

The Buckingham Navigator

Spring 2005

The newsletter of the Buckingham Canal Society
Registered Charity No: 1072924

Work Party Dates for your Diary April, May and June

Please note: For more information please contact Athina Beckett on 01908 661217

April		May		June	
Sunday	10 th	Sunday	8 th	Thursday	9 th
Thursday	14 th	Thursday	12 th	Thursday	23 rd
Thursday	28 th	Thursday	26 th		

***** BSC BOAT RALLY, COSGROVE***** **Cosgrove Lock, 11TH & 12TH June**

For further details contact Bill Upton on 01908 647317 or Tony Collins 01908 604731 or email
info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

The next issue of the Navigator is due for publication in July. Your contributions, articles, letters, general observations will help to make it more interesting. *Please send all contributions by 1 June 2005*, emailed, 3.5 floppy disc, typewritten or handwritten (in that order of preference) to Lyn Simmons, 3 Robins Close, Hartwell, Northants, NN7 2HZ, Telephone 01604 864484 (email address: lynsunley1@hotmail.com)

GETTING IN TOUCH

There is a list of BCS Committee Members and others who are active in the Society on the back page. Please contact any member for details of the BCS activities, future events, sponsorship opportunities, membership details or any other matters.

IN THIS ISSUE

Work Party Organisers Report	Page 2
Advertising in "The Buckingham Navigator"	Page 2
Fund Raising by Raffle Ticket	Page 2
The Buckingham Flotilla	Page 2
Grand Old Lady Back in City	Page 3
British Waterways Lock Standard	Page 3
Welcome to New Members	Page 3
Chairman's Column	Page 3
Editors Note	Page 4
News from Stoke Bruerne	Page 4
Other Events	Page 4
Contacts	Page 5

Disclaimer

The Committee of the Buckingham Canal society publishes the Buckingham Navigator and the views expressed in it are not necessarily those of the Society. Nothing printed herein may be construed as Society policy unless specifically stated. The society and its Committee accept no responsibility for any matter advertised in, or included in this newsletter

WORK PARTY ORGANISERS REPORT

The work is still progressing well at Little Hill Farm. BITM WRG were here for a weekend in January and did an amazing amount of work stump pulling. They cleared most of the tree stumps that we had cut down and I think they enjoyed themselves with an evening at the Barley Mow pub in Cosgrove where we all tried our hand at Northampton skittles.

We are now advertising for new volunteers to cover Thursdays and Sundays as a few of our long time volunteers are not available at present due to various medical problems.

We also got a bit of extra publicity via the Buckingham Advertiser. They had come to the Buckingham site and taken pictures when John Bercow, MP for Buckingham visited the site, but then nothing appeared in the Advertiser. I thought we had upset them, but it turns out that there was a problem with the cameraman's camera. The Advertiser then offered to do a re-shoot on the same Sunday as the work party. I had to make a mad dash to Buckingham and along with six other people stand on our re-built spillweir whilst Tony Collins posed with a watering can! We then had to make a very quick dash to our other site at Little Hill Farm to join other members working there. Hope the publicity in the newspaper will result in new members joining us.

Finally, I would like to send my best wishes to three of our volunteers who haven't been well lately. Firstly to Peter Robertson and to thank him for the heritage bricklaying at Buckingham and to wish him well. Also best wishes go to Mike Mathewson and Ted Atkinson who are both recovering from operations.

Once again as we are now working on private land, if there is anyone out there who would like to visit our new site or come and join in with the group, please give me a ring and be sure of a warm welcome, as we always have a good bonfire going on work party days.

Athina Beckett
Work Party Organiser

ADVERTISING IN "THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR"

Advertisements are welcome in the Navigator to assist funding. Rates are as below. Payment is required before copy date. Cheques made payable to "Buckingham Canal Society". 33% reduction for 3 issues.

Whole Page:	£16.00
Half Page:	£10.00
Quarter page:	£6.00
Back page:	£22.00
Inserts:	£7.50

FUND RAISING BY RAFFLE TICKET

We sold 350 raffle tickets, this is up on last year. My thanks to all who bought and help sell raffle tickets. We shall shortly be receiving a cheque for £175, this is 50p per ticket sold. The winner of the VW Beetle came from Huntingdon, Cambs.

Diana Collins

THE BUCKINGHAM FLOTILLA FOR SALE

Ask any member of the Buckingham Canal Society and they will tell you the story of the opening of the canal link:

"Twelve decorated canal boats puffed their way into Buckingham Canal Basin on May Day 1801. Pride of place in the prow of the first went to the Marquis of Buckingham, who was joined by Messrs Praed and Selby (Canal Committee members), and Philip Box, Buckingham's greatest banker. The great, the good and a supporting festival band were on succeeding craft; the rear being 3 narrowboats containing typical cargoes: coal, slate and fine goods. After a Civic welcome complete with cannon fire, all the dignitaries repaired to *Cobham Arms Inn* for a "handsome" dinner, presumably subsidised by the Marquis."

