

The Wharfinger

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



**Edition 68 • Winter 2000/2001
50p – free to members**

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FRONT COVER: *Skew Bridge, Monkhide. Transformed by volunteers from a heavily overgrown muddy ditch.*

A Huge Success !

The storm clouds receded and the sun shone for the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, the Mayor & Chairman of Tewkesbury Borough Council, the Mayor of Gloucester, the Mayor of Dymock, the Mayor of Newent, the Mayor of Ledbury, the Chairman of Gloucestershire County Council, the Chief Executive of Swan Hill Homes, the Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association, and the Chairman of Waterway Recovery Group - all of whom were present to see Prunella Scales and Timothy West formally declare open the first phase of the Over Wharf Project.

H&G CT Member Chris Clark had transported Prunella and Tim to site in his vintage Lanchester motor car - and very impressive it looked too with Chris suitably attired in his best chauffeurs uniform! [Photo - p.7]

On behalf of the H&G Canal Trust, Director Cliff Penny said that it was a tremendous and unique partnership that had enabled us to deliver the first phase to such a high standard and on time! He thanked each and every person who had assisted, in any way, to achieve what some had said, and many more may have thought, was impossible to achieve given that it was a 100% volunteer Project. He suggested, however, that it would be inappropriate not to identify and publicly thank David Penny who had been acknowledged as 'the powerhouse' behind the Project. To everyone our thanks-and *well done!*

Mike Palmer. Chairman of the Waterway Recovery Group added his thanks and praised the unusual and highly successful partnership. He thanked Adrian Fry who had led the considerable WRG presence on site.



Prunella Scales and Timothy West unveil the plaque watched by Adrian Fry (WRG), David & Cliff Penny and John Theakston (Chief Executive, Swan Hill Homes). (Carlton TV)
[A photograph of the smaller plaque, listing our other supporters, appears on page 11.]

Over - Phase 1

On behalf of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust Council of Management I should like to express our appreciation to each and every individual volunteer who has assisted, in any way whatsoever, to make the Over Basin Phase 1 project a national success. By everyone we include all of those who have worked so hard 'behind the scenes,' in so many different ways, to assist and, especially, the Over SPG who meet fortnightly to mastermind it all.

Our thanks also to the ever-growing list of businesses, large and small, local and national who have assisted in various ways. Without this help, and the co-operation of Swan Hill Homes, the challenge would have been even greater!



Will Frecknall, Chairman CofM.

Water World

Carlton TV's highly successful series **Water World** returns to the Central Region television screens this January for another six half hour programmes. The H & G Canal features in every one of the programmes so ensure that you are in (or set the video recorder!). The grand Opening Ceremony at Over, featuring Prunella Scales and Timothy West, will bring the second series to a close.

If you don't live within the transmission area then it is highly likely that a Carlton TV video of the whole of the second series will be available in due course (*the first series is currently on sale*). As soon as we have details they will be published in **The Wharfinger**.

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THAT WORD AGAIN

We do our utmost to avoid boring our readers with repetitive stories, comments and reports throughout *The Wharfinger*. However, I make no apologies for this edition being dominated - yet again - by Over. What a national success this has been; not just for the H&G Canal Trust but also for the inland waterways restoration movement in general. The Grand Opening Celebrations, at the end of September, were attended by virtually every dignitary and Mayor within a 20 mile radius!

Hopefully the photographs in this edition of *The Wharfinger* give a taste of what the three days of celebrations were all about. For those with internet access our web site www.h-g-canal.org.uk puts it into colour. In the New Year, those in the Central TV region will see Over on Carlton TV's *Water World* [details on page 2]. On behalf of the H&G Canal Trust Council of Management Will Frecknall expresses his thanks to everyone on page 2.

It is inevitable that this edition is full of 'thanks' messages; the huge success of the Grand Opening would not have been possible without the willing assistance of many - we have tried, somewhere in this and the last edition, to thank everyone. Some of the assistance was fairly 'normal' (but still greatly appreciated); some of the other help was more unusual! For instance Andy, from the security firm engaged by Swan Hill Homes, ensured that our site had extra attention over all three days to make sure that our marquees and the

traction engine etc. were secure. Thanks to *Knighthawk Security* [0117 941 4366] and to SO's Brian and Martin; their continued site security is also much appreciated.

The torrential rain during the 'Boaters Games', on the Saturday afternoon, seemed to add to the enjoyment. This comprised a number of WRG Teams (plus one from the H&G) in a kind of 'Its a Knock Out' competition. The H&G team performed with credit and wasn't last! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves - especially when David Penny became the first person to be officially thrown into the Canal at Over (twice!).

During the 'Boaters Games' Mike Palmer (the National Chairman of the *Waterway Recovery Group*) made an unexpected presentation to the H&G Canal Trust of a cheque for £250. This was from the *Inland Waterways Association* being a small part of the proceeds from the highly successful National Waterways Festival when it was held at Worcester last year. The following weekend Nigel Bailey's highly successful guided walk raised over £200 for our funds [report and photo' page 10].

HEREFORD BRIDGES

The two new bridges in Hereford [see page 5 of the last edition] have been finished and very good they look too [Photo's page 23]. Hopefully it will not be many years before the funds are available to excavate and install waterproof lining to enable this stretch of the Canal, through this prominent site close to the City centre, to be brought into water.

