

THE WHARFINGER



**Newsletter of the Herefordshire &
Gloucestershire Canal Trust**

**50p
free to Members**

**Edition 49
Winter 1995/6**

WHO DOES WHAT . . .

VICE PRESIDENTS	<i>R. E. Barnes TD, Sir John Knill Bt.</i>
CHAIRMAN	Cliff Penny
VICE CHAIRMAN	Roger Chandler
TREASURER	Liz Connors
RESTORATION GROUP	Brian Fox, Simon Hayward, Mike Potts, <i>Chris Hille</i>
PRESS/PUBLICITY OFFICER	<i>Under discussion !</i>
MEMBERSHIP:- SECRETARY	Nigel Jefferies
COVENANTS	Liz Connors
FUNDRAISING OFFICER	David Penny
SOCIAL EVENTS GROUP	<i>Linda Palmer, Steve Delacourt-Smith</i>
THE WHARFINGER	Cliff Penny, David Penny
MINUTES SECRETARY	Tony Austin-Bailey
TRUST ADMINISTRATOR	Lesley Lowe
TALKS/WALKS	N Jefferies, M Potts
WHARFINGER POSTMASTERS	<i>D & M Gray; I & F Roper; B & M Saunderson & family</i>

Those in italics are not Directors on the Council of Management

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Please see CONTACTS, inside back cover, for addresses/phone numbers.

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The Print Sponsor for The Wharfinger is acknowledged on the inside front cover of *each* edition. 1,100 copies are circulated throughout the Country to our Members, Local Authorities, local and national news media, British Waterways, IWA., Government Departments - as well as being sold in the two Counties.

To discuss this excellent opportunity to support our wholly voluntary work, which is of benefit to the environment and the community, please contact the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

£ 4,300,000 p.a.

We have always said that the restored Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal would make a *significant* contribution to the economy of the area in terms of tourism and related matters. It has been clearly shown elsewhere in the country that canals attract many tourists (not just by boat!) which helps to sustain existing shops, restaurants and other businesses - and even creates some new ones. Add to this boaters, fishermen, walkers etc. and it can be seen that a canal creates an interest and a facility that becomes of vital importance to the areas through which it passes - and the surrounding areas as well.

At the end of August I received a "desk-top" study that the Research Manager of **British Waterways** kindly undertook for us. Based on data from other parts of the country it showed that the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal can be expected to bring an estimated additional *£4.3 million per annum* into the local economy. *Over 160 full-time jobs* would be supported by the presence of the Canal. The report is based on 1994 figures for the average of rural canals but we believe that, correctly promoted, the Canal could easily exceed these averages!

In both Gloucestershire and Herefordshire tourism plays a vital part in the local economy; the Economic Development Officers of the five District Councils, and the two County Councils, have received a copy of the report and we are confident that they will fully appreciate the potential that exists! The Local Plan Inspector for the Forest of Dean recognised the economic importance that the restoration of the Canal would bring [*"... restored canals in other parts of the country have shown their benefits in generating tourist receipts, thereby making a contribution to the rural economy ..."* - page 8 of the last edition] - now British Waterways have put the matter into perspective for us there should be little doubt as to whether or not it is worth doing!

As mentioned in this Editions Committee Matters our Fundraising Officer has been highly successful in arranging a number of meetings, attended by senior Officers from each of the local authorities through whose area the 34 mile Canal passes (and a number of other key organisations such as the National Rivers Authority), over the past year. The report from British Waterways is of considerable assistance to these discussions and we are most grateful to Glenn Millar, British Waterways Research Manager, for his very willing help.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS . . . (ii)

£ 12,000

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (Sales) Limited was formed, along with the Canal Trust, in spring 1992; profits from "trading" *[NOT grants]* are approaching **£12,000** (this includes the Grand Holiday Draw and advertising revenue from **The Wharfinger**). A magnificent achievement; to all who have been part of the team that achieved this "*well done - and thank you*".

To continue with this level of fundraising *[or even improve it! - Ed.]* we need to attend a wide variety of events; of course it is not *just* the fund-raising that counts - we are also promoting the restoration of the Canal. To "man" a full display and sales presence for a major event we need a minimum of 10 volunteers each day *(comprising two overlapping shifts)* - sometimes for three days - PLUS a team to set up and down the display/sales items and to transport it all to and from the event. Whilst the team has expanded in 1995 we need even more for 1996!

£ 5; £ 7.50; £ 10 . . .

