24th World Canals Conference shows richness of Dutch waterways

Comprehensive map of Dutch canals

Roger Raat has produced a comprehensive map showing all canals in the Netherlands. It features not only existing canals, but also lost canals. This breathtaking document shows all the branches of our canal systems, both large and small, and the intriguing situations they form in the landscape, as well as illustrating their significance in providing access to all parts of the country. The Canals Map brings a fascinating history to life. ‘The map shows with more than 1000 canals, says Roger Raat. ‘It is a map with many lines. It is quite a challenge to make the project, but there is an overview of all Dutch canals. It encompasses all navigable canals, canalised rivers and creeks, and lost canals. The map gives an excellent picture of the general canals and their significance for the landscape.’

Declaration of Groningen

The Declaration of Groningen has been drafted on the initiative of the WCC2011. During the conference this declaration, which defines the need for sustainable management of canals as elements of an integrated water system and as features that help define both the landscape and our cultural identity, will be submitted to the participants for approval.

Exhibition

The Northern Maritime Museum in Groningen, ANWB and the WCC2011 project management have put together an exhibition entitled ‘Navigation, new use for old canals’ which showcases the heritage of canals and their recreational use up to the present day. The exhibition explores the interconnected network of waterways developed in the Netherlands that enabled goods and passengers to criss-cross the country by water. Large numbers of motor boats use these canals for recreational purposes, and bikers and hikers are frequently seen cycling and walking along their banks. The exhibition shows how the network of canals developed, using maps and photographs. It focuses especially on three main themes: recreational navigation by motor yacht, with the most beautiful models from museum collections on show; exceptional documentation and maps from the ANWB’s collection; and unique cinematographic material on water-based recreation, a compilation of which will be shown continuously. The exhibition will be open from 16 September 2011 to 12 February 2012, Tuesday to Saturday from 10.00 to 17.00, and on Sundays from 13.00 to 17.00.
The main themes of the conference will be:

- Transportation and tourism
- Ecology, water management and nature conservation
- Heritage, protection and development
- Institutional and management innovations
- Technology, infrastructure and water quality

The conference will address the full range of the main themes and their interactions. It is expected that the conference will provide a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge and recent developments in the field of canals and waterways. The conference will also provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and the identification of future research directions.

Why the northern Netherlands?

The northern Netherlands is a region with a unique combination of cultural, natural, and economic features. The region is characterized by a rich history of water management, a network of canals and waterways, and a strong cultural heritage. The region is also a hub for tourism and recreation, with many opportunities for water-based activities such as sailing, fishing, and cycling. The northern Netherlands is a region that offers a unique setting for the presentation of papers on the theme of canals and waterways.

The conference will be an excellent opportunity for researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders to share their knowledge and experiences, and to explore new avenues for research and development in the field of canals and waterways. The conference will also provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and the identification of future research directions.

The conference will be held in Groningen, the capital city of the northern Netherlands, on the north-west coast of the country. The city is known for its vibrant cultural life, its rich history, and its beautiful canal system.

The conference will be held in three parts::

- Lectures, workshops, and presentations at Martiniplaza in Groningen
- Working visits to the provinces of Drenthe, Friesland, and Overijssel
- Post-conference tour "Journey to the bottom of the sea" - Zuid-Willemsvaart canal

The conference will be held in English, and there are no language restrictions for contributions.

The programme consists of three parts:

- Lectures, workshops, and presentations at Martiniplaza in Groningen
- Working visits to the provinces of Drenthe, Friesland, and Overijssel
- Post-conference tour "Journey to the bottom of the sea" - Zuid-Willemsvaart canal

Sponsors

The programme will include contributions from a wide range of international organizations, including:

- The International Waterway Association
- The European Federation of Waterways
- The National Waterways Network
- The Dutch Waterways Foundation
- The Dutch Waterways Association

The conference will be held in collaboration with our partners in the northern provinces and in the Netherlands.

The post-conference tour "Journey to the bottom of the sea" will be held on Saturday, 24 September 2011.

The main venue for the conference is the Martiniplaza in Groningen. The working language for the conference will be English, and all papers will be presented in English.

The conference will include a keynote speech by Dr. Michiel Gerding, Director of the Drents Plateau Water Authority, who will provide an overview of the current state of the art in the field of canals and waterways, and the challenges and opportunities for future research and development.

The conference will also include a poster session, where researchers and practitioners can present their latest research findings and discuss their work with others.

The conference will conclude with a closing ceremony and a farewell dinner at Martiniplaza.

For more details see www.worldcanalsconference2011.nl