

# The Wharfinger

Newsletter of the  
Herefordshire and  
Gloucestershire  
Canal Trust



**Edition 56 • Winter 1997/8**  
**50p – free to members**

# WHO DOES WHAT ...

## VICE PRESIDENTS

*Viscount Portman*  
*R. E. Barnes TD, Sir John Knill Bt.*

## CHAIRMAN

Bryan Heatley

## VICE CHAIRMEN

Brian Fox, Tom Bennett

FINANCE:- Treasurer/Chairman  
Committee

Liz Connors  
Brian Fox, Tom Bennett,  
David Penny, Nigel Jefferies

## RESTORATION:-

Mid-Week Group Co-Ordinator  
Plant & Training Manager

Steve Delacourt-Smith, *Simon Hayward*,  
Brian Fox, Mike Potts, Tom Bennett  
*Dave Young*  
Tom Bennett

SPECIAL PROJECTS:- Chairman  
[Oxenhall Locks Site] Vice-Chair  
Secretary  
Committee

*Peter Moore*  
David Penny  
*Steve Gittins*  
*Richard Hamblin, Bill Cronin (FoDDC)*,  
Steve Delacourt-Smith, *Paul Johnson*,  
*Shawn Price, Roger Tutt, Alan Lines*,  
*Simon Hayward, Steve Lambert*  
*Steve Gittins*

## HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER

David Penny

## LOCAL AUTHORITY LIAISON

## PLANNING LIAISON

David Penny, Cliff Penny

## LANDOWNER LIAISON

Brian Fox

## PRESS/PUBLICITY:-

Social/H&GCS Events

*Elizabeth Lloyd*

MEMBERSHIP:- Secretary  
Covenants

Nigel Jefferies  
Liz Connors

## FUNDRAISING

David Penny, Bryan Heatley

SOCIAL:- Events  
Outings

Steve Delacourt-Smith  
Mike Potts, *Joyce Potts*

## MINUTES SECRETARY

Tony Austin-Bailey

## IWA NOMINATED MEMBER

Will Frecknall

THE WHARFINGER:- Editor  
Postmasters:- Leader  
Team

Cliff Penny, David Penny  
*B & M Sanderson & family*  
*D & M Gray; I & F Roper;*

## TALKS/WALKS

Nigel Jefferies, Mike Potts

Those in italics are not Directors on the Council of Management, although they may be co-opted members

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EXHIBITIONS CO-ORDINATOR  
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Liz Connors  
Volunteer wanted!  
*Derek Gray*  
*Penny Shetliffe*

CRAFT FAIRS *Joyce Potts*

LOGISTICS GROUP *Chris & Mark Blunden, Steve Gittins*

BOATS:- Chairman *Dick Skeet*

Committee *Ray & Barbara Moses, Pat Skeet, Derek Gray*

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

HONORARY POSTS:- AUDITOR *Davies, Edwards & Co., Leominster.*

SOLICITOR Sue Newbould, GABB & CO., 25 King Street, Hereford.



# Editorial

A great deal has happened since the last edition of **The Wharfinger** dropped on to your mat! Thankfully, almost all of these "happenings" have been good for the Canal Trust - and there is one common theme to all of them - *the results arise from hours of work by unpaid volunteers; in many instances our unseen hard workers "behind the scenes"*.

## NATIONAL AWARD FOR TRUST

For the second time in four years we have won the **British Marine Industries** Trophy for the best display by a voluntary group at the National Waterways Festival (*the award was only introduced four years ago*). Well done to all concerned - those who updated our display panels, store and organise our sales goods, transported everything to Henley on Thames (*a marvellous site from which to promote our activities*) and erected the display, those who "manned the stand", and those who took it all down and brought it all back safely home. Each element of this teamwork was essential to our success - *thank you*.

## ANOTHER PLANNING SUCCESS

Just as this issue was going to press we heard the good news that yet another Planning Inspector had found in favour of the Canal Trust and refused to grant Planning Permission, on Appeal, for a site at Withington in Herefordshire. The site in question had received a Permission, a number of years ago (*before the supportive Local Plan Policies were in place*) but the development did not proceed. South Herefordshire District Council refused a "renewal" Application on

the site and this was taken to Appeal. We argued that the current "protective" Policies now had to be taken into account - in respect of the main line of the Canal and the off-line Basin at Withington - and the Inspector agreed. One of three reasons for his outright refusal was *"... the proposed development ... would prevent the Council from safeguarding the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal."* The Canal Trust have made it clear to the owner of the land that we are not opposed to development on the site provided it respects the line of the Canal (and the Basin) and have offered to work together to develop suitable proposals.

## YET MORE PLANNING ISSUES

As we go to press we have yet another Planning Inquiry; this time in respect of the site of the former Over Hospital in Gloucestershire. Regrettably, the very positive recommendations of Tewkesbury Borough Council Planners [*see p. 3 of the last edition*] were overturned by Councillors who voted to refuse the sensitive housing development planned for this site - possibly losing the opportunity to get the Canal restored as part of the development. Subject to conclusion of an Agreement we were in the (unusual) position of supporting a developer at an Appeal! [*see p.4*]

Meanwhile, the Worcester family firm Messrs Underwoods have re-submitted their development proposals on the former Pritchard's Metals site in Hereford [*See report on the very favourable Appeal decision, in strong favour of the Canal Trust, in edition 53 - pages 19-21.*]. Most regrettably, the revised

## Editorial

layout takes no notice of the Inspector's findings. A detailed outright objection has been made by the Canal Trust. A further letter has been written to Mr Underwood repeating our (previously ignored) offer to work with them to produce a viable layout for the site (*we have presented a layout to Hereford City Council that leads to no loss of the now proposed floor space provided the developer funds a short length of retaining wall*).