If I put a proper heading you wouldn't read this! *[If you are a Life Member, pay by Bankers (Standing) Order/continuous credit card authority/pay by cheque and are definitely up to date with your membership subscription then you are excused!]*

Yet again our Membership Secretary is having to "chase" outstanding subscriptions - including some very prominent members *[no names this time! - Ed.]* We are not British Gas or some other organisation where you deliberately wait until the third reminder before you pay! It really isn't fair to those who do pay promptly - *or to our hard working volunteers who spend much time, effort and postage* - check the date of renewal on your address label and if you are overdue PLEASE pay up NOW!

NOTHING TO DO WITH MONEY

Thank you to everybody who has wished me a speedy recovery (having been taken rather ill in August). I've got to take this as a serious "warning shot across the bows" and take life a *lot* easier in future; thankfully things are "going in the right direction". However, I have asked my colleagues to find a replacement Chairman *(complete with the necessary energy!)* no later than the 1996 AGM. Hopefully they will let me continue with a single task - such as joint Editor of **The Wharfinger**!

Cliff Penny, Chairman/Liaison Officer

Canal Trust Craft Fair

Saturday 9th December - 10am to 5pm.

Canal Trust Craft Fair - Canal Trust Display
at Newent Memorial Hall



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Canal Trust Display/Sales
Craft Demonstrations

Come and buy your Christmas presents !

Home Made Refreshments including Cream Teas

A wide variety of local Crafts will be on display/sale, with
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Christmas H&G Dinner '95



To be held on Friday 1st December,
7.30pm. for 8pm. At

The Barn House,
New Street,
Ledbury.

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Our Guest after dinner speaker is Tim Parker, the
Managing Director of Black Prince Holidays.

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to arrive by Friday 24th November - Please include your full address.
Accommodation is available at the Barn House:- 'Phone (01531) 632825

COMMITTEE MATTERS

Two very busy Council of Management meetings are reviewed by our Chairman in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date (there was no meeting in August)...

JULY COMMITTEE

■ It was reported that the Inland Waterways Association's nomination for their seat on the Canal Trust Council of Management would be Will Frecknall. Sir John Knill had agreed to chair the AGM. Both were welcomed.

■ A landowner had asked the Canal Trust to pay £25 per annum to moor our trip boat on a section of the Canal. The matter was under discussion.

■ Forest of Dean District Council intended to put a report on the deterioration of the Lock and Cottage at Oxenhall (which are "Listed" structures) to their September Planning Committee. It was agreed to await the outcome but to make it very clear that the Canal Trust was not prepared for the long outstanding promise of positive action against the owner to remain outstanding beyond that date. The support of the Parish Council in respect of this matter was welcomed. *[No progress - p.8.]*



■ The Council of Management received a report regarding the apparent "recreation" of an ancient Company responsible for navigation matters relating to the Rivers Wye and Lugg and of a meeting attended by the Chairman and Vice Chairman. They had made it clear that the Canal Trust was neutral to the proposals to reinstate locks on the Wye, and to the question of navigation on the Wye and Lugg, but would oppose any proposals for the River Lugg that conflicted with the restoration of the Canal.

■ The report of the Inspector relating to the Forest of Dean Local Plan was welcomed *[see p.8 of the last Edition.]*

■ Following telephone calls from a number of Members we had asked Hereford City Council to investigate unauthorised filling of the line of the Canal adjacent to Aylestone Tunnel.

■ Gloucestershire County Council were holding meetings with Parish Councils regarding various options now that the proposed A40 link road had been dropped from the National Road Programme - it was important to ensure that these did not have a negative impact on the route of the Canal.

■ The Vice Chairman was in discussions with a potential purchaser of a section of the Canal in Gloucestershire.

COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (ii)

- Budgets from July to September 1995 were approved.
- In Gloucestershire the excavator was now within sight of the Oxenhall Tunnel portal; brickwork to a large culvert adjacent to the Tunnel was being restored. Major services of the dumpers and excavator were in hand.
- Concern was expressed at the continued lack of a Press and Publicity Officer; it was hoped that a volunteer would be found soon.
- A number of Directors expressed concern at the increasing workload and the meeting was adjourned so that the matter could be given the time that it deserved. It was agreed that a larger number of volunteers needed to be recruited into the existing (and some proposed) Teams to enable the essential workload to be spread and to ensure that all offers of help were utilised.
- The Trading Company was considering an ever-increasing range of events for our display and sales stand to attend. There was a need for updated photographic display panels. It had been agreed that there was a need to nominate a person on each "shift" at events to be responsible for all aspects of our presence. It was also reported that a representative from the Boats Group would attend future meetings of the Trading Company.