Editorial

SPONSORSHIP

Another huge success; following our appeal for the mooring rings, benches and trees to be sponsored at Over the cheques have flowed in - *a most sincere thank you.* We know that some are from pensioners to whom the amount of money concerned is significant; without belittling any of the donations we hope that you will understand that we really do appreciate this support and it isn't taken for granted. [see page 28]. *Thank you to you all.*

PAID HELP?

Mike Palmer, the Chairman of the Waterway Recovery Group, in his speech at Over (and in his Chairman's Page in their newsletter *Navyvies*) took to heart a comment by your Editor at the Grand

Opening about the immense demands that fall on us volunteers the minute that we start to make real progress.

He says "... *someone has to represent the local canal trust at meetings, do the donkey work, raise the funds, check out the facts and figures and look after the seemingly endless paperwork that volunteers naturally shy away from.*" Mike refers to multi-million pound projects being run on the proceeds of coffee mornings and jumble sales whilst the volunteers meet at evenings and weekends. *"Once a project gets its huge lottery grant then it will have plenty of support"* he said.

Well, we're a little off the 'huge lottery grant' and know just what he means!

● CRP



One of the smallest (and most colourful) boats at Over presented a 'photo opportunity' for Prunella Scales and Timothy West after the unveiling of the plaques. (Carlton TV)

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Christmas Cards & Coasters

Our Trading Company have commissioned well known waterways artist Garth Allan to paint Oxenhall Lock Cottage and House Lock to create a magnificent set of coasters and a scenic Christmas Card...



Of course, those of you who know the site will realise that we have not yet finished our work there. The Wrinklies (our regular Tuesday working party at Oxenhall) are pressing on with the reconstruction of the lock chamber before paddle gear and lock gates would even be contemplated. Hence the title of Garth Allan's watercolour is

"Oxenhall Lock, past, present and future". Coasters are £1.25 each (£1 for 6 or more); Christmas Cards cost £3 for a pack of 5 cards [Discounts available for large orders]. Mail order please add 10% to cover p&p. Penny Shetliffe would be pleased to receive your order - see 'Contacts' on inside back cover.



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The Grand Arrival - by vintage Lanchester. (Waterways World)



WRG's unofficial Opening Ceremony - at midnight! (M Lodge)



Mr Prout's traction engine provided a colourful greeting to visitors to Over, our trip boat, Mr Maysey, takes on more customers. (Cliff Penny)

Thank you, Dome!

The costs of mounting the Opening Weekend celebrations were significant. Not only did we have to hire in marquees, toilets, the public address system etc. but our bid for very modest funding for the weekend from the Millennium Fund was turned down at the last minute "*due to an unexpected single demand on the funds*" - thank you, Dome!

Undaunted, the team got to work to reduce costs wherever they could. Whilst the hire costs couldn't be entirely eliminated we could save in other expenditure - the food for the VIP buffet being a good example. We should like to thank the following for their generous assistance with food:-

Our thanks to Transco who stepped in to sponsor the public address system. This still left the Canal Trust exposed to possible bills approaching £2,000 hence the decision was taken to charge a nominal £1 entry (accompanied children 50p). Our thanks to everyone who willingly paid this - as described elsewhere there was plenty to see and do - and to the two or three that were turned away because they refused to pay ...

Our sincere thanks to everyone who baked biscuits and cakes for the public refreshments and/or helped in any other way, whatsoever, to make the three days such a success - and keep us in budget!

Associated Co-operative Creameries; Paul Barrow Honey; Birds Eye Walls; Birdwood House; Bottle Green Drinks Company; Brand Green Fruit Farm; HP Bulmer Ltd; Cerney Cheese; Douwe Egberts UK Ltd; Duchy Originals; Freemans Chicken; Gurney's Family Butcher; Sainsbury Supermarkets Ltd; Left Bank Village; Melkirt Mushroom Farm; The Mousetrap Cheese Company; Over Farm Market; Safeway Stores plc; Smarts Traditional Gloucester Cheese; The Country Butcher.

Many visitors to the main marquee remarked upon the large Acers that made the whole Canal Trust display look so professional. Our thanks to Member John Wood for entrusting half his garden to us for the weekend! Thanks also to those who exhibited, to the Craft and other displays and to the Showman Traction Engine and Organ at the entrance who added so much to the atmosphere.

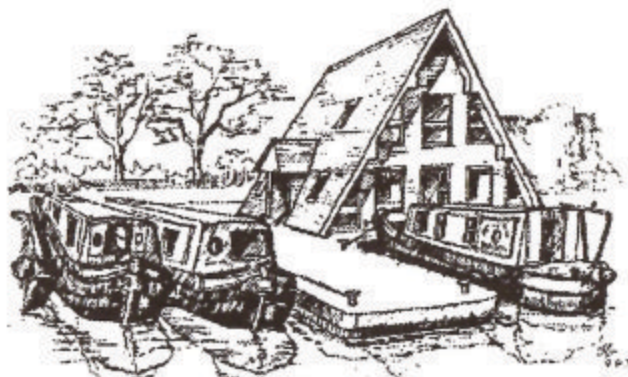
Apart from food and floral displays there were many others who played a part in the resounding success of the Opening Celebrations. Many of our Members and Waterway Recovery Group volunteers worked hard 'behind the scenes' - to each and everyone - *thank you*. In addition, we are grateful to the following for their help; as always we try hard not to forget anyone:-

*Hewden Cranes (Bristol),
Defence Storage and Distribution Centre, Ashchurch
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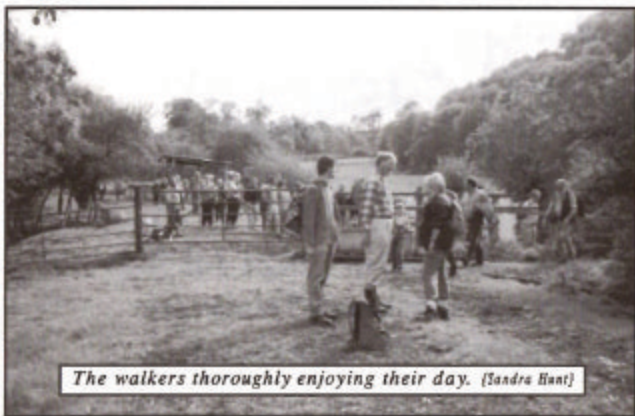
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Something Completely Different !

That was how we described the Canal and River Walk that Nigel Bailey led in October. H&G Canal Trust Member Sandra Hunt reports back on a day that was something completely different!

On Sunday the 8th of October, 42 men and women, one child and two dogs set off from Over Basin on an 8½ mile walk.

The weather was beautiful despite the gloomy weather forecast. We started off by leaving the site and walking down the road to the Farm Market. We then followed the footpath taking us past an old tip



The walkers thoroughly enjoying their day. (Sandra Hunt)

which the Canal will have to skirt and up over Lassington Hill. The canal line was pointed out to us by Nigel, and we followed it along to Rudford. After a look over the bridge at the old railway line and tut-tutting at GWR for re-using stone from the original canal bridge, we made our way to the halfway point, a farmer's barn near Hartpury.

Here Nigel's wife Liz miraculously appeared with manna from heaven, by way of rolls, crisps, quiches, drinks and even a choice of pud with ice cream! As you can imagine the ravening hoard fell on the food and munched their way through the lot.

Feeling very well fed, we started off again at 2pm for the other half of the walk. Off then to the river Severn and Maisemore, Nigel leading at a quick pace with one eye on the storm clouds that were building. Just as we got to the river the heavens opened. We quickly made for the trees at the Upper Parting and then down to the site of Maisemore Lock and weir where 2 canoeists had no problem

with the rain as they were going up and down the weir, sometimes upside down! Then along to Telford's Bridge and back to the basin for a well earned cup of tea and delicious homemade biscuits. Some of the walkers took advantage of the Canal Trust's trip Boat still being there and took a trip around the Basin.

Well done Nigel, a lovely walk, plenty to see, good food and information. Everyone should be up to date with what is going on as quite a number of Nigel's book *Over & Over Again* were sold [we all had the bruises to prove it]. The sum of money raised for the Canal Trust was £201.03.

The Wharfinger is your magazine. The Editor welcomes articles (such as this one from Sandra Hunt) to keep Members and supporters aware of the many events that take place both to promote awareness of the Canal and the work of the Canal Trust.

Aiding Funds

Late last year the widow of a Canal Trust Member donated to the Canal Trust her late husband's collection of canal books and railway videos for us to sell to augment H&G Canal Trust funds.

With the experience of her own book collection, Janet Moulton was able to place a number of the books with a specialist dealer, which proved very remunerative. The remainder, together with the videos, Janet priced at reasonable figures. These were offered to both Trust Members (at the monthly meetings) and the general public at the venues attended by our Trading Company. The Canal Trust has benefited from this generous donation to an amount totalling over £250. *To the lady who donated the books and videos, we offer our sincere thanks.*

The Trading Company would also like to thank Derek and Margaret Gray for the donation of a camper awning, which will be very useful at small venues, to protect stock and volunteers alike, should the weather turn inclement.



Close-up of lower plaque at Over - also see photo on page 1. (Waterways World)



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These are now published in every edition of *The Wharfinger* on *[not quite] The Last Page*. Please send cheques/Postal Orders to H&G Canal Trust, 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL *together with your full name and address*. However, payment by Bankers Standing Order considerably assists our volunteers. *Thank you.*

Any queries? Please write to the Membership Secretary at 6 Castle Street.

OUR MEMBERS LOSE H&G CANAL TRUST £1,000's

Hundreds of our Members are going to lose the H&G Canal Trust literally thousands of pounds over the coming years - *are you guilty?* If you pay tax have you filled in the Gift Aid form enclosed with the last edition (or made a verbal declaration)? Why let the tax man bank money that could be adding significantly to the funds of the H&G Canal Trust? *Please contact Liz Connors on 01432 880 155 - thank you.*

To the remainder of our Members please assist us by ensuring that your subscription is up to date - you can do this easily by checking the label code on the envelope that contains each edition of *The Wharfinger*. There is a guide to the code below. Please save us the time and expense of issuing reminders by ensuring that, however you pay, your subscription is up to date. *Thank you.*

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PLEASE check and ensure that
YOUR Subscription is up to date!
Thank you.

Trading Company Diary - Year 2000 - Part 2

Our Trading Company Chairman, Brian Moulton, continues his summary of the promotional and sales activities to the end of September - a highly successful year; and it's not finished yet!

July 8th; Hartpury Village Fete. This event was held at Hartpury College. The Trading Company Diary often reads like a weather forecast and this venue was no different. Gusting winds greeted us on our arrival to erect the new Trading Company gazebo. At one point Janet Moulton was convinced that her feet left the ground whilst holding onto the gazebo frame when the guy ropes were being fixed in place! A relatively quiet afternoon but Sales were taken which is what matters and several good contacts were made with people who remembered bits of the canal during the early part of 20th Century, fishing, playing and the like. One old gentleman even remembered courting beside part of it!