Also in Herefordshire, we are about to meet with the Environment Agency, jointly with the City Council and the developer of a key site in the City [*see pages 4/5 of the last edition*], to try and overcome some misunderstandings that have led to the Environment Agency objecting to the developer's proposals for the new length of Canal within his development.

### FOR SALE!

A length of former railway siding in Hereford has been placed on the market by Rail Property Limited and will be auctioned in Bristol at the end of October. This narrow strip of land forms the essential diversion route for the Canal around the Painter Brothers Factory; the diversion route was lodged with Hereford City Council in 1991 and has been successfully protected from development in the intervening years. We have acted swiftly to point out to the Solicitors handling the sale that any development on this land would be subject to an outright objection by the Canal Trust and we would expect the Hereford City Council and the Planning Inspectorate to be consistent in their support for the

protection of the Canal route if any such proposals were taken to Appeal. Hereford City Council Planning Department have sent a very clearly worded letter supporting this view to Rail Property Limited; regrettably the latter have refused to withdraw the land from the auction. However, they have included in the sales particulars the letters from both the Canal Trust, and the Council, detailing the situation at this site.

### OXENHALL

Just in case you think it is all paperwork (*although, by the time you add all of the efforts by our Treasurer, Membership Secretary and others to the above it feels like it is at times!*) our own volunteers, together with those from all over the country working under the national "Dig Deep" initiative, are making splendid progress at Oxenhall. Brian Fox will bring you up to date in his regular report [*on page 16*]. But these (very) regular work parties do not just happen, there is a great deal of hard work "behind the scenes" in arranging budgets, materials, accommodation, permissions and in the essential liaison with the Waterway Recovery Group and Dig Deep organisers. *Another "thank you" to those who can so easily be taken for granted.*

### CRAFT SUCCESS

The end of October saw the first of our 1997 Craft Fairs. The St Catherine's Hall, in Ledbury, featured an extensive display of our restoration work plus a diverse range of craft stalls - including our own sales stand and home-made refreshments. Our thanks to all who




## Editorial

made this possible. On Saturday 13th December we have our most ambitious Craft Fair (yet!) - *wholly organised by the Canal Trust volunteers* - in the Shirehall at Hereford. An ideal opportunity for those last minute Christmas presents! [Full details on page 9].

### CHRISTMAS

Regular volunteers should have received an invitation to the annual "Volunteers Christmas Party" ably arranged by Joyce & Mike Potts. It

is by invitation as the numbers always exceed the capacity of the hall and ovens! For a number of years volunteers and armchair Members alike have enjoyed the successful Canal Trust Dinner arranged by David Penny - excellent food in a very pleasant, and informal atmosphere, plus a well known speaker. Those who have far to come can stay overnight at very reasonable rates - why not join us on Friday 5th December; Tim Coghlan should have some interesting tales to tell! [Further details below.] 

## Christmas *H&G* Dinner '97



To be held on Friday 5th December,  
7.30pm. for 8pm. At  
The Barn House,  
New Street,  
Ledbury.  
£16.95  
per person

*Our guest after dinner speaker will be Tim Coghlan, the owner of the award winning Braunston Marina in Northamptonshire - hear about his battles to succeed!*

*Stilton & Chestnut Pate or Spicy Prawns & Cucumber Feuillettes*

*Roast Loin of Pork with Apple & Horseradish Glaze  
Paprika Chicken with Grapes  
Roasted Vegetable Tourte*

*Black & White Bombes or Chocolate Hazelnut Amaretto Gateau*

*Coffee Tea Mince Pies Festive Novelties*

*Paying by credit card? You can 'phone your booking on 01432 820420*

*Or post to:- David Penny, Coppice, Burley Gate, Hereford, HR1 3QS  
to arrive by Monday 1st December - Please include your full address.*

*Accommodation is available at the Barn House:- 'Phone (01531) 632825*

# Committee Matters

*Three Council of Management meetings are reviewed by our Editor in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date...*

## JULY COMMITTEE

- Thanks were expressed to all concerned regarding the highly successful erection of our "Bailey" Bridge at Oxenhall [see photographs in the last edition of *The Wharfinger*.]

- Restoration Group's arrangements for the Waterway Recovery Group's summer Canal Camp were discussed and endorsed [report in *Restoration Update* - p.16].

- Scaffolding would be required in order to finish the brickwork on the Oxenhall Tunnel Portal and, subsequently, for work at House Lock. There was an extensive debate about safety/certification issues and the merits regarding the purchase of our own scaffolding compared to hiring.

- Progress at Lock Cottage/the overflow weir was reported together with a detailed report from the Special Projects Group who continue to manage all work in this area. Concern was expressed at the exceedingly poor standard of brickwork that had been laid by a visiting volunteer group when repairing a towpath wall. It was agreed that it would be inspected by our own bricklayer and that, in future, any such work would be stopped at an early stage and the volunteers taught how to achieve an acceptable standard. If they were not willing (or able) to do

so they would be asked to undertake less skilled work. Steps were in hand to overcome concern regarding maintenance of the grass on the towpath in Gloucestershire.

- There had been publicity for our work on **BBC Radio Gloucester** and regular positive articles had appeared in the **Gloucester Citizen**.

- The Trading Company reported that they were having problems with the donated van; serious engine problems meant that hire vehicles were once again having to be used [greatly cutting into funds -Ed.].

- There was a detailed report on the very significant development activity at various sites in both counties which was causing extensive work for our voluntary Planning Liaison team.

