

The Buckingham Navigator

The newsletter of the Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No: 1072924

EDITORIAL

Ah, the British summer. We spend the dark winter evenings dreaming of the long, warm summer days where we can sit outside until 10pm around the BBQ, forgetting that most of our 'summers' consist of a few blissful days (normally falling midweek so we can't enjoy them properly) and then drizzly, muggy days, like today. As I sit here typing this, I can see my rarely used BBQ sitting outside looking a bit sad, with rain streaming down its sides. I am a great advocate of British holidays, and will be spending 10 days in August camping in Wales, but there's a part of me that's thinking of my week in Spain at a friend's villa in July, and feeling just a tiny bit smug....

Best wishes, GEORGINA SORRELL, EDITOR

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THE NAVIGATOR AUTUMN ISSUE

Please send in all contributions for the Spring 2008 issue by 12 September **2008**, emailed, on CD, typewritten or handwritten (in that order of preference) to:

Georgina Sorrell, Magnolia Cottage,
26 Forest Road, Hartwell, Northants NN7 2HE
(email address: georgina@sorrell.me.uk).

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BCS HOSTS SOUTHERN CANALS ASSOCIATION MEETING

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		

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

It has been a very busy period since I last wrote my last Chairman's Chat column for the Navigator. On Sunday 20th April the BCS hosted a meeting of the Southern Canals Association. We based the day around Cosgrove Narrowboats trip boat and used it as our base for the day. The day started with a talk by myself on the history and current work of the BCS. This was followed by a site visit to the BBOWT Nature Reserve where the visitors were told about the WREN grant the society had received and the restoration work that was about to begin on the lock. (For details on how this work is processing please read the 'Work Party Organisers' Report) Returning to the boat for lunch there was a talk in the afternoon by the Wendover Arm Trust, Bedford to Milton Keynes Link and a discussion about the proposed changes to the IWA. The meeting finished with a roundup by everybody sharing information on what was happening in their local area.

Due to the success of last year's boat trip, we repeated the event and ran a boat trip down the River Nene on Sunday 18th May. Like last year's trip this was held on the St John's ambulance boat the Northamptonshire Crusader. 31 People made the trip and the weather was kind to us. A big thanks must go to Jonathan Brown who prepared most of the food for the trip and to all the others who helped make the day a success. A collection was made at the end of the trip and a donation made to St John's for use of their boat for the day. This boat is usually staffed by volunteers and is mainly used to provide trips for disabled people, older people and children with learning difficulties. St John's run two boats, one on the Grand Union Canal and this one on the River Nene and they are always looking for more volunteers to help crew their boats.

The most important event for us in the near future is our annual lock ransom, boat gathering at Cosgrove Lock, Grand Union Canal over the week of the 19th-20th July. We will need people to help us set up from

Friday lunchtime and then to cover the period from 10.00 to 5pm on Saturday and don't forget to bring food for the barbecue Saturday night! Again we need help from 10.00 to 4pm on Sunday running the lock ransom and extra hands needed to take down tents etc. at the end of the festival. If you can only spare a few hours on one of the days that will be fine and it's a great chance to meet up with other members and friends and have an enjoyable weekend as well as helping to promote and raise funds for the society so please come and support us if you can.

ATHINA BECKETT
CHAIRMAN

EVENTS

Buckingham Canal Society's Lock Ransom Weekend Will Take Place At Cosgrove Lock Grand Union Canal

19th-20th July 2008
(Saturday 10am till late - Sunday 10am to 4pm)

All Are Welcome – Free Entry but donations towards the restoration of The Old Stratford and Buckingham Arms will be gratefully received

Planned Attractions (subject to change)

- Historic Narrowboats Raymond & Nutfield
- Boat Trips & Bar – by Cosgrove Narrowboats
- Fender Maker (Mick Betts) Demos all day and sales
- Face Painting
- Bric-a-Brac Stall
- Prize Quizzes
- Guided Walk
- Cake Stall

Saturday night **also** features music, a raffle and a 'Bring Your Own BBQ'.

For further information contact Peter Caswell on 01908 282589 or 07702 668924

IWA EVENTS

Sat 26 July – Linslade Canal Festival
Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, Linslade
01525 631915/6

23-25 August - National Waterways Festival
– new and historic boats, trade stands,
children's activities, music, entertainment,
refreshments, real ale.
Atherley Junction (SU / Staffs-Worcs
Canals) Pendleford Pk, Blaydon Rd,
W'hampton, WV9 5PD
01923 711114 or 0870 240 2438

30 August – 7 September – “Monty 08”
National Campaign Rally, Montgomery
Canal, contact Michael Limbrey, 01691
654081

6-7 September – Shackerstone Festival,
working boats, vintage cars, craft stalls,
refreshments, 07767 400 894

