

The Buckingham Navigator

The Newsletter of The Buckingham Canal Society
Registered Charity No. 1072924

EXCITING NEWS!
Bourton Meadow Planning
Permission has now been
APPROVED!!

**BCS is going in the
right direction!**

With the permission of British Waterways we have recently changed the sign at the Cosgrove end of the Buckingham Canal from 'Disused' to read "Under Restoration". (Inset right: the old sign)



Preparing the Lock for Lock Gates



LOCK RANSOM

21st & 22nd July
10am - 6pm
Cosgrove
Lock

Buckingham



Canal Society

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We welcome advertisements in the Navigator to assist funding. Rates are as below. Payment is required before copy date.

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Contact Margaret for further information

T: 01280 828289 E: margaret.darrell@buckingham.ac.uk

W: www.buckingham.ac.uk/law

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the Navigator Summer 2012! It has been an exciting few months since issue 75 with planning permission approved at Bourton Meadow and a wonderful result with our Localgiving.com fundraising. We are celebrating the great work that our volunteers do in this issue with several articles written by the volunteers themselves. You are all what make the charity great! With a new membership leaflet and a new sign for the canal at Cogrove we are moving firmly towards a more professional image for the Society and the canal. We are working hard on the new website and new publications to make the Society a charity that looks like it means business.

All photography in this issue is © Richard Alan Lewis unless otherwise stated. As ever all comments on this issue gratefully received.



Richard Lewis (Your Editor)

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Work Party Report

Hyde Lane

Work for the summer months is planned for all four of our sites, but at the present time the work parties have moved to the Nature Reserve where the lock gates we received from the Northampton Arm await installation. Work has already started to remove the very thick, dense mud from the bottom of the lock chamber. This work is being carried out by hand, a real navvying job - good fun if you enjoy mud! There is also quite a lot of re-pointing work to be carried out in and around the lock and this is proceeding well in spite of the weather.



We have been helped by a group of volunteers from the National House-Building Council (NHBC) who joined us on three separate occasions working with our volunteers. Having extra people on site always helps with the workload and the groups enjoy themselves and spread the word about the Society, and our volunteers get to work with different people which provides an exciting mix. If anyone knows of a company or a group of students who you think might be interested in joining us for a 'team building' day do contact us.



As well as the work on the lock chamber another very muddy task is the removal of the reeds from the bed of the canal. Considerable amounts were removed last year but unfortunately some of these have re-grown and the feeling is this is a task we will have to tackle each year. Once removed and with the channel opened up again, and especially with the amount of rain we have had lately, we have a 'canal in water' again.



The hedge laying and wildlife habitat piles that were made last year have been tidied up (see previous page with Helen working with NHBC volunteers) and weeding has taken place around the saplings that were planted over the last two or three years, most of which have survived. There is still plenty of work to do at this site and again plenty of opportunities for other companies to volunteer with us.

Cosgrove

At Cosgrove, where the vegetation was cleared from the canal bed, we have now reached agreement with British Waterways (BW) to dismantle and rebuild the flood sluice nearer the A5 end of the canal. BW will be supplying the bricks and mortar, etc free of charge and this will save a considerable amount of money for BCS. Our thanks go to Jeff Whyatt and Neil Owen and the rest of the team at BW who are helping with this project. We have also been given permission to take down the rather broken fences, which straddle the towpath and replace them with gates, which should prove to be of great benefit to walkers particularly those with dogs.

The Montgomery Canal Society have been using a new type of liner for their restoration work and we have been in touch with the manufacturer and a site visit was arranged. The new material looks very promising and we hope to use it for the earth bunds at Cosgrove.

Little Hill Farm

At Little Hill Farm as the footpath is not open to the public we will be clearing and trimming the hedges and footpath through August and September so that they don't get completely overgrown again.

At our Bourton Meadow site, whilst we are trying to secure funding to re-line this section of canal volunteers have been keeping the canal bed and footpaths strimmed with extra work parties arranged to carry out this work. Stowe School are also working at Bourton Meadow and have cleared the drainage ditch that runs along the top of the site and will be working on the canal bed until the end of June.



So there is a variety of work being carried out over the next few months but there is still much to be done. Again my thanks go to our grand group of volunteers who are making everything happen.

Athina Beckett - Work Party Organiser.

Chairman's Chat

A lot of exciting events to report this quarter. BCS has recently joined 'Local Giving' which is a way for people to donate online via our website on localgiving.com/buckscanal. From time to time they run 'Match Challenges' where if people donate to the Society on a Challenge Day the money is doubled. Details about these Challenges will appear on our web site from time to time so please keep checking, as this could be a great money earner for us!

We have recently updated and reprinted our membership leaflet and here I would like to thank Richard Lewis and Kirsty Willette who designed the new graphics on the leaflet (see right). Our thanks also go to Buckingham Community Foundation who funded the new leaflet.

As mentioned on the cover - The signpost by Cosgrove Lock now reads 'Buckingham Canal under restoration'. This is an important step in recognition of our restoration efforts for the Buckingham Canal.



The other exciting news is that our planning application to re-water Bourton Meadow has now been approved. There are several conditions which still have to be met and the Committee is working on these at present, but this is a very large and positive step forward to restoring this section of canal.

Our Open Day at Cosgrove Village Hall took place on Sunday 22nd April. Invitations were sent out to all local residents, and all the local boaters moored on the Grand Union Canal and Buckingham Arm also received an invitation. The Barley Mow pub and the shop at Cosgrove Leisure Park also displayed our posters.

The day went very well with those who attended being very interested in the plans on display. Everyone was asked to leave a 'comment' in the signing-in book and I can report that no negative comments were received. Most of those who attended were from Cosgrove village, some were boaters, and the rest came from villages in the surrounding area.



British Waterways had suggested we arrange this day to gather feedback from the village on the BCS restoration plans and we can report back to them that it was a very successful day for the Society! We also gained three new members and several people were interested in the work parties so hopefully we should have a few new faces on our work parties in the future! Thanks go to Milton Keynes Heritage Association who helped fund this day for us.

With the increase in postage charges we hope that all members taking the Navigator by post will consider changing to email, as this will save the Society quite a considerable amount of money which could be spent on restoration. To help us save money on postage, Wyvern Shipping (who are corporate members) have agreed to frank our mailing again, saving us money, but the more members can do to keep postage costs down will still be welcome.

Plans are well ahead for our annual festival being held over the weekend of 21st-22nd July. On the Sunday we will be combining our festival with BW's Iron Trunk Open Day Celebrations. The first Iron Trunk Open Day held in February

had over 1,000 visitors so we are hoping the crowds turn out again and spend their money at our festival as well making this year's festival a bigger success than in previous years. I do hope as many of you will attend and if possible lend a hand over the weekend to help raise money for us. If I haven't met you before do introduce yourselves at the festival and I hope the weather keeps fine for us and makes it a very enjoyable weekend for all. Photos below of last years festival.

Athina Beckett - Chairman



BCS Social Evening

We are still meeting at the Two Brewers...!

...on the 3rd Friday of each month. The purpose is as a regular social and open topic discussion about the canal restoration progress.

We are keeping the location at Thornborough based on the general consensus. If you need a lift, please ask as people travel from various locations.

Photo by Mark "Clangers England" on flickr.



The Two Brewers

Bridge Street,
Thornborough,
Buckingham
MK18 2DN
01280 812020

Why bother....planning, planning, planning & celebrating?

Fortunately, we are now in the throes of planning at a reasonably detailed level for the work at Cosgrove, Hyde Lane and Bourton Meadow. Elsewhere you will see that BW is fully supportive of our plans at Cosgrove now that we have demonstrated the public endorsement shown at the Cosgrove exhibition. At Hyde Lane we are drawing up a plan along with a budget etc to get the lock gates installed. At Bourton Meadow plans are being drawn up in greater detail as we move forward following the granting of planning permission. That's the **'planning'** permission in the title out of the way.

Long term plans are all around us but how do they happen? Through our success with establishing partnerships, BCS gets invited to exciting events like the 'Vale of Aylesbury Plan – Strategic Stakeholders Meeting' (if anyone wants to come along feel free). Jestings aside, these are critical opportunities as they will set out the long term plan (in this case for Aylesbury Vale) for the next 20 years following their approval and adoption. In this particular case, we have asked for the canal to be considered with a view to future restoration and I am pleased to say the draft documents are now reflecting that request. There are still several stages to go in this document's lifecycle but I am optimistic the outcome will be favourable for us. That's the project **'planning'** and **'planning'** permission in the title out of the way. So here are some updates site by site:

Bourton Meadow

Planning permission granted; detailed project plans being prepared; detailed landscape plans being prepared to comply with the planning conditions; grant applications in final stages of preparation for submission. After planning permission was granted the press release was put out by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) in conjunction with BCS. You can view it at www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/news/2012/may/buckingham-canal-restoration-takes-another-step-forward/ OR google "AVDC Buckingham Canal Society".

Hyde Lane

We are now drawing up plans to focus on getting the lock gates installed along with the associated budget, health and safety updates, agreements with adjacent landowners etc. We need to get the lock gates into position by the autumn as they will not enjoy the winter in their present position. Photo Right: surveying the lock as part of preparations.



Environment Agency (EA) – Pre application for temporary water transfer permit at Bourton Meadow has been provisionally approved. This will allow us to fill the canal at Bourton Meadow when it is ready (subject to no drought orders etc) although we have to fill in the correct permit application at the correct time. We sent the EA an enquiry about funding in respect of some river catchment improvement work they are working on. This was well received and they want to work with us to refine our plans and ideas. As a result of this we have recently met with representatives of the EA and visited several of the project sites (see photo below). This is our first formal engagement with the EA in a consultative context and I am optimistic of establishing a formal partnership with their support.



Celebration and Support

Celebrate!! - I am sure it will say this elsewhere but WOW; planning permission for Bourton Meadow; the canal being considered in the 20 year plan; agreement from BW to re-water Cosgrove; changes to the sign at Cosgrove lock declaring Buckingham Canal to be under restoration. It really is worth celebrating what the Society is achieving and that includes all of you!

Support - Please email supporters@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

All of our work needs ££££ and most of this comes from fundraising including grants. These grants need to demonstrate public support and that includes you! It also includes your neighbours, friends, family, milkman (you get the idea) so please email stating your name and postcode and then ask them to email too. Your details will NOT be used for any other purpose nor shared with other parties. Only statistical data is taken e.g. the number of people in postcode MK18 3xx etc.

Working Groups

BCS has now adopted a management structure which spreads the workload among working groups. We need more help than ever to progress the wide range of tasks that need to be undertaken. If you can offer a few hours of your time then please contact any of the committee members and they will point you to where your skills can best be used. The list of groups is on the next page.

Strategy and Forward Planning

Work Parties and Maintenance

Covering Thursdays and Sundays, Stowe School, corporate days, other work parties, practical maintenance commitments.

Oversight and Compliance

Including health and safety / CDM, standards, methodologies and regulations, local area planning, land ownership and access.

Projects

Covering Bourton Meadow, Cosgrove, Hyde Lane, Deanshanger, A5 crossing , Little Hill Farm and Passenham Quarry.

Finance and Administration

Including grants, fundraising management, policy and control, financial management and budgets.

Archives, Heritage and History

Including artefacts

Events

Covering Cosgrove Festival, education and public talks, exhibitions and market stalls, bric-a-brac and other fund raising events.

Communications and Relationships

Including publicity and communications, membership and supporters, recruitment and retention, newsletter and website, youth and community, partnerships, publicity collateral and branding.

Lichfield Training Weekend

Training weekend in Lichfield – Good and bad news here. The training weekend is heavily oversubscribed so despite being the first on the list, we have been asked to amend our plans (oops ... more planning!!). Three or four of us will attend with some to be trained as instructors for excavators and dumper trucks as well as being competent in other areas. We will then cascade this training as we start work at Bourton Meadow preparing the site for contractors as well as doing the bund work at Cosgrove. Those of you who expressed interest will be contacted to arrange this.

Terry Cavender

Despite having lived in the Buckingham area our whole lives, Avkar and I knew very little about the Canal Society and the work they were doing so close to home. So when we discovered friends were members and we learnt much more about the Society and the extensive work they were doing – we couldn't resist satisfying our curiosity and joining their next work party.

The Sunday we went down to Hyde Lane Lock, was glorious weather. Foolishly, as we walked round the edge of the reservoir and soaked in the beautiful and peaceful surroundings, we began to think that perhaps we were going to have an easy time of it. It'll just be like going for a walk on a sunny summer's day. How wrong we were. As we approached the work site down by the lock we were confronted with a group of people beavering away in hi-vis jackets. Some on the lock, some on the banks of the canal and most alarmingly a few in the canal itself, knee deep in black sludge and water.

A brief induction from Terry and Athina as to what was being done that day and we were given tools and told to get involved. The purpose of the day appeared to be clearing the canal bed of reeds (hence the three men balanced on pallets in the canal, covered in varying degrees of black sludge).



We got to work filling up wheel barrows with the reeds that had been removed, scraping them off the bank and re-locating them to a different area. Most surprisingly Avkar, born and raised in the centre of Banbury and not a fan of the great outdoors – especially mud, took minutes before he volunteered to get in the canal itself and thoroughly enjoyed kedging with Brian and Richard.

The work was hard (our muscles ached the next day!) but incredibly rewarding. You could instantly see what our work had achieved that day and it felt good. It's well known that being amongst nature is good for your wellbeing, turns out actually feeling as if you are contributing to it feels even better. Ultimately we can't wait to go back next month.



Photos: above right - Carmen and Avkar have a refreshment break, below left - site at the start of the work party, below right - site at the end of the work party.

We know not all working parties will be in the warm sunny weather and that it may take many years before the canal is re-opened, something that may make seem days clearing weeds a little futile but none of that dampens the enthusiasm. We've told a lot of friends about it since we've been and we hope they'll all join us the next time. It turns out the busier and more hectic people's lives seem to get in this day and age, people crave time outside, giving something back.

Carmen Austin

Donating Online

BCS has recently joined Localgiving.com, a website allowing supporters to donate to the Society online. Anyone wishing to do so can visit localgiving.com/buckscanal and follow the simple instructions. Localgiving.com will claim Gift Aid on behalf of BCS – when the appropriate box has been ticked.

Signing up was all done in a bit of a rush. We had to design our web pages, submit our details and have everything approved in the space of 24 hours or so. The reason for the rush to be online was to be up and running in time to qualify for their Match Challenge on Monday 14 May when all donations, up to a total of £750, would be doubled. These Match Challenges take place every three months or so and we didn't want to wait for the next one!

There was little time to publicise the match challenge, so we emailed everyone we could and I'm pleased to say that we raised £1,475.98 of which £680 came as a result of the Match.

We are extremely appreciative of everyone who took up the Challenge and made a donation to BCS, even more so given the difficulties encountered on that Monday morning. There are 61 charities signed up to the Milton Keynes Community Foundation section of Localgiving.com and there was a total of £20,000 available

to match donations. The start time of the Challenge was gam and so great was the response that the website completely crashed, so no one was able to make a donation at all. Finally by 1pm things were running again. It's difficult to estimate how many people gave it up as a bad job, so even more appreciation is due to those who persevered.

Donations can be made at any time, though they won't be doubled most of the time. We will let you know next time there is a Match Challenge. If you didn't get the email last time it probably means we don't hold your address in the membership database; so in this case, as long as you don't have any objection to receiving news emails from BCS, please drop a quick email to membership@buckinghamcanal.org.uk to let the Membership Secretary know your address.

Localgiving.com is a social enterprise owned by the Community Foundation Network (CFN) and the Ardbrack Foundation, both registered charities dedicated to supporting local charities.

Vernon Draper - BCS Treasurer

BCS CANAL HERITAGE WALK

As part of the national heritage weekend we are organising a five mile walk along the canal starting at Cosgrove on

Sunday 9th September

Meeting at 2pm at Cosgrove Lock, Grand Union Canal

Northants IWA are joining us on this walk and we hope as many BSC members will take part as well. For details email: info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk Phone: 01908 661217



Photo: previous walk along the Buckingham Canal, Little Hill Farm.

BUCKINGHAM CANAL SOCIETY

COSGROVE CANAL FESTIVAL

21st & 22nd July 2012

Cosgrove Lock, Grand Union Canal MK19 7JR

**FREE
ENTRY!**
Everyone
welcome



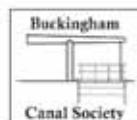
Historic Narrow Boats. Cheese Boat. Craft Stalls. Buckingham U3A Handbell Ringers. Fudge Boat. Pump House Clog Morris Dancers. Cookie Boat. Bric-a-Brac Stall. Other Trading Boats. Kid's Games. Tea & Cake Stall. MK Playboat Funion Bargee. Fish & Chip Supper (must be pre-booked). Raffle. Plus on Sunday, even more events in conjunction with British Waterways Iron Trunk Summer Celebration following completion of its refurbishment!

Sat 21st 10am–6pm & Sun 22nd 10am–4pm

Planned attractions subject to change.

Donations towards the restoration of the Buckingham Canal will be gratefully received!

For boat or stall bookings contact 01908 312239 or events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk



Recently Terry caught up with one of our most dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, Brian Knight, to ask him a few questions about his experience as a volunteer with BCS.

Name : Brian Knight

Age: 36

Location: Milton Keynes

Job: Part time pre-school assistant in MK.

BCS Service: 3 years.

Q. Why did you join BCS?

A. After a couple of years unemployed, I wanted to do something to fill my time. I read about the society and the chance to do some environmental good with tree clearance and replanting appealed to me.

Q. What do you enjoy most about your work with the society?

A. As anyone who has been on a work party with me knows, cutting down trees, chopping up trees, burning trees and of course planting more trees so they can be cut down, chopped up and burnt at sometime in the future! Seriously, this really is a form of woodland management that helps the natural environment and provides species habitat for a range of wildlife.





Q. What should BCS do more of?

A. Opening the canal up as a walkway and waterway for leisure has to be the main aim. Also, restoring it to be used for a wide range of purposes similar to that which its heritage has come from wherever possible should be a priority. Practical restoration is always good to be part off and I have enjoyed working on sites such as the bridge at Little Hill Farm as well as the lock at Hyde Lane.

Q. Where do you think other people would fit in if they came along?

A. It would be good to match people's skills to the work that is needed. Often people can learn a new skill and enjoy the work, although it is good to use skills they already have e.g. bricklaying, stone cutting, carpentry etc.

Q. What else would you like to add?

A. Although I am working part time, I am looking for a full time job and I find that my involvement in the canal is of interest to prospective employers. It provides an interesting topic during interview and the skills I have learnt are reflected in my CV such as practical activities I have undertaken. I enjoy working on the canal as it's a good way to use my time and help with the project.



Photo courtesy of Brian Knight.
Hyde Lane
Nature Reserve.
February 2010
Brian is in the
Red t-shirt with
his favourite axe.

We are pleased to tell you that the successful event held by BW (shortly to become Canals and River Trust) to celebrate the restoration of the Iron Trunk is to be followed up by a further event to show off completion of work to the aqueduct on the Sunday of the Festival (22nd July) so we are expecting larger numbers than usual that day. With competition for attention from the Buckingham U3A Bell-Ringers it should be an excellent day out.

As I write it is only 9 weeks to the Cosgrove Festival. Preparations are proceeding well but of course any offers of more help will be gratefully received. We are starting to collect items for the "Pluck a Duck" which, in addition to attracting adult support, is particularly enjoyed by the children so if you have anything suitable do let Athina or me know. Contributions to the Bric a Brac stall are always welcome with books and jigsaws in great demand so why not have a late spring clear out!

Helen Preston secretary@buckinghamcanal.org.uk 01280 821232

BCS The Beginning - Part 2

In the last edition of Navigator we heard how a small group of enthusiasts got together to discuss the future of the Buckingham Arm at a meeting on 7 January 1992. We now pick up where we left off with the minutes of that meeting and learn how the Society was formed.

....Following questions and general discussion about the project, those present were all in favour of a proposal to form themselves into a group called the Buckingham Canal Society. Jeremy Cooper was elected Chairman, Mike Freeman Secretary and Richard Hyde Treasurer. These officers were authorised to produce a logo and headed notepaper (which the Chairman offered to finance). It was agreed that a bank account be opened in the name of the Buckingham Canal Society to which any two of the three above elected officers could be signatories. It was also agreed that the Chairman should write formally to the Milton Keynes Branch of the IWA seeking financial support towards progressing the initial objectives of the Society (set out below).

In the meantime further contacts would be made to find out more about the history and present state of the Buckingham Arm and to interest other individuals and bodies in assisting and / or joining the ranks of the newly formed Society. The intention would be to try and walk the line of the old arm in the Spring as the first stage in carrying out a preliminary feasibility study. It would then be necessary to publicise the Society's activities, together with some thoughts on overcoming the

present obstacles, as the next step in progressing the project more formally if it seemed to be a practical proposition in the long term and there was a sufficient body of active support for continuing the venture.

Another meeting was planned for Tuesday 11th February in Buckingham.

This is the report of that meeting;

The Buckingham Canal Society

The Buckingham Canal Society was formed on 7th January 1992 at a meeting held in the club house of The Navigation Cruising Club near Cosgrove on the Grand Union Canal.

The aims and objectives of the society are:-

1. To assemble and make available information about the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal.
2. To promote such courses of action as may be necessary to preserve the present remains of the Buckingham Canal.
3. To examine the issues associated with the eventual restoration of navigation between Buckingham and Cosgrove.

Originally boats from Buckingham used to take water from the river with them, falling by two locks, finally arriving at the head of Cosgrove lock and the pound that runs to Stoke Bruerne.

What of the canal today? The major points that are known to date are as follows, but much more study of the situation will be taking place:

The route to Buckingham was unused beyond Leckhampstead by the mid-1930s; the last boat to Deanshanger was in 1939 and to Old Stratford in 1949. The arm was officially abandoned in 1961.

The first interruption to the route occurred at Old Stratford when the Northampton road was driven through the bed of the canal after official abandonment.

When the A5D trunk road was being proposed there was a public enquiry after IWA made representations to allow for potential future restoration. This was not to be. However the enquiry did recommend that there should be a winding hole provided

at the end of the arm to facilitate full usage of what was left. The winding hole has never materialised as the bed of the canal from Cosgrove to the ASD has a history of leakage and is currently dry - the original puddle clay was lifted and reused within the waterway system many years ago. This stretch of canal, however, is still in the ownership of British Waterways and the demand for off line moorings may see some development yet.

But what of the rest of the route to Buckingham? The rest of the line is all in private ownership of some form. At Buckingham the relief road curtails access to the town and the first lock now features in the garden of a private dwelling. At Foscott part of the canal, including the second lock is part of a nature reserve. The by-pass at Deanshanger crosses part of the line and housing now covers some of the route both in Old Stratford and Deanshanger.

One way of by-passing these obstacles would be for boats travelling from Buckingham to join the River Ouse west of Deanshanger and then pass through reinstated locks adjacent to the Iron Trunk to reach the Cosgrove level of the Grand Union Canal.

Navigation of the River Ouse used to reach upstream as far as Newport Pagnell, so such a move would also open up the prospect of navigation towards Bedford.

For information please contact: - The Secretary, The Buckingham Canal Society.

We have to be grateful to this small group of people because without them the canal could have been lost for ever.

Ros Woodford - BCS Archivist

Membership

New Members

We are pleased to extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the Society:-

Ray & Barbara Watkins

Mr T Walsh

Roger Elliott

Vanessa Whight

Maids Moreton

Silverstone

Buckingham

Stony Stratford

We are saddened to report the death of Justine Allison-Beer, who passed away on 22 April.

Justine was a founder member of BCS, joining back in 1992 when the Society was formed. Throughout the last 20 years she was a strong supporter, serving as a committee member for some years before age got the better of her.

Many of our longer-serving members will remember Justine with fondness and the Society extends its sympathy to her family. Her son David has written a short obituary.

My mother, Justine Allison-Beer, died peacefully on 22nd April 2012 aged 81. Although her death is sad, it is a release for her as she had become increasingly infirm and would have spent the rest of her life reliant on others. It is quality not quantity of life that is important and she had lost the quality.

Mother's first involvement with canals was in the early 1950s while studying at Bedford College, London. She did a placement at Beauchamp Lodge, which stands by the pool in Little Venice where the annual Canalway Cavalcade is held. Evidently the youth club regularly threw the piano in the canal and then had to retrieve it.

A few years later, married with 2 young children, my older sister Stephanie and me, we lived on the outskirts of Stafford with the Staffs and Worcs canal at the bottom of the field opposite the house. Walks with the dog along the towpath were a frequent activity. Over Easter 1962, we took a holiday on Shroppie. Mother never took to boating holidays; in those days there were no showers. Stephanie and I owned a canvas canoe and went on many ventures including sailing it on Tixal Wide and canoeing along the then closed Caldon Canal. Mother, as the support team, stayed firmly on the towpath. It was also whilst in Stafford that she started silver-smithing.

By the mid 1970's she was living in Swansea and working as a social worker. She enrolled at Swansea University to qualify as a probation officer. She enjoyed being a student grandmother! On qualifying, her first appointment was in Birmingham, based close to Perry Barr locks, where she often exercised her dog. On my weekend visits, she came on my trips to explore parts of the BCN, which included the Titford National Rally.

She then moved to Dorset, to be close to her elderly mother. Following her mother's death she transferred to Aylesbury probation office; moving to Maids Moreton in about 1991. By this time I was a member of IWA council,

which in those days met in Smethwick. I used to visit her on the way home from meetings as she loved to cook; a skill she inherited from her Dutch-born mother. I could guarantee a decent meal each time.

Earlier I mentioned her silver-smithing skills. Following the death of Ray Dunford, the IWA wanted a buckby can trophy in his memory. One day I casually mentioned that she would make it; I don't think I was believed. At the Milton Keynes National Waterways Festival in 2001, she presented a handmade sterling silver buckby can about 4 inches tall. It is a unique piece, being fully hallmarked, including her JBAB registered maker's hallmark, by the London assay office to comply with the UK's requirements. Why mention this? She gave the materials and her time for free, but asked IWA to make a donation to BCS.

Situations Vacant

Wanted! Health and Safety Coordinator / Manager

Owing to unexpected work pressures, Jim is unable to continue as our formal Health and Safety Coordinator / manager. So we need a new one please.

The BCS Committee will continue to help in this area and there is also lots of support available from IWA/ WRG as we develop our formal H&S site plans.

Awareness and common sense are key requirements. Willingness to visit sites occasionally and assess / confirm that method statements are being adhered to as well as refreshing paperwork with the team

Want to know more? Ring Terry or Jim or any of the Committee for a natter

Engineer

BCS is looking for a volunteer with engineering experience, preferably in waterways, to technically advise our project manager

Publicity Officer

BCS is expanding as a Society and Charity and is in URGENT need of an enthusiastic volunteer to fill this post and help promote them far and wide!

Researcher

Our projects require a great deal of varied research. We are looking for several volunteers to help us perform this work. No experience necessary.

Partnerships and Patrons

We are very grateful for the continued support of our patrons:

- Rt Hon John Bercow MP
- Lord Boswell of Aynho

We have formal partnerships with the following:

- Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)
- Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC)
- South Northants District Council
- Buckingham Town Council
- British Waterways
- IWA Corporate Member

We have been recognised by the following:

- Cosgrove Parish Council
- Thornborough Parish Council
- Maids Moreton Parish Council
- Thornton Parish Meeting
- Deanshanger Parish Council
- Foscot Parish Meeting

Corporate Members

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Upcoming Events

Braunston Marina Rally
& Canal Festival
Saturday 23rd- Sunday 24th June
Braunston Marina
Braunston, Nr Daventry
NN11 7JH, 01788 891373
www.braunstonmarina.co.uk

Saturday 7th July
Lionhearts Open Day
Lionhearts Cruising Club,
Milton Keynes

Friday 20th July
Set Up Day for BCS Festival
Cosgrove Lock. Grand Union Canal

Saturday 21st – Sunday 22nd July
BCS Lock Ransom & Canal Festival
Cosgrove Lock. Grand Union Canal
MK19 7JR

Saturday 28th July
Linslade Canal Festival
Tiddenfoot Waterside Park LU7 2AF
www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk

11th-12 August
Blisworth Canal Festival
Grand Union Canal
www.blisworthcanalfestival.co.uk

Friday 17th August 8pm
'Fancy a Natter'
BCS Pub Evening
2 Brewers Pub, Thornborough

Sunday 9th September
BCS Heritage Walk
Meet 2pm Cosgrove Lock MK19 7JR
Grand Union Canal for a 5 mile walk
Details 01908 661217
Email info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Friday 21st September 8pm
'Fancy a Natter'
BCS Pub Evening
2 Brewers Pub, Thornborough

Saturday 29th-Sunday 30th September
Village at War
Stoke Bruerne NN12 7SE
Grand Union Canal
www.stokebruernecanalmuseum.org.uk/

Work Party Dates 2012/2013

June

Sunday 10th
Thursday 14th
Thursday 28th

July

Sunday 8th
Thursday 12th
Thursday 26th

August

Thursday 9th
Sunday 12th
Thursday 23rd

September

Thursday 6th
Sunday 9th
Thursday 20th

October

Thursday 4th
Sunday 14th
Thursday 18th

November

Thursday 1st
Sunday 11th
Thursday 15th
Thursday 29th

December

Sunday 9th
Thursday 13th
Thursday 27th

January

Thursday 10th
Sunday 13th
Thursday 24th

February

Thursday 7th
Sunday 10th
Thursday 21st

March

Thursday 7th
Sunday 10th
Thursday 21st

April

Thursday 4th
Sunday 14th
Thursday 18th

May

Thursday 2nd
Sunday 12th
Thursday 16th
Thursday 30th

Next Navigator

So we are nearing the end of another issue of the Navigator and I am sure many of you are eager for more. You can be part of what appears in the next issue. There are regular items from the committee but there is space assigned to YOU for your submissions. I am also always very interested to hear what you think of the newsletter and comments are most welcome!