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THE OXENHALL COTTAGE SAGA

For many YEARS the Canal Trust have been in discussions with the Forest of Dean District Council regarding the deterioration of both the Lock and Lock Cottage at Oxenhall. Both are "Listed" structures and the Council have certain statutory responsibilities to ensure that their condition does not deteriorate. Regrettably much of the deterioration to the cottage (and the very badly deteriorating aqueduct over the Ell Brook) is accelerated by the frequent attention of local vandals that appears to directly relate to the school holiday periods.

The structures - plus half a mile or so of the Canal line - are owned by a gentleman living in Bristol. Some years ago the Council served a "Repairs Notice" and the owner installed temporary steel shutters over the ground floor windows of the cottage and securely bolted the door in an attempt to keep the local vandals out. Within a few months the vandals had climbed in though the (unguarded) upper windows to unbolt the door to enable their destructive activities to continue. Several further "Repairs Notices" followed, but resulted in very minimal improvements.

On more than one occasion the Canal Trust have been criticised (*without justification*) for the lack of action to "save" this rare example of Stephen Ballard's architecture. Over the years we have spoken to the owner, to various local organisations and (of course) to the Forest of Dean District Council in an attempt to get positive action to restore the cottage and lock.

Last year our Chairman spoke to the owner to once more express grave concern at the lack of restoration work and the very poor state of the structures. He was advised that all of the property had been offered to the Council at whatever the District Valuer considered to be an appropriate sum. The Council advised the Canal Trust that it would take some time for the valuation to be obtained and that it had to follow certain procedures; it couldn't just accept the offer to purchase as suggested by the owner. There then followed months of delays with little discernible progress.

At the end of May our Chairman wrote to the Council making it clear that the Canal Trust considered the delays to be excessive and expressing grave concern that the cottage would become beyond repair. The prompt reply stated that specialist engineers were to be appointed to carry out a survey and this was essential information that had to be obtained before the necessary compulsory purchase could be pursued. Verbally we were promised that the report would be submitted to the September Committee. As nothing had been heard by late October another letter was sent to the Council; we are advised that a "draft" report *should* be ready for the November Committee...

The Canal Trust have made it very clear to the Council that any further excuses for lack of progress/action are not acceptable.

OXENHALL COTTAGE... continued

What can we do now ?

Will anything ever be done, or will matters be allowed to drag on as they have for so long ?

YOU, our Members and supporters, won the day with your letters to Forest of Dean District Council when we were fighting for the amendments to the Local Plan.

NOW WE NEED YOU AGAIN...

If you want to ensure action please write to:-

J A Stewart, Esq., B.A., M.C.D., M.R.T.P.I.,
Director of Planning and Leisure Services,
Forest of Dean District Council,
High Street, Coleford,
Gloucestershire, GL16 8HG

Please copy your letters to our Administrator, Lesley Lowe [see *Contacts*]. Thank you. DRP

SOCIAL EVENTS REPORT

By Linda Palmer & Steve Delacourt-Smith

Keith Christie an ex-working boatman who is now living in Bournville, Birmingham, provided the entertainment for September's Social Evening. He spent the evening showing and talking about a spectacular collection of original 50's and 60's cine film about various waterways in Britain.

Everyone present appeared fascinated by his "treasures" and the evening carried on way past the time that previous evenings have concluded. It was very unfortunate that so few people attended - perhaps it was because it was the first talk of the autumn season?

October's speaker was our very own restorer Chris Hille who provided a very entertaining evening on the subject of "deer". I suspect a large number of those present had not realised that Chris was so expert in this topic and learnt a great deal from what was a fascinating evening.

A few members have expressed surprise that we should depart from a waterway related theme. However, unless Members object strongly, we hope to have a broad range of speakers over the coming months. Linda Palmer/Steve Delacourt-Smith [see *Contacts*] would welcome constructive comments/suggestions.

THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL

By David E Bick

15 years ago the first book about the Canal was written and published by David Bick.

AN EXCELLENT CHRISTMAS GIFT

The book contains two new chapters, one of which briefly summarises recent developments involving the Canal Trust. 104 pages, printed on art paper to A5 format with over 30 photographs, plus numerous maps and other documents.

Please use the order form on centre pages.



Dates For Your Diary

By Linda Palmer & Steve Delacourt-Smith

Social evenings in 1995/6 will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the

Cavern Bar of the Royal Oak, The Southend, Ledbury.

All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.

There will be a raffle, and plenty of time for a chat. We hope that these Social Events will also provide a time and place for the dissemination of the latest news from the Trust. Please contact either of us if you have any queries, or ideas for Social Events [see **Contacts**]. Items from the sales stand can be brought (*and you will be under no obligation to buy*) if you give 2 days notice of the ranges you are interested in to David Penny [see **Contacts**].

