

# TSCC



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Denmans & Tangmere; Russell Doig



[scouts.org.uk/activesupport](https://scouts.org.uk/activesupport)

Thames Scout Cruising Club Newsletter

No. 103 November 2016

# Chairman's Log

Hello everyone,

Once again TSCC has had sad times. Russell Doig passed away at the beginning of our trip to Hurley. It was a terrible shock to all of us. Our hearts went out to Theresa and Mark.



Russell had told me on several occasions how much he and his family enjoyed being members of TSCC, I shall remember that when I think about Russell.

We carried on with our events at Hurley and there are some excellent write-ups on the various outings.

After Hurley we all went on our cruises along our beautiful Thames, I am sure good times were had by all.

TSCC was represented at the ATYC rally; I hope our members had a good time, especially after all the hard work that goes into organising the event.

We are now looking forward to our next special dates, firstly the Royal Marines Band at G Live.

I hope as many members as possible will attend our Annual dinner on the 14<sup>th</sup> November at Casa Mia.

Raymond and I are looking forward to our trip to Potters and Thursford, it is wonderful that there are a lot of our members who are going, it will be a great way to end 2016.

My best wishes to you all.

*Elaine*

TSCC is affiliated to: ATYC, River Thames Society, and River Thames Alliance.

Cover Photo:

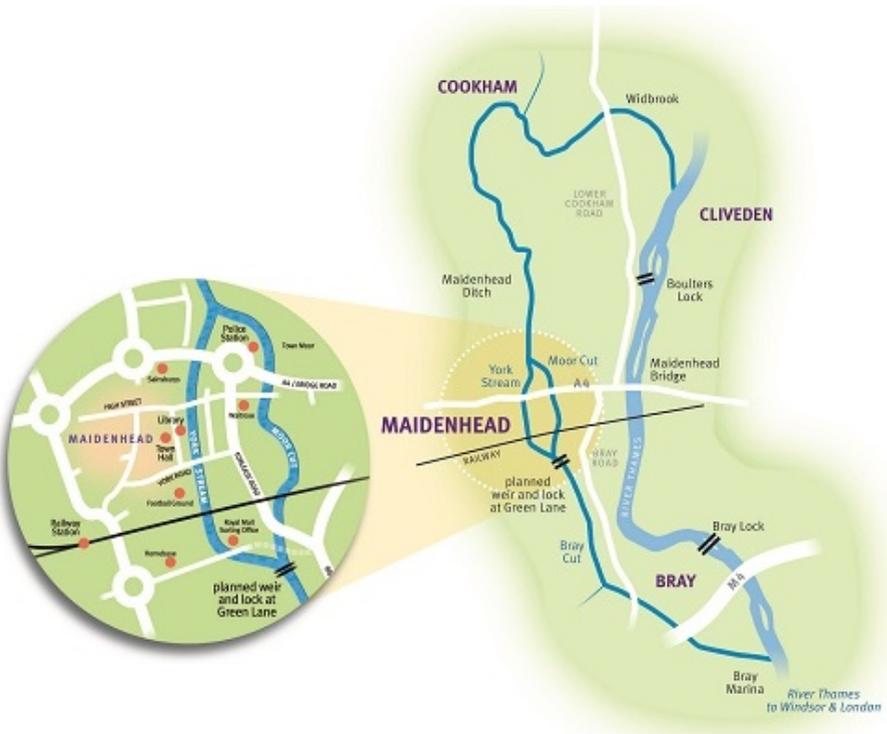
Rosie's Chocolate Factory: Taken by Mike Fowler.

# The Maidenhead Waterways Project

This was a very difficult day for all of us following the tragic death of Russell the night before. Many, understandably, felt unable to join the trip. Others of us took the view that there was nothing we could do to ease the pain of Theresa and Mark, and it was better to be active.

The informative nature of the day was probably appropriate to our mood. We were met by Richard Davenport, Chair of The Waterways Project. A man with an amazing grasp of facts and figures, combined with huge enthusiasm.