July 15th & 16th; Marcle Steam Fair. This is an important venue for us, for although Much Marcle is not on the line of the canal, our presence here ensures that we meet members of the farming community and landowners can keep up to date with what we are achieving. Notwithstanding this a respectable Sales figure was reached and for once this year, the weather was reasonable.

July 22nd & 23rd; Tewkesbury Festival. We are very fortunate that the local IWA Branch allow us to share their stand, which is always outside the marina clubhouse and thus gets a steady stream of visitors. It is also an ideal spot from which to view the boat parade and yes, we did make some Sales, so the weekend was worthwhile, considering that we

were away from our "patch". Our thanks to Member Graham Ettles who very kindly kept our Sales Stock secure overnight.

August 6th; Herefordshire Country Fair. This year the fair was held at Allensmore. We were in the main marquee with a good position and space to spread out. A reasonable Sales total was reached and we were fortunate to be able to speak to a number of canal landowners as well as a prospective parliamentary candidate.

August 19th; Tibberton Flower Show and Fete. A very good venue, excellent weather and Member Mike Bowden won first prize for his courgette flowers. Sales were fair for a small event and we sold out on the children's lucky dip, reserve stock and all. Interest in the canal was there, even though the canal passes north of the village.

August 25th 28th; National Waterways Festival at Waltham Abbey, Essex. Our marquee was manned over all four days by just eight H&G Canal Trust Members, two of whom had driven from Leicestershire to join us. One other enthusiastic Member helping us for one day, returned on the Monday because he was enjoying himself so much! Thanks also to the Reading Member who joined us for one day. To all our volunteers at this venue, The Trust is very grateful for your support. Everything went well except --- you guessed it, the weather, which

Trading Company Diary - Year 2000 - Part 2

almost cleared the site on the Saturday. Every knowledgeable visitor was impressed with our achievement of Phase 1 at Over, as were general visitors with the growing strength of our Canal Trust. Our new display boards are excellent everybody thought so (IWA, BW, other canal trusts) and we received a number of compliments on our general marquee layout. Good Sales were achieved with sell outs on a number of products. An impressive result which means that we can look to expand stock levels and bring new items in for next year. The **Grand Holiday Draw** was made by Audrey Smith OBE, retired IWA Chairperson, resplendent in her bright blue H&GCT sweatshirt. [Winners! P.19] The Sales Team, though hard worked, enjoyed themselves.

September 9th; Newent Onion Fair. This year the stand position in town was very central, which helped a great deal. Stand personnel reported a lot of interest of both a general and a specific nature. Included in the Sales total was an order for Christmas cards from a Corporate Member. The Sales figures were reasonable considering the number of other stalls in town that day. Thanks to all volunteers who helped to achieve a successful outcome.

September 29th, 30th and October 1st; Re-Opening of Phase 1 of Over Basin. This was a bit like Waltham Abbey as we put out a full information display and a comprehensive Sales Stall. Not surprisingly, as everyone attending was interested in us, excellent Sales were achieved and the counter staff

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Trading Company Diary - Year 2000 - Part 2

are to be congratulated. Elsewhere on the site, other attractions contributed to a memorable day. In the Basin itself, we were able to trail in the flower boat from Guildford (courtesy of John Ross), a cruiser from Essex (Jean & Maurice Eldridge) and a brand new narrow boat from Otterboats to join our own trip boat, making its first appearance in Trust colours. Also in the basin were sailing dinghies and kayaks from local organisations.

The Oxenhall Open Day was postponed because of the petrol situation until October 29th. The only other event left to fulfil is the Craft fair at Ledbury, with its craft stalls, Trust Sales stall and our refreshments on 18th November. Looking back over the year, the Trading Company have covered a lot

of ground, travelling near and far to venues both large and small - a total of 21. Almost all of these have included a display stand and Sales presence --- a total of 42 days. The total person days must be well into three figures.

As Chairman of The Trading Company, I want to say a heartfelt *THANK YOU* to all volunteers who helped in anyway. The results of our efforts are not always obvious --- new Members often join after an event, time spent talking to a person who will support us at future events. Also I don't forget the people who work behind the scenes, moving stock and displays, doing the paperwork, actually manufacturing items for sale, providing transport for extra journeys. All these go together to make The Trading Company.

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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,

Congratulations on an excellent Opening Ceremony at Over.

The sun shone on you and your many volunteers for a very special day and I hope you can maintain the momentum.

The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much indeed for giving my wife and me the chance to witness your splendid Opening Ceremony at Over.

The effort that you have all put into the project is outstanding and when you saw everyone there (not to mention many more I hope over the weekend) you should have been rightly proud.

It all goes to show what can be achieved with vision, enthusiasm, leadership and sheer hard work.

Thank you for making that bit of Gloucestershire so very much more attractive, congratulations on what you have achieved and for organising such a memorable day.

Our very best wishes for the next stage.

The High Sheriff of Gloucestershire

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to the H&G Canal Trust and WRG on a brilliant job at Over - I am very proud to be a Member of the Trust.

Thank you Cliff and David for your never-ending and dedicated effort on our behalf.

Jonathan Mosse - Nicholson/Ordnance Survey Guides

Dear Editor,

My wife and I were delighted to receive VIP invitations. We had both been present when The Queen Mother re-opened the Stratford Canal. I had been a 'Navy' on the project, but was there with hundreds of onlookers, as 'ordinary joe'.

We were opposite The Wharf at Over and there was an enthusiasm in the crowd which was almost electric. The day was beautifully organised, the Wergies were just superb; your guests of honour so natural and to have the twin sister of Tom Rolt's Alvis was a wonderful touch.