Tuesday 19th December

Tuesday 16th January

Tuesday 20th February

For details of the above Social Events 'phone (01452) 501372

Thursday, 30th November

7.30 for 8pm.

"Oxenhall Tunnel Talk - No.4"

at Newent Memorial Hall

The 3 previous Oxenhall Tunnel Talks have attracted an audience in excess of 500 people from all over the country.

Bob Simpson has kindly agreed to give his talk with the now famous cine film and slides to mark the 200th Anniversary of the Canal reaching Newent. The evening will commence with a brief history by local historian **David Bick**.

An evening not to be missed !

Non-Members £1.50; Members £1; Concessions £1 & 50p

No individual advance ticket sales - come early to ensure a seat!

Our congratulations to Mike Potts and Joyce Lynham
who recently announced their engagement.

It is rumoured that The Great Marvo (star of Mike's highly successful volunteers Christmas Party) has been involved in some match-making!

THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G CANAL (SALES)

H & G

DONATING ALL PROFITS
TO THE CANAL TRUST

SALES '96

Since the Trading Company was first formed in 1992 our trading activities, advertising from The Wharfinger, the Grand Holiday Draw, and contracting operations have now raised approaching £12,000 of profits for the benefit of the Trust. We are consistently a key source of income for the Trust's activities. Although we go all over the country with the stand a critical part of our income is from our Members - *thank you*. I do hope that you will support us by purchasing from this top quality, and great value selection. If you purchase more than £20 worth of goods you will receive a copy of The History of Gloucester Docks (worth £1.20) free if you tick the box on the order form. *David Penny*

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Not just for children! Many sales have been to adults, for adults!

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"Nigel's Design": Black with small yellow crest: £15.95

T-SHIRTS

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"Angela's Design": Yellow with small black crest: £9.00

"Nigel's Design": Black with small yellow crest: £9.00

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Duck Pencil Sharpeners	95p
Post Cards:- Claverton Pump & Crofton Beam Engine, 20 assorted	£1
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NEW:- Pens:- Square, yellow and black - Hereford & Gloucester Canal	45p
Pencils:- Black, triangular with gold dipped ends + as above	20p
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NEW:- Leather Bookmarks (with Crest):- black, blue, green, or burgundy	95p
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Furry animal keyrings:- Dinosaur, owl, mouse, frog, elephant, bear	£1.25
Gilt Charm keyrings:- witch, cat, black cat, buddha, boot, cow, pixie, lion	£1.25
NEW:- Wooden Ducks:- large	£1.95
NEW:- Wooden Ducks:- small	95p

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GLOUCESTER, LYDNEY, HEREFORD - by Eric Bottomley all 8" x 6"

Design A:- Gloucester Docks, a bustling scene of the inland port in its heyday.

Design B:- Lydney Docks, the upper basin in the 1850's at dusk.

Design C:- Hereford High Town, featuring the Old House in years gone by.

Please send name and address of recipient(s) on SEPARATE sheet of paper together with a brief message to be inserted in the card.

Gloucestershire Canal Trust which is registered as a Charity (No.1010721) to whom it donates all its profits. Registered Office: 114 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 8UQ. Please reply to the H & G C S. address given above.

RESTORATION UPDATE HEREFORDSHIRE

By Brian Fox

Normally this edition would contain a report of work completed during our summer camp accompanied by adverse weather reports and pictures of machines and operators up to their axles/knees in mud. This year of the long hot summer it was unfortunately not considered viable to organise such an event as the work available was not suitable, only requiring a few people at a time, to complete the current section at Yarkhill, and we are not yet in a position to start another section. I must apologise to all those volunteers who look forward every year to a week off work to come and do their bit and enjoy the 11 o'clock fry up and later tea and sandwiches at 4 p.m. all prepared by the chef of the day; it is intended to continue the tradition as soon as we have finished this section and another section is ready for restoration.

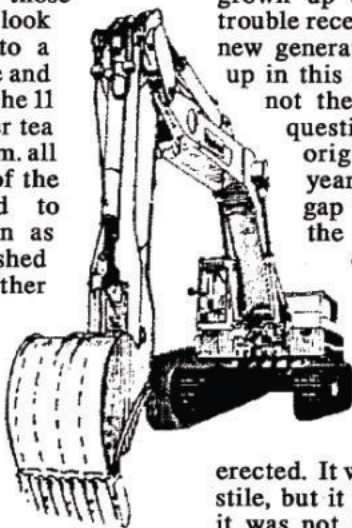
I suppose it was inevitable that the weather would relent on the year we decide not to have a work camp.

The drought has meant water levels in the Canal at Monkhide were down by about 3 ft. and despite a fair amount of rain during September it was absorbed by the fields, and none has yet run off into the Canal. The opportunity has not been wasted, however, as our excavator has been moved back to Mrs. Oram's Yarkhill section and been hard at work removing the last of the silt, which we couldn't get at before as it was too wet. Work will

also be continuing on cleaning out the one remaining ditch to the north of the Canal, which has been inaccessible due to crops, and it is hoped that this will solve the drainage problem of fields either side of the culvert which we cleaned out last year.

While working on the Canal at Monkhide the opportunity was taken to repair the stile vandalised this summer. We thought the problem had gone away, as the culprits had grown up and there had been no trouble recently, so hope there isn't a new generation of vandals growing up in this tiny hamlet. But this is not the reason I bring up the question of stiles. When we originally put in the stile last year it was simply to fill in a gap which remained, next to the new gate we had just erected. Many walkers now use the towpath, although it is not a public right of way, and they would all have been climbing over the gate if the stile had not been

erected. It was only a simple stepped stile, but it prompted comment that it was not now possible for horses and riders to access the towpath. I must admit that this option never crossed my mind, but it did make me think further about access in general to the towpath. What about provision for other potential users of the Canal towpath - cyclists, wheelchairs or older people who cannot negotiate stepped stiles? The Trust has now reached the point where it must give serious consideration to agreeing a policy on how we want the restored Canal and



towpath to be used. Is it possible to cater for every group of users, or will there need to be restrictions on certain users? A towpath designed for wheelchair access needs to be flat and firm, but allow horses along and it would soon be chewed up. Towpath cycling is becoming very popular but it does not always please the pedestrians who may have to jump out of the way [just ask Mike Potts! - Ed.] Do we need to leave a wider path and narrower Canal to try and please all the various groups? We have recently had some debate on whether to restore the Canal to the "Welsh" or "English" gauge, so your comments would be welcome on towpath restoration.

During the dry weather we have made a final attempt to resolve the drainage problem along the towpath between Middle Court Bridge and the Accommodation Bridge. A mini excavator was hired to dig a ditch along the field side of the towpath, which has been filled with suitable stone, and we hope will catch any water running off the adjacent field. This has then been channelled through a pipe under the towpath into the Canal, which will theoretically deposit all the surplus water into the Canal, instead of allowing it to percolate through the soil. The winter rains will soon test our efforts, but it should improve this section of towpath, which is very popular with walkers.

Those of you who regularly walk the towpath will be aware of the resident wildlife established since the Canal was restored. This summer there were breeding coots, moorhens and Mallard ducks, apart from the fish which, I believe, include rudd and pike. Two further visitors were spotted whilst working - one very welcome, but the other not such good news. A brief flash of brilliant blue plumage signalled a kingfisher as he skimmed along the Canal, and was gone in the blink of an eye. He has been seen before, but it is nice to know that he still favours our stretch of water and, presumably, must be finding enough fish to keep him happy. The other sighting was more sinister - a mink, who was seen quietly swimming across the Canal about 20 metres from where we were working and disappearing into the undergrowth on the bank. Let's hope he was just passing through, otherwise our resident bird and fish population are in danger of being wiped out by this voracious little pest.

We look forward to seeing all the volunteers, not just those involved in restoration, at the Christmas party being held again at Yarkhill village hall. Mike is looking for alternative acts for the entertainment, but I expect he will still insist on demonstrating the magical skills of the "Mighty Marvo" so you have been warned!

WANT TO GET INVOLVED ?

Volunteers to assist in our restoration (and maintenance) work are always welcome. Work is frequently taking place on one, or both, sites on several weekdays each month (or sometimes each week!). Our regular first weekend of the month workparties continue to be a focal point for work on both sites although work is also progressing on many other weekends. For details of what is happening when, and how you may be able to assist, please telephone:

Simon Hayward, Glocs. (01452) 534232

Brian Fox, Hereford (01432) 358628; or Mike Potts, Hereford (01432) 356392;

THE TOWPATH - CHIP or CHOP?

A personal opinion - by David Penny

Following on from Brian's comments in this editions *Restoration Update - Herefordshire* I have to confess that I am probably the awkward person that complained no sooner had they completed the stile by Middle Court Bridge. This did indeed remove the ability for horses to access this length, but just as critically in my view it removed, or made more difficult, the access of the less able, whether young or old.

