

STORT Reporter

NEWSLETTER OF THE STORT BOAT CLUB

Issue 59 - Feb 2016

Commodore
Graham Riley

Vice Commodore
Andy Higgs

Treasurer
Colin Porter

Secretary
Sue Higgs

Committee
Mike Newman
Sue Barrett

Editor: Sue Barrett
s-r.barrett@ntlworld.com

Hello and welcome.

This issue comes at a time when our thoughts start thinking about the warmer weather and the next boating season however long or short it will be - shall I mention the list of jobs we all must have to do - no perhaps not!

If you are anything like Robbie and myself, we usually have a rough plan of where we shall be heading off to by now although this year is certainly going to be different as we are moving house. Our boating priorities will be on the 'back burner' for a while but we shall certainly be out there later in the year and our paths may well cross, so we will look out for you. All being well we shall be sticking to southern waterways.

Wherever you cruise have a great time!

Editor.

WATERWAYS NEWS

River Thames

The Environment Agency is to tighten mooring restrictions at 22 locations along the non-tidal river.

The move follows a pilot scheme in which legislation designed for car parking was used to regulate short-stay mooring sites owned by the agency. The first included Oxford, above Osney lock, and Walton.

Now the civil procedures for enforcement are to be used at more locations from October 2015.

The sites will include Hurst Park, Walton Towpath, Walton, Gridley and Miskins, Weybridge Towpath, Desborough Island, Egham, Marlow, Goring, Wargrave (Lashbrook Moorings), Eynsham, Abingdon, Sonning, Boveney, Lechlade, and Kingston Wharf.

The agency is also considering extending the restrictions to Stevens Eyot between Teddington and Kingston and to the land between Molesey & Sunbury Locks.

At most locations boaters are allowed to moor free for up to 24 hours but face an increasing mooring charge for subsequent days. Skippers face penalty charges and possible court action if the rules are ignored, so do be aware.

Issued October 2nd 2015

River Thames cont.

A number of hydroelectric schemes on the River Thames have been given or about to be given the go-ahead.

The news comes after Richmond planners approved a controversial scheme at Teddington and Ham. The Lensbury Club at Teddington is concerned about potential noise from the turbines which could affect its business and says it is considering legal action in a bid to halt it.

Further upstream Runnymede Councillors have voted in favour of a scheme at Bell Weir, Staines.

Both of these are being undertaken by Southeast Power Engineering which is responsible for the plant at Romney which supplies power to Windsor Castle. The company is now involved in detailed planning of both and talking to manufacturers to begin the engineering process.

Meanwhile at Goring, a £1.5 million hydroelectric plant is planned on the western bank of the lock island. Goring and Streatley Community Energy has applied for planning permission for three Archimedes Screws estimated to produce 850 megawatt-hours annually, or enough power for 300 homes.

Thames Wildlife

A Survey was launched in 2004 designed to help conservationists to develop a better understanding on how marine mammals use the Thames and so help and encourage them in the future.

Highlights from the 10 year report just published include:

More sightings were reported around Canary Wharf than any other area along the Thames.

Many sightings were recorded in Central London, especially between the Houses of Parliament and the O2 Arena. Other sighting hotspots include Hammersmith, Southend-on-Sea and Cliffe

Seals were seen as far upstream as Hampton Court Palace, harbour porpoises and dolphins as far as Teddington Lock and whales as far as Gravesend

Harbour seals were the most commonly spotted marine mammal, with more than 1,000 animals reported over the 10 year period

Marine mammals were found year-round throughout the Thames Estuary

The majority of sightings lasted less than 2 minutes and were of marine mammals swimming

2013 saw the greatest number of sightings submitted (239 sightings)

Most sightings were of individual animals, but occasionally large groups were seen: In September 2014 100 seals were spotted at Greenwich and in November 2014 30 pilot whales were spotted near Clacton-on-Sea