- Discussions were taking place with a landowner in order to regularise an abstraction of water from the Canal into a nearby lake. It was agreed that, in principle, genuine surplus water could be made available subject to the comments of the Environment Agency and our Honorary Solicitor; a formal Agreement would be required.

## AUGUST COMMITTEE

- Bryan Heatley was in liaison with our existing two



## Committee Matters . . . (ii)

Vice Presidents, and with Viscount Portman, regarding their roles. He reported that he had been nominated by the Transport Trust (of which he is also Chairman) as the national inland waterways contact. He was pursuing the potential for organising a study day, based on the Canal, next Spring. The posts of Trust Administrator and a Manager for the Trading Company were still without volunteers *[and we still don't have a Press & Publicity Officer - Ed.]*. Various options were to be pursued.

- Budgets were approved for the third quarter. Although funds were exceedingly limited it was decided to take the once and only opportunity of purchasing the "launch nose"

for the "Bailey Bridge" rather than return it to the suppliers.

- In view of the continuing importance of the Special Projects Group it was agreed that there should be a representative serving as a member of the Council of Management.

- Following very detailed discussion it was resolved that Oxenhall Lock Cottage would not be sold until next Spring *[As reported in the last edition.]*

- Discussions had taken place with Gloucestershire County Council regarding the partial collapse of material onto the towpath adjacent to Coldharbour Lane Bridge at Oxenhall.

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# Committee Matters . . . (iii)

- Further reports were received with regard to the many development sites where negotiations were continuing/ Appeals were in progress.

- Mike Potts reported a profit of over £200 from the weekend tour to Manchester, and of nearly £90 from the Teddy Bears Picnic on the Mon. and Brec. Canal. Regrettably, due to lack of bookings, the proposed trip to Ellesmere Port might have to be cancelled.

- Sonia Rolt was likely to be our guest speaker for the November Social evening [other Social details on p. 10.]

- Obtaining the correct lime for the restoration of the Lock was incurring substantial costs. [However, Council of Management agreed that there was only one way to do the work - the correct way - Ed.]

- Concern was expressed at the management of visiting volunteers with regard to standards of work on the listed structure of House Lock. It was agreed that, in order to make best use of the stone that was being recovered from the former railway abutment, and to assist in maintaining standards/ teaching our own and visiting volunteers, the Trust would pay for a local stone mason to be on site when required. Following a report from our own bricklayer the defective towpath wall had been demolished and would be rebuilt; a suggestion that it could remain as it would be out of sight below eventual water level was firmly rejected.

## SEPTEMBER COMMITTEE

- Due to continued heavy commitments on other matters it had not been possible for the Chairman to visit Oxenhall during the August WRG Canal Camp. The Hereford Volunteer Bureau had been contacted to try to fill some of our vacancies.

- Mike and Joyce Potts were continuing to give talks to external organisations - nine were in hand over the next few months. The Council of Management thanked them for their continuing efforts to spread the word about our voluntary work.

- The Treasurer reported exceedingly heavy outgoings due to materials and other expenditure at Oxenhall. Other budgets were having to be reduced to allow work to continue.

- Arrangements for the Volunteers Christmas Party and the Canal Trust Christmas Dinner were reported and welcomed [see pages 3 & 23].

- The attendance at the National Waterways Festival, at Henley, had been a major success in terms of promotion of our work and sales - and the Trust had won the BMIF Trophy as well! [See page 1.]

- The means by which Oxenhall Lock Cottage would be sold was discussed at length; the final decision was based on detailed recommendations from a respected local Estate Agent. [Details on page 22].





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## **Canal Trust Christmas Craft Fair, 1997**

In addition to the very successful Craft Fair in Ledbury, at the end of October, the Trading Company have arranged a special Christmas Craft Fair this year:-

***Saturday, 13th December***

***at the Shire Hall***

***HEREFORD***

*The Craft Fair will be open from 10am to 4pm*

Apart from a wide variety of crafts on sale there will be our own sales stand and display of restoration photographs. Home-made cakes, filled rolls and other refreshments.

*The ideal opportunity to buy your Christmas presents and support the work of the Canal Trust at the same time !*

Volunteers - Liz Connors, 01432 880155

Traders - Joyce Potts, 01981 590372

## ***All Jumbled Up ?***

Ray and Barbara Moses are again having a stall at the Gloucester Boat and Watersports Jumble in April. They need items to sell to raise funds for the Canal Trust. Several donations of boat jumble have already been received, but they need more - anything related to boating, fishing, canoeing or any water related activity are required. Books, magazines, boat fittings, fishing equipment and even items like hand knitted hats and scarves could be turned into money for the Trust. Some motoring and caravanning bits could also have uses on boats!

Please bring items to the Social Evenings or 'phone 01989 780325 to arrange collection of job lots or bulky items! *Thank you.*

## **DISCOVER BRITAIN'S SECRET WORLD!**



### **Come canal cruising!**

*Enjoy our beautiful countryside the peaceful, relaxed way. No experience required - tuition included. Family and group boats, luxury to economy classes. Trad-style boats with boatman's cabins. 5 well known routes, including the Llangollen Canal.*

*Brochure from:-*

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# Dates For Your Diary

*By Steve Delacourt-Smith*

Social evenings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Acorn Suite of the Royal Oak Hotel, The Southend, Ledbury.

*All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.*

## Tuesday, 16th December

### *"Canal Restoration in the 21st Century"*

The year promises to go out with a bang - as sometimes controversial, nationally known canal enthusiast Michael Handford, has agreed to take us into the future!

