

# The Buckingham Navigator

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

## EDITORIAL

Georgina Sorrell our newsletter editor has had to step for personal reasons. The Society would like to thank Georgina for all her hard work in producing the Navigator.

We do need someone to replace Georgina so if any BCS member would like to take over this exciting and worthwhile job could they contact a committee member. In the mean time Len Barrows and Athina Beckett have produce this edition of the Navigator

Best wishes, Athina

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### THE NAVIGATOR SUMMER ISSUE

Please send in all contributions for the Spring 2009 issue by 9<sup>th</sup> March, emailed, on CD, typewritten or handwritten (in that order of preference) to:  
 Athina Beckett, 2 Staters Pound, Pennyland, Milton Keynes MK15 8AX  
 (email address: [info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk](mailto:info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk))

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.

### Corporate Members

We are pleased to receive support from these corporate members

Inland Waterways Association

Nikon Optical U.K. Ltd.  
 3 Tanners Drive  
 Blakelands  
 Milton Keynes

Pauley Construction Ltd.  
 The Avenue  
 Broughton Manor  
 Broughton  
 Milton Keynes, MK109AA

If your business is interested in becoming a corporate member of the Buckingham Canal Society please contact the membership secretary.

### 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.

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

## NOTICE OF AGM and SOCIETY SOCIAL EVENING

The 17th Annual General Meeting of the Buckingham Canal Society will be held on Saturday 31st January 2009, at the Community Centre, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham, commencing at 7:15 pm.

Nominations for the committee or matters that you wish to be put before the meeting should be submitted to the secretary by 17<sup>th</sup> January 2009. Nomination forms are available from the secretary.

All interested parties are welcome to attend, but only current members are entitled to vote.

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**Following the formal part of the meeting there will be a social interval with refreshments of cheese and wine. The committee looks forward to meeting as many members as possible.**

The meeting will conclude with a presentation from Howard Yates of Carts & Crafts Horse Drawn Services in Cosgrove who will talk about 'The Working Horse Past and Present' with particular reference to the boat-horse.

Helen Preston, Secretary      01280 821232  
[helenipreston@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helenipreston@yahoo.co.uk)  
16 Mallard Drive, Buckingham, MK18 1GJ



## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Another year has passed but one which proved to be a very positive year for the BCS. With the grant received from WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd) we were able to restore the brickwork on Hyde Lane Lock. This is our first major restoration project on the restoration of the Buckingham Canal and has also saved a heritage feature on part of the North Ouse Valley walk. It has also shown that we can attract major funders to our cause.

The society can report that over 50 people attended our celebration day at Hyde Lane Lock in September. There were also articles and photos in most of the popular waterways magazines including Waterways World, Canal Boat and Narrowboat. Plus coverage in the local press with the Buckingham Advertiser reporting the event with a photo and both local IWA branches had articles in their newsletters.

We are hoping to follow this success and apply to other funders to restore further sections of the canal. I would like to thank all the other groups and organisations that have helped us over the past year. These include Buckingham Town Council, HBOS Bank, Aylesbury, Abbey, Milton Keynes, Nikon, Milton Keynes, Waitrose, Buckingham, Pauley Construction and both Milton Keynes and Northampton IWA and of course our own volunteers who given their time and have helped with fund raising and the practical conservation work at Little Hill Farm and the BBOWT Nature Reserve. Thanks also goes to those who helped sell raffles tickets for the Community Raffle. This year we sold 1,500 raffles tickets the most we have ever sold.

One other exciting development is that Kingdom Tours the company who specialise in canal tours are including a visit to the Buckingham Canal and Hyde Lane Lock as part of a tour arranged over the May Bank Holiday weekend. On Sunday 3rd May they're spending the afternoon touring the canal and inspecting the lock. Further details will appear in the next edition of the Navigator.

The most important event for January is our **AGM on Saturday 31st January** at Buckingham Community Centre. As most of you who have attended in the past will appreciate this is a social event as well as an agm and a chance to meet and socialise with other members. Howard Yates of Carts & Crafts Horse Drawn Services of Cosgrove will be giving the talk this year. Those of you who heard him talk at Milton Keynes IWA meeting in September will know what an amusing and informative speaker he is. I should also point out this is a different talk from the one given to Milton Keynes IWA.

At the AGM we will be asking for your help with various activities that will take place this coming year. Whilst we have an excellent committee there are still vacancies so if anyone is interested please contact me or another committee member and hear I would like to thank Richard Waddy who is standing down from the committee this year. We very much appreciate the work he has done for the society including several talks at our AGM in the past.

We will also need help at our annual Cosgrove Festival, which is being held over the weekend of 17th-19th July. Help with the bric-a-brac stall, which will be attending various canal festival throughout the year would also be much appreciated.

Wishing everybody a very Happy New Year and hoping to meet and greet everybody at the AGM on the 31st January.

