

In 1858 Trinity House introduced the use of electricity, making it the first lighthouse in the world to be powered in that way. It was installed by Michael Faraday (1791-1867) but its use continued for only six months when there was a return to oil. Generators were brought into use in 1872 to provide the electricity to create the revolving light.

He urged those who had never visited the lighthouse to do so and learn the fascinating history that included Marconi's first ship-to-shore radio message in 1898 between the East Goodwin lightship and South Foreland. Even more impressively the following year he exchanged the first international radio transmission between Wimereux near Boulogne and the lighthouse.

Water Matters

Reported by Jeremy Cope

I WAS VERY IMPRESSED by the talk given by our second speaker Richard Sturt on, "Water Matters". Richard spoke from his experience as Southern Region Chairman of the Consumer Council for Water. He surveyed our water supply scene, its problems and some of the potential solutions of a subject that is of fundamental importance to anyone living in this area. A serious shortage of water involves rather more than a hosepipe ban and we should not take comfort from this year's wet summer.

First our deteriorating supply.

It came as no surprise that the Romans sorted things out using aqueducts to bring in the water that enabled them to use 600 litres per day per person. The comparison with our situation was highlighted by pictures of Bewl Water which supplies 17% of Kent's needs; the first when full, the second well high empty, each the result of seasonal variation. In Dover we rely almost wholly on water from the chalk

aquifers. Across Kent we consume 160 litres per day, just over a quarter of the Roman figure and we currently have water shortages from time to time.

Second our increasing demand.

Oh dear - the picture gets worse when we look into the future. Population predicted to grow by over 10%, growth in single households which use water less efficiently, additional demands from climate change and a forecast reduction in supplies from abstraction from aquifers. The net result, a potential deficit of around 30% by 2030.

Lastly possible long-term solutions.

What can be done? First if we use more domestic metering, water saving campaigns, more efficient distribution systems and more effective appliances within the home we will still find demand rising.

What of new sources of supply? Bewl capacity can be increased by raising the dam height; building Broadoak

Reservoir would make a substantial contribution. Reservoirs have advantages as environmental and recreational resources. The output from Abingdon via Thames would be a major source but the problem of transport has to be resolved. Both desalination and reuse of effluent require major use of energy and are unlikely to form a major part of the solution. We can use reed beds to purify used water but this requires extensive space although nature does the work for us.

At the end of Richard's talk there were several questions and I think that most of the audience left with something to think about. My own feeling was that there needs to be proper thought given

to what is a very fundamental matter and this includes the growth in Kent. We in the Dover area face a very substantial increase in households, particularly at Whitfield and this in the face of inadequate water supplies. There does not appear any logical planning and co-ordination; no countrywide approach to the problem. Does our town planning need a major overhaul so that we only build efficient housing and think through our town layouts? How can we build homes where there is an adequate and sustainable infrastructure? But any answers are only valid if there is proper research and we are all given the right to take an effective part in the decisions.



River Dour, 1906