## Tuesday, 20th January

### *"Wyvern Shipping Company & Beyond"*

Alan Keff promises to give an insight into early post war commercial carrying on the inland waterways.

## Tuesday, 17th February

### *"Reflections of the Waterways"*

Another nostalgia night!

Colin Scrivener takes us back to the years 1949-55 in what is likely to be a fascinating evening.

Members and non-members welcome. There will be a raffle, and plenty of time for a chat. These Social Events also provide a time and place for the dissemination of the latest news from the Trust. Please contact Steve if you have any queries, or ideas for Social Events [01452 501372].

## Friday, 5th December - Christmas Dinner '97

*With guest speaker Tim Coghlan of Braunston Marina*

*At the Barn House, New Street Ledbury, full details on page 3.*

*Two of our guests come from Farnborough each year - it must be good!*



*Christmas Greetings*

*Christmas Cards -  
Skew Bridge  
in colour in the  
snow - two photo's  
available.*

*85p each or four of  
each view for £6.50  
+ 10% p&p. Please  
see Sales '98 for  
details.*

*Each card 7 1/2" x 5 1/2"*



*Christmas Greetings*



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# SALES '98

## Christmas Cards

Skew Bridge, in the snow, in colour

2 photo's available; 85p each or 8 (4 of each view) for £6.50



## Pewter Sculptures

The highest quality hand crafted English Pewter.

Pair of Swans on hardwood base in presentation box @ £6.95

Squirrel on Hardwood base in presentation box @ £4.95

Owl	@ £2.95	Duck	@ £2.25
Pig	@ £2.25	Squirrel	@ £2.75
Rabbit	@ £1.95	Swan	@ £2.95
Hedgehog	@ £1.50	Sleepy Hedgehog	@ £2.25



## Slate Sculptures

Animal sculptures hand crafted from Welsh slate.

Pig - Sitting	@ £1.45	Rabbit	@ £2.95
Pig - lying	@ £1.45	Fox Cub	@ £2.95
Duck	@ £1.45	Pig Sitting	@ £2.95
Bunnies	@ £1.95	Pig Lying	@ £2.95
Squirrel	@ £1.95	Fox	@ £5.95
Hedgehog	@ £1.95	Pig Sitting	@ £5.95
Harvest Mouse	@ £1.95	Frog	@ £5.95
Tawny Owl	@ £2.95	Hedgehog	@ £5.95
Hedgehog	@ £2.95	Squirrel	@ £5.95

## Soft, Cuddly, Toys

High quality, value for money (CE marked), and very cute, cuddly toys.

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

Otter - (12")	@ £3.95	Rabbit - Very Large (17")	@ £9.95
Badger - (9")	@ £3.95	Rabbit - sitting up (8")	@ £4.25
Fox - sitting up (8")	@ £9.50	Duck (green/brown) - (6")	@ £3.45
Fox - curled up (8")	@ £9.50	Hedgehog - very large (13")	@ £9.95
Squirrel - large (10")	@ £8.95	Hedgehog - laying down (5")	@ £1.95
Squirrel (5")	@ £3.95	Hedgehog - sitting up (5")	@ £1.95
Owl, Mini - (4")	@ £2.50	Hedgehog - sitting up (4")	@ £1.50
Snowy Owl (7")	@ £7.50	Hedgehog - laying down (4")	@ £1.50
Snowy Owl - L (12")	@ £14.50	Bee - (4")	@ £1.75
Baby Bunny (in white, fawn, or brown) - (6") @ £2.25			

## Sweatshirts/T-Shirts

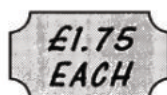
They are all printed "Help Restore the Hereford and Gloucester Canal", in circular text, or bear the Crest. All available S., M., L., XL.

Black with large text:- Sweatshirts £14.95 T-Shirts £8  
Black or Yellow with small crest:- Sweatshirts £15.95 T-Shirts £9



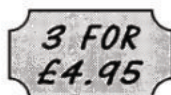
## Brass Plaque

This 3½" x 2½" solid brass plaque has a very distinctive black background with the Skew Bridge and lettering standing proud in raised polished brass. £5.95 each



## Notelets

8 Quality Salmon "Ambassador" notelets,  
2 each of 4 canal scenes by Allan Firth.



## Slate Coasters

Hand riven welsh slate with imprints of Animal engravings.

All £1.50 or 6 assorted for £7.50

Fox Hedgehog Osprey Woodpecker Leaping Salmon  
Bunnies Stags Badger Squirrel Mouse Swans

Coaster Holder hand crafted in Slate £2.50

## The Book Shelf

The Hereford & Gloucester Canal, by David Bick .....	£6.95
Warwick Canal by Alan Falkner .....	£5.95
Gloucester Docks - a living history. The official guide .....	£2
The History of Gloucester Docks, by Member Michael Stimpson .....	£1.20
Herefordshire in Old Postcards, by Member Tim Ward - Vol 1 or 2 .....	£4.50
Race Against Time, by David Bolton .....	£5.95
The Bristol & Gloucester Railway ... by Colin G. Maggs .....	£8.95
Three Men in a Boat, by Jerome K Jerome .....	£1.95
Working Life on Severn & Canal, by Hugh Conway-Jones .....	£7.95
The Observer book of Canals, by John Gagg .....	£2.50
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Nicholsons Guide - South Was £9.95 NOW £7.50

Leicester & Melton Mowbray Canal Was £14.95 NOW £12.50

Secret Waters (Hardback), by John Watney was £14.95 NOW £7.95

Canal Walks, by Ray Quilan was £9.99 NOW £7.50





## Cross-Stitch Kits



A range of very high quality, counted cross-stitch kits - at very competitive prices.

By Abacus Designs

- The Clock Warehouse, Shardlow (8½" x 6½") @ £17.95
- High Bridge, "The Glory Hole", Lincoln (8" x 7½") @ £17.95
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- Fradley Junction, Lichfield (10½" x 4½") @ £19.95
- Henley-on-Thames (12½" x 5") @ £19.95
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- The Packet House, Worsley (10½" x 8½") @ £19.95
- Canal Museum, Stoke Bruerne (14" x 5½") @ £19.95
- Mallards (8" x 5") @ £12.95
- Telfords Warehouse, Ellesmere Port (10" x 4½") @ £12.95
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct (10½" x 5½") @ £17.95
- Windmill End, BCN (13" x 5½") @ £16.95
- Old Turn Junction, BCN (14" x 4½") @ £17.95
- Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford (13½ x 5½) @ £24.95
- Audlem, Shropshire Union (9½ x 5½) @ £16.95
- \* Marlow @ £19.95
- \* Temple Island, Henley @ £16.95
- \* From Town Lock, Newbury @ £16.95
- \* Bingley 5 Rise, Leeds & Liverpool @ £16.95
- \* Hambledon Mill, K & A @ £12.95
- \* Nottingham Canal Museum @ £16.95



## Knick-Knacks

- Car Stickers - Crest + Help Restore The Hereford & Gloucester Canal..... 45p
- Pens:- Square, yellow and black - Hereford & Gloucester Canal ..... 45p
- Pencils:- Black, triangular with gold dipped ends + as above ..... 20p
- Leather Key Fobs:- available in black, blue, green, or red..... 75p
- Leather Bookmarks (with Crest):- black, blue, green, or burgundy ..... 95p

## Greetings Cards

A range of high quality, general purpose cards - at very competitive prices

**ONLY  
£1 EACH**

CANAL COLLECTION - by W A Townsend

Design 1:- A Peaceful Afternoon Afloat

Design 2:- Autumn Reflections

**SET of 8  
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THE HEYDAY COLLECTION - by Eric Bottomley all 8"x 6"

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

B:- Lydney Docks, the Upper Basin in the 1890's at dusk.

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

D:- Dusk on the Bristol Avon; Clifton Suspension Bridge & 3-masted trader.

E:- The Malvern Hills.

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

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# *Mike & Joyce's Outings*

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*By Mike & Joyce Potts*

Following the insertion of a questionnaire in *The Wharfinger* at the end of 1996, our outings experts - Mike and Joyce Potts - promised to try and ensure that Member's suggestions were acted upon. This resulted in the first ever Canal Trust "Weekend Break", based in Manchester with a trip on the Manchester Ship Canal and a visit to Albert Dock; a highly successful and very enjoyable weekend.

Two more suggestions have been thoroughly researched by Mike and Joyce. A number of the passengers are regulars but new faces will be equally welcome!

Because of the need to secure hotel rooms, book boats and coaches, it is necessary to have bookings as soon as possible, please. Don't leave it too late and be disappointed. *A small deposit secures your place.*

## **Weekend Tour - 13th & 14th June**

### **LLANGOLLEN CANAL CRUISE & RAILWAY**

Cruise the beautiful Llangollen Canal, including across the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, and a trip on the Llangollen Railway - with the opportunity to visit other attractions in Llangollen.

*All fares, evening meal, bed & breakfast plus insurance included £85 per person (single room extra).*

*£10 non-refundable deposit - balance to be paid by 10th April 1998.*

Advance notice:-

## **Sunday, 13th September, 1998**

### **DAY OUT AT THE NATIONAL TRAMWAY MUSEUM CRICH, Derbyshire**

A fascinating "living museum", step back in time and travel on magnificently restored trams at this beautifully located museum - a day out with a difference!

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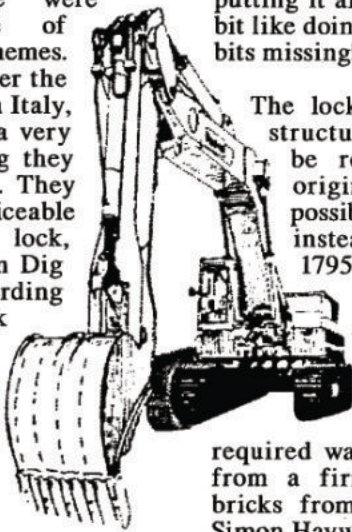
# RESTORATION UPDATE

*By Brian Fox*

Restoration at Oxenhall is now going ahead at a frantic pace. For a week in August the WRG volunteers descended on us in numbers, 25 at one time, ladies and gents of varying age groups, and all managed to squeeze into Dymock Village Hall to sleep on the floor. Most seemed to cope with the arrangement very well although I did see the odd one having forty winks after lunch. Many of them were students looking for a useful pastime during their holidays and some were involved in Duke of Edinburgh award schemes. They came from all over the country, even one from Italy, and apparently made a very good team considering they had never met before. They certainly made a noticeable impression on the lock, which is the long term Dig Deep project, and according to the visitors book which we have now started they were mostly favourably impressed with the work, countryside and perhaps, most of all, the social side of the week.

With the assistance of a few local volunteers the first task was to strip all the loose stone and brick from the upper wing walls at the entrance to the lock and get down to a surface which was solid enough to key our reconstructed lock into. This included moving a few stones weighing upwards of 5 cwt and some large tree roots which had grown into the lock walls - luckily a JCB had been hired for the weekend and the task was made relatively easy.