**ATHINA BECKETT (CHAIRMAN)**

### **Your Society Needs YOU!**

Have you over-indulged over Christmas? Are you turning into a couch-potato? Buckingham Canal Society has the perfect solution; come and join one of our work parties!

Perhaps we should find a new name, one that doesn't involve the word work? All the activities are entirely voluntary and everyone participates at his or her own pace so it can hardly be called work.

There are four sites along the canal where we are active at different times of the year. You will spend a day (not a long day, we usually start at 10 am and finish about 3 pm) out in the delightful Buckinghamshire or Northamptonshire countryside, enjoying the peace and the wildlife. You will have the opportunity to exercise by undertaking tasks such as scrub-clearing and raking, strimming, hedge-cutting, tree-felling and a new skill that is enthusing some of us, hedge-laying. There are always openings for the frustrated arsonists among you as we usually need a bonfire (for sitting round when we have our picnic lunch as well as for depleting the rubbish pile).

At the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust site, volunteers are making good progress improving the environment around the newly restored lock. This can involve levelling and laying gravel, fence-mending or for those who really enjoy mud there is an opportunity to clear the lock bed! (Waders provided if you ask nicely.)

At the Little Hill Farm site the traditional bridge is being lovingly restored. Winston Churchill isn't the only one to have found that brick-laying can be good therapy. Many of our volunteers find this activity very rewarding.

We are hoping to find some volunteers with knowledge about the wild-life and perhaps with photographic skills. We would like to record some of the more unusual plants and animals that we come across as we work. The adder at Hyde Lane Lock was very camera-shy but the spring flowers are always a delight! The Buckingham Arm is a rural canal and we would like to publicise its rural qualities.

No one has to commit themselves to regular attendance. There are two Thursday work-parties and a Sunday one each month and very occasionally an additional one for a particular reason such as participating in Make A Difference Day. If you would like to come for a taster session just give Athina a call and she will let you know the location for the next work-party.

How will you feel at the end of the day? You will probably be tired and may have exercised some muscles that you didn't know you had but there is always progress to be seen which gives a tremendous sense of satisfaction. At some of the sites where the Ouse Valley Way runs along the line of the tow-path you may be lucky enough to receive the plaudits of passing walkers. You will certainly have enjoyed the fresh air!

**Helen Preston**

Enthusiastic (if not very skilled) Hedge-Layer

**Hedge Layers at Work**



**IWA EVENTS**

26th January MK IWA 7:45pm  
 Around the canals in the 70's  
 The Pavilion Community Sports Club  
 Worrelle Avenue  
 Middleton  
 Milton Keynes Village

10th February Northampton IWA 8:00pm  
 Forth and Clyde Canal by Richard Thomas  
 Walnut Tree  
 Station Road  
 Blisworth  
 Northampton

23rd February MK IWA AGM 7:45pm  
 plus Canalside issues in Milton Keynes  
 by Alan Holmes

10th March Northampton IWA 8:00pm  
 To be confirmed

23rd March MK IWA 7:45pm  
 Across the Levels by David Blagrove

14th April Northampton IWA 8:00pm  
 The work of a Fisheries Officer by John Ellis

27th April MK IWA 7:45pm  
 The Venice of the Midlands by Runnalls Davis

**The Restored Hyde Lane Lock Today**



**WORK PARTY ORGANISER'S REPORT**

Work started back at the BBOWT Nature Reserve in September. Having had the lock restored by Pauley Construction we were able to assess the next stage of work to be done by our volunteers. The infill blocking the flow of water in the canal bed needs to be removed and we also hope to re-build

the flight of steps on the far side of the lock but this task would be better suited to later in the year when the weather is hopefully warmer.

BBOWT had requested that we do some hedge laying. So four of us attended a course run by Milton Keynes Parks Trust and we have been attempting to pass on the skills learnt. Here I would like to thank Helen who has taken on the task of training our volunteers and by now most of them have had a go with excellent results. This has also proved to be a very popular task as well.

On Make a Difference Day in October 4 new people joined our regular group and again tried their hand at hedge laying and also helped with some of the clearing work near the lock.

Jonathan has been running the sessions at the lock and the large tree that was blocking the entrance has now been removed. The old steps have been cleared away and the brickwork in this area prepared, ready for the work to start restoring the steps later in the year. There is still plenty of work to do in this area as we hope to remove a lot of the reeds blocking the canal by the time our session here finishes in March.

Our work parties will continue at the BBOWT Nature Reserve until the middle of March. It's not all hard work, as the nine people who braved the weather and joined us for the 'fun day' on New Years day will know. In spite of the cold we managed to have a huge bonfire and three people were brave enough to try and cook their food on it. They reckoned it tasted great even though it looked well blacken and with plenty of charcoal on it.