FOR SALE

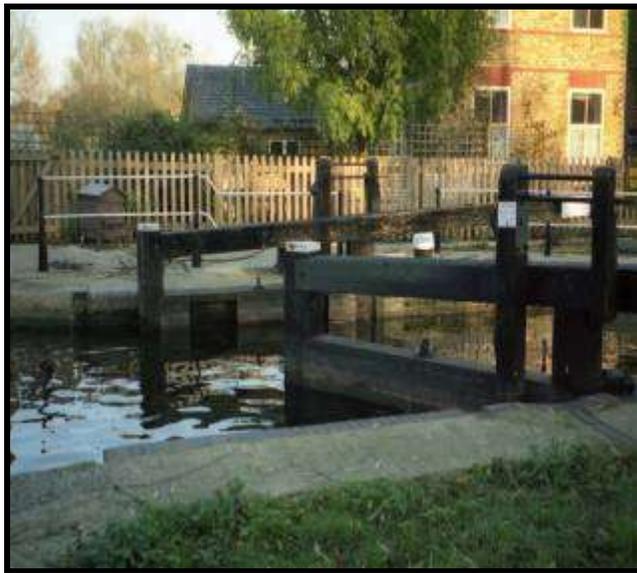
Narwhal inflatable dingy Minor 2.8 (8ft long) £150.00.

Shakespeare electric outboard motor. 5 speed forward and reverse. £100.00.

Contact: Robbie.

SHOTS PAST AND PRESENT

Below is a photo of Stanstead Abbots Lock before the walkway was installed. The second shot was taken on the 23rd February 1992 when the Lea and Stort Rivers Society gave BW (as it was then) a substantial sum of money for this to be installed onto the top gates - John and Pat you will definitely remember this!



Before

I also kept copies of articles that appeared in the local papers at the time and you will find them on the next page.

Many of you will recognise the lady on the next page as the late June Wilkinson who owned Hallingbury Marina for many years. Together with her husband John, they took on the huge task to restore the Mill you see today. June was also the formidable Lea & Stort Rivers Society Chairman for many years.

Of course Hallingbury Marina is still owned by the Wilkinson family but is now run by her son Graham and Graham's son-in-law Rob. Michael Render was the BW Waterways Manager at that time and is receiving the cheque.



After



FEB 23 1992

Society unlocks cash for gates

LOCK gate footboards for Stanstead Abbots lock off Amwell Lane are to be bought by British Waterways, thanks to the fund-raising efforts of the Lea and Stort Rivers Society.

Members of the group walked along the towpath from Ware to Stanstead Abbots on Sunday to present a £900 cheque to Michael Render, manager of British Waterways' Lee and Stort Navigations.

The footboards will help boaters to operate the lock, enabling users to walk straight across when operating the sluices.

June Wilkinson, chairman of the rivers society, said the money had been raised through raffles, auctions and the society's open day at Hallingbury Mill.

Walkway bridge

AN AUCTION and a raffle contributed to the building of a bridge at Stanstead Abbots Lock.

The money was raised by the Lea and Stort Rivers Society to build a walkway allowing better access for boaters to operate the lock.

The official opening of the bridge took place on Sunday when a cheque for £900 was handed over to British Waterways from the society.

After the presentation, manager of the British Waterways' Lee and Stort Navigations, Michael Render, said: "We are very grateful for the money and we hope it will make things a lot easier in the future."

Pictured on the bridge is chairman of the Lea and Stort Rivers Society, June Wilkinson handing over the cheque to Michael Render of British Waterways.

Club 2015 Christmas Dinner at the Salisbury Arms Hotel in Hertford



21 MEMBERS HAD A THOROUGHLY ENJOYABLE EVENING ATTENDING OUR ANNUAL CLUB CHRISTMAS DINNER BACK IN EARLY DECEMBER 2015 AND HERE'S THE PROOF!

CALL TO MARK 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF CANAL ENGINEER

This year marks the 300th anniversary of James Brindley's birth and the 250th anniversary of the first cutting of sod for the Trent and Mersey Canal.

Did you know that James Brindley designed the first major trunk route through England since the departure of the Romans - that was the Trent and Mersey Canal. The Harecastle Tunnel was another of his momentous achievements.

