the Inspector's Report, and the Secretary of State's Decision (120 pages!) they are welcome to do so by arrangement with the Secretary.

Structural Conservation Officer Roger Penney is now in the process of visiting, listing and classifying interesting waterway related structures within the Branch

area. He would welcome some more help on this task, particularly with regard to the disused navigations to the south of the area (Wey and Arun, Portsmouth/Arundel, Rother, Itchen, Adur, Chichester, etc). If anyone would like to combine a weekend ramble with this piece of interesting research, would they please contact him at 59 Ashenden Road, Guildford (Tel: 64076).

TONY DAVIS

HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

'The Forgotten Waterways' The branch committee have now decided that the venue for their Rally of Boats for next year will be Dobbs Weir, Hoddesdon on the River Lee, for three days over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, 29-31 May 1976, by kind permission of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. It is hoped that this will provide the incentive for boatowners in the south to visit what are virtually 'forgotten waterways', the Rivers Lee and Stort, being somewhat cut off from the rest of the canal system. The site is a truly picturesque spot in the northern part of the Lee Valley Regional Park and we look forward to seeing many new boats and faces next Spring.

Future Meetings At The Bull, Stanborough, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

Wednesday 29 October 8 pm. Speaker - Ron Hough on Traditional Canal Boat Painting.

Wednesday 26 November 8 pm. Photographic Competition. Open to all members who are requested to bring along slides and prints on both canal and general subjects.

December - No meeting this year.

NORMAN VINES

LONDON BRANCH

Meetings 1975/6 All London-based members are welcome, with their friends. Venue as before, the *Albert*, 52 Victoria Street, London SW1, 7.00 for 7.30 pm:

16 October Micheal Ayland, Chairman of the ST&S, will talk on the Stroudwater, Thames and Severn - Past, Present and Future.

20 November Malcolm Braine on Thirty Years with Narrow Boats (supplementing earlier talk).

11 December Northern Waterways by the well-known canaller/author, John Gagg.

1976 programme (third Thursday each month up to May) to be announced.

NIGEL STEVENS

OXFORD BRANCH

Another season of activities has begun. Book the following dates in your diary now:

Oxford Meetings

Meetings are at the Magdalen Arms, Iffley Road, Oxford, unless otherwise stated. Time: 8.00 pm (bar opens 7.30 pm).

Wednesday 12 November 'Building a Modern Narrowboat'. Peter Jones, of Cropredy, talks about his experiences building and fitting out two boats.

Saturday 15 November JUMBLE SALE 2 pm SS Mary and John Church Hall, Cowley Road, Oxford. Our last Jumble Sale raised over £60. We hope to do even better this time!

Saturday 6 December CHRISTMAS FESTIVITY: traditional style, with live entertainment, dancing to a traditional group, folk music and the Bampton Morris Dancers. Buffet supper and bar. 7.30 for 8.00 pm, Greycoats School Hall, Bardwell Road, Oxford. Tickets available at Branch Meetings, or contact any Committee member.

Wednesday 10 December Members' night. A social gathering: bring 12 of your favourite slides. Quiz, and light refreshments.

Wednesday 14 January 'Exploring Disused Canal Tunnels'. Alan Simpson, on the Brindley Harecastle and Sapperton tunnels in particular.

We hope you will support meetings, and in particular the Branch's two fund-raising efforts: the Jumble Sale and the Christmas get-together. We hope to raise money to help the K&A restoration and the Montgomery Appeal.

Banbury Meetings

Martin Gelling and his committee in Banbury have been busy. Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month. Time: 8.00 pm. Place: the Buck and Bell, South Bar, Banbury.

Tuesday 28 October 'Colour up the Cut'. Members show waterways slides.

Tuesday 25 November 'Memories with LTC Rolt on Cressy': W.G.Trinder.

There will be no December meeting.

Tuesday 27 January Social evening.

Working Parties

Chairman of the Oxford Branch, Mike Warner, has been organising canal working parties during the summer. A group of volunteers has done much to clear away undergrowth along the towpath from Wolvercote. If anyone is interested, contact Mike Warner, Telephone Cassington 880201.

Committee member Mrs Chris Chinkin has resigned from Oxford Branch Committee: she and her husband have recently moved to London and will be continuing their waterways interest there. We wish her all the best and would like to thank her for all her efforts, particularly in organising so many of the activities we have enjoyed over the past two years.