Those stones which were still roughly in situ were numbered and noted on the master plan so that they could be put back in the correct position. We discovered that the bricks used in the lock walls mixed in with the stone were of a different size to the standard brick generally used 200 years ago and more were needed before rebuilding operations could commence. After three days the demolition was complete and we were ready to start putting it all back together again, a bit like doing a jig-saw with half the bits missing!



The lock is a Grade II Listed structure and everything has to be rebuilt as near to the original specifications as possible. Lime had been used instead of cement mortar in 1795 and it was clear that expert advice was needed before we commenced because we were unsure of the correct mix. The special lime that we required was only locally available from a firm in Brecon and the bricks from a firm near Ludlow. Simon Hayward once again made his truck available for the collection and Steve Delacourt spent a day driving around finally arriving back at Oxenhall late on the Tuesday. Another challenge successfully overcome but the budget severely depleted on materials costing more than anticipated.

There were plenty of other tasks to hand so a start was made on the lower wing walls which were of a totally different construction. One side being of rough stone in the



## RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

form of a retaining wall bonded together with puddle clay whilst the other side was built of the same rough stone but keyed into a rubble and lime mortar backing. Both need rebuilding as the clay had been washed from one wall over the years and many stones were loose or missing, whilst the other wall had totally collapsed.

Another job was the clearance of an old overflow culvert, about 18" in diameter (linking this canal with the coal branch) which had become totally blocked with tree roots and this was tackled with relish by one of the students who happened to be a potholer.

By the end of the week we were making considerable progress although not exactly where we had planned. There was stone everywhere, some from the dismantled lock and an ever growing supply from the railway abutment which was also being demolished. Neat rows lined the towpath for about 30 yards in either direction, care being taken to leave sufficient room for public access along the towpath and also for conveyance of sand and gravel by wheelbarrow from Church Lane, which was the nearest access point for large lorries.

Since August we have had the pleasure of WRG company again on 4 separate weekends with the final effort for this year being on October 11th/12th. We have now resolved the mortar mix problem (sorry - challenge) and collected a second load of special bricks! Thanks to another of our members, John Arnold, who loaned his truck. Stone has been re-laid and some recut (after being transported to a

specialist stone cutting firm in the Forest of Dean) whilst we are employing a stonemason to give us expert guidance on that aspect of the job and to complete some final dressing of the stone. Our objective is to complete the upper wing walls of the lock this year, put in some temporary stop planks so that the water is diverted over the newly restored spillweir, remove the earth dam, and fill the pound with water to its full depth. Each day we work seems to bring new challenges as we strive to complete our jig-saw but they will be overcome and we shall then be forced to sit back and relax for a while or the Trust will be broke. Restoration of a listed structure doesn't come cheap!

There has been no mention of the weather this summer because there has been nothing exceptional to report, until last Saturday (Oct 11th) when it poured all day and posed a few challenges. The WRGies coped, mixing a bit of concrete, and laying a few stones but finally giving in by mid afternoon (even they have limits) to go and get some dry clothes on. The local volunteers had planned to clear out the bottom pound above the aqueduct but after a few runs along the towpath realised it was not such a good idea when a dumper nearly slid over the bank. Sunday was sunny but still too wet along the path so dumpers transferred surplus soil from our compound to a local field while spare bodies were employed in erecting gateposts to complete the security of "our" part of Gloucestershire County Council's Depot. By the time you read this we should be securely fenced in and able to work on plant protected from the elements by our own mobile workshop (framed tent!).

## RESTORATION UPDATE (iii)

Before I go any further it should be made clear that the work at Oxenhall is not exclusively done by WRG. A lot of credit must go to our own dedicated band of workers who keep the momentum going on other weekends and even during the week. Most of the credit for the brickwork is due to Dave Young, our own retired bricklayer who, together with a few more of us active retirees, enjoys nothing better than a day at Oxenhall listening to the birds twittering, trickling water and the scrape of a trowel on brick. Dave has been with us for some years having been responsible for much of the brickwork at the tunnel portal and leggers rest and is keen to see things progress. He has even volunteered to lead a small party of folk with time to spare during the week on continuing work on the lock and also maintenance of the whole of the length from the tunnel to the aqueduct. This would involve grass cutting, strimming, trimming of hedges and generally keeping this delightful stretch of canal and towpath tidy. Local people walking the footpath clearly take great pleasure from what we are doing so any who feel they can spare an hour or two from time to time would be more than welcome - just call Dave or me (numbers below).

### WANT TO GET INVOLVED ?

To volunteer to assist in our restoration  
(and maintenance) work please telephone:

Steve Delacourt-Smith (01452) 501372

Brian Fox (01432) 358628

Simon Hayward (01452) 534232

Tom Bennett (01981) 500258

MID WEEK GROUP CO-ORDINATOR

Dave Young (01531) 635321



CORPORATE  
IWA  
MEMBER



## MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

*Corporate Members of the  
Herefordshire & Gloucestershire  
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## 50 Editions On . . .

We continue our review of the earlier Editions of **The Wharfinger**. [Editions 1-42 were covered in Editions 50, 51, 54 & 55.]

**Edition 43** (Summer 1994) saw the Chairman reflecting on the immense progress that had been made in the last 10 years in gaining political support for our long term objective of full restoration. "Yes I know that many of you reading this would like to see greater progress on the ground but a fat lot of good that is if we then find lack of attention to policy detail has lead to the total loss of the historic line (or an essential diversion route) somewhere along the 34 miles ... Our voluntary endeavours will become a permanent asset to the community and the national waterways network." he said. The same edition reported, in detail, the greatly improved wording for the Forest of Dean Local Plan. Good progress was also reported with the other Local Plans. **Waterways World** (August 1994 Edition) contained a detailed article about the Canal with four colour pages of photographs. **Heart of England Tourist Board** had identified the Canal as a major asset to tourism in Hereford City. David Bick's book about the Canal had been republished in an extended and revised edition.