It is one thing to show what the Canal might do for Buckingham and North Bucks in terms of enabling both heavy bulk goods and fragile knick-knacks to be imported cheaply, speedily and safely, but another matter to ensure that entrepreneurs were equipped to rise to the challenge: to fill the canal with craft and pour money into the coffers of the Canal Company. After all, Buckingham's canal link was super narrow gauge. It wasn't just a case of boats from the Midlands or Paddington turning right or left at Stony Stratford and chugging along the nine and a quarter miles to Buckingham. Most craft were too wide to navigate our link.

But Messrs Praed and Selby, aided and abetted by the Marquis and the rest of the Committee had engineered a crafty ruse. All was revealed barely a week later in an advertisement in the *Northampton Mercury* placed by Stony Stratford's brilliant auctioneer: John Day. Before the month of May was out, he held a great auction at the Stony Stratford Wharf of stout canal boats, each capable of carrying upwards of a ton of freight and suitable for the Buckingham Arm. They had been the property of the proprietors of the Canal.

By now, you will have guessed how many were on offer: TWELVE. The flower bedecked, glory barges bought for the opening ceremony had been stripped of their finery and were flogged ready to carry bricks to Buckingham.

Ed Grimsdale

GRAND OLD LADY BACK IN THE CITY

High and dry but this old girl is actually back home – about as far from the open water as you can get in England.

The Pat was built by the Edward Hayes Company in Stony Stratford 80 years ago.

The 45 foot tug spent its working life on the River Thames but was renamed The Wey in the 1930s.

Recently she was lifted gingerly from a low-loader to become an exhibit at Milton Keynes Museum after being donated by its current owners the Environment Agency.

“We have been looking for a Hayes boat for many years and to find and secure the last example of a boat built by this important local manufacturer is significant for the museum and the local community”, said Museum Director Bill Griffiths.

Edward Hayes was a major manufacturer of boats and agricultural machinery between the 1860s and 1920s.

One of its apprentices was Frederick Rebbeck, who later worked on the Titanic and became Chairman of Harland and Wolff in Belfast.

It was possibly unique for boats of the size of The Pat to be built so far from tidal waters. She was towed from Stony to now closed Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal and launched sideways in the water minus her engine, which was fitted in London after she was towed there by horse.

Hayes boats served across the world, including on the Sea of Galilee, another was a gunboat in South America and another chased U-Boats in WWII.

The Pat started her life moving freight on the Thames and later was an ice-breaker on the river in the winter of 1940. In 1959 she was used by the Metropolitan Police to find a car in which a couple had committed suicide and in 1966 she recovered a sunken sailing boat.

“She will go straight on display and I am sure she will create a lot of interest locally and further afield,” said Bill.

“We would love to find more items made by or associated with Hayes,” he said.

The Pat is now on public display, every weekend 11 am to 4.30 pm.

Steve Larnar, The Citizen January 4th 2005

BRITISH WATERWAYS LOCK STANDARD

Roger Squires, Chairman of IWA's Navigation Committee, has been asked by BW Customer Services if the Association can assist in identifying poor standards of equipment at locks on BW waterways. British Waterways particularly wish to be made aware of balance beams that boaters consider to be at the wrong height, difficult paddle gear, and anything else that makes locks difficult to operate. Branch and region officers who have comments on the above should submit them direct to Roger Squires. (roger.squires@waterways.org.uk) who will forward them on to British Waterways.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome all new members who have joined us since our last edition of The Navigator.

We hope to see some of you at Society events; if distance does not permit this, we hope you enjoy reading about our activities and thank you for your support.

It would save the society postage if you would take future copies of the Navigator from the internet, just send your email address to info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

With John and Peter leaving us we have at least two vacancies on the committee to fill, plus any volunteers who would be willing to assist with individual items. Our workload is increasing all the time, so anyone who could help with, for instance, planning/events organising/insurance. All small jobs, but put together they take a large part of our time. All help would be welcome.

I met John Bercow, the MP for Buckingham, on site at Bourton, who showed interest in the work party progress and has since written offering his help where possible. He is also very willing to work with our patron, Tim Boswell, MP for Daventry, to try and get the canal line on to the new development plan for Buckinghamshire and the new South Northants plan, to protect it from future development. I believe this to be a priority for 2005. I also met Jerry Appleyard, the new General Manager for South East Waterways last month with my IWA hat on, but did manage to get in a plug about the BCS. I am also trying to set up a meeting with him to see if we can find a way for BW to support the BCS campaign, if not with money with moral support. This would help our dealings with the local councils. Finally, we are again holding our Rally at Cosgrove in June, which I know is some way ahead, but please put the date in your diary because we can do with your support. Remember you do not have to be a boater to join us.

