

# The Wharfinger

Newsletter of the  
Herefordshire and  
Gloucestershire  
Canal Trust



**Edition 59 • Autumn 1998**  
**50p – free to members**

# WHO DOES WHAT...

## VICE PRESIDENTS

*Viscount Portman*  
*R. E. Barnes TD.*

## CHAIRMAN

Brian Fox

## VICE CHAIRMAN

Tom Bennett

FINANCE:- Treasurer/Chairman  
Committee

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

## Fundraising

## RESTORATION:-

Tom Bennett, Brian Fox, Alan Lines,  
*Simon Hayward*, Mike Potts  
*Dave Young*, Brian Fox  
Tom Bennett  
Steve Gittins

Mid-Week Group Co-Ordinators  
Plant & Training Manager  
Health & Safety Officer

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

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

[Over Site]

Project Director  
Project Manager  
Labour/Funding  
Committee

David Penny  
*Bob Willis*  
John Meager  
Steve Gittins, *Peter Eyres*

## LIAISON:-

Local Authority  
Planning  
Landowner

David Penny  
David Penny, Cliff Penny  
Brian Fox

PUBLICITY:- Social/H&GCS Events

*Elizabeth Lloyd*

MEMBERSHIP:- Secretary  
Covenants

Nigel Jefferies  
Liz Connors

SOCIAL:- Events  
Outings

*Steve Delacourt-Smith*  
Mike Potts, *Joyce Potts*

SUPPORT TO CofM:- Minutes  
Admin

Tony Austin-Bailey  
Mike Potts, *Joyce Potts*

## 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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*Tom Bennett, Ray & Barbara Moses, Steve Hughes*  
*Dick Skeet, Derek Gray, Derek Weaver, Mike Potts*

BOATS:- Chairman *Dick Skeet*

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

## HONORARY POSTS:-

AUDITOR Davies, Edwards & Co., Leominster.

SOLICITORS Sue Newbould, Gabb & Co., 25 King Street, Hereford.  
Jim Chapman, Madge Lloyd & Gibson, 22-24 Church St, Newent, GL18 1PP

ARCHAEOLOGIST Ron Shoesmith

# Editorial

## HOT SEAT

Without a shadow of a doubt we can report the unanimous support from the Council of Management to the appointment of Brian Fox to the post of Chairman of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust. We are certain that all of the many Members who have got to know Brian over the many years that he has been (increasingly) active on behalf of the Canal Trust will endorse his appointment. Please join us in giving Brian the support he needs to take us all successfully into the next century. In true H&G tradition Brian's activities have extended to both pen and spade and we are certain that he is an excellent choice for the post. *Thank you, Brian, for accepting the position.*

## COTTAGE SOLD

Oxenhall Lock Cottage attracted a great deal of interest (including being featured nationally as "wreck of the week" in the *Telegraph*!). A small team from the Council of Management, plus our Honorary Gloucester Solicitor Jim Chapman, and Estate Agent Julian Phillips, attended the formal Tender opening.

We are very pleased that a local landowner, Mr Nigel Freeman, was the successful bidder (at £46,800). After the deduction of the (reduced) Estate Agents fees, and the agreed 10% to original owner Mr Robin Stiles, that leaves some £40,000 as "seed corn" for matching funding grant aid applications over the coming months. As recent visitors to site will have noted, Nigel Freeman is well advanced with his restoration work and we all hope to shortly see the Cottage occupied once again.

## GREAT DEAL!

Work progresses at Over and Oxenhall thanks to the hard work of our small teams on the ground and behind the scenes. However, to meet our restricted targets at Over far greater numbers are required urgently on site.

The letter from Ray Allsopp [p.23] makes a good point - if just a quarter of the Membership helped for one day a year it would make all the difference ... whilst we would prefer more regular assistance we have to succeed at Over and cannot do so without support!

The excellent news is that John Meager has negotiated for Over to be the launch site for the Government's "New Deal - Environmental Task Force" employment initiative in the Gloucester area [*There will be a full report on this major success in the next edition of The Wharfinger*].

This does not mean that more H&G Canal Trust Members are not required - please see "Want To Get Involved" at the end of Brian Fox's Restoration Update on page 15 & letters page 23.

We cannot stress too often how critical Over is to the Trust. If we don't achieve the massive programme of work within the tight deadlines we will not have transferred to us assets worth ¼ million pounds....

## AGM

The 6th AGM of the Canal Trust was the first since the days of the former Canal Society to have an "Any Other (Relevant) Business" slot. This

# Editorial

provoked a lively debate, over a number of issues. Part one of a two part Report is on page 4.

## USE IT OR LOSE IT

At the AGM Mike and Joyce Potts reported the struggle to fill all the seats on their outings these days. There are many testimonials of the excellent value that the trips represent and the obvious enjoyment of those who do book. This is yet another service to our Members and, potentially, an excellent way of assisting our fund-raising - *provided the coach is full*. Without your support, Mike and Joyce will have to share the trips with another organisation - that would mean sharing the profits too! So please support their trips and keep the profits for the H&G! [See p.13 & 16].

## HONORARY ARCHAEOLOGIST

We welcome to the new post of Honorary Archaeologist Ron Shoesmith who was, for many years, head of the Archaeology Department of Hereford City Council. Ron has recently established his own Consultancy and has readily agreed to act on behalf of the Canal Trust on a voluntary basis - *thank you*.

## UNDERWOOD'S, HEREFORD

Most regrettably, the new Herefordshire Council (Officers and Members) have created a great deal of hard work for the Canal Trust by what can only be described as their wholly inadequate handling of the revised Planning Application for the Underwood's site in Hereford [Update Report - p.21].

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## Chairman's Comments

You will all be aware that the Trust has been without a Chairman for the last 6 months since Bryan Heatley resigned and Tom Bennett and myself have been running the management meetings. Bryan knew little about the Canal when he joined although he had experience in management and Chairmanship of other organisations but he agreed to accept the challenge, and I am sure gave it his best shot. We were all disappointed when he resigned.

The first duty of Council after the AGM was to elect a Chairman and everyone seemed to think that yours truly was the obvious choice, so what could I do but accept. I have very little experience in management but I do know a bit about the Canal and the problems (sorry - *challenges*) that come with restoration and can do no more than give it my best shot ably assisted, of course, by the rest of the management team. My first challenge will be to get our Council meetings finished by 10 o'clock even if it means gagging some Members!