The Directors' of the Canal Trust had (according to the Autumn 1994 - **Edition 44**) been

reviewing the running of the Canal Trust and the Trading Company. The role of the Chairman was to change. The Canal Trust had won the **BMIF** award at the National Waterways Festival for the best display by a voluntary group on the first occasion that it was presented [and again this year - see p.1 - Ed.] The Planning Inspector appointed to decide an Appeal for a proposed permanent Gypsy encampment on the line of the Canal at Rudford, in Gloucestershire, had firmly rejected the proposals -

including a last minute suggestion that it might be approved on a temporary basis.

*"a fat lot of good that is if we then find lack of attention...has lead to the total loss of the...line"*


The Winter of 1994/5 (**Edition 45**) reported that the first formal Landowner Agreement had been signed in respect of a length of Canal in Herefordshire owned by Mrs. Oram -

this set out the basis of our occupation of the Canal until the year 2040. There was to be a three day Open Day at Monkhide the following year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first boat arriving in Hereford City Basin. The Canal Trust were continuing to press Forest of Dean District Council to take action to secure the repair of Lock Cottage at Oxenhall. Significant progress on the Yarkhill Project Site (the section owned by Mrs. Oram) was reported with both of our excavators in action over a very successful September Canal Camp.

## 50 Editions On . . . continued

Consultants Reports covering the whole Canal, encompassing Engineering, Water Resources, some limited Environmental Assessments and a detailed Cost Benefit Analysis. A Special Projects Group had also been formed within the Canal Trust to oversee work in Gloucestershire.

Edition 50, the combined Spring/Summer edition for 1996, saw the introduction of our vastly improved front (and back!) cover to **The Wharfinger**. Cliff Penny wrote his last column as Chairman, and stressed that the Canal was already helping to support the local economy long before restoration was completed! He also explained why it was so absolutely essential to commission the independent Consulting Engineers Reports - these would provide the firm

foundations on which to base competent Lottery and other major funding bids. Forest of Dean District Council had commissioned a structural survey of Lock Cottage, House Lock and the Aqueduct at Oxenhall. A special meeting of the Canal Trust Council of Management was to consider these Reports and seek a way forward. Yet again, our Canal Camp had produced heavy rain and the photographs indicated a somewhat muddy site! There was a great deal of voluntary professional effort being expended on liaison relating to development pressures along the line of the Canal [*some things don't seem to change - Ed.!*]. Membership had broken the 700 barrier reported this edition of **The Wharfinger**; and it carried the first of this series on the past 50 issues... 

## Sale of Lock Cottage

As reported in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**, the Canal Trust Council of Management have resolved to proceed with the sale of Lock Cottage in the Spring of 1998. Following careful consideration of the options that are available it is likely that the method of sale will be by way of Formal Tender. This decision followed clear advice from respected local Estate Agents and our Legal advisers.

The property will be advertised in the national waterways press as well as in the main local newspapers circulating in the vicinity of the Canal. The next

(Spring) edition of **The Wharfinger** will also contain the advertisement and you should receive your copy in good time prior to the tender deadline. However, readers who wish to express an interest and receive the details when they are available next Spring should send their name and address to:-

Julian A Phillips Esq.,  
(Re. Lock Cottage, Oxenhall),  
Phillips & Co.,  
5, Church Street,  
NEWENT,  
Gloucestershire,  
GL18 1PU



# The Secret Party

By Joyce & Mike Potts

The Canal Trust hosts an excellent dinner open to all Members and their friends early in December each year [see page 3]. But, unknown to many it also holds a Christmas Party. To receive an invitation to this you must have helped in the last twelve months in either raising funds or in spending this money [that must mean Restoration Group! - Ed.]. The volunteers Christmas Party has become quite famous in the last few years - apparently it is a cherished honour to receive such an invitation!

These parties started in a very modest way. A small handful of us that turned up for the monthly working party at Crews Pitch on the first Sunday in December would bring some food and drink along which we would pool. After the mornings restoration work we would have a simple cook up in the barn and enjoy a light drink, sometimes followed by brandy and a cigar, thanks to Robert Barnes. This

gradually expanded over the years and became open to all volunteers.

A few years ago we had 75 at our party (normally held at Yarkhill Village hall). This was stretching things a bit and so we now limit numbers to the first 50. Not only do we enjoy a 3 course meal with tea, coffee and mince pies (all for £5 !) but we have our own entertainment too. It is surprising what budding stars we have amongst us. We've had Magic, Escapology, Mind Reading, Monologues, Singers, Musicians and Pantomimes. What surprises do we have in store this year?

It is our way of saying thank you to all the people who have helped in the previous year. So come and help us in 1998, it's not just all work and no play! Our party is self funding and occasionally makes a slight profit for the funds. But for £5 it is the very best value for money - ask the others! Come and join our happy band in '98.

## GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

- ★ 1st Prize - NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY FOR 3/5 ★  
ONE WEEK (April/May 1998) Donated by STARLINE NARROWBOATS
- 2nd - SANNAN COURT "FINEST IN W. WALES"  
One week self catering (in part of former Victorian Vicarage) for 2/3.  
(3/1/98 to 23/5/98) Donated by HAMDDEN Ltd., a Hyder Company
- 3rd - TWO NIGHTS B&B FOR TWO IN LEDBURY  
(Prior to 1/4/98) - donated by the award winning ROYAL OAK HOTEL

## 1997 Winners

Drawn at the National Waterways Festival  
by IWA National Chairman Mrs Audrey Smith

- FIRST: Mr A E Gray, MALVERN  
SECOND: J&A Westoby, HAMPTON BISHOP  
THIRD: Mrs B Owen, HEREFORD

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way;  
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Send your name & address, plus that of the person who is to receive the 12 months Gift Membership, plus the Subscription, to:-  
H&GCS, "Little Lugg", CROSS KEYS, HEREFORD, HR1 3NP

# The Last Page

## WHAT OFFICE?

For many years Jim and Eileen Dunn have made available to the Canal Trust their 6 Castle Street address in Hereford (close to the Cathedral) for use as the contact address in **The Wharfinger**; on our publicity material etc. We are very grateful for this (continuing) arrangement - this short, easy to remember prestige address has been of considerable benefit to the Canal Trust for many years.

On more than one occasion a Member has remarked that "there was no one at the office when I called around to pay my Subscription" - *please note that we have not taken over Jim and Eileen's home* - just their letterbox!

## ADVERTISING


Our seasonal thanks to our regular advertisers - (in alphabetical order, by name of business!) - Simon Hayward, (**B Hayward & Co.**); Chris Cliff (**Middlewich Narrowboats**); Tim Ward (**Put The Clock Back**) Ron Doherty, (**RDD Insurance Brokers**), and Michael Stimpson (**Michael Stimpson and Associates**). Their continued support (as

Members and advertisers) is not taken for granted.

Our advertising rates start at £9 per issue for a quarter page - your further support for our voluntary efforts would help to ensure that a higher percentage of income can be spent directly on the Canal! Whilst we don't want to fill **The Wharfinger** with page after page of advertising we do need a few more regular advertisements to help defray some of the costs. The Editors will be pleased to send further details - we can produce the art-work for you or take your existing copy.

## NEW YEAR RESOLUTION?

Even though we have more active volunteers than ever before this is more than matched by there being much more to do than ever before - the price of success!

We urgently need a **Trust Administrator**; a **Press Officer** and a voluntary **Trading Company Manager**. *Other volunteers are equally welcome!* Don't be bored in 1998 - join our Team - you will be made very welcome. Anyone on the **Contacts** page will be happy to give you details. 

*The Canal Trust (& Trading Company) wish all Members - and supporters*

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS**

*However, if you are reading this in 1998*

**A HAPPY NEW YEAR !**

**COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS SATURDAY, 3rd JANUARY**

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WANT TO HELP ?

PLEASE CONTACT ANYONE  
ON THIS PAGE

T O D A Y !

**Dick Skeet, Tel:- (01568) 797032**

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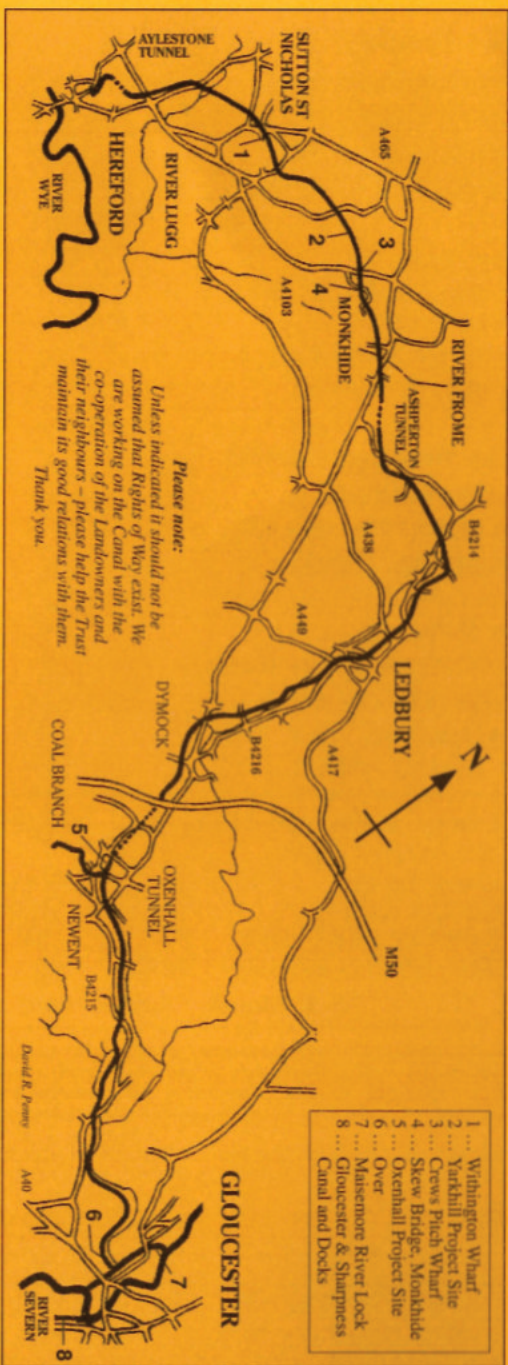
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# THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL



Work started in 1792 but was not completed until 1845, making this the last major route built in Britain, but for the navigations of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Canal stretched for 34 miles from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the City of Hereford utilising some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. The Canal was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway and this in its turn was closed by Dr Beeching in 1964.

The Canal Society was formed in 1983 and replaced in 1992 by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership exceeding 700 from all over the country – and abroad! Our objective is to fully restore the 34 mile Canal, from its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterways network at Gloucester to the centre of Hereford. A Steering Committee of the Local Authorities, Environment Agency, etc. has been formed by the Trust to assist in progressing this objective. We have a major restoration site in each county, which together extend to some 3 miles.