**Tony Collins
Chairman**

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Navigator is a magazine for all members of the Buckingham Canal Society, therefore, more input to the production of it would be appreciated. As a new Editor and Member, it would be useful for members to also let me have comments and suggestions regarding the type of information they would like to see. Many thanks.

Lyn Simmons
Editor

NEWS FROM THE CANAL MUSEUM AT STOKE BRUERNE

Throughout March and April we are holding a book sale, with 33% off a variety of books on waterways, walking, angling and local history in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. Please come and browse.

On 20th March our new exhibition on the Blisworth Tunnel will be open in time for the celebration of its 200th birthday on March 25th. The exhibition features a giant mural of the tunnel mouth which was completed by local children at our summer art workshops in August last year.

Preparations for the Blisworth 200 Festival on 18th and 19th June are well underway. There will be a variety of activities for all the family including tunnel boat trips, children's arts and crafts activities and the ever popular Mikron Theatre. For the latest news on events see www.blisworthtunnel.org.uk or call The Canal Museum on 01604 862229.

Alison Smith
Manager, Canal Museum

OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

IWA MILTON KEYNES

(All meetings are held at Bletchley Rugby Club, Manor Fields, Bletchley, 7:45pm).
For further details contact: Roy Cleverly
01908 367928

Monday 21st March

"Things you didn't know about the Inland Waterways"
with Nicholas Hill

Friday 1st April to Sunday 3rd April

Spring Clean-Up.

Wednesday 13th April

IWA Grand Junction Region AGM
& Inter-branch Quiz

OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS, Cont'd IWA MK

Monday 25th April

"James Brindley"

Speaker: Runnalls Davis

IWA NORTHAMPTON

(Meetings during the winter are held at the Blisworth Coaching Inn, Station Road, Blisworth, 8.00 pm)

12th April 2005

"Knots & Ropework" by Ken Nelson

Friday 29th April – Monday 2nd May 2005

Northampton Boat Gathering

Nene at Northampton

For your entry form or further details

Contact: Eric Young, 01604 862988 or

dituk@msn.com

Tuesday 10th May

"RNLI on the Thames" by John Baker

Tuesday 14th June

"Noggin & Natter"

(8pm at The Wharf Inn, Cornhill Lane, Bugbrooke)

Saturday and Sunday 18/19th June 2005

Blisworth Tunnel Bi-Centenary Rally

This event is already heavily booked, so if you are planning to take your boat, the only way you will get a mooring is to book now.

Contact: David King 01908 661309 or

djsking@tesco.net for your entry form.

Crick Boat Show

Saturday 28th May-Monday 30th May.

At Crick Marina, Crick, Northamptonshire.

Just off Junction 18. M1.

A great day out for all the family.

Look out for the BCS stall in Barlow's Tent where you can buy a signed copy of Geoffrey Lewis's new books or browse around the bric-a-brac for sale.

- Over 50 Boats to welcome you aboard.
- Free boat trips
- 250 exhibitions and stalls
- Children's activities
- Real ale bar
- And much much more.

For more details.

www.crickboatshow.co.uk

Email crick@britishwaterways.co.uk

Phone 01908 302500

Patron Tim Boswell MP

Committee.

Chairman. Tony Collins 18 Skeats Wharf Pennyland Milton Keynes MK15 8AY info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk	01908 604731
Secretary. Bill Upton 18 Elmers Park Bletchley Milton Keynes MK3 6DJ	01908 647317
Work Party Organiser. Athina Beckett 2 Staters Pound Pennyland Milton Keynes MK15 8AX	01908 661217
Treasurer. Vernon Draper 12 Chipperfield Close New Bradwell Milton Keynes MK13 0EP	01908 312239
Steve Miles Cosgrove Wharf, Lock Lane Cosgrove Milton Keynes MK19 7JR	07792 497116
Helene Hill Cockfield House Stowe Rise Buckingham MK18 1HU	01280 813133
Diana Collins 18 Skeats Wharf Pennyland Milton Keynes MK15 8AY	01908 604731
Pam Forrest 72 Portishead Drive Tattenhoe Milton Keynes MK4 3FN	01908 504017

Other Activities (non committee)

Navigator Editor. Lyn Simmons. 3 Robins Close Hartwell Northants NN7 2HZ	01604 864484
Archivist. Sylvia Mead. 16 Bradvue Crescent Bradville Milton Keynes MK13 7AJ	
Membership Secretary. Steve Morley. 33 Hambleton Grove Emerson Valley Milton Keynes MK4 2JS	01908 520090
Promotional Activities. Mandy & Steve Morley. 33 Hambleton Grove Emerson Valley Milton Keynes MK4 2JS	01908 520090
Website Design. Jeremy Cooper. www.olio.demon.co.uk	
Website Maintenance. Len Barrows. info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk	
Rally Facility Officer. Richard Hyde. Cosgrove Narrowboat Company, Cosgrove Wharf, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, MK19 7JR 07973 915652	

Committee members can be contacted by email: info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk