



## Mick's Musings

### Britain's Got (Boating) Talent?

MOWS recent attendance at the Braunston Boat Gathering was marked by the meeting of TV's boating couple Timothy West and Prunella Scales (see photo page 4). This wasn't my first encounter as the pair had gracefully accepted our invitation years before to open the canal festival at Loughborough, which Linda and I were heavily involved with at that time. On that occasion Tim borrowed my Panama hat as it was a hot day and at Braunston, Pru was the one to don the tifter.

Many people were asking for autographs, etc, which made me realise what an impact television has on the psyche of the viewer and how it can influence their attitude to the subject matter that the celebrities are involved in.

Thanks to Rosie and Jim (remember them?) a whole generation has grown up, not only acutely aware of the UK's waterway system, but with a healthy respect for it, resulting, hopefully in less vandalism and more voluntary workers in that sector coming forward.

Likewise, Tim and Pru have awakened the sensibilities of a whole cross section of the populus, and many more people have been encouraged to discover the delights of a towpath walk or boat trip.

David Suchet as patron of the Litchfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust uses his celebrity status to achieve great things, but we will soon need another generation of "Boating Superstars" as the present wave begin to enjoy their retirement.

So what's next? The Chuckle Brothers do the BCN? Tiller to you - to me - to you, etc? Gary Lineker does the Yorkshire five rise with ball skills at Bingley? Or maybe Dr Who at Foxton Locks? Well good luck to the Daleks with that paddle gear – it was always very stiff when we were there!

Mick  
Mick

## MOWS New Website

Our new website has just gone live. You can still access the website via [www.meltonwaterways.org.uk](http://www.meltonwaterways.org.uk), but that's where the similarity ends. It has been rebuilt and looks completely different to the old website.

We are indebted to Tom Coward who has spent very many hours reconstructing the site with input from ourselves. We hope you will agree with us that Tom has done a fantastic job. See what you think - we would be grateful for any feedback.

## WatersideCare In Melton

The society has been contacted by WatersideCare, which is a branch of the Keep Britain Tidy organisation. Their representative, Les Warren, met our secretary, Dave Andow, and had a look at the waterways around Melton town centre, with the view to forming a Melton group, but unfortunately this was several months ago. Sophie Cooke has now replaced Mr Warren and would like to meet us and familiarise herself with Melton and surrounding area. A meeting has been arranged for mid-August, so we'll probably have more to report in the next newsletter.

We understand that their main remit is to clean up/litter pick around waterways, so we may be asking for volunteers in the future.

## Rights of Navigation

A recent guest at one of MOWS committee meetings was Adrian Stott, who has published papers concerning (some would say controversial) views on navigation rights on rivers.

In a very interesting presentation, he took the committee through the historical background of the law principles involved and went on to speak about the specifics of those laws which have a bearing on objectives that river based restoration societies like ourselves are trying to achieve.

Many misconceptions were challenged by Adrian who seems as committed as anyone to correcting these anomalies, whilst putting forward ideas and giving us much food for future thought.

Who would know for example, that flowing water is public, although the riparian owner owns the river bed and that floating over land is not deemed to be accessing or trespassing on that land?

Adrian went on to highlight the 1935 problems with the River Derwent and the subsequent fallout that resulted from the court and appeal cases.

One thing that struck a chord with us was his statement that "roads were made by man, but rivers by God" - a very interesting thesis.



## ***Guided Walks of the Oakham Canal and Melton Mowbray Navigation***

**26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

**25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

**11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Daily walks of between 1 and 18 miles available for all abilities**

**OAKHAM CANAL: Oakham - Ashwell - Market Overton - Teigh - Edmondthorpe -  
Stapleford Park - Wyfordby - Brentingby - Melton Mowbray**

**MELTON MOWBRAY NAVIGATION: Melton Mowbray - Kirby Bellars - Frisby on the Wreake - Hoby -  
Thrussington - Ratcliffe on the Wreake - Cossington - Syston**

**Email [pdadford@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pdadford@yahoo.co.uk) to find out more or to book your place**

- Walks follow (as far as possible) the routes of the Oakham Canal and Melton Mowbray Navigation using public footpaths and mainly minor roads
- Public footpaths can be muddy after heavy rain
- Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear
- Walks are free, but donations to the Melton & Oakham Waterways Society are welcome
- Transport, food and accommodation options available (at cost)

**To help our cause, we would like this publication to reach as wide an audience as possible, so please feel free to pass it on to your friends and family, either electronically or pass on your paper copy. Thanks.**

# Braunston Boat Gathering

Over the weekend of 24/25 June, the society attended the above event. Mick and I were there on the Saturday and, after an appeal to members for volunteers to come forward to cover the Sunday, Fiona and Ian Knapp happily volunteered and were our representatives on that day. The weather was kind ... for which we were grateful, as our stand was not under cover.

We had lots of chats with visitors, but the highlight was having our cheque presented by Timothy West and Prunella Scales. Their presence on our TV screens has undoubtedly put the waterways of Britain into the public consciousness. Tim was a founder member of the Kennet & Avon Trust. They have both worn Mick's hat over the years; mmm ... I wonder how much we could sell it for on ebay - "... as worn by", etc?

*Linda*



*Left to right: Paul Bennett (Braunston Marina, Linda (yes, that's me), Chairman Mick, Prunella Scales, Timothy West, Tim Coghlan (Braunston Marina). Unfortunately, the MOWS banner was behind us and it looks like we were part of the Coventry Canal crew! (Photograph by courtesy of Harry Arnold, Waterway Images Ltd).*

**Reminder!**

## Subscription Renewals 2017

Sorry for another reminder, but this is just to some of our members who pay by Standing Order. If you pay by this method, but have not yet increased your old SO to the new annual membership fee, could you please ensure you pay the shortfall for this year and also inform your bank of this increase.

*Many thanks*

## Welcome To New Member ...

David Wood

## Society Contacts:

**Chairman:** Michael Clowes  
Tel: 01509 414140  
e-mail: lindandmick@btinternet.com

**Secretary:** Dave Andow  
Tel: 01664 562317  
e-mail: daveandow@live.co.uk

**Treasurer:** Jan Dadford  
e-mail: jdadford@live.co.uk

**Membership Secretary / Newsletters:**  
Linda Hulme  
Tel: 01509 414140  
e-mail: lindaahulme@gmail.com

**Website:**  
<http://www.meltonwaterways.org.uk>