I must admit that my first love will still be working on restoration and maintenance, particularly with the new *Wrinklies* mid-week group [see letter from Ray Allsopp on page 23], and continuing to seek and recruit more Members to help in that task. Those Members who have helped in the past will be contacted to see whether they would like to become actively involved once again and we shall be seeking more armchair Members to boost the overall Membership figures which were slightly down last year.

Those of you who were at the AGM [*Report follows*] will know that we introduced *Other Relevant Business* at the end of the meeting when the Members were given a chance to air their feelings. Some lively debates developed and the matters raised, which were not resolved at the time, have already been discussed at *extra* Council of Management meetings. I think that the most crucial point was that the Trust does not have an overall *Strategy* to determine how we should tackle restoration, it being suggested that at the moment ours is an opportunistic approach, and that we will finish up with small bits of restored Canal all over the place but nothing long enough to run a boat on. This may be true but it has been our policy for some years to have a restored length of Canal in each County and this we have achieved. The time has come to reconsider our position, particularly now that work has started on restoration at Over, and we shall have to rethink our strategy for the whole Canal, *not only the restoration but the maintenance of it*. Liaison with those who own lengths of Canal will be a crucial part of our strategic thinking. We must persuade them that a restored Canal can produce benefits for both parties.

We have been restricted to a large extent in what we can do by the lack of funds but this situation has now been eased somewhat by the sale of Lock Cottage so we shall need to be very resourceful to make the most of this windfall. There continues to be much activity behind the scenes in

## Chairman's Comments . . . continued

seeking Grant Aid/Sponsorship to fund work at Oxenhall and Over whilst the Feasibility and other Studies are now well under way and will be an essential aid in helping us to formulate our strategy on restoration.

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This promises to be another very exciting year and I am sure the Trust will continue its successes in protecting and restoring the Canal between Hereford and Gloucester.

*Brian Fox*

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## AGM Report part one

Thursday 21st May, Burgage Hall, Ledbury was the setting for the 6th Annual general Meeting of the Canal Trust and the Trading Company - *reporting for the year ended 28th February 1998*. Tom Bennett was on holiday and, due to a family bereavement, Brian Fox was unable to attend. With no Chairman in post, and both Vice Chairmen unavailable, some rapid 'phone calls led to Cliff Penny stepping into the breach to take over the conduct of the meeting.

Reporting on behalf of the Council of Management Cliff laid great emphasis on the increasing number of volunteers who were taking an active part in the day-to-day running of the Canal Trust and Trading Company - and those who had no official position but nevertheless regularly supported us in some manner. During the course of the Report he attempted to name as many as possible - accepting the inevitable consequence that someone would be omitted for which he apologised in advance. The big challenge, however, was that, inspite of these increasing numbers of active volunteers, the range, complexity and extent of our activities was such as to still leave the Council of Management (and the Board of the Trading Company) with barely adequate numbers of the right

people to undertake the management of the Canal Trust.

In concluding his detailed Report Cliff stated that the past twelve months had to be the most exciting and significant since the former Canal Society was formed in 1983. He was confident, as were the Council of Management, that the next twelve months were going to be an equal milestone and he repeated the thanks of all of the Council of Management to everyone who made it possible - including every single Member for their support by way of continued Membership. On behalf of the Membership, Cliff thanked the Council of Management for their extensive voluntary efforts over the year.

Due to the limits on space in **The Wharfinger** it is not possible to even begin to adequately summarise the individual Reports from the various Officers and Groups - the details of which have largely been carried within earlier editions of **The Wharfinger** over the year in question. Restoration Group reported on the hard work and achievements at Oxenhall and on safety issues; the Town and Country Planning activities had been extensive, and highly successful, culminating in the legal Agreement in respect of the Over site; securing

# AGM Report

part one . . . continued

good attendance on our trips and outings was proving to be hard work; for the first time since the Canal Trust was formed there had been a slight reduction in overall Membership totals; and the Treasurer concluded the Reports (*as usual!*) with a graphical colour tour of our bank balances. Due to the notional value of Lock Cottage on our books last year, the reduced number of events attended by the Trading Company and the significant income from Life Memberships in the previous year, the year ended 28th February 1998 saw an overall reduction in income whilst restoration costs remained understandably high. Due to very careful monitoring of the finances the Canal Trust remained in an acceptable financial position and the income from the sale of Lock Cottage would improve balances.

There then followed "Any Other Relevant Business" which (*as Brian Fox comments in his Chairman's page*) led to some lively debates. Also, regrettably, it consumed all of the allocated time which meant that

it was not possible to have our customary update on current progress or to see Mike Potts' slides (which are greatly appreciated by those Members unable to get on site).

As Brian Fox has already stated, the Council of Management have called a number of meetings (*additional to the routine monthly meeting*) to address the principal issue raised - the need for a clear restoration strategy to ensure that restored lengths were adequate for boat operations and for maintenance to promote the essential public image. All of the other issues that were raised are also being specifically reviewed by the Council of Management (including the need to control the length and content of future AGM's, without suppressing freedom of speech, and the need to avoid the same issues - *unless warranted* - being raised repetitively).

Further details of the other issues raised, and of the action being taken, will be continued in the next edition of *The Wharfinger*.

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## Over

Just as this edition of *The Wharfinger* was going to press we heard the sad news that Bill Rudd was no longer able to act as site manager at our Over site. This came at the worst possible time - the day before two people from New Deal Environmental Task Force were due to start on site.

In the Trust's normal resourceful manner we had an alternative rota of site managers in place for the following few weeks within 3 hours!

This is only a temporary solution however, and we are now considering our longer term options to secure a permanent site manager for 3/4 weekdays a week. With such a critical and major project the final solution must give us continuity from day to day to ensure the right productivity and quality standards.

In the meantime if there is anyone with even just 1 day a month they could spare to assist us, please contact Brian Fox.

# A Winner!

*By Linda Westoby*

*Every year there are three holiday winners in our Grand Holiday Draw. Last year one of the prizes was a week in W. Wales courtesy of Hamdden Ltd. (one of the Hyder Group of Companies). John and Linda Westoby, from Hampton Bishop near Hereford, were the lucky winners drawn from the hat at the National Waterways Festival at Henley on Thames last August - by IWA Chairman Audrey Smith. Our thanks to Linda for their story ...*

Llanfynnydd? *Where on earth is Llanfynnydd?* Answer --- a tiny village located a few miles northwest of Llandeilo in deepest Carmarthenshire. When my daughter told me there was a lady on the phone to say that we had won a prize holiday, I immediately said it would be one of those timeshare people, and tell them not today thanks. No, Mum, this is *genuine*, she said, you had better come and talk to her. *And genuine it was.*

John and I were the proud winners of a weeks holiday in a luxury flat in that glorious countryside that everyone bypasses as fast as possible in the scramble to Tenby and points west. The donors of the prize, Hamdden Ltd (I understand Hamdden is Welsh for leisure) offered a week in their beautifully converted old vicarage, Sannan Court, in Llanfynnydd village centre. We booked the first week in May, inadvertently including an excluded bank holiday. When I pointed this out, the management was kind enough to let the booking stand. We understood from the literature that the flats were primarily for fisher(wo)men, as Hamdden also own 14 miles of fishing rights along the Mon Tywi.