Brian is quite right to say horses could chop up the towpath *as it has currently been left*. I have, however, suggested for a long time that the towpath should not only be grass. With any regular use, even just people walking the towpath, this soon disappears and leaves bare soil that becomes muddy and slippery in bad weather. I would suggest that the centre of the towpath should be surfaced with woodchip. This may sound expensive - *it is not*, as we have to date burnt many tons of material that could have been chipped. Indeed, since about 2 years ago we have had the free use of a commercial chipper for such a purpose, if we require it. However, the way we worked the Yarkhill Project Site meant that this was unfortunately not a viable option as

there was never sufficient material at any one time to justify bringing the chipper in. This was basically because the initial clearance was done several years ago before anyone thought of chipping, and the balance of the clearance work was done slowly over an extended period of time. Future sites are, however, likely to be done very quickly.

When we move on to the next site it is critical that we plan from the beginning how we are going to ensure that all material that is not 'logged' is chipped, and that this resource is utilised and not burnt.

Why am I so keen on woodchip? Well it has many advantages - with me you will have no difficulty in guessing my favourite - it is free! Furthermore, there is a never ending supply from new restoration sites, and the maintenance of the existing ones - again free! It is also the perfect surface, being ideal for horses and walkers alike without any 'urbanisation of the countryside' that results from just about any other form of surface. Once it has settled and firmed up (or been compacted) it is also suitable for wheelchairs so long as the gradients are suitable to start with - something the present

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For further details 'phone H&G Canal Trust Members,

Lesley & Andrew Lowe, 01981 540366

COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iv)

■ The Fundraising Officer reported that British Waterways had undertaken a "desk-top" benefit analysis for the Canal Trust, based on national data relating to similar canals, which indicated that some £4.3 million would be brought into the local economy by the restored Canal (including over 160 new jobs). The report was welcomed and the Chairman had thanked BW for their willing assistance. [See p.1.]

■ Restoration activity in Herefordshire included improvements to the drainage of the towpath in the vicinity of Middle Court Bridge, stoning of the towpath there and at the "Accommodation Bridge", and the repair of the vandalised stile at Middle Court. The excavator had been moved to the "Yarkhill Project Site" in preparation for further excavation on Mrs Oram's length of the Canal.

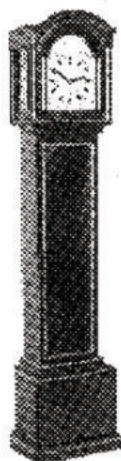
■ In Gloucestershire work continued on the large brick culvert adjacent to Oxenhall Tunnel. Both large dumpers were undergoing repair by our own volunteers. The assistance of specialist companies was being sought to defray expenditure on component parts.

■ Budgets through to February were approved.

■ The Membership Secretary reported that a disappointingly large number of Members who paid annually by cheque were having to be reminded of their (overdue) subscription renewal even though the date of renewal is now clearly indicated on the address labels.

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COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (v)

■ Chris Hille (one of our professional plant operators) had expressed an interest in joining the Council of Management and it was agreed that he should be co-opted at the next meeting.

■ The Trading Company reported that Member John Simpson had re-painted (and repaired where necessary) all 20 black display panels prior to the National Waterways Festival at Chester. This was greatly appreciated.

■ Contrary to the "Thanks" column in the last Edition the Trading Company no longer had the use of a van for transporting our display and sales stock (through no fault of the Canal Trust/H&GCS). The cost of hiring transport was eating into potential profits.

■ Our Fundraising Officer had been very successful in organising meetings with senior Officers of all District and County Councils, National Rivers Authority and other bodies; four meetings of a "Steering Committee" having been held so far in 1995.

■ The Trading Company reported that the National Waterways Festival (held over the August Bank Holiday at Chester) had been very poorly attended by the general public - for the first time the Canal Trust would make a loss. The Canal Trust Chairman was asked to write to the Inland Waterways Association pointing out that the (subsidised) cost of the marquee/pitch and electricity, coupled with the (non-subsidised and increasingly expensive) camp site pitches plus our other costs (van hire/fuel) meant that we would have to seriously re-consider our attendance. However, it had been agreed that we would attend the 1996 event (the Black Country National Waterways Festival) as that had been highly successful last time (1991) when in excess of 300,000 people attended!

■ Hereford City Council had refused Planning Permission for a significant industrial development that would have obstructed the restoration of the Canal in the City. This positive decision was welcomed.

■ Our Trust Administrator was liaising with the Data Protection Registrar to ensure that our computer records complied with current legislation.

■ It was agreed to accelerate production of accounts so that the AGM could be brought forward to a date in May in future.

