

The Buckingham Navigator

Winter 2004-05

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

Work Party Dates for your Diary January, February, March

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

January	February	March
Thursday 6 th	Thursday 3 rd	Thursday 3 rd
Thursday 20 th	Thursday 17 th	Thursday 17 th
Sunday 9 th	Sunday 13 th	Thursday 31 st
		Sunday 13 th
BITM WRG WEEK-END 15 TH – 16 TH January 2005 at Little Hill Farm		

*****Buckingham Canal Society AGM*****

The eleventh Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 29 January 2005, at the Community Centre, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham, commencing at 7.30 pm. All interested parties are welcome to attend, but only current members are entitled to vote.

The next issue of the Navigator is due for publication in April. Your contributions, articles, letters, general observations will help to make it more interesting. *Please send all contributions by 1 March 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.

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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 has been going well on our new site at Little Hill Farm. In January BITM WRG are here for a weekend, so with the extra manpower on site we hope to clear the larger tree roots from the canal bed. We shall also be borrowing a Tirfor winch from Wendover Arm Trust. This should be helpful in tackling the remaining tree stumps and roots.

Things are happening at the Buckingham site with a visit from Buckingham NIP John Bercow and hopefully an article in the Buckingham Advertiser.

We are also in discussion with the landowner Nick Hawes about re-watering this section of canal, hopefully next Spring.

Several ideas are under discussion as to the best method of protecting the bank in front of the lock cottage. We are planning to have a meeting with Wendover Arm Trust in January as they have plenty of experience in this area.

Once again we welcome anybody who would like to come and see the work in progress and of course, volunteers to help clear the canal bed at Little Hill Farm would receive an extra welcome!
Athina Beckett

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

In conjunction with the MKCVO we have been allocated slots in Centre MK to sell raffle tickets to win a VW Convertible. Last year we raised £137 towards our funds this way and with two slots in the Centre this year we hope to raise more. We had 1000 tickets to sell at £1 each, which we retain at least 50p for every ticket sold. If you can sell more tickets please contact Diana on 01908 604731. Any help in selling books other than at the Centre MK will help, but remember we must have all ticket stubs returned to Diana Collins by 3rd January 2005.

FOR LOVE OF HER AUNT

Sophia was the servant of Matthew Willison who had been the Proprietor of the Falcon Public House for over 50 years. That Inn was situated North West of the crossroads in Old Stratford until the 1920's when

the premises were demolished to improve the junction. Sophia died by drowning in the nearby Buckingham Arm early in 1824. The report on the inquest into her death was full of surmise, for, sadly, Sophia drowned alone in the icy cold waters, as nobody was there to lend a helping hand.

Apparently, Sophia Douglas had an Aunt who lived in Buckingham Town. The conjecture was that she went to the canal side to hail the skipper of the "Buckingham Fly" to see if he had news from her Aunt. (One may presume that she had done so before, or, possibly he had given her messages when she served him in the Falcon.) She probably leant over in her attempt to see if the skipper was on-board his craft. At that point, it was thought, Sophia's shawl fell from her shoulders into the black waters below, she tried to catch it, over-balanced and fell in. It is likely that she could not swim, but the shock of immersion in winter waters can overcome good swimmers.

Was Sophia Douglas the first civilian casualty of the Buckingham Canal?

Does any Canal Society member know of earlier accidents in the Buckingham Canal?

To term a boat the "Buckingham Fly" suggests that it was a regular taxi-boat ferrying passengers and small items between Old Stratford and Buckingham - what do we know about this service? Do Canal Society members ever dream of indulging in a spot of fly-fishing whilst being ferried in a 21st century Buckingham fly?

Ed Grimsdale October 2004

based on a report in the *Northampton Mercury* March 1824

We are indebted to you Ed, anything you find on the canal makes interesting reading.

TRACING LOST RELEATIVES

I am following up on a family history left by my late grandfather. I have been able to confirm the family tree back to Edward Dickens, born in Soulbury in 1835. The history gives his father as 'Christopher Dickins, Bargee on Grand Junction Canal'. There is no further information given. I have not been able to find any trace of a Christopher Dickens, of a suitable age to be Edward's father (I guess he would have been born between 1780 and 1820). I wonder if you would be aware of any records still existing that might show who was operating on the canals at the beginning of the 19th century. Any assistance you could give me with this quest would be much appreciated. Best Regards, Richard Dickens.