Basically, the project is to rejuvenate Maidenhead town centre by restoring and improving existing watercourses to provide a linear leisure park suitable for navigation by narrow boats.



I have to confess that I have not been to Maidenhead town centre for, probably, 40 years. I was very surprised to see how unloved it has become. It is certainly in need of a significant stimulus to achieve the potential it so obviously has.

The overall project will create a looping navigable channel from Cliveden Reach, through the town centre, then joining the Thames again at Bray Marina.

The Centre Piece will be the widening and improvement of two channels in the town centre to form a squashed “ring” of waterway. I could give a long and impressive description of the aims and detailed plans of the project, and then pretend I have an extraordinary memory for the facts that Richard gave us. It would, however, be impossible to better the information given on the project website:

**<http://www.maidenheadwaterways.org>**.

Have a look, it is a rewarding read.

So, back to our day.

Richard gave a very concise background to the project. Ideas have been around for decades but the present project was conceived in 2008. It is a joint scheme partnered with the Local Authority and a development company. It became viable when the Jubilee River was constructed, relieving the old watercourses of their historical flood relief roles.

He took us to a series of vantage points to see the works in action. These involve widening some of the existing channels, raising some bridges following demolition of obstructing buildings and constructing new walkways, towpaths and small public areas. One of those in particular he referred to as a small Oracle, echoing the Reading shopping centre beside the Kennet and Avon.

The speed of the progress of works has been extraordinary. The various necessary applications were only submitted in 2012, a meaningful construction start was made in February of last year and the first phase is due to be watered and available for leisure use next year.

Parts of the project are in the hands of the Restoration Group, those elements with a commercial content are undertaken by The Shanley Group, a local development company. That close collaboration seems to have worked well with the residential schemes providing much of the finance and momentum to the scheme overall.



Our tour took us to the top of a car park for a birds' eye view, to the row of shops that are still currently trading but due for demolition next year. This is partly to allow a bridge to be raised to achieve the necessary navigation headroom. Then to the excellent recent modern library which will form the hub of one of the leisure areas and finally along one of the walkway/towpaths beside a restored, but not fully watered, length of canal.

For the total project, there remain vast amounts of construction to complete, including the building of two locks. There is no finish date, progress being governed by funding and commercial pressures. The progress so far, however, must be hugely rewarding for those at the conception stages of the project, and for those whose volunteer labour is still an important element in the more remote sections.

There is no doubt the scheme will transform Maidenhead, even with completion of the early phases.

We did of course offer our sincere thanks to Richard and, through him, to his colleagues. Some of our group were moved to become members of the Restoration Group at £10 each. I am sure the Group would welcome further additions to their number.

We look forward to seeing the scheme develop and to the day when a narrow boat flying the TSCC burgee moors in the town centre. An Orlando photo opportunity?

*Ray Churchill*

The

# Hellfire Caves



This year our day out from Hurley was to start with a visit to the Hell Fire Caves in High Wycombe. All who boarded the minibuses were in sombre mood in view of the event two days previously and not sure whether we should be going out on a jolly, but we decided to go ahead as planned. After a short journey we arrived at the caves and it started to drizzle. Before getting too wet we ordered lunch and set off into the dark, damp and chilly tunnels. We had our own guide, Jack, well it wasn't long before Jack had managed to lift our spirits with his theatrical and flamboyant manner and saucy tales of goings on in the 1700s when Sir Francis Dashwood

had created the Hell Fire Club which began to meet in the caves where, according to Jack, there was an awful lot of "Wine, Women and Song" and a few other things besides going on underground. As we went further into the caves we realised we were going downhill and the thought reached the minds of several retired, hobbling oldies that the way out would be uphill, still, undeterred we continued into a huge cavernous



banqueting hall where the revelry took place having passed the underground river Styx. Several people tried taking photos attempting to capture the spookiness of it all, unfortunately, none of mine came out. When we could descend no further we started to wend our way back to the top and daylight. After enjoying our pre-ordered lunch snacks the minibuses returned to take us to our next venue. The Winery.