We have now installed an information box on site. This contains the BCS leaflets and seems to be working well. When I went to check on it I found it needed refilling so hopefully all the walkers and fishermen passing this way now have details about the BCS and hopefully we will be getting some new members out of it! My thanks goes to Bill Upton for making the box for us.

For those of you who haven't tried the work parties yet they are a great way of getting to know other volunteers and we always welcome visitors. If you haven't visited this site the best opportunity would be on a work party date as access to the site is difficult, as the farm gate is kept locked at other times.

The dates for the next 3 months work parties are listed in this edition of the Navigator.

**ATHINA BECKETT**  
**WORK PARTY ORGANISER**

**WORK PARTY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**  
**October 2008 -January 2009**

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

<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup>
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup>			

**NEW MEMBERS**

A warm welcome to the following new members that have joined since the Summer newsletter.

- Mr Paul Roper, Tadley, Hampshire
- Mr & Mrs Thomas, Fenny Stratford, Milton Keynes
- Mr K Humphreys, Lillingstone Dayrell, Bucks
- Pauley Construction, Broughton, Milton Keynes
- Nikon Ltd, Blakelands, Milton Keynes
- Mr T Collier, Kettering, Northants
- Mr Michael Bayley, Maidenhead, Berks
- Mr Terry Cavender, Akeley, Bucks

Reminder: Renewals for 2009 were sent out in November 2008 so if you have not already renewed your membership for 2009 please send your remittance to the Membership Secretary.

# Buckingham Canal Society Lock Ransom Weekend 2009



A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

**17 – 19 July 2009**

**at Cosgrove Lock**



Our Lock Ransom Weekend is one of our major fund raising events, last year was one of our best ever so we want to make this years event at least as good.

We have some new ideas for this but your committee needs some extra help to make them happen, some examples of where help is needed, are people to; organise a tombola stall; publicise the event; put posters up around Cosgrove village; oversee the reserved moorings for visiting boats.

A more complete list of activities where help is needed will be available at the AGM. There are both administrative and physical tasks and in all cases anyone offering help would be supported by the committee, you would not be left on your own.

The most important thing at the moment, whether you would like to help or just pay us a visit, is to mark the event in your diary.

In the meantime if you would like any further information please contact Peter Caswell (or any other committee member) – see Navigator for contact details.

## **News of one of our Founder Members**

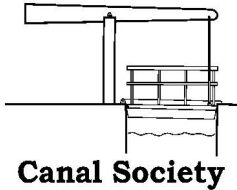
The inaugural meeting of the Buckingham Canal Society was held on 7th January 1992. One of the eight participants was Mr Philip Smith, now of Heelands, Milton Keynes, who was an active member in the early years and has continued to support the Society ever since. Mr Smith recently renewed his membership and included with his renewal some comments, which the committee read with interest.

Mr Smith, OBE, DFC BC, told us that he is now 87 years of age and due to ill health is unable to leave his house. He is sorry to

have to say that 2009 will be his last year as a member with the BCS. He wanted to pass on to all concerned his view that a good job is being carried out in getting the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal back in water.

The committee was delighted to learn that Mr Smith has maintained this interest in the progress of the society for so many years and felt that it would be appropriate to confer Honorary Life Membership upon him. A selection of photographs showing recent progress, particularly at Hyde Lance Lock, will also be sent to him.

## Buckingham



Patron **Tim Boswell MP**

## Committee 2009

Chairman/Work Party Organiser - <b>Athina Beckett</b> 2 Staters Pound, Pennyland, Milton Keynes MK15 8AX <a href="mailto:athinabec@aol.com">athinabec@aol.com</a>	01908 661217 Mobile 07721 319404
Treasurer - <b>Vernon Draper</b> 12 Chipperfield Close, New Bradwell, Milton Keynes MK13 0EP <a href="mailto:vernon.draper@btinternet.com">vernon.draper@btinternet.com</a>	01908 312239 Mobile 07961 302039
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<b>Hélène Hill</b>	01280 813133
Grand Junction Region IWA representative - <b>Bill Upton</b>	01908 647317
<b>Richard Waddy</b> <a href="mailto:Richard@rwaddy.plus.com">Richard@rwaddy.plus.com</a>	01327 842347 Mobile 07885 418797

### Other Activities (non committee)

Website - <b>Len Barrows</b> <a href="mailto:info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk">info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk</a>	
Archivist - <b>Pam Forrest</b>	01908 504017
Rally Facilities Officer - <b>Richard Hyde</b> Cosgrove Narrowboat Company, Cosgrove Wharf, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, MK19 7JR	07973 915652
Editor, " <i>The Buckingham Navigator</i> " - Vacancy	
Slideshow & Talks - <b>Steve Morley</b> 33 Hambleton Grove, Emerson Valley, Milton Keynes, MK4 2JS	01908 520090

Committee members can also be contacted by post:  
c/o 16 Mallard Drive, Buckingham, MK18 1GJ or by email: [info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk](mailto:info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk)