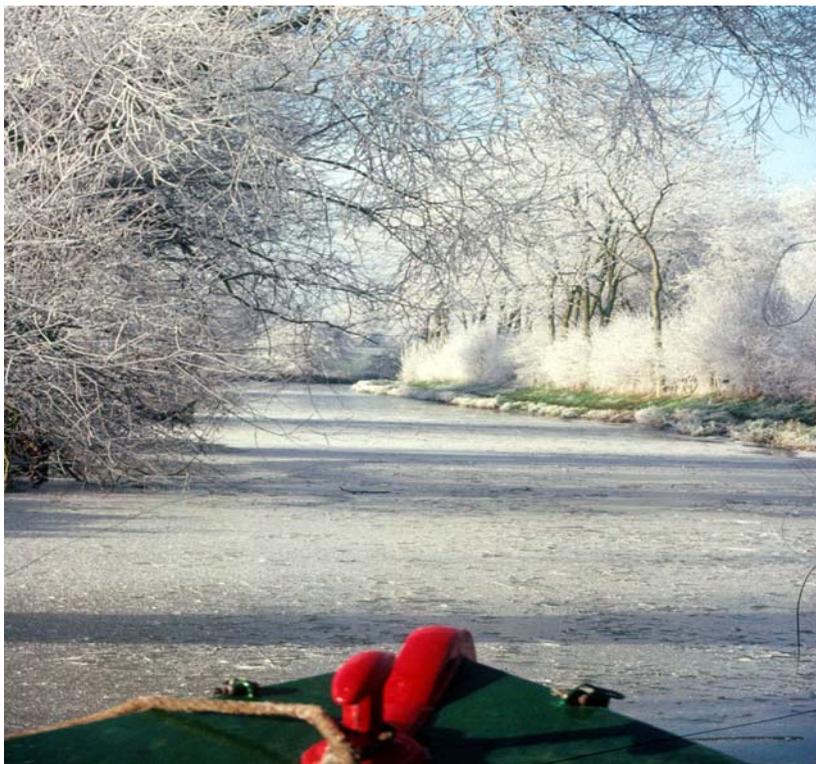


# Sou'Wester

**The pleasures of winter cruising!**

*Pictures courtesy of Mike Potts*



**January - April 2020 / Issue 183**

**IWA South West and  
South Wales Region**

***[www.waterways.org.uk/  
southwest](http://www.waterways.org.uk/southwest)***



**INLAND  
WATERWAYS  
ASSOCIATION**

# South West and South Wales Region Committees

## **South West & South Wales Region Committee:**

Chairman: \*Roger Francis      Members: \*Geoff Brown  
Hon. Secretary: \*Ray Alexander      \*Geoff Harman  
Sou'Wester Editor: \*Joyce Potts      Baz Juniper  
Navigation Committee \*Peter Kelly  
Representative: \*Steve Warwicker      \*Steve Peet  
\*Tony Pugh

## **Avon & Wiltshire Branch Committee:**

Chairman: \*Geoff Brown      Member: \*Steve Warwicker  
Hon. Secretary: \*Tim Wheeldon  
Hon. Treasurer: \*David Chalmers  
Events Officer: \*Geoff Brown  
100 Club Administrator  
& Publicity: \*Vivienne Hook  
Salisbury Group: \*Ron & Myra Glover      Jon Van de Geer

## **Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch Committee:**

Chairman: \*Steve Peet      Members: Vacant  
Hon Secretary: Jackie Peet  
Acting Treasurer: Chris Handscombe

## **South Wales Branch Committee:**

Chairman: \*Tony Pugh      Members: Mike Synan  
Hon. Secretary: Vacant      Chris JL Yewlett  
Treasurer: Henry Brown  
Minutes Secretary: Vacant  
Membership Officer: \*Tony Pugh  
Publicity Officer: Vacant  
Volunteer Co-ordinator: Vacant

## **West Country Branch Committee:**

Chairman: \*Ray Alexander      Members: Julian Gibson  
Hon. Secretary: \*Sally Hillman      Chris Jewell  
Hon. Treasurer & Events: Vacant      Maurice Pinner  
Volunteer Co-ordinator: \*Mike Slade

**\*Contact details for these appear inside the back cover.**

# Region Chairman

Welcome to this edition of Sou'wester, I promise that this will be a shorter introduction than my initial letter last time and may I begin by wishing you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

When I sat down to write this I was musing over the word Sou'wester and I began wondering where my sou'wester had gone. Not the magazine but my hat I had to buy, along with the oilskins, sea boots and sea boot socks when I joined Shell Tankers, as a deck apprentice in 1963.



In fact, the clothing and uniform we had to carry almost fitted into a large trunk, the sort with wooden banding. I say almost, because the sea boots had to be strapped to the outside of the trunk. This caused a bit of a problem at Gothenburg airport when I was joining a ship there, as the boots became wedged in the tunnel leading to the carousel, and the whole system came to a grinding halt. I was not the most popular passenger there!

This quarter has flown by, with a lot happening around my patch, I have been to several meetings, and it seems that at least two of the areas in question are causing closer examination of the Rights of Navigation.

They are the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier and the proposals for Bristol's Cumberland Basin which the current Mayor wishes to rename the Western Harbour. A harbour is usually a terminus, whereas a basin is a place to await onward progress, either in or out of the floating harbour, whilst the bridges are changed over.

This is all very sinister, when you think that recently there has been a service trying to get established where a sailing ship is bringing cargo into the floating harbour, in the belief that eventually we could return to sailing ships in order to become carbon neutral.

It strikes a chord with me, as I commanded a ship from 1986 until 1988, which carried a fuel saving wing sail, as a trial. The trial was successful, but the fuel price plummeted and the idea foundered. People are turning to such technologies again today, so maybe a Right of Navigation for both ports will be needed in the future, but who knows!

Enjoy reading this New Year edition, whether we are in Europe or Out.

**Roger Francis**

# Notices

## FORMAL NOTICE OF BRANCH AGMs

Each branch will be holding its AGM in 2020

Contact details for Branch Chairmen can be found on the inside back page.

### **Agenda (which is common to all branches)**

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of 2019 AGM
- 3 Report of Chair
- 4 Treasurer's report and accounts
- 5 Election of Committee
- 6 Any other business (previously notified to Chair before the meeting).

Immediately after the AGM, the new Committee will meet to appoint its Officers.

### **Avon & Wilts Branch:**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2020: 7.30pm**

Venue: The Community Room, Wickhouse Close, Saltford, BS31 3BZ

A.G.M. followed by a brief talk by Roger Francis, our region chairman

### **Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch:**

**Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 7.30pm**

Venue: Whitminster Village Hall, School Lane, Whitminster GL2 7NN

The AGM will be followed by a film show with a boating topic, delivered by award winning local film maker and boat owner Robert Paget.

## **South Wales Branch:**

**Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2020                      3pm**

Venue: The Royal British Legion Club, the Lock House, Riverside, Aberdulais, Neath. SA10 8ES

Phone: 01639 643386 (Club open Saturdays 2pm-midnight)

There will be a visit to the aqueduct and lock on the Tennant Canal and also a short walk to the Tonna Lock and workshop on the Neath Canal and these will take place at 1pm and 4pm weather and numbers permitting.

## **West Country Branch:**

**Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2020 11.45am**

Venue: The Black Swan, Langport (2 North St, Langport) TA10 9RQ

Tea/coffee available from 11.15am.

Please join us for the AGM with optional boat trips in the afternoon aboard “The Duchess of Cocklemoor” (donation suggested) and walk along the banks of the River Parrett.

Built in Plymouth in 1908, this 38ft timber ferry boat spent much of her life in Devon ferrying passengers across the River Teign from Teignmouth to Shaldon. Rescued in a sorry state from the River Dart, the boat has been lovingly restored and renamed the “Duchess of Cocklemoor”. She was launched as Langport’s Community boat in July 2017 and takes passengers to observe the wildlife and river along the environs of the River Parrett.

Parking available in the town car park (sign posted) beside the river.

Come and enjoy a pleasant river cruise on what will be a lovely May afternoon!

If you are interested in joining us on the river trip, please contact Ray Alexander or Sally Hillman (details at the back inside cover) to add your name to the list.

Further information and timings will be sent to members in April.

# News

## Navigation Committee Update

***Steve Warwicker, NavCom Chairman***

A key issue for Navcom is the development of higher level relations with other inland waterways parties such as Canal and River Trust (CRT), Environment Agency (EA), and Royal Yachting Association (RYA) as well as British Canoeing and others to ensure where possible and sensible we can act in a coordinated way. IWA is in contact with various EA managers at all levels, the new EA Deputy Director for Navigation happens to live near Bath. The one key issue is sustainable funding for the waterways.



