



WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

Welcome to "On The Button", the electronic newsletter for the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. If you have any suggestions or items you would like to include in the next edition please email editor@wbct.org.uk

200 CLUB

Time is running out to join the 200 Supporters Club 2020. Buying a ticket gives you a chance to win some money but you are also supporting the Trust. Half of your ticket money is used to support the work of the Trust. If you would like to participate and read more information about the 200 Club go to <https://www.wbct.org.uk/get-involved/200-club>

The closing date for applications is 31st January 2020.

QUEENFIELD

Branch volunteers have made their first foray to the recently acquired Queenfield site between Melksham and Lacock. Parts of the canal are still in water, though somewhat overgrown, however the first task is to remove a number of disused outbuildings.



After that we will look to start clearing the towpath which we hope will become part of the 'Destination Lacock' project, a footpath linking Melksham and Lacock along the line of the canal.



SANTA TRIPS

Our Santa trips in December were the best they've ever been. We decided to run 5 trips per day rather than 4, as we'd had to turn people away in the last couple of years, & now we're back at Waitrose we can afford to finish later in the day. The trips became booked up very quickly and we still had to turn some people away, though not many. Even before the first trip on Nov 30th, we were as close to 100% booked as it is possible to be.



All trips ran without a hitch, though there were a few close calls on windy days. There were a couple of families who had to cancel through illness, but Diana was able to fill their places – and one family even got their Santa presents anyway! Thank you and well done to the 20+ members who were involved in one way or another; as always, it was tremendously rewarding – and the bottom line is that we were able to transfer a much-needed £4,000 to Trust funds!

FUNDRAISING

The fundraising team, have begun using the well regarded services of another charity called GoodExchange to put us in direct contact with funders that match our requirements profile and donate to projects like ours. We have begun a campaign to double the membership of the Trust and our plan for doing this has been endorsed by the Executive. This is designed to make the Trust self sustaining for its running costs and independent of hard to find core funding from external sources.



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**Port to Port,
A Historical Journey, the length and breadth of the
Sharpness to Gloucester Canal**

A talk by **Paul Barnett**



Saul Junction today

The talk charts the fortunes of Gloucestershire's waterborne trade via its famous ship canal. Starting at the rural dock of Sharpness, journeying northward, until eventually 'hoving to' in the city's historic Gloucester dock.

Monday 3rd February 7.30pm

The Angel Hotel,
47, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett
SN4 7AQ

For further information contact Jenny Stratton 07818 450651

Please note, the ballroom is upstairs and there is no lift.

Free parking in the Borough Fields car park SN4 7AX

www.wbct.org.uk

WINTER TRIPS

On the first weekend of the year, my wife (Liz) & I were on nB Dragonfly doing some tidying up after the Santa trips; several people came down to the jetty to ask if we were doing trips. We'd never done them in the winter before, but Liz said "Why not give it a go?" We thought we'd go for whichever weekend day had the better weather; that was Sunday 12th, so on Friday I advertised it on Facebook – the post reached over 8,000 people, with 1,400 engagements, 14 comments & had 18 shares – almost a record! We started the day by taking some of the Swindon Work Party down the canal to deal with a fallen tree; then we did four trips, ending up carrying 15 adults & 10 children, making almost £140 for the Trust – and, just as important, being visible to many people and giving out Trust leaflets to all who came on the boat.



Skipper Rob Hardy had joined us, & was happy to do Sundays; Liz & I are happy to do Saturdays, so between us we decided to run both weekend days for a weekend or two & see if that level of interest continues. It will be very weather dependent, of course, & the plan is to advertise on Facebook every Friday. Wish us luck – at least we have plenty of water!

ICE BREAKER

Dragonfly did a bit of ice-breaking in January! Very thin ice is OK; more tends to strip the paint off, but we'll be repainting her anyway quite soon. So our experimental winter weekends look successful so far, but we won't run in bad weather.



BOOK SALES

We will be holding book sales at the Swindon Information Centre again this year. The sales will be on the following dates

Friday April 3rd and Saturday April 4th
Friday May 1st and Saturday May 2nd
Friday June 5th and Saturday June 6th
Friday July 3rd and Saturday July 4th
Friday August 7th and Saturday August 8th
Friday September 4th and Saturday September 5th
Friday October 2nd and Saturday October 3rd

Opening hours 10am to 4pm. Volunteers welcomed for all dates. No experience needed. Please contact us on 0845 625 1977 or by email at info@wbct.org.uk if you are able to help. The centre is opposite the Swindon main library at 1 Regent Circus SN1 1QN



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QUIZ NIGHT

*Needle Hall
High Street
Chippenham SN15 3ER*



*Friday 17th April 2020
7pm for 7.30pm start*



*In aid of restoration of the
Wilts & Berks Canal*



*General Knowledge Quiz
Entry £15 per team (of up to 4)
Tea, coffee, cake available
Licensed Bar*



To enter email quiz@wbct.org.uk

No later than Fri 10th April please

Registered Charity No. 299595



WBCT TEAM

Welcome to our new Head of Communications: Dave Crucefix, who joins our Executive Team. Along with Dave Thomas, recently appointed as Marketing & Membership Advisor, and Martin Stubbs, our Head of IT, there are plans being worked up to improve our communications approach to ensure our "reach" via the wbct website and other communication channels such as social media are maximised to encourage better support to our charity.

CONTACT

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For membership enquiries please email membership@wbct.org.uk and include your postcode and your membership number if known.

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