**STANLAKE PARK**  
WINE ESTATE

I don't know how Elaina manages to find so many wineries considering she doesn't drink, what a thoughtful Chairman we have! On arriving at Stanlake we waited in the garden,

enjoying a glass of wine, for our tour guide. This was a lady called Ruth. Boy was she down to earth! She started off by saying "forget all about blackberries and top notes of almonds you either like it or you don't!" She said we would be trying several

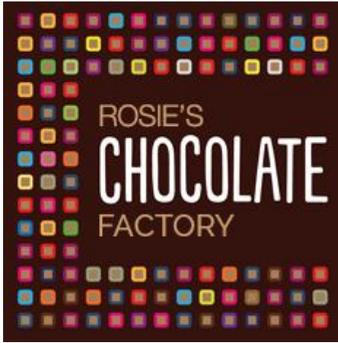


different wines and if we didn't like any to give it to our neighbour and if they didn't like it to chuck it away. I've never heard that at a winery before. Another aside she made was that Cava was as good as any other sparkling wine, (music to my ears)

Needless to say everyone enjoyed the visit and several of us took some "mementoes" home. Once again it was time to get on board the minibuses and drive back to Hurley with all on board in a "mellow" frame of mind.



*"Hellfire" and  
"Winery" by  
Rosie Sowter*



What a splendid time was had by everyone who managed to visit Rosie's Chocolate Factory.

We all walked in looking like very grown up people and within a very short time we were back in junior school wearing pinnies, hairnets, and gloves as well as fighting over a pot of smarties!

The owner was a very enterprising young lady who gained her expertise in patisseries and the like and had taken on the unit which she ran with clockwork precision. She had outside contracts with Cliveden and other organisations as well as running parties for all occasions.



It was amazing that she managed to keep TSSC in control. After a very thorough initial instruction she, thankfully, did the initial chocolate bar bases where everyone could choose dark, milk or white chocolate. Once we all had a plain base the fun began in earnest with everyone choosing which sweets to put on the three bars we each had. All the designs ranged from being avant-garde, abstract, to very precise designs of cats.

Once all our designer bars went into the fridge, more fun was to be had as we had a lesson in how to make chocolate lollies and again much fun was had decorating these. By now everyone was well into the spirit of the visit with lots of poaching of favourite sweets to go on their designs.

Not only did we have gorgeous treats to take away, but teacher Rosie's attention to detail meant that we were provided with personally decorated bags and labels to take our yummy goods away to be enjoyed during the rest of our Hurley visit.

*Article: Judy Bowles, pictures from Rosie Sowter*

# HURLEY

# FUN DAY



Janet and George arranged a super fun day at Hurley, only let down by the weather which turned rather soggy but the marquee came into its own once again and was able to give shelter to everyone while we had cream tea and

Pimms. Janet started off with one of her beautifully presented quizzes. Then Barbara delivered a paper plane kit to



everyone to be constructed. What a miserable lot of old so and so's. Nobody wanted to be bothered to try. In the end Frank managed to get everyone in the mood - as only Frank can - and enter into the spirit of the afternoon. The planes were assembled, and then the competition to see how far they would fly began. The first few had brewers droop then Peter Lawrence had a winner and crossed the line, now everyone wanted a go, including some passing children! So thank you, Janet and George and Frank for getting us to enjoy ourselves and Ray and Jackie for bringing the cream tea, another memorable occasion.



## HURLEY



FUN DAY



*Article: Rosie Sowter. Pictures Rosie Sowter & Mike Fowler*

**Marlow Bridge** linking Berkshire and Buckinghamshire has been closed for investigations and repairs after damage caused by a heavy lorry.

In London **Tower Bridge** has also been closed this time for three months for maintenance work on the road surface.

The damage at Marlow could amount to £200,000 and owners of the truck from Lithuania have issued an apology.

Surveyors have found supports above and below the road surface have been 'significantly overstressed' by the lorry, which was more than ten times the three-tonne weight limit.

Councillor Mark Shaw, Bucks County Council's cabinet member for transportation, has warned the bridge could be out of action for months.