We were quite unprepared for just how high quality our accommodation proved to be, despite the excellent literature we had received. We had a very spacious flat in a lovely old stone house overlooking the pleasant grounds, the church and the main street. All mod cons include a freezer, a microwave, and televisions in both lounge and bedroom. There is a rod room and full facilities for fisher(wo)men, which we are not. The management was welcoming and keen to ensure that everything was right for us. The decor, furniture and furnishings are all of a very high standard. Cooking and eating in were a real pleasure, and we did this on five of our seven nights.

This part of Wales is so quiet, but has many places of interest, and castles galore. We were spoilt for choice, and managed to cram in visits to the coast at Aberaeron and Newquay, Cardiganshire, as well as at Oxwich, Rhosili, and the North Gower coast where we saw innumerable wild ponies on the saltmarshes. We managed to fit in several walks both locally and at the places we visited. Of the tourist attractions, we particularly enjoyed

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust are grateful to all the Grand Holiday Draw prize donors. For further details of the self-catering luxury apartments at Sannan Court Hamdden Ltd can be contacted at Alexandra Gate, Rover Way, Cardiff, CF2 2UE - telephone 01222 316367.

## *A Winner! . . . continued*

the National Trust property at Dynevwr near Llandeilo which features not only the interesting house lovingly maintained by devoted Trust staff, but also a deer park, a bog and wetland walk, and a bird hide above the oxbow lakes of the Tywi flood plain. We also enjoyed the gold mine, originating from Roman times, at Pumsaint, also in the hands of the National Trust. We visited castles at Dryslwyn, spectacularly overlooking the Tywi river, and at Carreg Cennen also in a spectacular situation. Kidwelly Castle, under Heritage in Wales,

(Cadw), as were the other castles, offers a well-produced audio tour by Walkman with good sound effects.

We had an excellent week in mixed weather, and can highly recommend this area of Wales for a tranquil holiday with much of interest to see and do. The quality of our accommodation enhanced our enjoyment of an area which we may not otherwise have been tempted to explore. We are grateful to Hamdden for the donation of such a generous prize, and to the person who drew our ticket!

### ***The Grand HOLIDAY Draw!***

***Extended deadline*** - Draw Ticket stubs (and the money!) for the 1998 Draw need to be returned to Liz Connors by Thursday 27th August at the latest, please. However, late entries to win a holiday can be made on our stand at the National Waterways Festival, Salford Quays, Manchester, over the August Bank Holiday.

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# The Green Book

*By Health & Safety Officer, Steve Gittins*

*As the pace of work increases the Council of Management consider Health and Safety to be paramount. Steve Gittins, our Health and Safety Officer, sets out the formal policy of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.*

## **Health, Safety and the Green Book.**

For those who don't know, the **Green Book** is the **Waterway Recovery Group** volunteers Health & Safety Guide. It is full of information and advice which will help prevent accidents on our worksites. It also contains a Health and Safety Policy *which the Canal Trust have adopted*. This policy is summarised below:-

The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust want to make sure that neither you nor anyone around you gets hurt while working for the Trust.

So we assess all the risks we foresee in the work we ask you to do, and try to eliminate them. We ask you to follow our instructions, *for the sake of everyone's safety*. We also try to provide the safety equipment you

need. If you think you need more equipment to do a job safely then ask for it, ***DON'T do the job without it.***

*If you think that something is not safe, tell us as soon as possible.*

All new volunteers, and those on our list of volunteers from the past few years, will be receiving a copy of the **Green Book** and a form to sign and return stating that they've read and understood it.

Please don't feel that we're trying to stop restoration being fun. It's no fun being taken to hospital following some mishap (*and it's no fun for the person who has to take you there and wait around for hours either*).

So finally, please come along and help restore the Canal, ***and be safe while you're doing it.***

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## How Far Can You Go ?

*By Steve Gittins*

*Not content with his active work (with pen and spade!) for the Canal Trust Steve has also been burning the midnight oil elsewhere ...*

You've got 24 hours. And a boat. And about a hundred miles of canal to choose from. How far can you go? That's sort of the gist of the **Birmingham Canal Navigations Marathon Challenge**.

The challenge is designed to encourage use of some sections of the BCN less popular with boaters. To

this end, each year different sections are given a different points rating - one point per mile or lock on the easy sections and double and triple points for other sections. There are also dead end bonuses for the various branches on the BCN.

So, how did I get involved? It all started back in February, when

## *How Far Can You Go ? ... continued*

Rupert and Alison Smedley of London WRG, who were working at Oxenhall, kindly asked if I would like to be part of their crew on Rupert's historic boat Ben.

And so it was that I found myself sitting in the Little Dry Dock pub at Windmill End, waiting for a boat. England were busy getting through to the next round of the World Cup in the other bar as early evening came and went. I decided to take a look outside just as Ben was mooring up. Rupert and Alison were aboard, along with other Wergies from that February camp, and Tip Cat, the ship's cat.

We were ready for the off just before 9am on Saturday when Vaughan, one of the team of scrutineers who check up on the locations of boats throughout the event, arrived to give us our Challenge Cruise competitor's pack and see that we started on time.

And so we set off towards Parkhead Junction, but not before heading up the Bumblehole Arm. This was something of a homecoming for Ben, having been built by Harris Brothers of Bumblehole in 1934. The arm was the scene of some confrontation during the 1997 Challenge, but was quite tranquil this year. Before leaving the arm we stopped to clear the prop (not for the last time), then continued to Parkhead. On the way we picked up Ed, another crew member, bringing our number up to seven. At the locks we met Peter Pan, another boat which had started at Windmill End, coming down the flight. Once he was through we headed up from the Birmingham Level to the Wolverhampton Level. At the top we hauled Ben stern first down the short Pensnett Branch and the Grazebrook Arm, before mooring

up for the first of our rest stops. The Challenge is a 24 hour cruise, but it's spread over 30 hours with each boat mooring up for 6 hours, either all at once or a few shorter stops. We used an hour for an early lunch and to prepare the boat for Dudley Tunnel. Tip Cat used it to get back on dry land and catch a mouse!

Motors are not allowed in Dudley Tunnel, so the options are a tow from the electric tunnel tug or the more traditional legging. We chose the latter, though the Dudley Canal Trust insist that all boats are escorted by one of their tugs. Not far into the tunnel the steerer of the tug had to ask us to stop legging so that he could clear a branch from his prop. We then continued through, with occasional verses of the Dudley Tunnel Song, led by Alison.

After 2 hours in the dark, on our backs with our legs in the air, we reached the other end of the tunnel (a well earned 50 points), just as a trip boat was emerging from one of the side tunnels. Rupert protested loudly as the commentary suggested that we had just been towed through. When eventually they realised that we were legging we gave them a final rousing chorus of the Dudley Tunnel Song and headed for Brades Hall Junction on the Old Main Line. On the way we paused to enter a new looking basin, having established that it was long enough to count towards our points total. The residents seemed somewhat surprised to see a BOAT in their basin!

We descended Brades locks, the only staircase on the BCN, and picked up the New Main Line. This wide, straight cut is the canal equivalent of a motorway. You can see how it would have been so much easier, especially

## How Far Can You Go ? ... continued

on fly boat runs, but it is a little dull and I wasn't sorry to be taking the turn for Netherton Tunnel.

Another hour underground, but this time under the power of the Lister diesel in this broad tunnel with two towpaths, a marked contrast with Dudley Tunnel, and we emerged back at Windmill End. Before mooring up we motored, hauled and poled Ben up and down the Boshboil Arm and into the Coal Basin off Dudley No. 2 Canal. Then we returned to the familiar surroundings of the Little Dry Dock.

Once fed and watered the crew returned to the boat, except for Tip Cat who decided that now was a good time to play hide and seek. He was located with the help of one of the locals who knew where the local

female felines lived, and we were on our way. Three of the crew were to try and get some sleep during the next part of our journey to explore the Fens branch and Stourbridge Extension.

Night was falling as we made our way to Parkhead Junction, this time turning left and descending Blowers Green Lock. The canal passes alongside the Merry Hill centre with its bright neon, before the descent of the eight locks of the Delph flight. With Alison at the tiller and three of us working the locks we quickly settled into a routine, one person setting the lock ahead while the two others stayed with the boat. The beam of the headlight illuminated the smoke from the range and the exhaust from the diesel hanging in the chambers as the boat descended.

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# How Far Can You Go ? . . . continued

We continued to Leys Junction where we woke the other members of the crew so that they could see the Fens branch and Stourbridge Extension, as none of the crew had been there before.

Once these had been navigated we headed back towards the Delph flight. At Leys Junction we came across Vaughan, and very shortly afterwards Chris Spencer, still scrutineering in the early hours of Sunday morning. It was time for a shift change, so I and the others headed for the hold and some sleep while the other three worked the boat back up Delph as dawn broke.

Breakfast had been scheduled for Windmill end, but we were running ahead of our schedule, so the second shift kindly let us sleep through the second passage of Netherton Tunnel. We were heading up the New Main Line towards Factory Junction, so it was decided that we would scrutinise the scrutineers! HQ for the BCN Challenge is the Malthouse Stables near Factory Junction, so once we had ascended Factory Locks we moored up outside and gave the scrutineers an early morning call with the horn. Alison emerged from the cabin with a welcome cooked breakfast and we sat in the sunshine catching up on the latest gossip. Some of the Wilderness boats (a small and very manoeuvrable craft) arrived, and the question of a collective noun for these boats arose, as they tend to travel in groups for the Challenge. After some discussion "a wandering" seemed to be the favourite.

After breakfast we set off towards Deepfields Junction to venture up the remains of the Wednesbury Oak Loop to the BW yard at Bradley.

Before setting off up the branch the prop was cleared of weed again. Once we began to proceed up the branch this seemed a bit futile, as the weed here was the worst we had encountered, and eventually we resorted to hauling the boat, two of us on the rope (while two shire horses looked on) and two others trying to keep the weed off the bow with poles. About half way up the branch the weed cleared and we were able to cruise up to the Bradley Works. Turning a 70 foot boat here proved a "challenge" in H&G parlance, but one that was eventually overcome. Then came our final rest stop and our return up the weed infested canal. Again the ropes from the bank were brought into play, as were the poles. Then came the splash. And Matt was wet. But at least he went back for the pole before being hauled out of the cut!

More prop clearing at Deepfields Junction before heading on towards Wolverhampton Locks, the final destination on our itinerary. Unfortunately we were by now running behind schedule, and stops for weed were pushing us further behind. And so it was that our Marathon finished at 3pm a couple of miles short of Wolverhampton flight. All that remains is for the log to be written up, complete with photographic evidence that we had reached the ends of navigation of the branches. This will be checked against the scrutineers' reports, the points added up and the winner announced. *There's no big prize, just knowing that you've taken part in an event which raises the profile of some of the lesser used waterways, so that hopefully they will remain open for future boaters to enjoy.*

# *Dates For Your Diary*

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*By Steve Delacourt-Smith*

Social evenings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the  
**Down Under Bar\* of the Royal Oak Hotel, The Southend, Ledbury.**

*[\*Formerly known as The Acorn Suite]*

*All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.*

## **Tuesday, 15th September**

*"Slides of the 50's and 60's"*

By Richard Courtney-Lord - his fascinating series of slides illustrate the heyday of working boats on the inland waterways.

## **Tuesday, 20th October**

*"Canals on Film and Video"*

By Graham Ettles - not content with giving the H&G one enthralling evening in 1997 Graham is back for a second stint!

## **Tuesday, 17th November**

*"Advance notice"*

At the time of going to press two speakers were fighting over this date! It will, however be the first evening for a long time when the sales stand will be present. Please give this your support - an ideal opportunity to buy your Christmas presents!

Meetings hosted by our "Master of Ceremonies" Lloyd Jones; raffle organised by Ray and Barbara Moses.

*IMPORTANT: Please note that the small Hotel car park is for residents of the Hotel. Our members and guests are requested to park either in the street or in the (free) public car parks nearby.*

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].

### **WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE ?**

Do you have an idea for a speaker for one of our Social Evenings? Steve is always looking for new speakers, who can give an evenings entertainment on a waterways or local subject. If you have any ideas please give Steve a ring on 01452 501372

# *Mike & Joyce's Outings*

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*By Mike & Joyce Potts*

**Sunday, 13th September, 1998**

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*Cheques payable to H&G Canal Trust, please.*

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## *Promotional Events*

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**28th - 31st August**

National Waterways Festival, Salford Quays, Manchester

**Sunday, 27th September**

Oxenhall Open Day - see the difference at House Lock since last year !

**Saturday, 3rd October**

Canal Trust Craft Fair - St Katherine's Hall, Ledbury

**Saturday, 31st October**

Canal Trust Craft Fair - Shire Hall, Hereford

The Trading Company are hoping to take our award winning sales and promotional display to the above events. Liz Connors (01432 880155) is looking for volunteers; we provide free entry for all helpers - a really good chance to assist the Canal Trust and enjoy yourself at the same time! You don't have to be "front of house" - setting up (and down) is just as important and should be easier this year with our own "refurbished" van!

# RESTORATION UPDATE

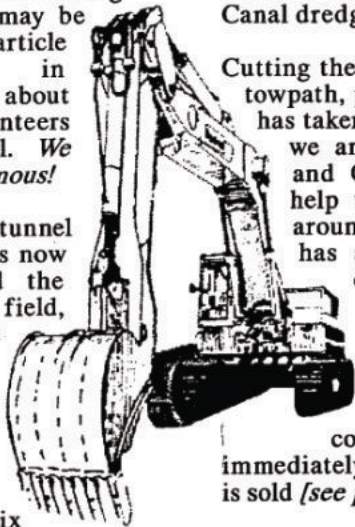
*By Brian Fox*

I'm afraid you have a double dose of me this quarter having just written an introductory piece as Chairman - this may have to continue as there seems to be a dearth of journalists among us so I hope you like my style. I don't know whether other Canal Trust Chairmen are actively involved in the restoration side of things but I have to get my exercise somewhere and I enjoy it too. Writing about restoration is also demanding of the old brain cells so it must be good for my overall wellbeing - anyway, that is what I tell my wife when she complains that she never sees me! Talking about writing, there may be some who saw the article and photographs in *CHOICE* magazine about the retired volunteers working at Oxenhall. *We are now nationally famous!*

The work on the tunnel portal at Oxenhall has now been completed and the farmer who owns the field, Mr Goulding, has agreed to complete the job by pushing the mountain of excavated soil on top back where it came from, over the tunnel. The final act was to mix about 6 tons of concrete in our own mixer to backfill the wall and strengthen it. It was not possible to get a ready-mix lorry anywhere near the portal so it was all shovelled into the mixer by hand and then barrowed, by our volunteers, in two sessions. There were a few aches and pains afterwards, and Dave Young went into hospital for a hernia operation

a few days later, but he assures me that the op. was booked weeks before!

Much of our time this last quarter has been devoted to finishing off, tidying up and generally maintaining ongoing projects. The tunnel portal, just completed, was actually started back in 1994, when it was reported that the scrub on top had been cleared revealing much rebuilding required. Another job under completion is the landscaping of the lake adjacent to the Canal around which the owner, Mr Davies, allowed us to place some of our Canal dredgings last year.



Cutting the grass and nettles on the towpath, particularly at Oxenhall, has taken considerable effort and we are grateful to Mr Elgie and Geoff Holmes for their help with mowing. The area around the lock and Cottage has also been kept tidy in order to impress potential buyers and facilitate the sale. This will of course continue but we shall no longer be responsible for the cottage garden (except immediately around the weir) now it is sold [see page 1].

Unfortunately it does mean that work on the lock restoration and Canal at Oxenhall has been neglected and apart from a couple of WRG weekends the locals have been conspicuous by their absence. We hope to rectify this soon especially when Dave is fully recovered from his op. - we shall have to lift the stones while Dave slaps a bit of mortar underneath!

## RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

Our biggest effort at the moment is going into the project at Over as reported in the last edition. Work is continuing on processing the timber felled in March so that it is ready for logging, chipping or converted for other uses. Bill Rudd, our Over Site Manager, works there most days and has been partially successful in recruiting new volunteers from Gloucester and, with the assistance of John Meager our Fund Raising/ Sponsorship Officer, hopes to attract new recruits through the Governments New Deal scheme for 18 to 25 year olds *[Full report next edition]*. This is the first use of the scheme in the Gloucester area and we will necessarily carefully manage it to determine the best ways of using this labour force.

Excavations have now started on the first lock out of the river. One of our excavators has been transported to the site and the first job was to remove the remains of a massive willow tree which had grown in the chamber. This proved surprisingly easy as it had rotted since being treated by the Environment Agency 4 years ago, so removal of river silt was able to commence immediately and reveal the lock chamber. An archaeology student from the

University of Bournemouth has agreed to do a survey of the visible remains but it is already clear that the lock, built entirely of brick, is not in good condition and is about 15ft wide at the top and then reduces rapidly! The willow does not appear to have damaged the walls but the top end of the lock (not yet uncovered) is likely to be severely knocked about by trenching for electricity cables and sewer pipes as well as a road which has been built over, it. The position of the old lock needs to be fairly accurately established before construction of the new wharf wall can begin.

The Over Project is a challenge unlike anything we have tackled before in that we have deadlines to work to, but at the end of it (*assuming we complete on time*) the Trust will be given a prestigious length of Canal together with the old lock cottage which will be restored and used as a visitor centre etc. As work progresses on the site there will be a need for both skilled and unskilled labour and it will be a daunting task for our team to recruit enough bodies and organise them to finish this exciting project within the time limits laid down.

### WANT TO GET INVOLVED ?

If ever there was a time when volunteers were required THIS IS IT! No ifs, no buts, we HAVE to complete the Over Project to the agreed specification and the agreed deadline. We would not have agreed to it if we didn't think it could be done. However, as our new Chairman says it is a "daunting task"! Or, put another way - IT IS A CHALLENGE!

No matter what your site skills might be the Team are anxious to have your support. As there is no public access to the site the only way to be part of the action (even brewing a cup of tea would be welcome!) is to telephone FIRST. Please don't hesitate until tomorrow, become part of the exciting action at Over NOW! If Over is too far, or you prefer different types of work, then there is still plenty going on at Oxenhall. *Please call:-*

#### MID WEEK & WEEKEND GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

Brian Fox (01432) 358628

Dave Young (01531) 635321

# Arranging an Outing

*By Mike and Joyce Polls*

*For many years Mike and Joyce have been organising days out (and, more recently, complete weekends away!) for our Members and friends. Not only is it yet another facility for our Members it also helps to raise funds as well. As with everything that we do, there is a lot more to it than meets the eye...*

When Joyce and I start to arrange an outing, there are a number of important aspects to be considered. Firstly, we have to pick a venue that will (we hope!) be popular. Usually, a cruise is involved. How many passengers can be carried, especially if catering is involved, is important, as we must be able to take enough people to make the trip financially viable. The boat needs to be chartered for a reasonable sum - many being beyond our means.