TONBRIDGE BRANCH

The tour of the Royal Military Canal was very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Members filled a coach and we walked along delightful stretches of this peaceful waterway on a hot July day. For most of the mileage the draught through the coach helped to cool us, as did icecream and beer at intervals. The picnic lunch was an absolute joy and the whole day was as a summer's day should be.

At the time of writing this, we are on the eve of the Boat Rally at Gravesend. At least two boats have already left the Medway and are moored in the Basin, waiting for next week. Under the Chairmanship of John Epton, over 20 members of the Branch are now involved in preparations and most are doing their respective nuts! It seems incredible that when you read this, the event will be over. We are all praying that this summer will last just a little bit longer. The event might be over but as one newspaper has put it - "this could be the first step toward a rejuvenated canal". You have seen in last month's *Windlass* that we are anticipating support by the subject matter of our first Branch Meeting in October. For those of you who could not get to either the Rally or the Meeting, a report will be in the next *Windlass*.

Branch Chairman When Geoff Matthews left, Ron Stainton stepped into the breach 'temporarily', but like most temporary jobs it looks like becoming a permanency. Ron is exceptionally well qualified for this position as he is a very long-standing member of the IWA and has served quietly and unassumingly on national committees of some importance. We are very fortunate because IWA have now released Ron from other committee work to be our Chairman. Welcome Ron, we are sure you'll do a great job!

Personnel Officer Response to last issue's appeal for this job was good, and we would like to welcome Mrs Anne Vernon of 60 Hawkhurst Way, West Wickham (Tel: 01-777 5478), who has been appointed. We would like to thank everyone else who volunteered - we are going to find jobs for you!

Planning Check Officers We still need a few more members for these positions. The work is not onerous but it is Vital. All that is needed is a visit to your local

Continued on page 8

THE ITCHEN NAVIGATION

Few know that the Itchen Navigation — meandering through lea and meadow from Blackbridge in King Alfred's historic old capital of Winchester to Woodmill in the Itchen's tidal reach in Southampton — remains a public navigable waterway.

Long since did the last barge — skippered by one Robert Newton — make its last commercial journey up to Blackbridge Wharf in 1969, when it finally succumbed to the competition of the parallel London & Southampton Railway. No more did the clump of the hooves of the barge horses, or the picturesque language of the bargee, disturb the sylvan peace of this stretch of lovely Hampshire countryside — as this ancient navigation slipped gently into decay. Attempts to resuscitate it commercially at the beginning of the present century came to nought and, only now, in the present climate of nationwide efforts to save our waterways heritage, has there begun to awaken strong local interest in its retention and preservation for all to enjoy.

The story of the Navigation began long ago. Godfrey de Lucy, Bishop of Winchester, made the River navigable from Southampton to Alresford between 1189 and 1204, but over the centuries it fell into disuse. In 1665 seven so-called 'capitalists' were commissioned by Act of Parliament to make the Itchen, or Itchin or Itching, navigable, giving them the monopoly of proprietorship. Its restoration had a chequered history, and the works were not completed until 1710. The main course of the river and its tributaries were used — after improvement — the remainder being artificial cut. The navigation now extended for some 10½ miles, with 15 locks, plus two sets of single gates for flood control, and could accommodate barges of 70-feet x 13-feet.

Due to preferential treatment, the monopoly proved unacceptable, and the second Act of 1767 came into being, *inter alia*, appointing commissioners to ensure fair treatment, resolve problems and fix levies. A further Act of 1795 became necessary to give one, James D'Arcy who had become sole proprietor, powers to extend the Navigation from Woodmill to the Northam anchorage, and — owing to the chicanery going on at the time — required D'Arcy to replace himself by a Committee — which he failed to do! The equity of his company of 160-shares was next acquired by Messrs Moody and Meadow, and then by George Hollis and Harry Baker.

In 1802 the most important Act became law. The Act of 26 June 1802 converted the Itchen Navigation from a monopoly into a public waterway — that is 'the river, the bed of the river, six-feet on either side of each bank, plus another nine-feet on the side on which a horse could pull a barge'... 'for the benefit of the public, without let or hindrance, or obstruction from any person or persons whomsoever, upon payment to the said George Hollis and Harry Baker, their heirs and assigns, such rates and duties as shall be demanded by them'. Two more Acts completed the six Acts enacted — those of 1811 and 1820 — which mainly concerned amended toll rates, riparian rights, use of the water for irrigation, etc. All of these Acts remain on the statute book — none has ever been repealed.