CRP



Please remember that we have a wide range of high quality items - see centre pages - that are ideal as a gift at any time of the year. If you are ordering for Christmas PLEASE let us have your order by 11th December at the very latest. *Thank you.*

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

HEREFORD CITY LIBRARY
BARTESTREE & LUGWARDINE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

We greatly appreciate the support of our new Corporate Members, above, who have joined the Trust since the last Edition of *The Wharfinger*. If you have any leads that we might pursue with local businesses, Parish Councils etc., we would greatly appreciate your passing details on through the normal Membership addresses [see *Contacts*] - *Thank you*. The cost of Corporate Membership is only £20 per annum (*not £25 as the gremlins put in the last Edition*) and is of great value to us, not only for the money, but to be able to show a strong cross section of support from local and national organisations; this is of great assistance when trying to make our case with 'the powers that be' (as we regularly have to)!

LAST CHANCE TO SAVE 20 %

When we increased the Membership Subscriptions in March it was agreed that the full increase should not apply immediately to Life Membership rates and that they should be *discounted by 20% for the remainder of 1995*.

A significant number of Members transferred to Life Membership prior to March in order to benefit from the old Subscription rate - here is your last chance to transfer at the *discounted rates* [the full rate is shown {£xx} and applies from the 1st January 1996]:

Senior Citizen £64 {£80};	Joint Senior Citizen £88 {£110}
Individual £120 {£150};	Joint/Family £160 {£200}
Corporate £320 {£400}	

AN OPPORTUNITY

There is an old saying that problems should be turned into opportunities! Well we have a (slight) problem and we are asking all Members to turn it into an opportunity!

Earlier in the year we had a number of our yellow "brief history/recruitment" leaflets printed; the print run took account of the various events that were planned throughout the year. The leaflets included the revised subscription rates. However, as you have just read, the Life Membership rates were temporarily discounted by 20% for the rest of 1995 - so the leaflets will be out of date by the end of the year.

Our *problem* is that we have 600 or so left - your *opportunity* is that one of the leaflets should be enclosed with this copy of *The Wharfinger*! Please put it to good use before it becomes out of date and recruit a new Member; *thank you*. More leaflets are always available from the normal Membership addresses [see *Contacts*].

THANKS...

to the following for their greatly appreciated support:-

TIM COGHLAN,
BRAUNSTON BOAT SHOW,
for donating £200 to cover all our costs associated with this successful event.

GLENN MILLAR,
BRITISH WATERWAYS,
for producing the 'desk-top' Economic Appraisal referred to on page 1.

SOUTH HEREFORDSHIRE D C,
for a Grant of £1,100 towards the cost of purchasing our second 4 ton dumper.

Mr GILES BULMER, of H P BULMER,
for their donation of two case of Pomagne for our Bottle Draw.

DAVIES BROOK & Co, HEREFORD,
for their donation of 10 dozen bottles of pop for our Bottle Draw.

BASIL & ELIZABETH FROST,
COLWALL PARK HOTEL,
for the donation of a considerable number of engineering and other bricks. We don't have an exact number yet, as each time our restoration team arrives to collect them the pile seem's to have grown!

WELSH WATER,
for undertaking an excavation to locate the Canal's water supply culvert from the River Frome, so that a future pipeline replacement contract can allow for works to ensure our culvert is retained.

ANONYMOUS !
two large companies have agreed to sponsor parts, or the refurbishment of parts, for our Plant. This will result in significant savings in our ever increasing maintenance budget. The firms have requested no publicity.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS
TO EVERYONE**

HELP!

Would you be prepared to think of, and organise, a fundraising event? We had the highly successful **Bangers and Mash** evening earlier this year and are hoping that another equally effective (and enjoyable) way of raising some money can be found!

If you have ever said "*why don't they ...*" then this is for you! In the first instance please contact David Penny [see *Contacts*] who will get the idea "approved" and offer any support regarding other volunteers who would assist in the venture and obtain budget approval for essential expenditure - then the rest would left with you. This is an ideal opportunity for those who would like to help but have only limited time or prefer to be "their own boss" (or both!).

We are on the scrounge again. Does anyone have a large rotary mower (*a ride on one would be ideal!*) to donate - or sell *very cheaply* - to enable greatly improved towpath maintenance to be achieved? We have an attachment for our tractor but this is invariably in the wrong place at the right time (and is too big to be used on all sites). Whilst we also have a Member who has a motorised scythe this is not the ideal piece of equipment once the towpath is in good shape. Please contact Simon Hayward [see *Contacts*] - *thank you.*

Our retail sales of **The Wharfinger** are in jeopardy because of the lack of a co-ordinator. *We really cannot believe that there is no Member prepared to take on this important (but not greatly time consuming) task.* Please see the first item on the next page.