We need to find somewhere else of interest nearby - a canal feature or a railway for a ride; also a suitable place for a picnic may be required. Our venue needs to be within reasonable travelling distance of home so that we don't spend too much time sitting on a coach. We also have to make sure the coach can get to the venue - *some roads to the canal sites are very narrow!*

Easy access for the less able of us, facilities en-route for refreshments etc. are equally important. The timetables of the chartered boats/rail trips have to be checked so that they can easily be slotted into our day, with sufficient space, should we be held up in transit.

*An important point is that we try to ensure that the day is affordable for all.*

Finally, in our planning stage, we have to prepare a budget of Income & Expenditure for submission to the Canal Trust.

Next, we start to arrange it! We book a coach, a boat, rail seats and (since last year) B&B accommodation. Usually we do a recce of the trip. As Joyce is disabled, this gives us a good insight into any mobility problems that may occur.

Once we have made the relevant bookings, we *HAVE* to sell the seats. We produce the tickets, make posters which are used for advertising along with *The Wharfinger*. Many seats are sold outside the Canal Trust to ensure sufficient numbers so that we can run the trip. It is very difficult to make sure that enough seats are sold so that we do not make a loss on the less popular outings. *We try very hard to produce a small profit for the Canal Trust.*

Before the trip, we make out a passenger list. We produce some literature about the days events (including a Membership Form for non-members) and draw tickets in aid of the Canal Trust, when appropriate. We sometimes include a quiz or questionnaire or some other form of entertainment to pass the time on the return journey.

On the day, we are at the Bus Station early. Joyce checks everyone onto the coach, picking up others en-route. We check numbers at each stopping point during the day to ensure that we haven't lost any - we haven't lost anyone yet! *(As a result, we are now known as the Canal Trust Sunday School Outing!)*

## *An Outing... continued*

Occasionally we have to map-read for the driver- when we have some less accessible places to find.

We check on our passengers comfort and needs during the day and ensure that all the necessary arrangements and payments are made for the boat hire/train ride etc. (We try to allow sufficient space on the boat/train for our driver, who has looked after us during the day, to come along.)

*We try really hard to ensure that all our passengers have an enjoyable day and want to come back and enjoy one of our special trips again.*

*The reward for all the hard work behind the scenes has to be a sunny day with a FULL coach! A few empty seats makes all the difference to the funds raised, so why not ensure the success of the last trip of 1998 - join Mike and Joyce for a day out at the National Tramway Museum in Derbyshire on Sunday 13th September? Full details on page 13.*

## *Craft Fairs*

As you will see on page 13 we are running our highly successful Craft Fairs again this year.

These are a growing success, and Joyce Potts is always pleased to have any contacts for *quality* crafts people who may wish to attend the events in Ledbury on 3rd October or in Hereford on 31st October. Our rates are very reasonable and the number of repeat bookings testifies to their success.

We will also be running our bottle draw at these events - if you can donate any bottles please contact Liz Connors for details, *thank you*.



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# Committee Matters

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

## APRIL COMMITTEE

- Arrangements for the AGM were discussed and agreed. Thanks were expressed to Steve Delacourt-Smith who was standing down although he was willing to continue to organise the Social Evening speakers and hoped to continue to play an active part in restoration.

- Budgets for the quarter June-August were approved.

- The Restoration Group reported that they had achieved the objective of stoning the towpath at Oxenhall prior to Oxenhall Lock Cottage being placed on the market. Our "new" ex. BR secure tool store/mess room (£500) was about to be delivered to Council Yard at Oxenhall *[now grandly signed Horsefair Wharf]*.

- Due to the nesting season clearance of trees and heavy scrub at Over had been suspended - work was concentrating on dealing with those that had been cleared earlier. Our volunteer Architect and Quantity Surveyor were assessing work required to the former Lock Keepers House.

- A revised Planning Application for the Underwood's site in Hereford was very disappointing - failing to acknowledge the Appeal decision in favour of the Canal Trust last year *[see p. 16 last edition and p. 21 of this edition]*. It was likely

that a Public Inquiry would be held into the proposals for the former Farriery College site in Hereford - here we had the full co-operation of the Developer but the Planning Application had been "called in" as it was not fully in accordance with the Local Plan with regard to the type of Development proposed.

- Steps were in hand to move materials up to the Oxenhall Tunnel Portal to enable restoration of the Portal to be completed.

- Serious difficulties were being experienced with the WRG Licensing system for plant and equipment drivers on which we relied. Tom Bennett was continuing to press for an accurate list of authorised/trained volunteers.

- Mike Potts reported that he had been experiencing difficulties with the arrangements for the weekend in Llangollen; matters were now resolved following a visit to the hotel. Initial bookings were disappointing. Mike & Joyce were thanked for all their efforts *[Article p.16 - next outing, p.13]*.

- It was noted that the latest edition of the Nicholson's National Inland Waterways Map does not show the H&G Canal under restoration. Brian Fox would fully investigate why we had disappeared, and that we should seek to ensure that we are shown on all such maps in future.

## Committee Matters . . . (ii)

- The Trading Company reported their list of promotional events for the year [see p. 15 of the last edition].

- Efforts were being made to obtain additional advertising in The Wharfinger.

### MAY COMMITTEE

- The Council of Management were saddened to hear of the death of Sir John Knill [tribute on p. 2 of the last edition]. Condolences were sent to Sir John's family and, in lieu of flowers, a small donation was made (as requested) to the Knill Church appeal fund (in Herefordshire - the family home).

- Poor standard work by visiting volunteers at Oxenhall was reported; in accordance with previous decisions it would be corrected - lack of suitable supervision being identified as the difficulty on this occasion.

- Potential purchasers of the Over Hospital site had been visiting the site and undertaking site investigations.

- The Canal Trust had agreed to work with the Oxenhall Parish Meeting to make available plant and volunteers on an expenses only basis to assist in the creation of the new Church car park - this being on the understanding that the Canal Trust would have use of the car park from time to time. Concern was expressed at what was thought to be the expanding nature of the work involved. It was in our mutual interests that this be clarified.

- Significant difficulties were arising in respect of the Underwood's site in Hereford. The Officers of the new Herefordshire Council had prepared a Report that failed to respect the former County Council's Policies relating to the Canal and was generally regarded as far less supportive than those of the former Hereford City Council. Our voluntary Planning Liaison Team had attended the relevant Committee and following their report they were authorised to take further action on a number of fronts. [Report - p.21]

- A meeting of the Steering Committee was planned for the following week and Messrs Parkman would attend and report progress on the Feasibility and other Studies.