13-14 September – Slough Canal Festival,
Bloom Park, Slough, SL3 7DH,
www.slough.gov.uk

Mon 22 September – BW South
East Update for boaters, by Murray Geddes,
Business Development Manager, South
East Waterways -MK Village Pavilion,
Worelle Ave, Middleton, MK

26-28 September – Chiltern Branch trip to
Wiltshire and Avon – incl Wilts & Berks,
K&A, Bristol Harbour & SS Great Britain.
Contact Colin Bird, 01932 248178

For IWA Milton Keynes see
<http://mkiwa.users.btopenworld.com> for
updates or Rodney Evans, Social Secretary
on 01908 376449 or
Rodwen@scythia.fsnet.co.uk

For IWA Northampton check their website:
<http://northampton.waterways.org.uk/diary.htm>
for updates or contact Graham Treagus on
01604 870515.

BCS HOSTS SOUTHERN CANALS ASSOCIATION MEETING

The Society was asked at short notice to host the spring meeting of the Southern Canals Association, which is an informal grouping of restoration interests from right across southern England and South Wales. Athina Beckett arranged with Richard Hyde for his trip boat Elizabeth of Glamis, which is moored at Cosgrove, to be the venue and participants enjoyed being in such an authentic waterway environment.

Athina opened the proceedings with a brief history of the Old Stratford and Buckingham Arms and then went on to describe the ongoing work of volunteers at the four sites that are currently being worked. Historical photographs of lost bridges were eagerly pored over, as were more recent ones of helmeted volunteers on work parties! Knowledgeable questioning followed and then participants were taken to the BBOWT nature reserve to inspect the volunteer work that has taken place there. We viewed Hyde Lane Lock, for which we have received a £34,500 grant for brickwork restoration and where work will commence shortly. (The grant is from the Landfill Communities Fund of Waste Recycling Group (WRG) administered by the Environmental Body WREN.) The spring flowers were out in abundance, the short section of newly laid hedge – carried out by BCS volunteers – was beginning to sprout new growth, and our visitors were very encouraging about the progress that had been made clearing the lock preparatory to the restoration.

Returning to Cosgrove, lunch was provided by Richard followed by exciting and informative presentations, first by Rodney Evans of the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust who gave an extremely positive progress report and then by Ray Orth of the Wendover Arm Trust reporting on their success opening phase one of their restoration and their progress towards achieving the second phase. There was also a report from Les Etheridge about proposed IWA restructuring and the day was rounded off by brief reports from around the

region from other southern restoration groups.

Participants, who came from a wide area, were complimentary about the progress that is being achieved by a Society with a relatively small membership.

HELEN PRESTON



ATHINA OPENS THE PROCEEDINGS



INFORMATIVE TALKS IN AN AUTHENTIC WATERWAY ENVIRONMENT

WORK PARTY ORGANISER'S REPORT

Pauley Construction Ltd., have now started work on restoring Hyde Lane Lock. Unfortunately the work has been hampered by the fact that there is too much water in the canal at present. This would normally be encouraged but it is proving a problem as their efforts to pump out the lock chamber are taking twice as long as expected and they have already had to send for a much larger pump! At the time of writing a bricklayer is due to start work on the lock chamber in a weeks time. A couple of our

volunteers are working at the lock strimming the footpath and seating area and removing all the over hanging branches from the footpath.

The work on the lock is expected to take about two months and after the work on the lock chamber has been completed we will be installing an interpretation board funded by Milton Keynes Heritage Association. To mark the completion of the work on the lock we are planning a celebration day inviting all BCS members, volunteers and local people who have helped with the project to attend. We hope this will happen in August or at the beginning of September. Unfortunately we can't confirm the date before the next edition of Navigator goes out but we will try and contact as many of you as possible either by email or speak to you at the Cosgrove festival over the weekend of the 19th-20th July.

Our work parties are continuing at Little Hill Farm but as there has been a problem with the sheep damaging our shed it has been decided to move the shed canal side.

HBOS Bank will be running a couple of their team building exercises at Little Hill Farm. One is planned for July and another for the beginning of September. Abbey are also interested in bringing their volunteers to help out in July and there is a possibility of Mercedes Benz also sending along a group of people. So our work parties are proving even more popular. The work continues with the bridge repairs and the scrub bashing and we shall properly carry on working on this site until the middle of September. Even though we are having these extra groups helping us we still rely on our own volunteers to do most of the work so do keep coming along on Thursday or Sundays

**ATHINA BECKETT
WORK PARTY ORGANISER**



THE 'BEFORE' SHOT - HYDE LANE LOCK - MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM WREN.