The EA is agreeing through various workshops some common principles of how it charges for licences on its waterways, in many cases similar to CRT, however, it is NOT proposing to have a common charge for their various waterways. The reason for this is the government funding constraints on them. A new charging structure is planned to be implemented on the River Thames area from Jan 21<sup>st</sup> and their other navigations from April 21<sup>st</sup>, (will include probably length and width for wide beams although this is not yet confirmed).

Due to the current political situation and general election, HMRC have paused their activity on Red Diesel. This will obviously be looked at again when the situation stabilises. However, all parties are looking if it is implemented at a long period of implementation. The current situation has also meant the All Parliamentary Group for the Waterways has been postponed until the new parliament is established.

Although not connected with the above directly I am sure you are all aware of the increased emphasis on environmental concerns, particularly with road diesel engines. There is a proposal in Bristol for example to have a clean air zone in the city centre which will ban diesel cars for certain parts of the day. Why is this of concern to boaters? The proposed zone borders the Floating Harbour and it is possible there may be concerns raised even though boat

emissions are minuscule compared to other transport forms. This type of situation may proliferate over time so needs monitoring.

To consider long term effects and potential alternative forms of propulsion a subgroup has been established in Navcom lead by Bowman Bradley (I am also a member) to review what advice we can give. Generally it looks like electric propulsion is becoming the preferred direction, the real issue is providing the electricity and recharging that source. Solar might help in some way but batteries and hydrogen fuel cells are but two key options. (Google James May and his new Car to see a video which clearly explains the issues between hydrogen cells and battery storage on cars). The waterways press also have articles looking at hybrid systems etc.

Clearly there is a large installed base of diesel engines, all of which with care, will run for decades so ideas are being considered on how emissions can be reduced by whatever small steps can be taken along the way to prevent any adverse impact on boaters.

It beholds all of us to try and demonstrate we are reducing harmful emissions, this will be more sensitive in mooring areas where engines are run to charge batteries etc – a practice we wish to reduce and if feasible stop.

The boating community is full of innovative ideas so please share any innovative ideas for reducing harmful emissions – this will clearly also apply to various heating systems etc. Already in the South West and South Wales areas there are electric boats at various locations and quite a history of experience.

## ***CHAIRMEN AT WORK!***



***Courtesy of Tony Pugh***

# **SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Do you think you might have some time to spare to join the Region committee?

The Region team is looking for a new Hon. Secretary. The current post holder has been in situ for five years and having taken on a branch chairman role feels it's time to step aside from this role and make way for someone new.

The committee meets four times a year in Bristol and in addition to providing a forum for communication between the branches, it oversees the publication of Sou'Wester (the region magazine) and awards the prestigious Brian Sheppard Award annually.

To find out more, please contact Ray Alexander at [rayalexander01@gmail.com](mailto:rayalexander01@gmail.com)

## **IWA PLANNING ADVISORY PANEL**

### **Baz Juniper**

I joined the IWA in 1996 at a time when a couple of hire boat holidays had convinced my wife and I that we might find longer term enjoyment on the canals. In 1998 we bought a rather basic narrowboat which has given us good service over more than 2 decades but we've only been occasional attendees at IWA functions, not doing much, it has to be said, to forward the Association's aims over the years.



Having fully retired from a career in the public services a few years ago, I began to think I should 'do something useful' and a trawl for volunteers in an e-mail from Headquarters took my eye. My professional background was in town planning, having worked over 40 years for a development corporation, two local authorities and, finally, for the Planning Inspectorate. It was suggested to me that I might be a useful addition to the Association's newly formed Planning Advisory Panel and, although the existing members are vastly more experienced than I am, I hope to contribute positively in the future. Ray Alexander has also asked me to attend meetings of the Regional Committee and I will aim to be useful in that forum also.

## **First Silver Propeller Challenge Completed by Minimal List From The IWA Bulletin**

This week saw our Silver Propeller Challenge completed for the first time since its launch last year. The intrepid couple who were the first across the finish line were a husband and wife team, Michael and Jo Morehouse, who have been video blogging about their experiences via a YouTube channel “Minimal List” and keeping fans updated on social media through their social media accounts.

The challenge aims to encourage boaters to visit 20 or more lesser-explored waterways across the UK and it was with a visit to Standedge Tunnel that Michael and Jo finally made it to their 20<sup>th</sup> location.

The couple have been boating the network since May, 2017 and found out about the IWA Silver Propeller Challenge after its launch in early 2018. They realised they had already ticked off eight or nine of the destinations and made the decision to go for it and visit as many as they could. Their social media followers grew, with their YouTube channel now having over 10,800 subscribers and well over 1,000 on both Twitter and Instagram. It was this interaction that drove them forward as they knew they were encouraging other people to visit these rarely visited destinations.

As Michael says, "We appreciate the IWA's cruise-it-or-lose-it ethos and wanted to highlight some of the gems of these out of the way places. There were some canals where there was no love lost, but others were definitely worth the struggle, including the Ashby Canal and the end of the Montgomery."

## **AVON AND WILTS 100 CLUB DRAW** *Vivienne Hook*

The result of the Avon and Wilts 100 Club Winter Draw is too late for this issue and will be in the next issue of Sou'wester.

Anyone wanting to join the 100 Club should contact Vivienne Hook:

email: [vivienne.m.hook@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:vivienne.m.hook@blueyonder.co.uk) or write to me at 48 Broadfield Road, Bristol BS4 2UQ. One share will cost £6 and gives you a chance in each of the three draws during the year. You can have as many shares as you want.

## Getting to know your cushion

*Roger Francis*



I thought in this article, I would unlock some of the mysteries of the 'canal effect', in all its glory, in the hope that those who do not know about it, may come to understand why it is important to keep to the 'walking' pace of 4 mph, and also to slow down passing any moored boats.

Narrow boats mimic ships not only in their handling but also in their influence on the canal they float in. All ships have a coefficient of fineness, or a block coefficient. This is basically how close to a rectangular block, the underwater profile is. Most ships, such as tankers and bulk carriers, have a block coefficient of about 0.8. Refrigerated cargo ships and cruise liners, have a block coefficient closer to 0.5, or 0.6. I consider that my narrow boat has a coefficient of around 0.8, and handles similarly to the sort of bulk carriers I was handling as Master. Indeed, when I was asked to carry out some berthing and unberthing operations as a pilot, some years ago, I had a play on the canal, just to get my hand in again, as it had been some time since I had put ships alongside jetties.

In a canal, the effects of shallow water are almost always present, and because the canal banks are close, the canal effect is at its greatest. A boat with a block coefficient of 0.8, or  $\frac{4}{5}$ ths towards a rectangular block displaces a volume of water ahead of itself. In narrow canals, it has been known for ships to be affected by an approaching ship, 2 miles ahead of that ship. Thus the moving boats bow 'wave' and stern 'wave' and its attendant trough adjacent to the boat increase in amplitude as the speed increases, so it is vital to proceed at a moderate speed, and indeed to slow down in shallower water.

The trough is created by the water building up ahead of the boat as it pushes forward. Naturally, the water trough is highly unstable, and the water behind the boat needs to rush in to level the canal after the boat has passed, hence the stern wave. It is this wave that does the most damage to moored boats, and more importantly to the canal banks.

When a boat is moving ahead close to the bank on one side, the bow wave exerts a high pressure outwards, away from the bow, and it is this which tends to push the bow away from the bank and is known as the bank cushion.

Similarly at the stern, the trough has set up an area of low pressure, so that

water is being sucked in to fill the trough, towards the stern and likewise, the stern is drawn in towards the bank, known as bank suction. This is particularly evident when you get close to the sides of concrete lined sections of the canal; the simple answer is to slow down

The other factor of the canal effect which should be borne in mind is caused by the inequality of the bottom. The upshot of this depends on where the bottom gets less on one side, it can cause the boat to slew off, causing large rudder movements to be applied, to keep the boat going straight.

The trick is to keep, as far as possible, to the middle of the canal, as this minimises the bank effects, and sheering forces.

So the message is simple, if you go too fast, you will damage the fragile banks, and damage moored boats, and as you are so close to the bottom on most parts of the canal, you will cause the boat to squat deeper in the water, and probably run aground. So slow down, and save our canal for as long as possible.

## **IWA Nominee to Wilts & Berks Canal Trust**

### ***Neil Edwards***

IWA is entitled to appoint a trustee to Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. The nominee takes on the full role and responsibility the same as any other trustee, and in this role their primary duty is to the Trust rather than to IWA, but they should regularly report back to the Association at both local and national level and facilitate good liaison between the two organisations.