- It was agreed that the idea of Council of Management Members utilising the 3rd Tuesday of each month Social Evening to update Members had been a success. Every effort would be made to continue it.

- The Trading Company reported a successful weekend with a sales stand at the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Society's Spring Bank Holiday gathering of boats - the next event to be attended would be the Braunston Boat Show.

### JUNE COMMITTEE

- Brian Fox agreed to take on the post of Chairman - this was unanimously endorsed by the Council of Management. All other Officers of the Canal Trust

## Committee Matters . . . (iii)

agreed to retain their existing posts.

- The procedure for the acceptance of Tenders for Lock Cottage was confirmed.

- A special meeting of the Council of Management would be called to review all matters arising from the AGM and to try and ensure that future AGM's accomplished *all* of the intended matters in one evening.

- There were further discussions over the extent of work, and likely costs, relating to the Oxenhall Parish Hall car park.

- The Honorary Treasurer reported that the sales of Grand Holiday Draw tickets to

date were noticeably down on last year - the loss of a promotional event, and a day of **Draw** ticket sales at Sainsbury's was thought to be responsible.

- The Restoration Group reported steady progress on various aspects of our work at Oxenhall. It was agreed that detailed plans needed to be agreed for the completion of the restoration in this area. Basic towpath maintenance had been undertaken on part of the Yarkhill site. More of the lock had been exposed at Over and the route of a sewage pumping main ascertained - right under the lock!

- There was a detailed report from the Town and Country Planning Team regarding

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## Committee Matters . . . (iv)

the Underwood's site. A huge amount of effort had been required and was ongoing. Following our representations to the Government Office for the West Midlands they had served a formal Notice on the new Herefordshire Council which prohibited them from approving the Application pending a review of the file - our Team were congratulated on achieving this unusual intervention. [Report below.]

- Great difficulty had been experienced in obtaining publicly available documents relating to the Public Inquiry on the former Farriery College site in Hereford. The Team had to work all weekend to make our (highly supportive) written submission.

- It was agreed that our Health and Safety Policy be published in the next edition of The Wharfinger [see p. 8].

- There was still no satisfactory progress in obtaining details of authorised plant and equipment drivers from WRG.

Tom Bennett would write to their Chairman and to IWA Headquarters.

- The Trading Company reported a highly successful attendance at Braunston Boat Show; as was normal for this event, our pitch costs had been reimbursed by the organisers and we had been invited to make a bid for a share of the eventual profits. Concern was expressed that our van was only achieving 17-18 mpg. making attendance at distant events very expensive!

- The Canal Trust had been represented at a memorial service to the late Sir John Knill in Bathampton Church by Cliff and David Penny.

- The continued lack of a membership form dispenser at Oxenhall was again raised; steps were in hand for a suitable one to be fabricated and erected.

- Draft proposals from Over SPG relating to Sponsorship opportunities at Over were discussed.

CRP

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## Underwood's, Hereford

Further to the Report on p. 16 of the last edition, all 25 Councillors on the relevant Planning Committee received a written brief the day before the vital Committee.

This brief clearly explained our case as to why (*contrary to the Committee Report*) the Planning Application did not comply with established Planning Policy. We also gave the Councillors a

coloured plan showing how a slight amendment to the submitted layout would achieve our objective - without detriment to the development.

Our case is simple - amend the layout slightly and there is no encroachment and, therefore, no need for a retaining wall. If Mr Underwood is not willing to amend his layout slightly then he should pay for the retaining wall.

A number of Councillors spoke and supported our case. They were then reminded (quite properly) by the Officers that they couldn't consider the Canal Trust's amendment (*it was only submitted to demonstrate that a solution was readily achievable if the Developer co-operated*). A Councillor then completely misinterpreted the Inspector's Decision Letter (relating to the earlier Planning Appeal on this site) and one of the Officers then suggested (*quite wrongly*) that the width of the Canal at this point might be excessive. *The width and Canal alignment was a specific issue covered by the Inspector at the earlier Inquiry - his Decision Letter fully supported both the route and width!*

The matter was put to two votes, both requiring the Chairman's casting vote which, predictably, supported the Officers.

Our Planning Team were dismayed that the very first meeting of the new Herefordshire Council should deal with a vital matter relating to the Canal in such a manner. However, our Planning Team are aware that in law an Application is not approved until the actual Notice of Approval is signed and dated. They acted swiftly and put all the facts to the Government Office for the West Midlands, making a case that to approve the Underwood's Application would set an adverse precedent with implications across two counties.

We are very pleased to report that the Government Office for the West Midlands have served a formal Notice on the

Herefordshire Council which prevents the Planning Approval being granted until the file has been reviewed by the Government Office. *This is a very rare step, especially in respect of a relatively minor Planning Application.*

In the meantime our Planning Team have made repeated attempts to encourage the Council to review the Report to Committee and to address the very unsatisfactory circumstances of the two close votes being influenced by incorrect statements to the Committee. The Secretary and Solicitor to the Council sent a helpful letter to the Canal Trust suggesting that the matter would be taken back to Committee - *followed by a further letter reversing these comments and giving a wholly incorrect interpretation of the Hereford City Local Plan!* Since then our further attempts to resolve the matter have been frustrated as the Council is refusing to respond to the various issues we have raised due to the intervention of the Government Office. *[The intervention does NOT prevent the Council from rewriting their Committee Report to reflect all the (correct) facts and then refusing the Application - nor does it stop the Council from replying to the various issues we have raised.]*

Local Liberal Democrat MP Paul Keetch has written direct to Mr Underwood asking that he amends his plans slightly to accommodate the Canal or, if he is unwilling to do this, that he provides the retaining wall as part of his development costs.

TO BE CONTINUED

# Letters to the Editor

[Whilst we welcome letters on any topic relating to our work and the Inland Waterways System any opinions expressed do not represent the policy of the Canal Trust unless specifically stated.]

*Dear Editor,*

Following comments passed at the AGM I would like to say that I have no problem with the payment of entrance fees, car parking, photocopying, stamps, 'phone calls and mileage allowance for volunteers who work on behalf of the Canal Trust.

All these volunteers are after all giving freely of their time, and time surely is money? If the volunteer has sufficient income then doubtless he/she will not claim but it would be a pity if we lost the help and expertise of volunteers who produce results for the Trust if they could not afford the luxury of helping us for nothing.