Many of you currently receive the Navigator by post, but we also send out copies by email, allowing us to pour more pennies into the canal and be kind to the environment at the same time. If you want to get a copy of the Navigator by email instead of post then please email membership@buckinghamcanal.org.uk with your name and preference.

Please submit all contributions for the Autumn Issue by the 24th August 2012. Emailed, on CD, typewritten or handwritten (in that order of preference) to :

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Richard Lewis, Hillcrest, Akeley, Buckingham , Bucks, MK18 5HL

Meet the Committee

Vernon Draper

Treasurer

A Chartered Quantity Surveyor and Chartered Builder, Vernon has lived in Milton Keynes for 11 years. Now retired, he had a career as a consultant involved in major construction projects across the country, changing course in the 1990s to become a director of a specialist design and fit out contractor in the City of London, project managing and cost managing office relocations for many blue chip companies. Vernon joined BCS at the IWA National Festival in Milton Keynes in 2001 and volunteered for the treasurer's position at the AGM in 2004 after the retirement of the previous post holder. One of his first tasks was to open a deposit account so that our reserves would start earning interest, in the days when interest was worth earning. Vernon has been boating on the canals since the 1970s and brought his first boat in 1988. A past chairman of IWA Middlesex Branch and treasurer of IWA London Region, the opportunity to become involved with a restoration society was a priority when moving up to MK from London.



Tony Dawe

Assistant Work Party Leader

Tony has been living in Bletchley for 9 years and now lives on his own. He has worked extensively as a general labourer in a range of industries. Tony has been actively involved as a work party volunteer with the BCS since 2010 and then joined the committee in 2011 after retiring. Tony enjoys the natural environment and gardening despite living in a third floor flat. He likes to think of the canal as an extension to his lawn! He is now also a volunteer lock keeper at Three Locks in Soulbury which extends his garden even further along the canal. As a committed supporter and active committee member of the BCS, Tony looks forward along with us all to being on the first boat trip up the restored Buckingham Canal or at least the parts we get in water!



Jim McIlroy

Committee Member

Jim has a background in engineering and has worked in the past for GEC, Plessey and the BBC. He is currently working as a freelance consultant providing design and project management services on various construction projects for Local Government. Jim is a member of the Publications and Imagery Group, and also assists generally with the activities of the Committee. His other interests include travel and creative writing.



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and Work Party Organiser
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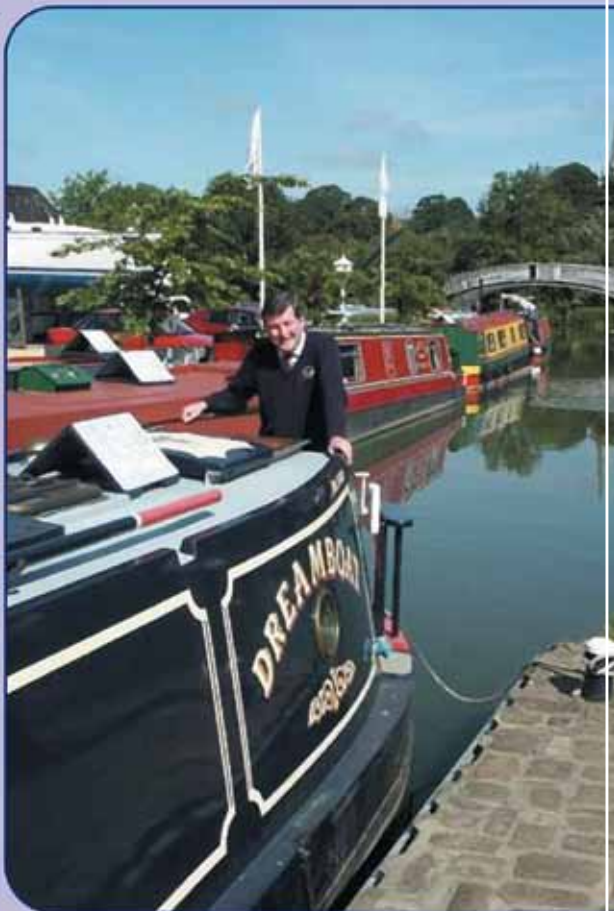
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