IWA's current nominee, Sue Cooper, wishes to stand down as soon as possible following her election as leader of South Oxfordshire Council after the May, 2019 local elections – so we are looking for someone to take over Sue's post with the Trust. The Wilts & Berks Canals flows through areas covered by both IWA Oxfordshire and Avon & Wilts branches, but the group's trustees are not restricted to coming from just these areas. If you might be interested in taking on this role for the Association, please contact Neil Edwards at IWA's Chesham Head Office for an informal chat – [neil@waterways.org.uk](mailto:neil@waterways.org.uk)

# Dredging the Swansea Canal

*Andy Ellis, Swansea Canal Society (SCS)*

Dredging the Swansea Canal is underway! Work to regenerate the historic canal continues apace with a key element - the dredging of almost a mile of the waterway between Coed Gwilym Park in Clydach and the locks at Trebanos by Land and Water Services acting as contractors for the Canal and River Trust (CRT). More than 6,700 cubic metres of silt is being removed from the channel – the equivalent of over 8,300 bathtubs full of water. This will open up the canal, enabling the Swansea Canal Society (SCS) to operate a trip boat and also improve the canoeing sessions that are already offered. Work started in November, 2019 and is anticipated to be completed in January, 2020.



The project is costing around £380,000 that includes funding totalling over £256,000 secured by CRT in partnership with SCS earlier this year from the Rural Community Development Fund with the support of the

Rural Development Programme teams in Neath Port Talbot Council and Swansea Council. Additional funding of £25,000 has been granted to the SCS by the Welsh Government Landfills Disposal Tax Community Scheme and SCS will contribute a further £26,000 as “donation in kind” from our dedicated team of volunteers.



Recently the canal was visited by two members of the Welsh Assembly - Rebecca Evans, AM for Gower, and Jeremy Miles, AM for Neath. They are both good friends of the canal and are always willing to offer support and encouragement. Here we see them learning about the

dredging project from Paul Fox, project manager for CRT, and watching the dredging in action.

The dredging project will transform the Swansea Canal into a premier heritage destination and centre for active recreation. As CRT dredges the canal, SCS volunteers will renovate historic structures and plant native trees. Further phases will develop leisure and learning opportunities including canoeing, trip boat, floating classroom and high quality interpretation. An underused semi-derelict canal will be transformed into a top tourist destination, raising the profile of the Swansea Valley as a base for tourism in the rural economy

*Photos: Top photo - Martin Davies (SCS), Bottom photo - Andy Ellis (SCS)*

## **New IWA Chairman**

### ***From the IWA Bulletin***



Paul Rodgers has been elected as new National Chairman of IWA with immediate effect. He succeeds outgoing National Chairman, Ivor Caplan who, after two years at the helm, has decided to focus on areas of particular interest including heritage, navigation and Planning.

Paul brings a wealth of business and volunteering expertise to the role and is looking to capitalise on IWA's unique position in terms of its independence, heritage, perspective and diversity of interests to help shape and facilitate the future regeneration of the waterways.

Paul says, *"I am honoured to have been elected by my fellow trustees to help lead the next stage in the development of our Association with the support of our staff team, volunteers and members. My aim as National Chairman is to continue to build on IWA's reputation, developing well-thought-out, strategic and active campaigns, which will result in the regeneration of the waterways to benefit all users, influencers and stakeholders for the remainder of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – and beyond."*

Neil Edwards says, "I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ivor Caplan for his service as National Chairman and for the commitment and energy he has brought to the Association during his time in the role, and will continue to bring to IWA in many other roles."

# BRIDGWATER DOCKS

*Ray Alexander*



West Country Branch members will know that the committee has for some time been lobbying both CRT and Somerset County Council (SCC) to address the future of Bridgwater Docks and the failed infrastructure which, inter alia, means that craft have been unable to use the Barge Lock to gain access to and from the River Parrett since 2002/3.

At the CRT User Group Forum for the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal on 3<sup>rd</sup> December the main presentation was about the Docks and the discussions that have been held between the two parties to the lease.

In summary:

- \* CRT announced that they will not be extending or renewing their lease of the Docks when it expires in July, 2020. They emphasised that they are only tenants of the landlord and that when the lease runs out all the interests in the Docks will revert to the freeholder, SCC.
- \* CRT has undertaken to work with SCC to secure the long term future of the Docks and in particular to identify how they can be managed in the future, perhaps by putting together a community company made up of local interests. Much more work needs to be done on this.
- \* CRT has undertaken to put the Docks back in the position they were in 1999, when they entered into the lease. This means carrying out a number of repairs including replacing the lock gates that are subject to the lease.

The presentation gave rise to a good number of questions from those present, many of which could not be answered as the detail has not yet been agreed between the parties. We commented that whilst IWA was disappointed that CRT was not extending or renewing its lease we understood the reasons for this and that we were glad that CRT was honouring its obligations under the dilapidation provisions of the lease.

The announcement leaves many questions unanswered and much work needs to be undertaken to determine what repairs need to be undertaken and how the Docks will be managed once the lease expires, which in reality is not far away.

*Photo: Barge Lock gates into the River Parrett - in need of replacement. courtesy of Mike Slade*

# Branch Reports

## IWA South Wales Branch Report

### *Tony Pugh, Branch Chairman*

On behalf of the South Wales Branch and Committee, I have attended the Swansea Bay Inland Waterways Partnership Meetings and the IWA regional meetings in Bristol together with working with the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust (MBACT) on their Electric Community Boat.



The South Wales Branch AGM is to be held at **3pm on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2020** at The Royal British Legion Club, the Lock House, Riverside, Aberdulais, Neath. SA10 8ES [Phone: 01639 643386](tel:01639643386) (Club open Saturdays 2pm-midnight)

There will be a visit to the aqueduct and lock on the Tennant Canal and also a short walk to the Tonna Lock and workshop on the Neath Canal and these will take place at 1pm and 4pm weather and numbers permitting.

Drinks will be available from the bar from 2pm. Light refreshments will be available to those who attend. Our guest speaker will give a talk on the history of the Neath Canals

On behalf of your Committee we would like to thank you for your support and hope to meet you on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.

The IWA South Wales Branch covers many valleys in South Wales, each with their own unique Canals and support Groups, many are listed below.

If you have a story or article you would like us to follow up please contact us.

**For up to date information on the local South Wales Canal Society's activities:**

**The Fourteen Locks Canal Centre** <http://fourteenlocks.mbact.org.uk/>

**The Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canals Trust** <http://www.mbact.org.uk>

**The Neath & Tennant Canals Trust** <http://www.neath-tennant-canals.org.uk/>

**The Swansea Canal Society** <http://www.swanseacanalsociety.com>

**The Cardiff Bay Harbour Authority** <http://www.cardiffharbour.com>

**Swansea Marina** <http://www.swanseamarina.org.uk/>

## **IWA Avon & Wiltshire Branch**

### ***Geoff Brown, Branch Chairman***



Following the recent upheaval in the local region with CRT, the branch chairmen and region chairman had a meeting with Jon Horsfall, which was useful, but at the time no permanent regional director had been appointed. Since then Mark Evans has been appointed. He is known to a number of people who have been active in the waterways movement for longer than me. Hopefully, at our next region meeting, we will discuss the way forward in our relationship with him.

At the last River Avon Users Group meeting, the subject of Himlayan Balsam was discussed and Paula Spiers, the secretary, was hoping to be able to make enquiries as to ownership of land. Hopefully, next year, we will be able to organize some work parties. Anyone interested in helping with clearance of this invasive species should contact me,

Also discussed was a proposed bridge over the river to take traffic from Saltford sewage works away from the village, but this idea was very quickly abandoned.

Since my last report, independent consultants have been employed by BANES (Bath and North East Somerset) council to look into the problems associated with mooring on the river by Mead Lane in Saltford. Unfortunately, the results are not now going to be discussed until January, due to the general election being called. However, it has since come to light that the works to the river bank, which took place in 2005, were more extensive than anyone realized, and as no mooring was contemplated at the time, it is possible that damage to the bank has occurred during the mooring trial.

Of more interest is the mayor of Bristol's plans for the western harbour, and changes to the road system in the Cumberland Basin area. I attended one of the presentations, but was unable to find out much, as the people in charge were not fully informed. I did, however, establish that there was little enthusiasm for either option. The majority of the people present were local residents or businesses, who were not happy with the eastern option because of the effect on their area, and the western option would affect the view of the suspension bridge. The hybrid option gives the worst of both options. It does seem that despite the original vagueness, that any new bridges will be able to be raised. If anybody picks up on news of developments, then please let us

know, in case we have not heard about it. At the last Harbour Group meeting very little was said, as the news had only just come out. By the time you read this we should have had another meeting.

Our winter programme of talks has begun, but so far the turnout has been lower than hoped for. I hope that more of you will be able to attend as the winter progresses. In particular we need more names for our annual dinner in January. The proposed boat trip next summer is still not finalized. Hopefully I will be able to fix a date in the near future.

## **IWA Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch**

### ***Steve Peet, Branch Chairman***

Our meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September at The Ship Inn was very successful and enjoyed by those who attended. We had a brief and informative walking tour of Brimscombe Port, followed by a meal and chat in the pub afterwards.



Our committee have met a couple of times since then and our last meeting of the branch on 2<sup>nd</sup> December was attended by 16 members, and we all had a thoroughly good evening.

Polly and Richard gave a very informative talk about the Saul Boat Festival and 200 Year Celebration of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal, to be held on the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2020.

It sounds like it will be a fabulous event and is to be centred around many activities including boats, beer and music. There will be something for everyone.

We finished our evening with coffee, tea and biscuits and a friendly chat.

We look forward to seeing as many members as possible at these meetings as we are still keen to get the branch back on its feet again. So come and talk boats and meet fellow users of the waterways!

Our next meeting will be our AGM, details can be found on pages 4 and 21.

## IWA West Country Branch

### *Ray Alexander, Branch Chairman*



**Branch committee** I am pleased to report that Maurice Pinner has joined the committee and will be responsible for maintaining the branch website at Head Office. Maurice is a shared-boat owner and lives in the Devon/Somerset borders close to the Grand Western canal. At the same time Peter Kelly, a long standing IWA member and a former IWA trustee, region and branch chairman, has retired from the committee. Thanks go to Peter for his contribution to the affairs of the branch over many years.

**West Country Waterways Forum** The Branch hosted a waterways forum on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> October in the Canal Room of the Globe Inn, Sampford Peverell. The purpose of the forum was to provide an opportunity for the local waterway groups to meet up, exchange information and ideas, and to hear about current and proposed developments – of which there are many – on some of the local waterways. The event was attended by 28 waterway enthusiasts, representing the Bude Canal Trust, Bude Canal and Harbour Society, Rolle Canal Society, Stover Canal Trust, Friends of Exeter Ship Canal, Friends of the Grand Western Canal, Somerset Navigators Boat Club and Langport Town Council. The waterways represented included operational waterways, restored waterways, those undergoing restoration and others in need of regeneration. Various presentations were made which highlighted the successes that have been achieved in recent years but also the issues that are faced in making further progress. A talk was also given by Ellen Hawes, IWA's fundraising officer, which was well received.

**West Country Waterway Guides** A new A3-size waterway guide has been produced in conjunction with the Stover Canal Trust. This is double the size of the previous guide and reflects the considerable progress made by the Stover Canal Trust on regenerating the canal and its corridors in the past few years. Copies are available from Sally Hillman, Branch Secretary.

**Upper Parrett Regeneration** Implementation of the new infrastructure on the Upper Parrett is proceeding apace and now includes the following:

- Solar lighting at Huish Bridge and at the top of the slipway;
- Two sets of steps for Canoes/Kayaks;

- Four pontoons (two at Cocklemoor, one at Huish Bridge and one at Muchelney);
- A trim trail;
- An outdoor table tennis table;
- Throwlines along the river bank at various locations;
- Solar lighting at the pedestrian bridge adjacent to Bow Bridge.
- Cycle racks; and
- Bike repair station.

Good use is already being made of these and together with a new café at Bow Bridge they are already attracting visitors to the Town, which was one of the key objectives of the River Project. Our 2020 AGM will be held in Langport – please see page 5 for details.

***Bridgwater Tidal Barrier*** Branch members will be aware that the Tidal Barrier project board rejected the proposal for land to be allocated to enable a lock and approach channels to be constructed at a later date in the (decommissioned) bypass channel. The Association is disappointed with this and considers it a short sighted decision, which it is planning to contest through the Transport and Works Act Order procedures.

## **IWA WATERWAYS RECOVERY GROUP (WRG) WORK CAMP DATES FOR OUR AREA**

### ***Alex Melson, Volunteers Coordinator***

4 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> July	Swansea Canal
1 <sup>st</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> August	Wilts & Berks Canal
8 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> August	Wilts & Berks Canal
15 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Cotswolds Canal
22 <sup>nd</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> August	Cotswolds Canal
29 <sup>th</sup> August – 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Cotswolds Canal
24 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> October	Cotswold Canal

WRG has released it's programme of weeklong residential working holidays for 2020. They all need the support of up to 20 volunteers each week.

The aim of the Canal Camp programme is to support the admirable work of local canal restoration societies. Volunteers will have the chance to learn new skills and meet new people.

please visit WRG's website [www.wrg.org.uk](http://www.wrg.org.uk). Alternatively, you can call WRG head office on 01494 783453 ext 610, or email [enquiries@wrg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrg.org.uk).

# Forthcoming Events

## IWA WEST COUNTRY BRANCH - New Year's Day Walk

IWA West Country Branch is organising a New Year's Day walk on the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal, starting at Creech St. Michael near Taunton in Somerset. Members and guests including family dogs are most welcome to come along to this.