If we could afford a part/full-time "officer" to look after our interests I am sure he/she would also claim expenses on top of their salary.

*Mrs Juliet Dixon, Birstree, Hereford*

*Dear Editor,*

I would be grateful if you can find space to allow me to express some candid comments. Although the Canal Trust has been in existence now, for some years, everyone seems to agree that the last twelve months have been phenomenal.

House Lock is well underway for restoration, Oxenhall Lock Cottage is now sold. The terminal end of the Canal at Over is on line for plenty of work to be done, and is slowly beginning to show a difference. The tunnel portal at Oxenhall too has been restored as far as possible, until the digger moves in again. (Have you been to see it, lately? The towpath to it from Cold Harbour

*Lane Bridge is quite wet, but a work Party of a dozen or so, would soon make a difference).*

While we have had considerable help from the Waterway Recovery Group most of this work has been done by less than half a dozen pensioners - now identified as the *Wrinklies*!

*All things considered, for five old men, out of a membership of 700+, to do this transformation, does make one think.*

The argument has been put forward that most Members are committed to a working week, and so cannot possibly spare time to see the project go ahead. This however, just doesn't hold water (*we are, after all, talking about a canal!*). If only a quarter of the Membership could find time to work **FOR ONLY ONE DAY A YEAR**, it would do wonders for the working hours, and thus the restoration. **Do come and join us!**

As time goes on there will be increasing amounts of routine maintenance, which should not cause problems to a normally active Membership. *You might even get to enjoy it* in a very pleasant part of Gloucestershire; your fellow toilers are usually a happy, sociable crowd (*does a party of 5 make a crowd?*).

As a *Wrinkly* I feel that reasonable targets for the Canal, such as a usable stretch for boats from House Lock to the tunnel, if supported by a few extra "hands", would be a strong incentive to attract a lot more interest, nationally. **NOTHING succeeds like SUCCESS.**

*Ray Allsopp, Bevers, Worcester*

# The Last Page

## APOLOGY

In the last edition of *The Wharfinger*, the *Committee Matters* page for March reported that a local Hunt were believed to be responsible for the serious damage caused to the towpath at Yarkhill.

Immediately before publication we were advised that the culprit was a local horse owner and not the Hunt; one reference to the Hunt was corrected but this one slipped through. *Our apologies.*

*[This was the subject of a complaint at the AGM. If, in future, Members are aware of information that might assist the Council of Management prompt notification would greatly assist us volunteers and be greatly appreciated - Ed.]*

## SUGGESTION ADOPTED

Our Spring edition (no. 57) explained, in detail, how to check your mailing label to ensure that your Membership Subscription was up to date. A number of Members subsequently drew to our attention that the *Membership rates* are not published in *The Wharfinger* - sorry! It was also suggested that some casual purchasers of *The*

*Wharfinger* might be encouraged to join if they could see that the rates were reasonable. We do try to adopt Member's suggestions so the current rates will be printed in each edition from now on.

## LEGAL (& ESTATE) AID

We have enjoyed free (or reduced rate) legal services from Gabb & Company in Hereford for many years. However, legal services in respect of issues relating to the sale of Lock Cottage at Oxenhall were provided, without charge, by Jim Chapman of Newent Solicitors Madge, Lloyd and Gibson for which we are most grateful. Also, Estate Agent Julian Phillips charged a reduced fee for his services; *our thanks to both.*

The number of professionals providing free or reduced rate services to the Canal Trust is growing - further details and acknowledgements in the next edition.

## SOFT BOATING

Our thanks to Mr John Griffiths, from Newent, who has donated a rubber dinghy to the Trust.



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**Dave Young,**

Tel:- (01531) 635321

**WANT TO HELP ?**

The Canal Trust is always in need of new volunteers as our activities continue to expand. We can normally find a use for any skill from chefs to first aiders, brickies to those willing to help with shovel or pen.

PLEASE CONTACT ANYONE  
ON THIS PAGE  
**T O D A Y !**

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

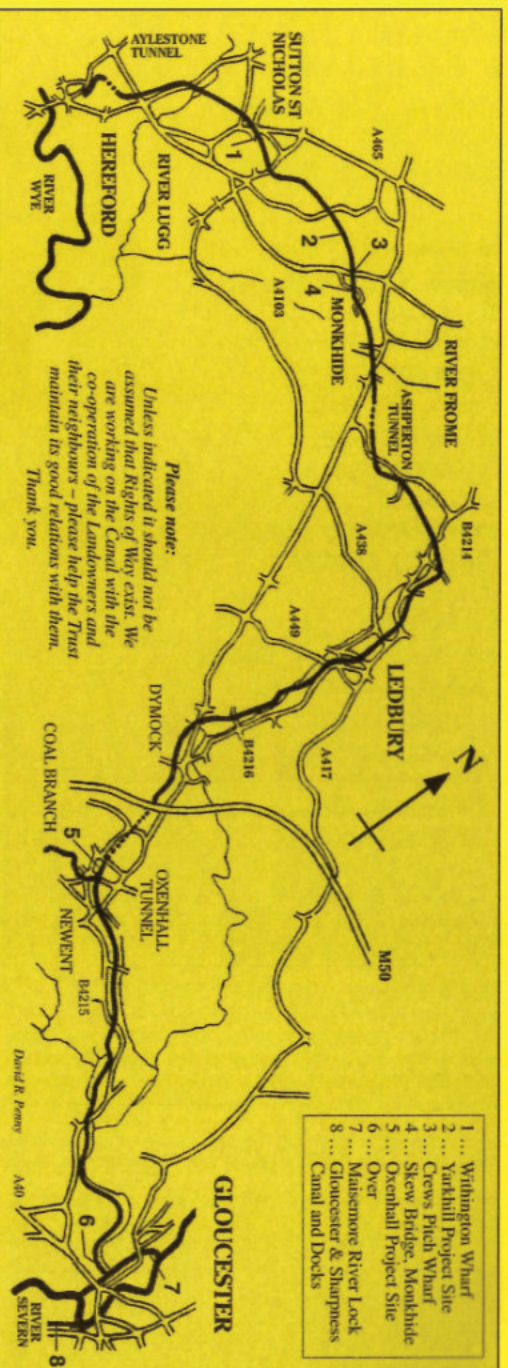
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**ALL MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE TO:- (sae please)**

**H & G CANAL TRUST, 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL**

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust is a non-profit distributing Company limited by guarantee [No.2704407], and is registered as a Charity [No.1010721]  
H & G Canal (Sales) Ltd. is the Trust's wholly owned Trading Company [No.2710215]

# 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 county – 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.