

# The Buckingham Navigator

*The newsletter of the Buckingham Canal Society*

**Registered Charity No: 1072924**

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Navigator. At present we are still without an Editor; the post has been advertised with all the local volunteer agencies but we would still welcome a BCS member to come forward and take over the editorship.

Best wishes, Athina

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### THE NAVIGATOR SUMMER ISSUE

Please send in all contributions for the Summer 2009 issue by 19<sup>th</sup> June, 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

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Blakelands MK14 5BU

Pauley Construction Ltd.  
The Avenue  
Broughton Manor  
Broughton MK10 9AA

Taverners Boat Club  
Thrupp Wharf  
Cosgrove MK19 7JP

Inland Waterways Association  
Northampton Branch

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  |               |        |

## Annual General Meeting report

The Society held its Annual General Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January at the Buckingham Community Centre, well-timed to avoid the snow that arrived the following Monday. Richard Waddy retired from the committee and was warmly thanked for his contribution, particularly for his administration of the Heritage Walks and his entertaining talks given to earlier AGMs. Ros Woodford, a keen boater and regular member of working parties, was welcomed to the committee which otherwise remained the same.

Reports were presented on working party activities, including the progress being made at the Hyde Lane site where the improvement in the environment, both at the lock and along the towpath, has been welcomed by local residents. Fundraising and community involvement were reported on and a significant increase in publicity was noted as a result of the lock restoration. The treasurer reported that funds were up this year despite significant expenditure on the lock and congratulated hard-working fundraisers, particularly Athina Beckett and Jonathan Brown for the Bric-a-Brac Stall and Peter Caswell for his organisation of the successful Cosgrove Festival.

Members enjoyed a Wine and Cheese interval with refreshments organised by Helene Hill and Kay Meadows. Kay's homemade pate is a great favourite!

The evening was completed by Howard Yates who kept us all entertained with his stories of life with working horses. We were given a real understanding of the day-to-day life of working in all weathers and in modern traffic conditions to provide transport services. Look out for Howard and his horse Jessie in the Cosgrove area!

If any member would like to see the draft minutes for the AGM it can be emailed if you contact [helenipreston@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helenipreston@yahoo.co.uk)

**Helen Preston**  
Secretary

## Chairman's Chat

Our AGM held on the 31<sup>st</sup> January at Buckingham Community Centre proved to be a very enjoyable evening for myself and hopefully for all those people who attended. We must be doing something right as we had more people here this year than last year! Howard Yates of Carts & Crafts Horse Drawn Services gave an excellent talk, which was very well received.

Our Secretary Helen Preston has written a detailed report about the rest of the AGM so I would just like to thank everyone who attended and of course a big thanks goes to all those who have helped the Society throughout the year.

There are a lot of exciting events planned for the coming year. These include a boat trip on the Grand Union Canal, a social event for members and friends, and a visit by Kingdom Tours to Hyde Lane Lock on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May as part of their 'Waterways of Buckinghamshire' tour.

Other projects include a display of photographs and information about the society in the MK Heritage Assn shop in Central Milton Keynes and on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May we have been invited to take part in Deanshanger Village Heritage Society celebration day at Deanshanger Community Centre. The village is very proud of its canal history and the history group have collected a series of photos on the canal.

On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June there is a site visit to the BBOWT Nature Reserve by Milton Keynes Natural History Group and of course our own 'Lock Ransom weekend' at Cosgrove on the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> July and a Heritage Walk around Buckingham on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

Our Bric-a-Brac stall will be out and about attending local festivals to raise our profile and also help with funding. At present we are booked into the Wendover Canal Festival on 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> May and the Linslade Waterside Festival on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July. Volunteers are needed to help with the stall on the above dates but by offering to help

you will often then get into the festival free of charge!

If any members know of other events taking place where you feel our Bric-a-Brac stall would do well please let me know.

At present the Society has installed four Interpretation Boards along the route of the Buckingham Arm and we would obviously like to install more so it is with great interest that we hear that Buckingham Town and Deanshanger are interest in having one.

At present we are still without a newsletter editor so the post has now been advertised with all the local volunteer organisations. But we still hope one of our members will come forward and take on this task as the best person for the job would be someone who knows the Society and shares our interest in the Buckingham Canal.

**Athina Beckett (Chairman)**

### **Your Society still needs YOU!**

Here are some more ideas of how you can contribute to the activities of the Society. Very few require a regular commitment. For example help on the Bric-a-Brac stall once or twice a year would be very much appreciated.

#### **Naturalists**

Are you interested in beetles? Can you identify water birds? Do you take photographs of wild flowers? Much of our work on site is in beautiful countryside. We would like to learn more about what we see, photograph it and then share it with other members via The Navigator. Perhaps we can establish a regular column, "Canal Country"! Let us know if you would like to contribute.

#### **Writers, historians, tellers of tales, photographers**

Are you interested in local history or the history of canals? Do you enjoy digging out items of interest about local people and places? Was your last boat trip adventurous, full of disaster or punctuated with beautiful sunsets? Articles for The Navigator are always welcome.

#### **Fund-raisers**

The **Bric-a-Brac** stall visits a range of summer events, mainly at canal locations. Help is needed erecting the stall and setting it out (and of course the reverse at the end of the day) and salespersons are needed to persuade people to

part with their money! This is a wonderful way to meet people who are interested in canals.

The annual **Lock Ransom and Rally** in July is our main fund-raiser. Helpers are needed to set up and man the stalls, to work the lock and to make cakes for the highly successful home-made cake stall! There are many other tasks involved in making this a successful event. Peter Caswell would love to hear from you!

**Community raffle ticket selling** is proving a highly successful fund-raiser. Volunteers are needed to sell tickets in the MK Centre. We are allocated half a dozen sessions over the Christmas and New Year shopping season. Some of us dress in traditional costume and the more volunteers we have the more tickets we sell.

#### **Otherwise willing volunteers**

You would like to help but none of the above activities appeal. There is sure to be a task to suit you. Talk to Athina and tell her about your IT skills or your interest in making craft items for sale or your specialist knowledge of brick-making!

If you think you might be interested in any of the above activities call Athina Beckett who would love to hear from you.

#### **Why bother?**

When Athina asked me to write a few words for the newsletter my mind drifted off and I wondered what to say. I am Terry Cavender and have become involved with the BCS since October last year. Why? Well, before I answer that I ask you to read on despite the following admission..... I am a Parish Councillor! Why am I a Parish Councillor? Because the community in which I live matters to me and my family. Short of winning the lottery and buying the whole village, this is the best way I can help to ensure that the village evolves in a way that my neighbours and I want it to. The same principle goes for the surrounding area and indeed the whole county. I guess it even goes for the whole country although don't get me started on national politics!! I am also a passive boater. One of those who hires a boat every other year or so with the family and enjoys the canals. One day maybe I will own a boat on my local canal but unless we get on and restore it, it will be a huge challenge to get anywhere!

Regardless of whether we agree with political objectives or methods, it is the framework that defines local life and that mean rules. For the BCS this means there are several councils involved in those rules due to geographic boundaries as well as multiple levels of parish, town, district and county councils.

So back to that question of why get involved. Through my parish council role, I have regular access to the town/district/county councillors and have been working with Athina and Helen to increase awareness with them of the canal restoration work. Hopefully this is paving the way for positive support of discussions on such subjects as planning, local development framework and grants as the restoration work progresses. We have even managed to have a meeting with the Environment Agency and the Inland Drainage Board present who although pleading poverty when asked to contribute financially are at least now offering access to survey and hydro-dynamic data that will be necessary in progressing the restoration.

Whilst in many cases I guess this is being read by those who are already advocates of the canal I would ask that you make it your mission to find someone who does not know its there and talk to them about it. Creation of a positive groundswell of support to the restoration is vital in progressing each step of the way through the local political landscape. I am always amazed at the number of people who don't feel it's worth voting, because politicians "don't listen". I can assure you that in my experience they do. If you have a problem write to your local councilor, 9 times out of ten they'll do their best to help. You can have far more of an impact on local politics than national.

And to finish.... a story... A man in a pub was introduced to the town mayor. He shook his hand and told him he would vote for him every time and would he give him his name so he could remember it? The mayor said that as the man did not know his name, his party, or what he stood for, he thought that rather strange. The man told him, "Look,

everything works, the streets are clean, the public services function, and the beauty of the town is maintained. Even better, it's run by politicians that I've never heard of because they just quietly get on with it; my kind of politicians!". That, is nirvana in local politics!

**Terry Cavender**

## **Community Raffle**

The BCS would like to thank all those who sold Milton Keynes Community raffle tickets on our behalf to friends and relations and to those who took part in selling the raffle tickets over the six days in the city centre. The BCS has now received a cheque for £825 for our part in the ticket sales. For information the Community Raffle made over £38,000 this year and this money will be spent on all local charities in the area.



The photograph shows Chairman Athina Beckett and Secretary Helen Preston with the cheque at the presentation evening in front of the car now owned by one lucky man!

## Events

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April  
BCS Boat Trip on Grand Union canal.

April 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-12:00am  
IWA Northants, Westbridge Arm Clean up.  
Meet in car park near Pizza Hut.

1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> May  
IWA Northampton Branch, Gathering at  
Becket's Park, Northampton.

1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> May  
Kingdom Tours  
Waterways of Buckinghamshire.  
01296 433999

23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> May  
Wendover Canal Festival.

17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> July  
BCS Lock Ransom Festival at Cosgrove.  
Details Peter Caswell

25<sup>th</sup> July  
Linslade Festival

## IWA Events

April 14<sup>th</sup> Northampton Branch 8:00pm  
The Work of a Fisheries Officer - John Ellis  
The Walnut Tree  
Blisworth

April 27<sup>th</sup> MK Branch 7:45pm  
The Venice of the Midlands - Runnalls Davis  
Milton Keynes Pavillion  
Worelle Ave.  
Middleton  
Milton Keynes

May 12<sup>th</sup> Northampton Branch 8:00pm  
My Life on working Boats - Beryl McDowall  
The Walnut Tree  
Blisworth

## Times are changing at College Lake

This coming year will see more changes over at the fantastic BBOWT reserve at College Lake which is situated 2 miles north of Tring.

This old chalk pit that was still being used to extract chalk for cement 20 years ago, is now a haven for wildlife including over wintering wildfowl and at this time of year is a great place to see breeding Lapwing and Redshank along with loads of lovely wildflowers and lots of butterflies and dragonflies.

This year will see the construction of a major new visitor centre on the reserve which is likely to be open early in 2010.

College Lake is a fantastic place to take the family for a day out but please be aware due to the sensitivity of the site for breeding birds it is strictly No Dogs.

Cheers  
Mark

**Mark Vallance**  
**Reserves Manager (Bucks)**  
**Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust**

## BBOWT Report

Those of you who have been attending our work parties recently will know that our third site is at the BBOWT Nature Reserve. The Buckingham Canal Society are working in partnership with BBOWT (Berks, Bucks, Oxon Wildlife Trust) who own this site; therefore I thought members would be interested in some of the activities carried out by BBOWT. So from time to time we will be publishing a report by Mark Vallance BBOWT Reserve Manager which I hope you will enjoy.

This time Mark is reporting on the BBOWT reserve at College Lake.



## Kingdom Tours

Kingdom Tours from Aylesbury are organising a Waterways of Buckinghamshire tour over the May Bank Holiday weekend. This will include a **visit to Hyde Lane Lock on the Buckingham Canal on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May.**



**Kingdom Tours**

## **WATERWAYS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May to  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009



With kind co-operation of the  
Wendover Arm Trust  
and the  
Buckingham Canal Society

**Leisure Travel and  
Special Interest Tours**

We are pleased to welcome old friends and newcomers to our home ground for a Canal Study Tour in leafy Buckinghamshire. As usual we have combined canal restoration

with other fascinating places to visit close to our waterways.

### **The Itinerary**

**FRIDAY:** We leave our hotel on the outskirts of Aylesbury at 10:00; the tour can also be joined at Bletchley Rail Station at 10:50 (connecting with the 10:13 semi-fast service from London Euston and the 08:53 stopping train from Birmingham New Street). Our first visit is to the **National Codes Centre at Bletchley Park**. It was here that the Second World War code breakers cracked the Nazi enigma cipher. Code-breaking successes are believed to have shortened the War by around 2 years saving countless lives. Visitors are amazed by the total secrecy in which 8,500 people worked, in fact little was known about Bletchley Park for 30 years after the War. It has narrowly escaped redevelopment for housing. The 2001 Hollywood feature film *Enigma*, based on a novel, and starring Dougray Scott and Kate Winslett brought the work of Bletchley Park to a wider audience. July 2008 marked the Royal opening of Hut 12 — Bletchley Park Spies and Double Agents, an exhibition including the War time exploits of Ian Fleming. A new addition opened in August 2008 is the National Museum of Computing featuring the Colossus rebuild — the world's first programmable computer. In November 2008 a much-needed donation of £330,000 was received from English Heritage to undertake urgent roof repairs and discussions are in progress about further funding for the Grade II listed mansion, the timber huts and other buildings. We will be making a 'premium visit' with our own guide for the day. Hot and cold lunches will be available on a cash basis in Hut 4.

Back at our hotel in the evening, we will enjoy an after dinner talk on the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway and we are delighted that Jane Wolfson, the Trust Chair, has indicated that she hopes to be available as our speaker.

**Saturday:** The Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal nestles at the foot of the lovely Chiltern Hills. A consequence is that driving alongside the canal is not an option! The only way to enjoy both the peace and the

views over the Aylesbury Vale is to walk the generally excellent towpath. With a length of over 6 miles, we have made it easy by spreading the visit over 2-days and having a coach standing by at strategic points to pick-up anyone needing assistance. We leave the hotel at 09:00 and drive to Wendover to walk the picturesque section still awaiting restoration. Here the canal is fed by two artesian wells and surface springs. We begin our walk at Wendover Basin and are soon in open country crossing a footpath on the line of the former Halton Camp Railway. Continuing to Halton Village, we pass the ornate Perch Bridge and the village centre at Halton Bridge (where our coach will be in attendance). The walk continues beneath Rothschild Bridge, Hare Lane, past the 'narrows' and under Stable Lane Bridge to Buckland Wharf. From here we drive to the Chiltern Brewery at nearby Terrick for an optional guided tour and drayman's lunch at £20.00 extra per person. This visit is strictly limited to 34 participants. For those not wanting (or unable) to join this visit, our coach driver will take us on a mini tour of Halton Woods with a stop for lunch (own arrangements) in either Wendover or a nearby garden centre. In the afternoon, we visit Aylesbury Basin to view the waterside redevelopment. We will have an after dinner talk by members of the Wendover Arm Trust.

**SUNDAY:** This morning our coach will take us to Bulbourne where we hope to board a boat subject to a few logistical concerns. This is expected to be the first passenger boat trip along the Wendover Arm. The cruise will pass Heygates Mill and the site of the Tring Canal Festival which has just been confirmed for the 3-day period 23 — 25 May 2009. We hope to visit Tringford Pumping Station and the boat will pass beneath Little Tring Bridge completed in 2003 to reach the current Head of Navigation. From here we will walk in the company of members of the Wendover Arm Trust alongside phase 2, where the canal is currently under restoration as far as the village of Drayton Beauchamp. The walk will continue to see the diversion incorporated in a bridge with navigable headroom beneath the A41 Aston Clinton By-pass that opened in 2003. Our

walk ends again at Buckland Wharf on the old A41 completing our overview of the entire canal.

After a break for early afternoon refreshments, we drive to Buckingham to view part of the **Buckingham Canal**, which linked to the Old Stratford Arm and ultimately the Grand Union at Cosgrove. In 2008, the Buckingham Canal Society secured a Landfill Tax Credits grant of £38,700 from Waste Recycling Environmental Limited to help restore the disused Hyde Lane Lock within the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust nature reserve near Foscote. With the brickwork now restored we will visit the site where the Society is hoping to have some ex BW gates installed in the future.

**MONDAY:** These weekends sometimes include a visit of railway interest to complement the canals. This year is no exception; we will visit the **Buckinghamshire Railway Centre** situated at Quainton Road Station some 8 miles north of Aylesbury. The former Great Central and Metropolitan joint line is still maintained by Network Rail and Quainton marks the junction with the Brill Tramway (closed in 1935) and nearby, the Metropolitan branched off for Verney Junction on the L&NWR serving Oxford, Bletchley and Cambridge. The Quainton site is a well-presented preservation centre with an excellent museum and they are rightly proud of the Visitor Centre, which is housed in the former Rewley Road Station moved from Oxford where it had been the terminus of the L&NWR. Steam trains will be operating in both the Upyard and the Downyard and the Bank Holiday diesel service is expected to be operating to and from Aylesbury. There will also be a Collector's Fair. We return to the Holiday Inn Aylesbury by 16:00 and the coach will continue to Leighton Buzzard Station (on the Euston — Birmingham line) for the benefit of passengers who joined at Bletchley on Friday.

## THE TOUR IS BASED AT

Holiday Inn Aylesbury, Aston Clinton Road,  
Aylesbury, HP22 5AA.

Opened in 1985, this comfortable hotel is situated on the A41 on the southern outskirts of Aylesbury. Indoor pool and fitness centre on site.

## CLOTHING

Please bring clothing that is both warm and waterproof with stout walking shoes.

## TOUR FARE OF £289 PER PERSON INCLUDES

- 3 nights (Friday, Saturday & Sunday), table d'hôte dinner, room and full English breakfast
- Travel by coach and boat\* as described
- All admission charges
- Guide services and donations
- Evening Talks

## TOUR FARE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Single room supplement of £54.00
- Personal Travel Insurance
- Mid-day lunches or Chiltern Brewery visit
- Travel to and from Aylesbury. A bus (routes 500 or 61) or taxi is required to reach the hotel from Aylesbury Town Centre
- Thursday and/or Monday nights at hotel

## Recommended websites:

[www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk](http://www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk)  
<http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/bcs>  
[www.bletchleypark.org.uk](http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk)  
<http://www.b-mkwaterway.org.uk>  
<http://www.aylesburycanal.org.uk/>  
[www.holidayinn.com](http://www.holidayinn.com)  
[www.bucksrailcentre.org](http://www.bucksrailcentre.org)  
[www.chilternbrewery.co.uk](http://www.chilternbrewery.co.uk)

*\* A price adjustment will be made should the boat trip not be possible.*

All bookings are accepted in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in our Fair Trading Charter. A copy is enclosed with this leaflet.

Should you wish to cancel your booking, this must be communicated to us in writing and the following charges will be made.

## Period before departure:

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| More than 42 days   | Loss of Deposit |
| 41—29 days          | 30% of price    |
| 28—15 days          | 45% of price    |
| 14 — 8 days         | 60% of price    |
| 7 days to departure | 100% of price   |

## Personal Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you have adequate travel insurance to protect you from cancellation charges and other risks in pre-scribed circumstances. We are an Introducer Appointed Representative for the purposes of travel insurance. An application form and premium rating schedule are available on request or they can be downloaded from our website

[www.kingdomtours.co.uk](http://www.kingdomtours.co.uk)

**Kingdom Tours**  
**27a Kingsbury, Aylesbury,**  
**Buckinghamshire, HP20 2JA. England**  
**Telephone: 01296 433999**  
**Fax: 01296 427774**  
**Email: [info@kingdomtours.co.uk](mailto:info@kingdomtours.co.uk)**



## Work Party Organiser's Report

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March we took part in 'Action Earth Day' at the BBOWT Nature Reserve. This is a nationwide project sponsored by CVS and Morison's Supermarket. 15 volunteers helped on the day and new volunteers learnt the art of hedge-laying and also planted new saplings to fill in gaps in the hedge.

Other volunteers worked on Hyde Lane Lock re-pointing the brickwork and re-building part of a flight of steps down the side of the lock. A reporter from the Buckingham Advertiser came and took photos and there should be an article appearing in the Advertiser, which again should give us further publicity.

For taking part in Action Earth Day we received a grant of £50 which we have put to good use and bought some new hedge-laying tools.

The work has gone very well and Hyde Lane Lock and the improvements to the nature reserve have been noted by walkers and fishermen and particularly by the villagers of Thornborough. I'm told they have changed their walking habits just to take in the lock and nature reserve and note the improvements to the area. I recently received an email from Mark Cole, a Thornborough Parish Councillor, who states that he was hugely impressed by the work we are doing at the BBOWT Nature Reserve.

The information box installed on site usually needs filling every time we visit the lock and a Brackley schoolteacher is now thinking about doing a special project with her class after visiting the nature reserve and lock and seeing the work being done by the Society's volunteers. So to those of you who have worked on this site you can now give yourselves a pat on the back for all the good work you have been doing!

There is still plenty of work to be done on this site but because of the bird-nesting season we will be moving to our summer site at Little Hill Farm where again we

should be able to see the spring lambs and the baby free-range piglets.

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. Little Hill Farm is on private land so if people want to see the work being done at this site please email me and I will try and arrange a visit.

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

**Athina Beckett**  
**Work Party Organiser**



Action Earth Day 2009. 15 volunteers took part in this year's event held at the BBOWT Nature Reserve.



Hedge-laying completed by volunteers at the BBOWT Nature Reserve.

## Boat Trip

For the last two years, as a social event for members and friends, the BCS has run a boat trip down the River Nene so this year we thought you might like a change! This years' trip will be on the Grand Union Canal starting at the junction of the Grand Union Canal and the Northampton Arm. This year we will be using the St Johns Ambulance boat Mountbatten. This is smaller than the boat we have used in the past but does have disabled access, so to ensure a place people may need to book early. The boat trip will be taking place on *Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April starting at 10:30am and finishing at 3:30pm and the cost will be £7.50 which will include food. To book a place contact Athina Beckett on 01908 661217 or email Athinabec@aol.com*

## Mysterious Sightings at Hyde Lane Lock

With the onset of the lovely spring weather Nigel and I were encouraged to take an energetic country walk. From our home in Buckingham we walked up to Maids Moreton, over the fields to the charming village of Foscote and across to meet the canal just east of the Lock. There were primroses and daffodils and strange red saucer-shaped fungi and a pipistrelle bat which at two in the afternoon was circling over the lock. It clearly hadn't read the bat curfew rules! As we approached the newly laid hedge, chatting to two bird-watchers from Milton Keynes who were full of admiration for the progress being made, I spotted movement in the field on the far side of the ditch. It was a mammal, light brown with rounded rear end, no tail and a fairly pointed nose. My immediate suggestion was that it was a capybara! The birdwatchers, who did not see more than a glimpse of brown felt that it must be a muntjac deer. Nigel disagreed but was unable to offer an alternative. We had no camera but I researched the internet on our return home and the shape of the capybara was certainly what I had seen. We discounted the coypu, which has a large tail. Since the capybara is apparently a native of South America we remain puzzled as to why one should make its home by the Buckingham Canal but of

course the canal's fame is spreading far and wide!

Helen Preston

## Work Party Dates For Your Diary April – July 2009

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

| <b>April</b>                 | <b>May</b>                   | <b>June</b>                  | <b>July</b>                  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Thursday<br>9 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday<br>7 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday<br>4 <sup>th</sup>  | Thursday<br>2 <sup>nd</sup>  |
| Thursday<br>23 <sup>rd</sup> | Sunday<br>10 <sup>th</sup>   | Sunday<br>14 <sup>th</sup>   | Sunday<br>12 <sup>th</sup>   |
|                              | Thursday<br>21 <sup>st</sup> | Thursday<br>18 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday<br>16 <sup>th</sup> |
|                              |                              |                              | Thursday<br>30 <sup>th</sup> |

## New Members

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

Julie Featherstone, Milton Keynes  
Liz Turvey, Milton Keynes  
Mark Pallett, Buckingham  
Taverners Boat Club

### Mr Philip Smith

It is with great sadness that the BCS has learnt of the recent death of Mr Smith at the age of 87. Mr Smith was at the inaugural meeting of the BCS in 1992 and had continued to support us over the years. The society had recently conferred Honorary Membership on him.

# Buckingham Canal Society

## Lock Ransom Weekend

### 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> July 2009



### An Update On Our Lock Ransom Weekend



## PLANNED ATTRACTIONS

- ❖ Historic Narrowboats Raymond & Nutfield return
- ❖ 'The Cheese Boat' selling a range of delicious cheeses
- ❖ 'The Fudge Boat' - loosen your belt and enjoy!
- ❖ Information on The Buckingham Canal
- ❖ Bric-a-Brac Stall
- ❖ Prize Quiz & Game Stalls
- ❖ Cake Stall – Tea & Coffee
- ❖ Saturday night only - BBQ (bring your own) & Music
- ❖ Limited reserved moorings available – watch our website <http://www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk> for details or contact Peter - see details below. (A donation will be suggested for moorings)

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 are still in need of someone to organise a tombola stall; to take over the publicity of the event; to put posters up around Cosgrove village.

If you can help with these tasks or offer general help then please contact Peter Caswell on 01908 282589 Mobile 07702 668924 or email [peter@caswell.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:peter@caswell.eclipse.co.uk)

## **Committee 2009**

Chairman/Work Party Organiser - **Athina Beckett**  
 2 Staters Pound, Pennyland, Milton Keynes MK15 8AX  
[athinabec@aol.com](mailto:athinabec@aol.com)

01908 661217  
 Mobile 07721 319404

Treasurer - **Vernon Draper**  
 12 Chipperfield Close, New Bradwell, Milton Keynes MK13 0EP  
[vernon.draper@btinternet.com](mailto:vernon.draper@btinternet.com)

01908 312239  
 Mobile 07961 302039

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

01280 821232

Charity Commission Officer - **Don Allison**  
[donallison@btinternet.com](mailto:donallison@btinternet.com)

01908 610564

Membership Secretary - **Jane Caswell**  
 96 Gaddesden Crescent, Wavendon Gate, Milton Keynes MK7 7SQ  
[jane@caswell.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:jane@caswell.eclipse.co.uk)

01908 282589

**Peter Caswell**  
[peter@caswell.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:peter@caswell.eclipse.co.uk)

01908 282589  
 Mobile 07702 668924

**Hélène Hill**

01280 813133

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

01908 647317

**Ros Woodford**  
[j.woodford1@btinternet.com](mailto:j.woodford1@btinternet.com)

01908 376895

### **Other Activities (non committee)**

Website - **Len Barrows**  
[info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk](mailto:info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk)

Archivist - **Pam Forrest**

01908 504017

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

07973 915652

Editor, "*The Buckingham Navigator*" - Vacancy

Slideshow & Talks - **Steve Morley**  
 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)