If you can help Richard please contact Diana on 01908 604731 or info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

NEW BOOKS

The History of Wolverton

Published by: The Wolverton and District Archaeological and Historical Society. Written by Sylvia Meads

This book is priced £17.50 in soft back and in hard back £27.50 It is currently available from Sylvia Meads on 01908 313496 or Peter Brazell on 01908 562045.

Sylvia is also working on a new book called **A Century of Football**, which depicts the history of New Bradwell St Peters Football Club. The book will be available after Christmas. Anyone who is interested in the subject can contact Sylvia on 01908 313496.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following people who have joined recently.

Jeff & Lesley Abrams, Milton Keynes
 Ian Smith, Buckingham
 Julian & Sheila Handley & Family, Buckingham
 Janet & Joseph Cresswell, Leighton Buzzard
 Lord Scott, Foscote
 Chris Fellingham, Great Horwood
 Lyn Simmons, Northampton

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

Two committee members are retiring this month, namely Peter Robertson who is standing down due to health reasons and John Burgess, who is standing down due to other commitments. We all wish Peter well and with his positive attitude we are sure his operation will be a success. John has also been an active member and we thank him for his assistance with committee matters in the past.

This does leave us with at least two places to fill on the committee and we could well do with assistance in other areas, for example: planning matters, landowner research, researching funding or grants, to name but a few. If you do not wish to become full committee members or cannot attend every monthly meeting don't worry, your help could be very useful and much appreciated. If you feel you have skills that will help the society with its aims, please contact any committee member so that we can arrange an informal chat.

On a more positive note, we also welcome new member Lyn Simmons, who has volunteered to help

produce The Navigator. Lyn has been a great help to me in getting this issue ready in spite of her already heavy work load. Thanks Lyn, welcome aboard.

All that remains now is for me to thank everyone for their support over the last year and to wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

Tony Collins

OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

IWA MILTON KEYNES

(All meetings are held at Bletchley Rugby Club, Manor Fields, Bletchley, 7.45 pm)

Monday 24th January

"A Day in the Life of a Thames Tug". Talk by Richard Thomas

Monday 28th February

Branch AGM and "The Ashby Canal Restoring the Moira End" with Geoffrey Pursglove

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.

For further details contact: Roy Cleverly
 01908 367928

IWA NORTHAMPTON

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

Tuesday 11th January

"Travels Down Under" by Steve & Mandy Morley

Tuesday 8th February

"River Lea Part 2" by Richard Thomas

Tuesday 8th March

"Lost Canals" by John Russell and AGM

Northampton Boat Gathering

Friday 29th April – Monday 2nd May 2005

For your entry form or further details
 Contact: Eric Young, 01604 862988 or
dituk@msn.com

Thursday 17th February

Old Stratford Remembered Group. Talk and Slide Show at the Memorial Hall. Details from Paola Lamborghini on 01908 265008.

Blisworth Tunnel Bi-Centenary Rally

Saturday and Sunday 18/19th June 2005

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
dsking@tesco.net for your entry form.

Annual General Meeting

29th January 2005 at 7.30 p.m.

at

Community Centre, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham

Agenda

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the previous AGM
3. Matters arising from Minutes
4. To receive a report from the Treasurer and to receive the accounts for the year ended 30th November 2003
5. To receive a report from the Secretary
6. To appoint the Auditor
7. Election of Officers and Committee Members
8. Subscription rates for the year to January 2006.
9. Any Other Business

Nominations to the Committee

According to the constitution, nominations should be in the hands of the Secretary 14 days before the AGM. We would welcome additional members. There is work for willing hands!

Resolutions to the Meeting

Any resolution you wish to be discussed at the meeting must be notified in writing to the Secretary 14 days before the meeting.

Note: Secretary's address is 18 Elmers Park, Old Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK3 6DJ

*The formal part of the meeting will be followed by a **cheese and wine social** where members will have the opportunity to meet and talk. Members of the Committee will be on hand to discuss future plans, answer questions or talk about ideas or suggestions you may have.*

W Upton
Hon. Secretary

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 North Hants NN7 2HZ	01604 864484
Archivist. Sylvia Meads. 16 Bradvue Crescent Bradville Milton Keynes MK13 7AJ	01908 313496
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***