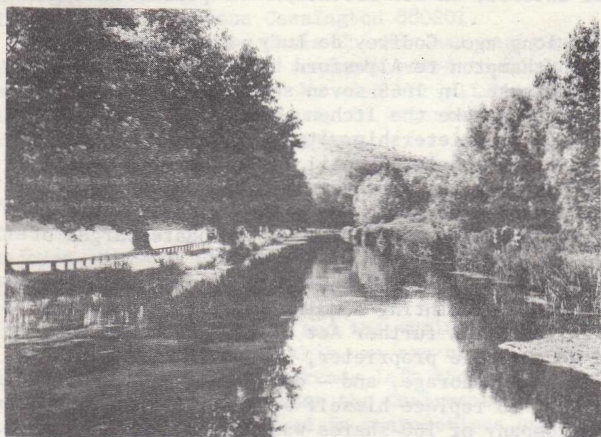
Trade expanded, particularly during the Napoleonic wars, and at the turn of the century plans were afoot to link the Itchen Navigation with the Basingstoke Canal — had that materialised this might have been a different story, both then and now! Hollis eventually became sole owner, and William Whitear Bulpett, who became his manager in 1841, subsequently became the owner of the equity of redemption of the proprietorship, or mortgagee in possession of the company of 'The Itchen Navigation Estate'. It was he who must have witnessed, with sadness, the all too familiar development in waterway history, in which the nearby railway drove the navigation into insolvency, and finally out of business.

On his death, at the ripe old age of 92, in 1899, it was stated in his obituary

that William Whitear Bulpett, DL, JP, Banker, ex-Mayor and Freeman of the City of Winchester was 'the receiver of the defunct Itchen Navigation, whose Deeds he possessed, and doubtless contain documents which would be interesting to the antiquary'. His estate — including Old Alresford House, Old Alresford, Hampshire, previously the ancestral home of Admiral Lord Rodney — passed to his eldest nephew, Charles William Lloyd Bulpett.

In 1911 one Patrick O'Carroll, a Southsea solicitor, obtained an option to purchase the Deeds from C.W.L. Bulpett, in the hope of resuscitating the Itchen Navigation and public meetings were held in Winchester and elsewhere. Backed by London financiers, O'Carroll created a Company capitalised at £20,000, with the hope of selling shares. Due to the difficulties in clearing titles, but more to the fact that it was never really practicable to compete again with the L&SWR running alongside it, insufficient interest was created, thus it never traded and was wound up in 1925. About this time bachelor Charles Bulpett took himself off to Kenya — and that, apparently, was that.

Since the Itchen Navigation Estate became insolvent, maintenance of the bridges over the waterway devolved into the care of local authorities and — as so often in these circumstances — some were lowered. The actual Navigation and its works has, over the years, lapsed into gentle decay. Due to local apathy, some have been



*The Itchen Navigation in
Winchester looking towards
St Catherine's Hill
(Photo: G.H. Crosley)*

allowed to insinuate themselves into certain sections purporting 'possessory rights' and 'acts of ownership'.

Fortunately, the all-important Act of 1802 covers the Itchen Navigation for the use of the public 'without let or hindrance' — and only by statute can it be disposed of, and then only in its entirety.

Today, whilst it is possible to walk the whole length of the navigation from Wharf Hill in Winchester to Woodmill in Southampton on a towpath in fairly reasonable condition, much would be needed to restore full navigation — although much more difficult projects are being planned and actually tackled in this era of waterway recovery. However, apart from approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of cut between a point above Mansbridge, on the outskirts of Southampton, to Conigers Lock just below Bishopstoke — which was drained some years ago and where short stretches were filled-in — the remainder is in water. With portage around the former locks and the aforementioned drained section — though the natural river runs nearby — through canoeing is still possible, and most of the pounds could be used for unpowered boating, even in its present condition. The majority of the locks were turf-sided, and the brickwork and masonry of these are in varying stages of decay — most of these now being weired. On the dry section little remains of four locks, with vegetation growing through the remaining masonry, whilst only a weir indicates the site of the former Bishopstoke Lock. The best preserved is Allbrook Lock, with its brick chamber, which was reconstructed at railway company expense being at a

point where the railway came right alongside the navigation. In the top pound from St Catherine's Lock into Winchester, pleasure boating by Winchester College and others has continued since its demise.

Most of its course is through beautiful and largely unspoilt countryside — surprising in the expanding conurbation of this area — and, in a part of the country starved of inland waterways, is a vital candidate for public retention, preservation and — hopefully — eventual long-term restoration.

A local association in Winchester has been conducting extensive research into this matter and, with widening interest awakened, has created a situation where the local authority has been placed in a position where responsibility of the control of its section of the navigation must be determined. If pressure is applied, the other two riparian local authorities will have to consider the matter also.

The section from Blackbridge Wharf to St Catherine's Lock, with Winchester's famed water-meadows twixt it and the natural river, is subject to an 'act of ownership' or 'possessory title' by Winchester College. They, with others, have rowed on this stretch for many years and have undertaken some maintenance in so far as is necessary to facilitate their own boating. This mile-or-so of the Navigation has been used by the public as a leisure corridor for countless years, though in recent times the towpath immediately below Blackbridge — one of the

*Old barge cottages on the
Itchen Navigation near
Blackbridge Wharf in
Winchester (Photo:
G.H.Crosley)*



original navigation hump-back bridges — has been obstructed by the College. Further down the waterway, other riparian claimants have sought to maintain 'squatters rights' over both the banks and bed of the Navigation. Local public interests, seeing attempts at possible long-term maintenance and extension of these infringements upon a public waterway, are urging local authorities to assert rightful public control.

A section of the Winchester 'summit' of the Navigation is also threatened by the motorway-planners, who have proposed its re-alignment in order to accommodate that part of the M3 extension — which would bring a six-lane motorway virtually into the ancient city — and is therefore part of another environmental battle with authority. Though the Title Deeds are as yet unlocated, wherever the Itchen Navigation flows — the Act of 1802 applies — and the six Acts still remain law.

It is therefore incumbent on every environmentalist and preservationist body — more particularly every waterways organisation — to do everything possible in support of securing the Itchen Navigation, an important part of our inland waterways heritage, for posterity — and particularly as it is one in the canal-starved South, where the public right of use can be verified.

S.C.L.ASHFORD and G.H.CROSLEY

Branch News - continued from page 4

library once a month to check through planning applications to see if your local waterway is affected. Then contact the Branch Committee if there is anything. A telephone is not needed and you do not have to attend committee meetings. You will be very welcome if you do but from the point of view of 'job effectiveness', it is not necessary.

Winter Programme 1975

Friday 7 November 8.00 pm. Branch Meeting at Maidstone Library. *Subject* - Thames and Medway Sailing Barges.

Wednesday 13 November 8.00 pm. East Kent Group Meeting at the Crispin Inn, Sandwich. *Subject* - to be announced.

Thursday 4 December 8.00 pm. Full Branch Meeting at the Elephant and Castle, Lewes. *Subject* - Research into Canal History.

Wednesday 10 December 8.00 pm. East Kent Group Meeting at the Crispin Inn.

Winter Programme 1976

Tuesday 6 January 8.00 pm. Branch Meeting at Maidstone Library. *Subject* - The Lee Valley Linear Park.

Monday 2 February 8.00 pm. Full Branch Meeting at The County Hotel, Canterbury. *Subject* - Long Distance Towpath Walks.

Thursday 4 March 8.00 pm. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Maidstone Library.

Fuller details of these meetings in next issue.

PROGRESS ON THE WEY & ARUN

Restoration work on the southern pilot section of the Wey & Arun Canal is nearing completion. The ease with which modern machinery is able to cope with dredging and general clearance work has been demonstrated again over the past few weeks with the visit of a Hy-mac hydraulic excavator.

The machine has been working along the length of canal north of Newbridge clearing previously inaccessible areas and has removed some huge tree roots. Banks have been regraded in parts and a start has been made on fitting stop-planks at Loves Bridge. Upper lock gates are being constructed in oak by the Weald School at Billingshurst and when these, or more stop-planks, are fitted at Rowner Lock a 700-yard section of restored canal can be flooded to give a 'new' waterway of nearly 1½ miles. Further restoration work is in progress along several other sections of the canal.

It is hoped that one other major engineering problem on the southern section will be tackled before the winter. A little north of Loves Bridge, the River Arun was diverted by the canal builders to run parallel with the canal over a length of 600 yards. This avoided the need to build expensive aqueducts, but left the ox-bow course of the original river to be drained under the canal through a brick culvert. Unfortunately, the central section of this culvert has collapsed, leaving a rather large hole in the canal bed. Our civil engineers have advised that the culvert must be completely replaced, and this means laying large concrete pipes alongside the old culvert. However, completion of the work will mean that further progress can be made towards Malham Lock - a section which has remained in fairly good condition.

As we go to press we hear that the Trust have managed to find £1100 worth of pipes for the culvert and working parties will be held from 20 September up to mid-October. The culvert will be replaced with twin pipes and some Naval people are helping with this job. Work will also be carried out at Loves Bridge and Pallington. All enquiries to Peter Dragonetti, East Wantley, Northlands Lane, Storrington, Pulborough, West Sussex (Tel: Storrington 2372).

The work of the Trust may be seen north of Newbridge near Wisborough Green (map ref: O.S. sheet 182 TQ 069260).

LONDON WORKING PARTY GROUP

The following working parties have been arranged for October, November and December:

18-19 October BASINGSTOKE CANAL

We shall be continuing the work so successfully started in July. This week-end should see the Lock well on the way to restoration.

8-9 November DROITWICH CANAL

Work will be repairs to a Lock or Locks, therefore be prepared for brickwork and concreting.

22-23 November }
13-14 December } STRATFORD

Advance warning of our first two visits to Stratford this season.

For details of transport and accommodation, please contact me—Malcolm Lawrence (Working Party Organiser), 'Mulebbis', Lower Dunton Rd, Dunton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3SN. Tel: 0268 414427.

LONDON BRANCH SHOWING OF HISTORICAL CANAL FILMS AT THE ROUND HOUSE

2.30 pm, 13 December 1975

London Branch IWA in association with John Huntley are showing a collection of rare and historical canal and inland waterway Films at the Round House Theatre, Camden, London (5 minutes walk from "Camden Lock") at 2.30 pm on Saturday, 13th December. The programme will include clippings from contemporary newsreels, films of the Basingstoke Canal in 1911 and 1958, a rare film of the Regent's Canal, the classic ex-television 'navvy' film *Dirty Weekend*, the 1945 feature film *Painted Boats*, and much other archive material taken in the days of horse-drawn narrow and butty boats and the great days of full commercial use of the canals. This is a rare opportunity to enjoy a programme of interesting films that are not usually available for public showing. Advance booking is strongly recommended. Tickets available from 1 October from the Box Office, Round House Theatre, Chalk Farm Road, London NW1. (Box Office telephone 01-267 2564), price 70p adult, 40p children under 14 years. As profits will be going to IWA funds, please send a stamped-addressed envelope for the return of the tickets.

HISTORICAL CANAL FILMS

Round House, 13 December 1975 - 2.30 pm

To: Box Office
Round House Theatre
Chalk Farm Road, N.W.1.

Please send me adult tickets @ 70p each and
..... childrens' tickets @ 40p each. I enclose

STAMPED-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE and cheque/P.O. for

£..... payable to the Round House Theatre.

Signed

BASINGSTOKE PROGRESS

As briefly reported in the last issue of *Windlass* Surrey County Council formally agreed at a meeting on 22 July 1975 to buy the 17-mile eastern end of the Basingstoke Canal, from the junction with the River Wey Navigation at New Haw, to the county boundary on Ash embankment. Earlier in the month, it was reported that the canal owners, the New Basingstoke Canal Company, had agreed a price of £40,000.

This marks the end of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society's 9-year campaign for public ownership of the canal. The 15-mile western end was bought by Hampshire County Council in November 1973. The Hampshire authority is restoring their section with the help of voluntary labour which has already contributed an estimated £15,000 during the 18 months work has been in progress on restoring the 15-mile Hampshire section. Apart from towpath clearance and cleaning bridge-holes, volunteers have installed a new footbridge over Fleet Weir, re-built Artillery Weir, and cleared Ash Lock. The Society purchased and renovated a 70-ton steam operated dredger last year which is now working on the canal at Odiham. The Society has also raised £1000 for work on repairing minor bridges over the canal in Hampshire.

The cost of restoring the Surrey section has been estimated at £172,500, to be shared on a 50-50 basis between the County Council and the four riparian District Councils. The County's Finance Committee envisages an annual expenditure of £34,500 for five years starting 1976/77.

The value of voluntary work, towards the cost of restoring the whole canal, at one time put at £98,000, has been increased to £141,000.

The Society recently took delivery of timber to build four pairs of lock gates as a start towards the cost of repairing the 28 locks in Surrey. Two pairs of gates have already been constructed by members of the Society.

The Society is now urging the two county councils to form a joint canal management committee and agree to the formation of a Trust as a means of attracting widespread voluntary labour and financial support.

SUGGESTION FOR A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Roddy on the Canal, by Phyllis Arkle, illustrated by Leslie Wood (for 5-8 year olds) (Hodder and Stroughton, ISBN 0 340 19787, £1.60)

This book tells the story of an adventure of Roddy. Roddy is the little man which we often see digging on roadsides. He can come off his sign at night and, together with his friends on other roadsides, come to life. The roadside people have a friend, a big boy by the name of Nick.

One night a roadside man called Littlefinger falls into the mud and when his friends try to clean him off he falls into the canal. He is rescued by Nick who uses a narrowboat moored nearby. In the narrowboat the roadside men find a tin of paper money that has been hidden. Together with an old man and his ass, an old cottage, two men in a punt and printing machines found later on the narrowboat all this adds up to something fishy which our friends, the roadside men and Nick, want to find out about. How the adventure finishes, I won't say, as that would spoil it.

I enjoyed the book very much and it was nice to read a mystery with a canal for its setting. The illustrations fitted in well with the words. I think the book is a bit too expensive though.

QUENTIN HILL (aged 8)

SILVER SWORD AWARDS

Congratulations to the following members of the Region who have been awarded Silver Swords:

Mr Basil B.Bonner, Whittlesford, Cambridge: *Cameo*

Mr E.J.Geary, Ilford, Essex: *Little John*

Mr R.Wolburn, Ealing, W5: *Little Tuffy*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Region Dinner Cancelled

Since the initial notice in the August issue of *Windlass* of the Region Dinner at the House of Commons we have been informed that the price would be increased by 25%. This the Committee felt would have made the tickets too expensive and have therefore decided to cancel the function. They are looking round for an alternative venue at a later date.

Course on Canals

A weekend course on canals is being organised for 4-6 June 1976 at Theobalds Park College, Waltham Cross, Herts. Lecturers will be Frances Pratt of BWB and Owen and Iris Bryce. The course will include a visit to the latter's boat "Bix", probably at Enfield Lock, and films and slides.

Another clanger!

Before your Editor gets taken to task for dropping another clanger let me state that Tony Davis (Secretary of Guildford Branch) does now live at 55 Holme Chase, having recently moved up (down?) the road from No. 53! Telephone number remains the same.

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Letters to the editor



SHORT-TERM LICENCES

Reading

Dear Sir,

The question of boat licences for the K&A Canal mentioned in the August *Windlass* interests me as I had hoped to take my grandchildren up the canal for a day to teach them how to work the locks and perhaps impart other knowledge as to the use of canals. This is now made impossibly expensive. My boat is moored on the Thames and has a Thames licence.

For a long time now I have felt that the system of boat licensing should be altered, and a comprehensive licence applicable to all waterways made compulsory.

Unless one can plan travel well in advance and write to the appropriate address in time to settle the sum required and receive the licence before setting out, it is difficult to obtain a temporary licence at all. Several times I have gone up to Oxford, and the weather being good, have decided to take a trip up the canal, only to find the canal office closed. I have gone on, and returning two or three weeks later, have had great difficulty in finding someone to take my money. On one occasion I had to come on home and send the money later. A similar difficulty confronts one on the K&A. Indeed I have met boat owners on the canal who have assumed that their Thames licence covers travel on the canal.

Now that there is one Water Authority it should be possible to pay one comprehensive fee. This might consist of the current fee for a licence to cover the waterway where the boat is moored plus xp per foot to cover other waterways or, alternatively, there could be an all-in fee like the road fund licence for cars.

For my part, increased petrol costs and advancing years make it unlikely that I should make much use of the additional facility but I would gladly pay the additional charge to help the waterways.

Yours faithfully,
D.I. Darlow (Mrs)

Classified Ads

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£1500	£20.00	£17.00	£3750	£40.00	£34.00	£7000	£70.00	£59.50
£1750	£21.00	£17.85	£4000	£42.00	£35.70	£7500	£75.00	£63.75
£2000	£23.00	£19.55	£4250	£44.00	£37.40	£8000	£80.00	£68.00
£2250	£25.00	£21.25	£4500	£46.00	£39.10	£8500	£85.00	£72.25
£2500	£28.00	£23.80	£4750	£48.00	£40.80	£9000	£90.00	£76.50
£2750	£31.00	£26.35	£5000	£50.00	£42.50	£9500	£95.00	£80.75

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