

# AUSTRALIAN CANAL SOCIETY

Devoted to the world's inland waterways

8th February, 2015

Hello Canalcoholics All!

The ACS year got off to a great start with our first "Canaltime Coffee". Yvonne volunteered to organise this informal inbetween meetings get-together. She chose Sydney Rowers, Abbotsford for lunch in January. Most of us came by rivercat along Parramatta River from the west or from the city direction.

The outlook from the club is magnificent, but we were glad of the airconditioning on a 30 degree day. I was thrilled that twenty eight people came, and we enjoyed swapping stories, travel plans and just "hanging out" together. Su & Stan even travelled for four hours by public transport just to be there. Let's do it again!

2015 is a very significant year as the Gallipoli Campaign in WW1 is commemorated. This has inspired our wartime theme for the coming meeting, which will be a kaleidoscope of World War associations with the waterways.

## **NEXT MEETING : MONDAY, 2nd MARCH 2015**

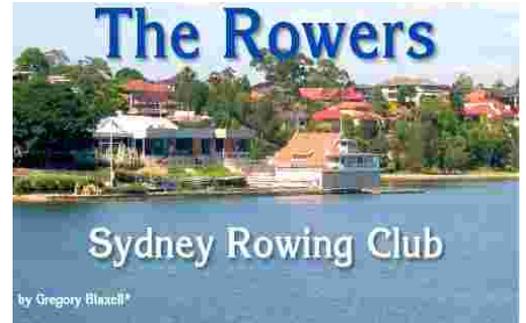
**Place:** Marsden Rd, Uniting Church hall, Marsden Rd, Carlingford

**Time:** 7.45 - 9.45pm + Supper

**Parking:** Mobbs Lane or at the rear of the church.

(Enter by the drive on the righthand side of the church).

**Theme:** Inland Waterways in Wartime, with a focus on WW1.



*A view of Beverley Beck, Lincs. UK*



*The Nautilus in the 1920s*



*The MV Krait during WW2*

**Stan Brown, Jennifer Lees, John Mitchell, David Mitchell, John August and Jan Roden will all contribute to subjects such as:**

- \* the story of a historic motor launch, *Nautilus*, which transported wounded troops to hospital ships at Gallipoli, and still survives today
- \* the proposal for a huge canal in Turkey
- \* British waterways at war - a Powerpoint overview
- \* the discovery of a little known English canal at Beverley, which had an important wartime role
- \* recognition of the *MV Krait*, the wooden hulled vessel famous for its use during WW2, now to be seen at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney
- \* What are Solitons? Find out on the meeting night

\*\*\*\*\* **Other 2015 Meetings** \*\*\*\*\*

**Mondays 1st June, 7th September, 7th December**

## FINANCE: A MESSAGE FROM TREASURER PETER

Our membership year starts on the 1st January, so your fee of \$30 for 2015 may be paid at the March meeting, if you have not already done so. There is a reduced subscription of \$20 for NSW country or interstate members. Fees may be made by cheque, or direct deposit into our bank account **BSB: 032-080, A/C: 248271** with an email or letter to Peter Lucas, 20 Walsh Close, Illawong NSW 2234. Mobile: 0411 265 430. Email: [pandelucas@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pandelucas@optusnet.com.au)

Our valued Overseas Members may pay their £10 by direct debit to John Colville, the Membership Secretary's account at Lloyds Bank, Uxbridge, No. 01620304, SC 30-98-91. Please confirm by an email via the website (see below) or a note to John at 28 Barton Ave, Haberfield NSW 2045, for cross referencing.

## A LITTLE MORE ON SONIA ROLT OBE 1919 - 2014

In my last Newsletter I wrote about Sonia 's interest and association with the ACS. I have had a number of messages about the life and passing of this quite amazing lady. **Tim Coghlan** is the energetic Managing Director at Braunston Marina, and has a high profile in the inland waterways world. He has written several commemorative articles in the waterways media. Knowing of our association with Sonia he sent me his obituary to her, for the Historic Narrowboat Owners Club in November, and I am including a precis of that article here.

*Her death has meant the passing of the last of the Idle Women who was still actively involved with the canals. Sonia, in her 96th year attended the Hay Literary Festival in May this year, where the 70th Anniversary of her late husband Tom Rolt's great work, **Narrow Boat** was celebrated in style. The Chairman of the Canal & Riverboat Trust Tony Hales made a video interview, which now features on the CRT website, and is a fitting testament to her. In August Sonia gave an interview to Canal Boat magazine for its back page, 'Twenty Questions' in November. For those who knew her, her energy and passion for life never ceased to amaze, and remained with her almost to the end.*

*The combined energy of Tom & Sonia Rolt was extraordinary. A major project was the saving of the Talylyn Railway, when they lived in a caravan with Tom driving the trains and Sonia manning the ticket office. In 1974, when Sonia was only fifty three years of age, Tom died.*

*She dedicated her remaining forty years of life working for the causes they had been involved in together, promoting his books and keeping his memory alive.*

Sonia also worked for the Landmark Trust, the National Trust and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

*In 1993 her good friend David Stevenson, the Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association from 1989 to 1994, (and member of our ACS) nominated her as an honorary member of the IWA, and she soon became a very active Vice President. Sonia made many friends on the canals, not only in Europe, but also in North America and Australia. Amongst her tributes was one from her friend Tom Grasso, President of the Canal Society of New York State:*

***'She was the First Lady of the English canals.'***

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**POSTAGE STAMPS:** Remember to bring trimmed or untrimmed stamps to the meeting. These are welcomed by the Shropshire Union Canal Society to assist with their waterway programmes.

Happy inland waterway thoughts and dreams!



President

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A young Sonia, an "Idle Woman"



Sonia (left) at the 2006 Braunston Historic Narrowboat Rally