

TAKE A TRIP

Milton Keynes Illuminated Boat Festival



VOLUNTEER

Help clean up the canal with the IWA



ARTS ON THE CANAL

An exciting Autumn programme



ISSUE 4 canals EDGE



Canal & River Trust

October – December 2017

canalrivertrust.org.uk/mk50

50 things to do on the canal for MK50

FREE to canal lovers!

You can explore the **MK Canalside** by walking, running or cycling. Alternatively join in with one of the exciting events on the canal for MK50 (34 – 50). Previous issues of **canal EDGE** presented the first 33 ‘things to do’ on the canal. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/mk50 to download your copy.

October

34) IWA MK Branch Canal clean-up

13 – 14 October, start at Fenny Stratford Lock, MK1 1BY
Join the IWA in their annual Autumn clean-up of the Canal, sponsored by Wyvern Shopping Co and supported by the Canal & River Trust. Everyone welcome, wear sturdy footwear, and bring your own lunch.

For further information, please contact les.franklin@waterways.org.uk.

35) Self-guided Autumnal walk

As the leaves begin to change colour and fall, this is one of the prettiest times to enjoy a walk along the canal. Did you know that only ten minutes of walking a day will help to improve your health and wellbeing?

36) Feast of Fire

21 October, from 6.30pm, Central Milton Keynes
MK50's official free event, Feast of Fire, is a magical and fiery celebration for the people of Milton Keynes. More information here: ifmiltonkeynes.org.

37) The Big Draw

25 October, 11 – 4pm, Stoke Bruerne (NN12 7SE)
Everyone is invited to join the world's biggest drawing festival. Draw, doodle, sketch, paint or just make meaningful marks.

Free event. To park costs £3.00.

38) Geocache your way along and around the canal in Milton Keynes

Did you know the canal is the perfect geocache walk, what will you find today?

November

Gongoozler Arts Council Funded Residency

As introduced in our last edition Jennifer, our artist in residence, has spent her summer listening to the stories of the people who live and use the canal.

There's still plenty of ways to get involved with her work:

39) Jennifer will be exhibiting throughout November, at the Milton Keynes Art Gallery.

Directions, opening times can all be found here: mkgallery.org/education/projectspace/

40, 41 & 42) Jennifer will be running three further workshops:

23 October, Tinkers Bridge

24 October, Pear Tree Bridge

25 October, The Lakes Estate

Times and venues will be available shortly.

43) Jennifer's music will also be available online to download, so you can take a walk along the canal enjoying the sound of her singing.

44) Parks Trust Annual Fireworks

5 November, Campbell Park

Annual free city fireworks presented by Keith Emmett and Sons. Nearest parking is at CMK Shopping Centre (John Lewis end), then follow footbridge leading into the park. No parking in the park.

45) Armistice Day at MK Rose

11 November, Campbell Park

A short annual remembrance ceremony at the MK Rose for Armistice Day. All welcome.

46 & 47) Milton Keynes Illuminated Boat Festival, Lantern Making Workshops

25 – 26 November

FREE LANTERN making workshops as part of MK50 Illuminated Boat Festival which is on Sat 2 Dec – Campbell Park.

December



48) Milton Keynes Illuminated Boat Festival

2 December, Campbell Park

Join the Canal and River Trust for an evening by the canal, with an illuminated boat parade, lantern making workshops, an afternoon and evening of entertainment, Christmas food and drink.

Registration for free tickets will be open shortly.

49) Carols at the Rose

17 December, Campbell Park

The Parks Trust Annual Christmas Carols event. Nearest parking is at CMK Shopping Centre (John Lewis end), then follow footbridge leading into the park.

50) Volunteer along the canal

We are always looking for individuals or groups to help our work protecting and improving our canal, if you'd like any more information please contact Sonny King, sonny.king@canalrivertrust.org.uk.



Canal & River Trust



For more ‘things to do’ follow us on Twitter @CRTSouthEast

Events Further Away...

November

Banbury Winter Open Weekend

8 – 19 November, Banbury Town Centre

A free event organised by the Canal and River Trust. Where you can walk into a drained lock gate, find out more about how lock gates work and our winter works programme, children's activities, and lots more.

December

Foxton Illuminated Boat Festival

16 – 17 December, Foxton

Join us for an afternoon and evening of festive food, entertainment and lit canal boats. [Tickets available soon.](#)

Arts Council funded residency – a chat with Jennifer Reid

Canals EDGE catches up with Jennifer Reid. Jennifer is our artist in residence as part of our MK50 programme, and is writing a song book of Milton Keynes. In this article Jade Montserrat our commissioned writer talks to Jennifer about the project and her progress so far.

Jennifer and I met first at the Venice Biennale, 2015 when she was performing a capella "Broad-sides and Ballads of the Industrial Revolution". We share an interest in the industrial revolution and its links to Imperialism and colonialism. Jennifer, working on the Gongoozler residency, culminating in an exhibition in November, spoke about her passion for canals and what we can expect.

Your adventures working on canals are enthralling...

I work on canals mainly around Salford. My friend and I, a pub historian, do this thing called Beer and Ballads, going to pubs along the canal where I sing canal songs. People are a little peeved initially, as we always arrive unexpectedly but soon they're really into it. I worked on The Ballad Boat, a trip boat, with about 20 participants, writing canal songs about the area. There are so many brilliant and also gruesome stories attached to canal histories that I make accessible through song.

The Gongoozler Canal Residency could have been made with you in mind.

What's been happening?

I lived aboard the 50 ft canal boat with Catherine, the Canals and River Trust volunteer, who helped navigate us from Gayton to Campbell Park, taking us two days. You can only go 4 miles an hour, making the journey leisurely. I facilitated two community workshops, sharing my methods as a ballad singer. Together, the public and I wrote two songs!

What is the legacy of these canal songs?

The canal people were called banditi - travellers of their time. People looked down on them and their lifestyle and they were very insular as a result. But I feel this makes their culture more concentrated. Their songs, although not well preserved, are distinctive. When I write new material in that old traditional style they are instantly identifiable as having taken inspiration from the canal. The medium of song is such a good way to connect families and leisure boaters who now forget about the working industry part of the canal.

How can we connect with the histories?

The canal story needs to be heard; singing is a good way to do it and it engages children. Nailing down stories to geographical areas along the canal is a good way to bond and boost regional pride.

Tell me about the work you intend making

I've already written six songs. One really good song that came out of a workshop is a conversation between the canal and the city. In this song the canal speaks to the city, teasing it, making jibes. It's written in the old Victorian style, with way too many words in it, but that's okay. The song book that I am going to write will include some traditional songs written to existing canal tunes to demonstrate the style. My plan for the exhibition is that songs are stenciled around the exhibition space plus a display of my friend Stuart's massive portraits of old boatmen. I'd also like to get lots of traditional boat bits to show. At the opening I'll be walking around singing. I hope everyone will join in.

Tickets available
online via our
Facebook page.

48) Milton Keynes Illuminated Boat Festival

As the Milton Keynes 50th birthday celebrations come to an end, join the Canal & River Trust for an afternoon and evening of festive fun at Milton Keynes first ever illuminated boat festival.

What to expect?

- Watch a parade of 30 plus festively lit boats along the canal
- Enjoy the art and lantern installations along the canal
- Take part in one of our lantern making workshops
- Enjoy tasty festive food and drink from some of the best local suppliers
- Listen to an array of musical acts, including Jennifer Reid.

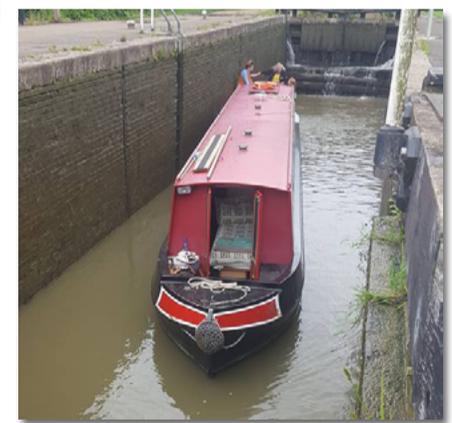
We are still finalising the programme and will update our Facebook page as it becomes available.

What to wear?

This is an outdoor event in December, so please dress in warm clothes and sturdy footwear.

What does it cost?

The event is free. And wouldn't have been made possible without the sponsorship from the Milton Keynes Community Foundation.



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Find out more at canalrivertrust.org.uk/newsletter