

BASINGSTOKE COMPLETION SHOCK!

The whole world has been stunned by the sudden revelation that all volunteer lock work on the Basingstoke Canal is now complete. Announcing the shocking news, an ashen-faced Mike Fellows informed London WRG News that a "topping-out event" event for volunteers has been rapidly arranged for SATURDAY 22nd JULY to enable all volunteers past & present to pay their final respects to this greatest of all work sites. We shall not see its like again.

The event will be based at lock 2 in West Byfleet & will start at approximately 2 pm & carry on until late afternoon. It will be followed in the evening by an audio-visual experience, then a trip to a local hostelry. Accommodation will be provided at Ash Village Hall (please tell Tim Lewis if you plan to stay overnight) & on Sunday there will be an opportunity to visit other parts of the canal.

On the Weston Front

Our Spring Bank Holiday dig, originally planned to be on the Pocklington Canal, was shifted to the Montgomery Canal, or to be more precise the Weston Arm, which joins the Montgomery just below Frankton locks. About 50 yards along the branch the canal narrows to about 8ft. wide & there are grooves for stop-planks to be inserted. The intention was to clear the bottom of the canal of vegetation & dismantle the sides of the canal so that they can be rebuilt & stop-planks inserted ready for rewatering of the pound below Frankton locks. Most of Saturday was spent driving to Aston locks & back several times, standing around wondering what to do & installing the toilet, but by Saturday night we had made a start on removing coping stones & had cut down enough trees to start a bonfire that was still burning on Monday.

Most of Sunday & Monday were spent removing some extremely stubborn tree stumps from the sides of the canal & demolishing an interior wall in the rather unstable stable that was already threatening to collapse onto the towpath.

On Monday we knocked off early so that Glyn could navigate us on a tour of the Frankton-Welshpool section of the canal. As we approached Welshpool the van ran out of fuel, to the consternation of Lesley & Mary, 2 KESCRG / Canal Camp people who had accepted our offer of a lift back to London ("Someone offers you a lift home, then they run out of petrol in a lay-by...").

P.T.O.

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Here's our complete dates list:

Working Parties

29-30/07/89 Droitwich Canal
19-20/08/89 Basingstoke Canal
09-10/09/89 Stroudwater / Thames & Severn (to be confirmed)
30/09-01/10/89 Wilts & Berks Canal
21-22/10/89 Chesterfield Canal (to be confirmed)
11-12/11/89 To be arranged
02-03/12/89 To be arranged

Socials

Don't forget our midweek gatherings at a central London pub (usually the Founder's Arms on Bankside) on the Wednesday night midway between working parties (i.e. 19/7/89, 9/8/89, 30/8/89 etc.) starting at about 7.30 p.m. The dates may be altered in the event of a tube strike. Phone Tim, Martin or Lesley for details.

Other Events

22/07/89 "Topping out" event on the Basingstoke Canal.
26-28/08/89 IWA National Rally on the River Lee at Waltham Abbey.
???13/12/89 Christmas Party

For details of any events, contact one of the following:

Lesley McFadyen,
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London SE22
Tel 01-693 3266 (eves)
01-405 8400 ext 402 (days)

Tim Lewis,
5, Harpenden Road,
Wanstead,
London E12
Tel 01-530 4767 (eves)

Martin Ludgate,
35, Bracken House,
Watts Grove,
London E3 3RG
Tel 01-515 7046 (eves)
01-637 9144 ext 47170 (days)