Last August bank holiday only Gorjess and Orlando ventured onto tidal waters to represent the TSCC, there were other members there with their boats but they had gone with other clubs. We had a lovely mooring next to Lord Amory with easy access to all the activities put on by the Dockland Scouts. The journey down was beautiful leaving Teddington about 7.30am but once we were moored in West India the sun came out and the temperature soared. Quite a lot of the time over the weekend it was 35 degrees inside Orlando and I can remember on one occasion sitting on the back bunk with a wet flannel on my head, (not a pretty sight but it helped.)



This year the Scouts had organised for the RNLI to be on site to test life jackets. Most boat owners took the opportunity to take advantage of this free service and a surprising number of boaters had to have adjustments made and in some cases renew all their jackets. Jessie and Gordon had lent theirs to friends and found out that one of the

canisters had been used and not replaced so it wouldn't have inflated if used again. A very worthwhile exercise.

Another activity the scouts offered was to "have a go" in a kayak. Well good old Jess had never done it before so off she went, if only the rest of us were as supple and able to bend as well as she can at 83. There was also a little boy aged 4 called Oliver who also had a go for the first time and both of the lady instructors were amazed by the two of them at opposite ends of the age scale doing so well, we shall watch this space for Oliver in future Olympics.

*Pictures and article from Rosie Sowter*

# DENMANS GARDEN

After so many glorious sunny days it was disappointing that Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September brought a rainy morning but lady luck was watching over us and by the time our group arrived at Denmans Garden near Fontwell, the rainclouds had passed over and we were able to make our way round the Garden without umbrellas.



As their leaflet tells us Denmans is quite unique as it is not a formal garden and especially at this time of year it is more about foliage and casual arrangements than flower beds. The gardens are kept to a tamed wilderness to help keep down labour costs but each twist and turn of the paths gave us a new vista with a natural feel. There is also a small greenhouse which houses an aviary for budgerigars many of which were this years offspring but sadly not for sale. The gardens also have a few peacocks and peahens who had recently produced three peachicks which we were able to feed under supervision. Of course we also made use of the cafeteria for coffee and the obligatory homemade cakes.

We adjourned to the delightful Gribble Inn at Oving. A traditional Inn serving speciality ales to go with the lovely food if fancied. As our meals were pre booked the service was very quick and efficient and the meal very enjoyable.

*Article: Pam Dennis  
Photo: Michael Dennis*

Plans for a Hindu community centre near **Boulters Lock** at Maidenhead are being opposed by residents who have launched a bid to buy the site themselves and turn it into allotments. The plan at Maidenhead is for a centre adjoining a car park used by visitors to Boulters Lock, Ray Mill Island and the Thames Path. Demand for parking is expected to increase further after **a new footbridge** over the Thames is built as part of a big housing development on the Buckinghamshire bank.



# TANGMERE

military aviation museum



Our group progressed from the Gribble Inn to the nearby Tangmere Military Museum which is housed in the hangars of the old wartime Tangmere Airfield. We were taken round in small groups by the knowledgeable staff. There is a lot to take in during one short afternoon visit but we were given a brief history of the

aircraft we were seeing such as the Hurricane, Spitfire, Gloster Meteor, and Hawker Hunter. Some of our group were brave enough to try out the flight simulator, quite an experience for them and no doubt the supervising staff!! There are many more aircraft outside on the airfield and there is an air raid shelter where we could relive the sounds of the air raid sirens (apologies to those too young to remember them). There is also a small memorial garden.

Sadly all good things come to an end and late afternoon we all set off on our homeward journeys having enjoyed another special TSCC day out. Our thanks to Elaina for arranging it for us.



*Article: Pam Dennis*

*Photos: Michael Dennis & Rosie Sowter*

MBNA **Thames Clippers** is expanding again – and has awarded a £6 million contract for two new fast ferries to an Isle of Wight shipbuilding firm. The two new 35-metre boats which can each carry 170 passengers will enter service in the summer of 2017.

The services already carry four million passengers a year and when the two new fast ferries join the fleet they will add 14 per cent additional capacity to the company's network.