THE WHARFINGER

In the last Edition we made a plea for a volunteer to take over the co-ordination, "behind the scenes", of the small team who distribute **The Wharfinger** for sale to our retail outlets. It is a role that can be developed with great satisfaction! Please contact Joyce Lynham [see **Contacts**] for details.



As our Members and supporters will all appreciate **The Colwall Park Hotel** has been a regular contributor to the successes of the Canal Trust - in more ways than one! Not only have the proprietors, Basil and Elizabeth Frost supported us by way of Corporate Membership, they were one of the first to place a regular advertisement in **The Wharfinger**. Add to this the annual provision of a prize for the **Grand Holiday Draw**, the magnificent "Bangers and Mash" fundraising evening earlier this year ... and even the donation of a number of engineering bricks! [see **Thanks**, p. 23] - you could not ask for more consistent encouragement and willing support. The very sad news is that the Hotel has been sold and whilst we hope that Basil and Elizabeth will continue to be "ordinary" Members we have to say goodbye to a Corporate Member who will be sadly missed. Our sincere thanks to Basil and Elizabeth - *all of your support was greatly appreciated.*



If you are reading this before Christmas, then the Trust (and Trading Company) Directors would like to wish all Members - and those who have supported us in any way over the past year

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

However, if you are reading this in 1996

A HAPPY NEW YEAR !

As the more observant Members will have noted the next Edition is number 50 - quite a milestone for a newsletter that is 100% compiled and "typeset" by volunteers - none of whom (currently or in the past) know anything about publishing! We will be doing our best to ensure that it will be a worthy celebration of the issues that have gone before.

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS MONDAY 1st JANUARY

Printed by Print Plus, 126 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, HR4 9HN (01432) 272025
The Wharfinger was compiled by Cliff and David Penny using **JetSetter** British software.

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Whilst we try to ensure dates are correct please verify them with a relevant Organiser.

Cover:- Thanks to Sandy Wooldridge, Creative Labels Ltd., Rotherwas, Hereford.

Membership records are computerised. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1984, your entry is available for inspection if you send a SAE to the Membership Secretary.

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ALL MEMBERSHIP QUERIES

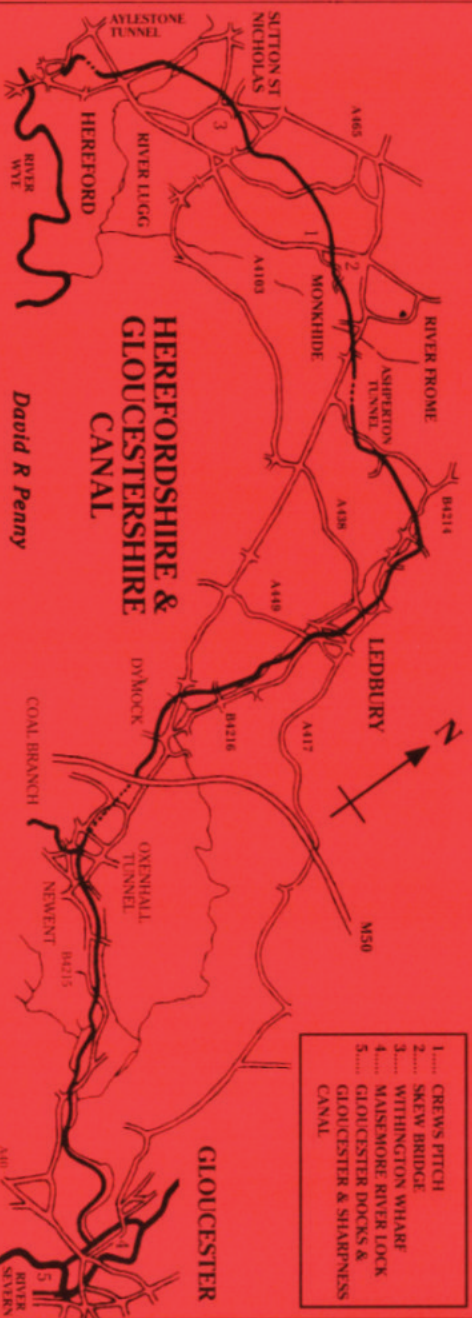
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6, Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

Contact The H&G Canal Trust,

(sae please)

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Please Note: We are working on the Canal with the permission and co-operation of the land owners. Unless specifically indicated it should not be assumed that there is any public right of way along the Canal towpath. Please help the Society to maintain its good relationships with the local land owners.

Work began on the Canal in 1792 but there were many problems which meant that it was not completed until 1845 making it the last major route to be built in Britain but for the Canals of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Canal stretched for 34 miles and utilised 22 locks and 3 tunnels to overcome the problems posed by the undulating fields of Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.