Congratulations to the H&G Canal Trust, the individual members of the committees who co-ordinated the work and to David Penny for all of his work - and to his employer for allowing him the free time to do what he did!

The Collins pocket dictionary defines "over" as 'above, beyond, in excess, finished.' Over is *finished*, the quality is in *excess* of the norm, efforts were *above* expectations, and *beyond* the call of duty. But it's not over at Over. Over is the beginning, not the end! We cannot give physical help these days, we stand on the sidelines and cheer you on as you go from strength to strength.

Following the success of "Oxenhall Tunnel" in 2000, Blisworth Tunnel Boats Ltd's enlarged fleet will next year feature "Aylestone Tunnel" and "Ashperton Tunnel". Hopefully the recipients of our 8,000 brochures, and our web site visitors, will learn a little about your waterway through this small gesture of support.

*David Dawson, Director, Canal Craft (Brokerage) Ltd.
Director, Blisworth Tunnel Boats*

STRONGBOW

the pint to
refresh Canal
Volunteers!



Dates For Your Diary

By Janet & Brian Moulton

Meetings hosted by our "Master of Ceremonies" Lloyd Jones

Social evenings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month *everyone welcome*, held at The Verzons Country House Hotel, Trumpet, nr. Ledbury - see map below.

All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.

Tuesday, 19th December

Canal Books

Mark Baldwin, of the well known specialist book publishers M&M Baldwin, will tell us all about the ever extending range of books on canals. He will also have some for sale - ideal for Christmas!

Tuesday, 16th January

Herefordshire From The Air

Well known Herefordshire author Derek Foxton will give us a different view of the Herefordshire countryside - will we be able to spot the Canal?

Tuesday, 20th February

The Droitwich Canals Trust

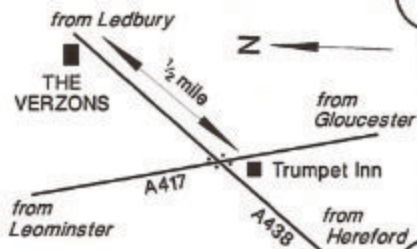
Margaret Rowley, Chairperson of the DTC, visits us to tell us all about progress on one of our near neighbour canal restoration projects.

Regular readers will note that we have new organisers for the monthly Socials. Following our repeated requests for a volunteer to take over from Barbara & Ray Moses Janet & Brian Moulton have kindly taken over - adding to their existing significant roles within the Canal Trust and Trading Company. Our thanks to Barbara & Ray for all their help.

Janet & Brian have gone to a lot of trouble to organise a superb range of Social Evenings - please support them - everyone welcome!
Any queries, or ideas for speakers, to Janet & Brian on 01432 264 366

Our Social Evenings venue is the Verzons Country House Hotel ... situated on the A438 Hereford to Ledbury road, half a mile on the Ledbury side of Trumpet crossroads (junction of the A438 with the A417).

A warm welcome, plenty of parking and approximately halfway along the Canal from Hereford to Gloucester.



Winners !

The winning Grand Holiday Draw tickets were drawn at the National Waterways Festival, at Waltham Abbey, on August Bank Holiday Monday. Mrs Audrey Smith OBE made the draw within our marquee in front of the panorama shot of Over Basin full of water - taken only a few days before!

1st PRIZE:

Black Prince
Canal Holiday
Mr M Davis,
Malvern.

2nd PRIZE:

London Boat Show
Mr T Boddington,
Macclesfield

3rd PRIZE:

Ross on Wye B+B
Ms J Delaney,
London

The 12 months subscription to **Waterways World**, for the person selling the most tickets, was won by Tessa Hunt, from Ross on Wye.

As always, our sincere thanks to **Black Prince Holidays**; **British Marine Industries Federation** and

Audrey wore her unique H&G Canal Trust blue sweatshirt that we had given her to mark the fact that she (completely unknown to her in advance) became our 100th Life Member earlier in the year. *Our thanks to everyone who bought (and sold) tickets.* The lucky winners are listed below left:-



Mrs Audrey Smith OBE, our 100th Life Member, wears her unique blue sweatshirt to make the draw; Brian Moul looks on. (Janet Moat)

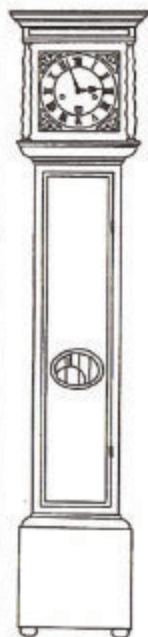
Mrs Gail Phillips for the donations of the three holiday prizes.

Our thanks also to **MEB npower** for sponsoring the print costs to ensure that every penny raised by the Grand Holiday Draw goes towards restoration of the Canal.

See Before You Buy !

Arc you looking for that Christmas or Birthday present that is just a bit different? Why not support the work of the Canal Trust and purchase from our Trading Company - who donate all proceeds direct to the H&G Canal Trust? *From a book to a cuddly toy - they have it!*

The very latest pages to go on the Canal Trust's own web site contain full details - including many colour photographs. Visit www.h-g-canal.org.uk, make your choice then 'phone our mail order sales co-ordinator Penny Shetliffe on 01432 820 623 to place your order. *Thank you.*



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on
01600 890662**

www.h-g-canal.org.uk

No doubt due to the frequent updating by our Webmaster, Nigel Bailey, our very own comprehensive presence on the internet goes from strength to strength. Rarely does a month go by without a glowing e-mail or letter of praise!

For those who do have access to the internet it is also an opportunity to see our work in full colour and to sometimes read the news before it can be published here. Due to the fuel shortages it was necessary to postpone the annual Open Day at Oxenhall in September; a number of Members said that a wasted journey was saved by checking the web before they travelled.

The very latest addition is a full colour sales section for our Trading Company - further details are on page 19 of this edition.

Socials

Our thanks to Janet and Brian Moulton for volunteering to form a sub-committee to organise the social activities of the Canal Trust. If you wish to join this informal group to expand our social activities please contact Janet or Brian.

Barbara and Ray Moses have produced many interesting speakers and events at The Verzhons over the past few years; their considerable voluntary efforts in making the Socials such a success have been greatly appreciated.

Please support this regular meeting we have tried to find a location that is 'fair' to those travelling from Gloucester or Hereford (and from much further afield!). Apart from the interesting speakers it is also an important opportunity to exchange news and views.

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RESTORATION UPDATE

By Brian Fox and Nigel Bailey

Most of this edition is, of course, devoted to the work at Over and the Opening Weekend - and what a show we put on! But let us not forget one of the main reasons we hold these events is to publicise the work we do on the Canal not only to the VIP's but also to the members of the public whose support we also need *writes Brian Fox.*

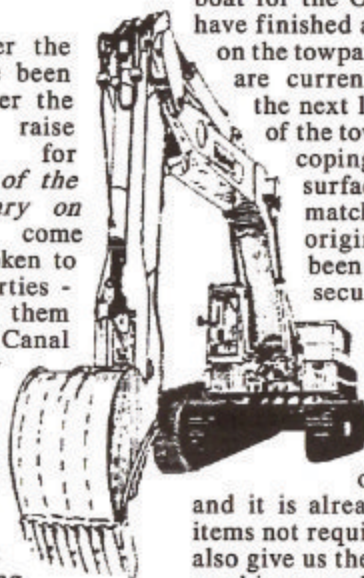
Throughout the summer the Trust's Sales team have been attending events all over the place selling items to raise much needed cash for restoration [see part 2 of the *Trading Company Diary* on p.13] but they usually come away having also spoken to dozens of interested parties - and recruited a few of them into membership of the Canal Trust. Consequently our membership figure continues to rise slowly towards the 1000 mark.

Most of our members are of the armchair variety and their support is invaluable when funding bodies ask how many members we have; occasionally we do find someone who wants to become more involved in the physical restoration side, or perhaps serve on one of the several committees which are working behind the scenes.

Several new members were recruited during the Opening Celebrations and one, David Gillman, who lives in Hereford, has volunteered to become one of the team at Oxenhall on Tuesdays. He doesn't yet know that he will be one of the Wrinklies and I hope that won't put him off! That

will make our regular numbers up to seven - with a few others who come when they can.

Progress has been slow on the lock due to the usual holidays, the English weather, and a bit of sickness but we have also been called to help on the preparation of the boat for the Opening Weekend. We have finished about half of the wall on the towpath side of the lock and are currently working towards the next ladder recess. The top of the towpath wall behind the coping stones has been surfaced with flat stones to match what is left of the originals and holes have been left for bollards to be secured later.



Down at our depot at Horsefair Wharf we have just completed a new fence to give us an extension to our secure compound and it is already being filled with items not required at Over. It should also give us the opportunity to store machinery and materials which are currently scattered around Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.

Work has also begun on dredging the Canal immediately above the aqueduct and raising the towpath level to what it used to be. We are not touching the non-towpath bank at the moment as there are several fallen trees and old roots to remove and it will probably need repuddling in order to make it watertight.

Nothing to report on the Nursery site yet [last edition - p.35] but negotiations are in progress.

Nigel Bailey takes over the reporting with a vivid description of the days leading up to, and including, the Grand Opening Weekend:-

Momentous Day No.1

Sunday August 6th was a red-letter day for the local volunteers: we cleaned the last brick needed to complete the wharf walls. The gang completing the wings of the lock reckoned they needed another 500; we had rather more, cleaned and palletted. We have done the bulk of the brick-cleaning because we can't expect WRG volunteers to travel hundreds of miles to clean bricks.

We calculate the best part of 40,000 bricks have been cleaned and laid to create the wharf walls, lock entrance and slipway - with the Castle (the fuel oil tank!) taking a further 600. Well done to any of you who cleaned a brick. *Enough of this brick obsession!*

Momentous day No.2

On Wednesday August 9th the last brick was laid - whoops!

Momentous day No.3

On Thursday August 10th the pump supplied by Sterling Fluid Systems was switched on to the sound of cheering WRGies and the whirring of Carlton TV's WaterWorld's camera. By the next afternoon all of the canal bottom and basin were covered with water which was lapping up towards the cobbles on the slipway. The cobbles, by the way, were still being laid so it was a question of keeping ahead of the rising water level *[seems to be a good incentive! - Ed.]*

Momentous day No.4

This was the first mowing of the grass either side of the towpath. While this may not sound very momentous, if you consider that the seed was sown only a few weeks before, the weather had been very dry and our watering arrangements rather haphazard, *I think it qualifies.*

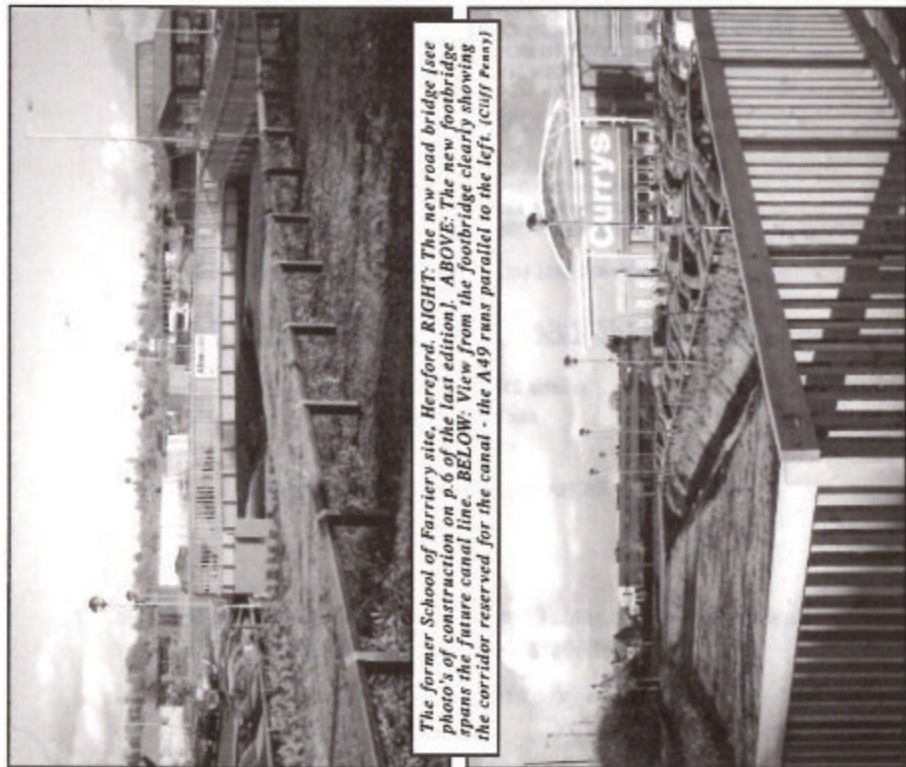
Momentous day No.5

By Wednesday August 16th the pump had done its job and the basin was full. Within days, sufficient insects had moved in to attract dragonflies, swifts and a wagtail. The buzzards, which are often seen soaring around Vineyard Hill, must have had a successful summer too - we spotted at least one youngster out on flying practice.

*“ We calculate
the best part of
40,000 bricks
have been cleaned
and laid ”*

During the last of the year's barbecues at Over, Brian Bailey recorded a piece for broadcasting on his BBC Radio Gloucestershire Country Matters programme. He has followed our progress over two years and confessed on air that he never believed we could do everything required of us in the time that was available. He said he was astonished by what had been achieved. *A Doubting Brian.*

Once the washed gravel *[donated by RMC Group]* was in place on the walkway behind the wharf walls, the mooring rings became rather lost. The solution was to edge each one with spare granite cobbles using John Wood's attractive diamond design. The cobble supply ran out but Roy Jamieson managed to acquire some more imported cobbles from Sharpness Docks *[thanks to*



The former School of Farriery site, Hereford, RIGHT. The new road bridge (see photo's of construction on p 6 of the last edition). ABOVE: The new footbridge spans the future canal line. BELOW: View from the footbridge clearly showing the corridor reserved for the canal - the A49 runs parallel to the left. (Cliff Penry)

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RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

Tony Large of Natural Stone Products].

'The Castle' was completed and the diesel fuel tank hoisted into place; but selecting a colour to paint the tank proved problematic. David Penny holds that the least obtrusive colour, that blends best into the landscape summer and winter, is Van Dyke Brown. Could we get hold of Van Dyke Brown? *No*. Could we get hold of some brown paint? *Yes*. So we painted it a shade of brown we refer to as Dick Van Dyke Brown! It's now looking very smart with a wooden trellis which will support a buddleia and a proposed Russian vine.

A photographer from The Citizen had just taken some pictures of the basin when we watched a windspout whirl its way across the surface of the water and up the bank, swirling its way across the dust on the Swan Hill site. While I'd never seen one before, Colin Seaton tells me they are common in August.

The first weekend in September was a strange one for the Over volunteers: helping repair and paint the trip boat. After 2½ years work on the Over canal project, this was our first encounter with a boat!

Dick Skeet must have drawn the short straw because he had the unenviable task of coating the underside with bitumen paint. He kept complaining that the stuff was rotting his roller faster than he could apply it to the hull. Our lack of nautical experience was evident from our failure to understand even the simplest boating terms such as

port, stern or mizzen topgallant staysail. Perhaps The Wharfinger should publish a glossary to help us. *[We'll have some trouble with that last one - Ed.]*

In the week prior to the opening, and with the help of a lorry from the Defence Storage and Distribution Centre at Ashchurch, we managed to install the Trust's spare (really!) Bailey Bridge over the lock. This created a new route into the site, passing over the head of the lock at the point where we will eventually build a swing bridge. Then with the help of an enormous crane from Hewden Crane Hire, the trip boat was lifted into the basin.

“ So we painted it a shade of brown that we refer to as Dick Van Dyke Brown! ”

Since filling the basin we have discovered two field drains near the old sewage works which were happily doing what they are best at - draining things! We have now removed both and packed the holes with clay, giving us a much better chance of keeping up the water level.

A lot of last minute jobs had to be completed if the Opening Weekend was to be a success, many of them behind-the-scenes, such as ordering the loos, liaising with the craftspeople and the media, putting out signs on the nearby roads *[at 2am!]* and shipping in fridges and freezers.

