

The Buckingham Navigator

The newsletter of the Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No: 1072924

CANVIN'S CONNECTION WITH THE BUCKINGHAM ARM

On the 1st March 2004 Dot and Derek Canvin flew out of New Zealand to begin a journey that they hoped would lead to an adventure of a lifetime. The idea was to have a narrowboat built in the UK and put it in a hire fleet to help pay for its upkeep until they were ready to retire.

A firm called Heron Boats in Mirfield, Yorkshire took on the challenge and produced a 55-foot boat to their specifications, which was completed on time at the end of January 2004. Upon arrival in Mirfield, the boat was inspected and accepted but it took a while to get the boat launched due to an oversight on behalf of the crane company. The Canvins then had 3 weeks in which to get the boat to Godalming in Surrey as they had to return to New Zealand for work.

With an additional 3 crew members working from dawn until dusk they were successful in their endeavours travelling over the Calder and Hebble, Huddersfield Broad and Narrow canals including the Standedge tunnel. The Macclesfield, Peak Forest, Trent and Mersey, Coventry, Oxford and Grand Union passed under the hull with no time for sight seeing. That was to come later. However, they did manage a day on the river Thames before finally reaching the River Wey and their final destination.

In October 2006 they took early retirement from work and returned to the UK to spend up to 4 years living aboard their Narrowboat with the idea of travelling over every mile of navigable waterway possible. In the interim they had been running a website which had been noticed by George and Phyl Barber.

It has come to light that the name Canvin has a history on the cut since 1858. George and Phyl have been researching the Canvin family tree as Phyl is a second cousin to Derek. Several members of the family were born on the cut. Dorothy Gertrude was born at Lady Capels Wharf, Watford on the Grand Union Canal around the turn of the century which is ironic as that is Derek's original home town and his mother's name. It is known that other family members operated barges; James Canvin operated 'Elizabeth' delivering coal along the Oxford Canal. Other known boat names were 'Philadelphius' and 'Unostentatious'. It is also known that John William Canvin operated out of John Dickinsons at Apsley Mills on the Grand Union. Further research has uncovered the fact that there was a "Canvin's wharf" on the Buckingham Arm 1 mile from the Cosgrove Junction and other members of the family hail from Passenham and Deanshanger. There is far too much information on the family tree website to include here – for further information see -

<http://www.canvinfamilytree.co.uk>

Sadly, George passed away last year but Phyl's daughter is carrying on with the family tree. With this much history it is no wonder that Derek has been drawn back to the cut. Recently Derek and Dot stopped over at Cosgrove and walked the "Buckingham Arm" whilst the BCS was hard at work. They stopped and spoke to Athena and her team hence this article for the Navigator.



DOT AND DEREK CANVIN



THEIR NEW HOME – THE GYPSY ROVER