They follow the addition of two Australian-built boats last year - in total adding an additional 30 per cent capacity in two years. MBNA Thames Clippers will become the biggest commercial passenger fleet operating solely in English waters when the two newly confirmed boats enter service.

## Russell Doig 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1937 - 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016



Russell was a much loved man who was devoted to his wife Theresa and son Mark. He had a very full life with lots of interests including hot rod racing (Russell and Theresa had their own car for this), fishing, woodwork, speedway, photography, gardening and, of course, boating. Although Russell owned a punt in his younger years it was not until retirement that Russell and Theresa bought their cruising boat. When he had health problems he never gave up and was always on the go. The family enjoyed lots of memorable holidays especially in their campervan.

Russell's funeral at Hanworth was packed to capacity with lots of people standing, such was his popularity. On the night of his death Russell had been happy and relaxed and enjoyed an evening meal laughing and joking amongst friends in TSCC. This will be an enduring memory for those that were there.

Theresa lives near to her sister who, together with her brother-in-law, has been a great support. Theresa and Mark are pressing-on with life and are hoping to attend as many TSCC events as possible. They are looking forward to their first Mediterranean cruise next year.

We extend our good wishes to Mark and Theresa and look forward to their company.



River Canal Rescue (RCR) has taken over EurekaWeb's inland waterway navigation products and rebranded them as **WaterNav**.

The Thames is one of the rivers covered by the waterway software system and e-canal apps.

Compatible with all Windows desktops, laptops and netbooks, plus iPhones, iPads and Android smartphones, WaterNav apps cover eight regions.

The WaterNav PC product covers the whole of Great Britain in one application and includes a route planning function.

Once downloaded, access to the maps is not dependent on a permanent internet connection, enabling users to plan and track routes and using GPS, pinpoint their exact locations and distance from over 60,000 points of interest.

These include; mooring locations, navigation points, potential hazards (e.g. weirs), bridges and locks, pump-outs, diesel and gas supplies, boatyards, Internet access points, pubs, restaurants, places to eat and drink, doctors, dentists, vets, shops, launderettes, bus stops and train stations, B & Bs, hotels, campsites and tourist attractions. WaterNav is available from RCR's **website: [www.rivercanalrescue.co.uk](http://www.rivercanalrescue.co.uk)**



Broom 9/70,  
Thrupenny, is **For Sale**.  
She is 32ft, 6 berth,  
with a new BSC and we  
are looking for £55,000  
in a private sale. We  
have also placed her  
with Penton Hook Boat  
Sales as brokers.

Please call Ray or Jacqui Churchill on 01273 812194 if anyone is interested or knows of someone else who may be.

The Environment Agency's report for 2015/16 reveals a total of 7,500 boats were checked to ensure they were currently registered to use the Thames. 330 enforcement notices were issued and 5 people went to court for non-payment.

The report says the total number of boats using the river was down from 22,009 to 21,933. The number of private powered boats dropped from 8,604 to 8,479 although visitor numbers were up from 4,593 to 5,247.

Waterways Manager Andrew Graham said:

“With continued pressure on our funding, we have worked hard to find efficiencies and make savings. At the same time we have continued with our volunteer programme bringing in further recruits to augment the lock keeper service on the lock side and to assist with practical work days at the locks”.

Plans for an online boat registration scheme on the non-tidal river have been shelved.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCOUTS/GUIDES

TSCC is always looking for Scouting/Guiding projects which need financial support. If your local Group is in need of funds for specific projects ask them to write a letter to our Secretary giving full details. (Honorary Secretary Thames Scout Cruising Club Thursday Cottage, 21 Ember Lane, Esher, Surrey KT10 8EA or email: [David.sowter@nahs.org.uk](mailto:David.sowter@nahs.org.uk)) Our Committee will be pleased to consider all requests.

## TSCC Programme for 2016

All dates and events are subject to change

November 14 Mon	TSCC Annual Dinner – Casa Mia
November 23 Wed	TSCC Committee
Dec. 11-12 Sun-Mon	Christmas at Potters and Thursford



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