PROGRESS MADE SO FAR AT THE SITE

WORK PARTY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY July - September 2008

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

July	August	Sept
Thursday 17 th	Sunday 10 th	Thursday 11 th
Thursday 31 st	Thursday 14 th	Sunday 14 th
	Thursday 28 th	Thursday 25 th

COSGROVE AND THE BUCKINGHAM ARM

*Athina sent through two scanned pages
from an old book which mentioned the
Buckingham Arm.....Ed*

Lockwork in progress using sheerlegs and horses at Cosgrove Locks on the Grand Junction Canal in 1900. Half a mile to the south is the cast-iron Great Ouse Aqueduct which carries the canal over the River Ouse.

The aqueduct was built in 1811, replacing an earlier structure designed by William Jessop that collapsed in 1808. Cosgrove was formerly the junction with the long abandoned Buckingham Arm. This 10-mile long branch last saw commercial traffic in the late 1930s. The picturesque village of Cosgrove contains canal warehouses, an unusual Gothic-style bridge built in 1800 and the popular Barley Mow canalside pub.



CANAL RECOLLECTIONS

Loading harvest direct to boat on the Buckingham Arm in the Maids Morton area, circa 1900. These boats were often fitted with additional side planks, thus enabling a wider load to be carried. Opened in 1801, the Buckingham Arm was a 10-mile long branch from Cosgrove on the Grand Junction Canal. It last saw commercial traffic in 1938 and was officially abandoned in 1961. More recently from Cosgrove to Old Stratford has since been restored.



SOCIETY NOTICES

BRIC-A-BRAC STALL

Our bric-a-brac stall has been out and about this year covering various canal festivals including a very wet Wendover and a boat gather at Stoke Bruerne at the beginning of June.

We now need more quality bric-a-brac particularly more books as our supply has now almost run out!

Again extra help is always needed on the stall and if you know of a local event where you feel we could promote the canal and run a bric-a-brac stall please let me know as I am always seeking new venues.

NEW MEMBERS

This issue we welcome the following:

Mr Mrs I Thomas - Fenny Stratford

Mr K Humphrey - Lillingstone Dayrell

WAITROSE CHARITY OF THE MONTH

If you live in the Buckingham area you will be pleased to learn that Waitrose has opened a new store. Each month they will select three charities to share £1000, the proportion being decided by the shoppers during that month. When you go in the store take a nomination form and help us make sure that Buckingham Canal Society is one of the selected charities.

UPDATE ON MAURICE BATTS

Man faces canal boat murder charge

A Banbury man has been charged with the murder of a 64-year-old man found collapsed on a canal boat. James Crane, 53, of Springfield Avenue, is to appear before Banbury magistrates accused of murdering Maurice Batts.

Mr Batts was found collapsed on his boat on the canal at Southam Road on September 29. He died on October 9 in hospital in Oxford.

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Another charged with boater's murder

A WOMAN has been charged concerning the murder of Maurice Batts, **Richard Hall** tells us, who was found battered in his boat at Banbury on the Oxford Canal last September.



SCENE OF THE CRIME AT BANBURY

This follows James Crane, also charged with murder in February and remanded in custody.

The 21 years old woman was charged with assisting an offender and bailed to appear at the town's magistrates court.

The post-mortem examination revealed Maurice Batts' death was caused by a 'blunt trauma'. 7/4

Committee 2008

Patron Tim Boswell MP

Chairman/Work Party Organiser - **Athina Beckett** 01908 661217
 2 Staters Pound, Pennyland, Milton Keynes MK15 8AX 07721 319404
athinabec@aol.com

Treasurer - **Vernon Draper** 01908 312239
 12 Chipperfield Close, New Bradwell, Milton Keynes MK13 0EP 07961 302039
vernon.draper@btinternet.com

Secretary – **Helen Preston** 01280 821232
 16 Mallard Drive, Buckingham. MK18 1GJ
helenipreston@yahoo.co.uk

Charity Commission Officer - **Don Allison** 01908 610564
donallison@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary - **Jane Caswell**
96 Gaddesden Crescent, Wavendon Gate, Milton Keynes MK7 7SQ 01908 282589
jane@caswell.eclipse.co.uk

Peter Caswell 01908 282589
peter@caswell.eclipse.co.uk 07702 668924

Hélène Hill 01280 813133

Grand Junction Region IWA representative - **Bill Upton** 01908 647317

Richard Waddy
Richard@rwaddy.plus.com 01327 842347
 07885 418797

Other Activities (non committee)

Website - **Len Barrows**
info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Archivist - **Pam Forrest** 01908 504017

Rally Facilities Officer - **Richard Hyde.** 07973 915652
 Cosgrove Narrowboat Company, Cosgrove Wharf, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, MK19 7JR

Editor, "*The Buckingham Navigator*" - Georgina Sorrell 01604 862743
 Magnolia Cottage 26 Forest Road, Hartwell, Northants, NN7 2HE
georgina@sorrell.me.uk

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