If you are thinking of going to the Etruria Canal Festival in the summer (4-5 June) that is the likeliest venue for such a celebration. It is a wonderful midsummer weekend when the Etruria Industrial Museum has a steam up and thousands enjoy a great day out overlooked by a statue of James Brindley standing on a tall, square sectioned plinth looking proudly over the canal he built. I am sure we will hear more about this as the year progresses.

SO WHAT'S THE STORY?!

So, does anyone know the reason behind this? One can only assume the boater owns the land in the first instance but to dig a trench and then fill it in is going that extra mile! One way to avoid paying mooring fees to CRT I suppose?



So, where is the location? It is on the Southern Oxford Canal not that far away from leaving Marston Doles top lock heading towards Banbury.

Rather intriguing don't you think, so if anyone knows the history behind this I will publish it in the next issue.

Even More Thames News

Thames Lock Ladders & Fire Extinguishers

Following protests to the (then) Chairman of EA, Sir Philip Dilley, regarding proposals to remove the portable safety lock ladders and withdraw the fire extinguishers at all locks on the River Thames, at a recent meeting of the Thames Navigation Users Forum in January the Waterways Manager advised that following an exercise to investigate issues at locks, the heavier ladders would be replaced by lighter versions and thankfully there will be little change on the fire extinguisher practice.

I for one feel a lot happier that the ladders are being replaced rather than being taken away altogether. It's all 'just in case'!

A public consultation on options for a flood alleviation channel for Oxford with a series of public events for local residents has taken place during January 2016. This information will be used to assess the options available for the channel.

Every year sewage overflows into the River Thames from various overflow points along the tidal river so London is going to get a super sewer! A 20 metre wide barge with a crane has nestled near Blackfriars Bridge so work can begin on a new pier to the east of Blackfriars and this will also serve as a Thames Clipper stop later in the year. A staircase and lift connecting the Embankment to Blackfriars Bridge will also be installed.

Building a new pier is one of the first jobs to enable the construction of the 25km long tunnel.

Most of the spoil from digging out the tunnel will be transported out of London by barge cutting the number of lorry trips that would be needed.

Canal and River Trust News

Have you seen this poster from CRT? One way to try and persuade cyclists to slow down I suppose!



A Team of Drivers Brave the Cold Water of the Grand Union

Last week, a team of divers braved the cold water of the Grand Union Canal in Little Venice to check the condition of the WW11 Air Raid Protection gates which have remained largely unaltered for over 75 years.

The team have to inspect the gates by hand because they cannot see too well under water. When one diver is in the water, another will always be in full kit on the boat ready to go in should there be an emergency.

Well I never knew that! Editor.

I'm sure like me you have seen photographs of the devastating floods affecting a number of northern waterways. Boats have been left in precarious places, bridges, embankments and canal banks

have been affected and a lot of towpath has also been closed. The clean up is going to cost hundreds and hundreds of pounds.

Donations to:-

canalrivertrust.org.uk/donate/flood-appeal.

The cafe at Hazelmere Marina has been demolished and so too the facilities block. As far as we know CRT will be replacing the facilities.

SPRING SBC EVENTS

Monday 15 Feb

Stort Boat Club AGM at the New Inn Pub, Roydon. 8pm. Buffet available. All members welcome.

Sunday 28 Feb

Snopdrop Sunday at Bennington Lordship. £5 entry fee per person. (no concessions on Sundays). Meet in the community hall car park at 11.45am (gardens open at 12 noon). Snacks, soup, tea and coffee available at community hall from 12 noon and I would suggest having a light lunch as we arrive before walking into the gardens.

Contact Sue to book in.

Wednesday 2 March

Club mid-week lunch at The Three Horseshoes, Spellbrook 12.30pm (same venue as for January).

Contact Sue to book in no later than Sat 20 February.

Saturday 12 March

Social get together at the Church Hall in Roydon. Bring a plate to share.

Contact Pauline asap if you haven't already let her know you are attending.

Easter Weekend - 25 to 28 March

*******Organiser needed*******

Neither Pauline or Sue will be available.