The intention is to meet at Creech St. Michael Canal Car Park, TA3 5PW, at 1.30pm and to walk from 1.45pm along the towpath to Cogload Junction and back, which should take approximately 2 hours. The total length of the walk is some 4 miles.

To get to the canal car park take Vicarage Lane, turn left at the end, continue over the railway bridge and then turn right towards the car park.

We have not booked a specific venue on this occasion for refreshments, however, the New Mill Inn, 102 Bridgwater Road, Bathpool, TA2 8BE will be open both before and after the walk.

For further information please contact Ray Alexander on 07786 176875 or [rayalexander01@gmail.com](mailto:rayalexander01@gmail.com) or Mike Slade on 07977 263840 or [mdslade8@gmail.com](mailto:mdslade8@gmail.com)

## IWA Avon & Wiltshire Branch Salisbury Group Programme

Venue: The Green Dragon, Old Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, SP5 3AR

There is no details of the 2020 programme at time of going to print.

All enquiries to Ron and Myra Glover - contact details can be found on page 23. Or Jon Van de Geer - 01722 412841

## IWA Avon & Wiltshire Branch Programme

**Venue:** The Community Room, Wickhouse Close, Saltford, BS31 3BZ

Access from the main Bath Road, where there are regular bus services from both Bristol and Bath, is via Norman Road. The Room is close to the Saltford Hall, where we have met before; turn left in front of the Hall.

**Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> January: 7.30pm**

Bristol Channel pleasure steamers by Richard Clammer.

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> January: 12pm (noon)**

Branch annual dinner at the Bathwick Boatman.

**Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> February: 7.30pm**

Manchester Canals by Steve Bacon.

**Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March: 7.30pm**

AGM followed by a brief talk by Roger Francis, our new region chairman.

All enquiries to Geoff Brown - contact details can be found on page 23.

## IWA Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Branch Meetings

**Venue:** Whitminster Village Hall, School Lane, Whitminster, GL2 7NN

**Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March: 7.30pm**

AGM followed by a film show with a boating topic, delivered by award winning local film maker and boat owner Robert Paget.

We look forward to seeing as many members as possible at these meetings as we are still keen to get the branch back on its feet again. So come and talk boats and meet fellow users of the waterways!

# Waterways in the IWA South West and South Wales Region

## Avon & Wilts Branch

- Rivers Avon & Severn: Tidal navigation that is the responsibility of the Bristol Haven Conservancy, downstream of the second Severn crossing
- Avon Navigation: Hanham to Avonmouth, including River Avon & Bristol Docks
- Kennet & Avon Canal: Hanham Lock to Froxfield Bridge
- North Wilts Canal
- Somersetshire Coal Canal
- Wilts & Berks Canal: Kennet & Avon Canal to County Boundary 1m West of Shrivenham

## Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Branch

- Coombe Hill Canal
- Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal
- Lydney Canal
- River Severn: from Mythe Bridge, Tewkesbury to a point on the tidal navigation which is the seaward extent of responsibility of the Gloucester Harbour Trustees, downstream of the Second Severn Crossing
- Stroudwater Navigation
- River Wye: Hay-on-Wye to Severn Estuary
- Gloucester & Sharpness Canal
- Leominster Canal
- Thames & Severn Canal

## South Wales Branch

- Brecon & Abergavenny Canal
- Monmouthshire Canal
- Swansea Canal
- River Wye - Hay-on-Wye to source
- Glamorganshire and Aberdare Canals
- Neath & Tennant Canals
- River Usk

## West Country Branch

- Bridgwater & Taunton Canal
- Cann Quarry Canal
- Dorset & Somerset Canal
- Grand Western Canal
- Par Canal
- Somerset Navigations
- Tavistock Canal
- Torrington (Lord Rolle's) Canal
- Bude Canal
- Chard Canal
- Exeter Ship Canal
- Liskeard & Looe Canal
- River Parrett
- Stover Canal
- River Tone
- Westport Canal

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## Next Issue of *Sou'Wester*

The next issue of *Sou'Wester* is due out in May, 2020.

Please send all copy to the Editor at

[souwester@waterways.org.uk](mailto:souwester@waterways.org.uk) by

**Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020**

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of IWA.

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Registered in England no. 612245. Registered as a Charity no 212343.

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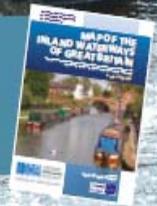
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