We also liaised with Swan Hill Homes who had kindly agreed to suspend work for the Opening Day and allowed us to take over their whole site for the weekend to give us the maximum possible parking space (supplemented by further space at Over Farm Market - *thanks Rob*).

RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

The marquees were erected, provided with flooring and kitted-out with borrowed tables and chairs. In the nick of time the two carved slate plaques, one recording the opening and the other thanking various organisations which have helped enormously with the Over project, were collected from the mason in North Wales by Cliff Penny the night before - and actually fixed in place on the feature wall on the morning of the Opening.

Member Chris Clark came up trumps, not only providing and driving his 1937 Lanchester to bring our guests to the site but also rustling up a traction engine, a fairground organ and, on the Sunday, a fleet of vintage cars.

The Trust sourced most of the ingredients for the buffet lunch served to the VIP's after the opening ceremony. A very impressive meal was prepared at Tibberton Village Hall and provided in the marquee for the cost of about £140 - for 150 guests! This was only possible due to the generosity of the firms listed on page 8. *Thank you.*

The official opening went without a hitch. Chris brought Prunella Scales and her husband Timothy West to Over spot on time - which was just as well because he was booked to drive a bride to her wedding in Malvern just one hour later! They stopped on the Bailey Bridge, over the remains of the lock, and posed for press photos and Carlton TV's WaterWorld cameras. Together with our principal guests they then

walked to the wall, to the rear of the short limb of The Wharf, on which the two plaques were shrouded in smart black and gold curtains.

Following a detailed introduction to our negotiations and work on the site from Cliff Penny on behalf of the Canal Trust, and his brief indication of what was going on elsewhere along the Canal, there were short speeches from John Theakston the Chief Executive of Swan Hill Homes, Mike Palmer (Chairman of WRG), Councillor Mark Calway (Chairman and Mayor of Tewkesbury Borough Council) and Richard Drake Chairman of the

IWA. Also present were the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, the Mayors of Gloucester, Dymock and Ledbury, as well as the Chairman of Gloucestershire County Council, their ladies and numerous other Councillors. The

last word came from Timothy West as our guests unveiled the plaques.

The crowd of several hundred, assembled on the opposite side of the Basin, heard every word courtesy of the PA system kindly sponsored by Transco. After a short ride on the trip boat Mr Maysey our guests joined the rest of the VIP's for their lunch and a guided tour of our award winning photographic display.

The weather stayed fine for the afternoon so visitors were able to watch and ride on a variety of craft on the basin, try their luck at a range of outdoor games and marvel at Peter Walwin carving a wonderful owl from timber cut on the site.

*“ he was
booked to drive
a bride to her
wedding in
Malvern just one
hour later! ”*

RESTORATION UPDATE... continued

Another interesting feature was the small dinghy being demonstrated by Whitefriars Sailing for Disabled. In the evening the site was closed to the public and a few Canal Trust members joined WRG for their Hog Roast.

The weather was a little more dodgy on the Saturday which kept visitor numbers lower than we would have liked and forced the Forest of Dean Morris to perform inside the large marquee. The main feature of the day was the Boaters' Games during the afternoon - a WRG version of It's A Knockout. Gloucester Model Boat Club brought along some splendid radio-controlled craft and had a fine time running them around the basin, dodging the full size vessels.

Sunday was a very successful day. The weather was kinder and at one point we had to turn a couple of cars away because the car park was literally full - including a long-standing member who arrived towing a large trailer full of garden rubbish - *sorry Steve!* Our own volunteers were stretched to the limit because most WRGies left for their long journeys home during the morning so we had to direct the traffic as well as provide refreshments, man the sales stand, look after the outdoor games and answer all manner of questions from the public.

Peter Walwin's owl was raffled over the three days to raise funds for the Canal Trust (some £375) and the winning ticket was drawn on the Sunday. It was won (fair and square) by David Penny who was promptly thrown into the Canal as a penalty!

Over the weekend 50 different Canal Trust members helped run the show,

some for a few hours, some for the entire three days. During the setting up period, and the first two days of the Opening Celebrations, they were assisted by WRG volunteers whose help was invaluable. It was great to feel part of a team, all doing whatever needed to be done from cutting cakes to directing traffic, from improvising notices to replacing coconuts on the coconut shy!

Nearly 3,000 visitors came to the site during the weekend and it was great to hear comments of amazement from so many of them about what we have achieved at Over against the clock on such a limited budget.

We have successfully completed the First Phase at Over but there is plenty more to do! *To volunteer please 'phone for details.*

New volunteers: It is ESSENTIAL to 'phone BEFORE arriving on site. *Thank you.*

please call:-

Oxenhall:- Brian Fox (01432) 358 628

Over:- Paul Brown (01386) 443 826

Nigel Bailey (01452) 533 835

Hereford:- Brian Moulit (01432) 264 366

HEALTH & SAFETY: All of our restoration sites are subject to detailed safety policies. ALL persons working on these sites are required to comply with these policies at all times - for their own safety and for the safety of others. Safety footwear and safety helmets are mandatory.

Motorised plant and equipment may only be operated by holders of current H&G CT or WRG permits relating to the plant/equipment in question. Permits must be available for inspection at any time. Failure to observe this invalidates insurance cover.

*The book
Over &
Over again*

750 YEARS OF
CHANGE AT OVER

See page 34.

Fantastic - Thank You!

Remember this from the last edition . . . ?

PLEASE SPONSOR A MOORING RING AT OVER . . . OR A BENCH!

We've had a fantastic response to the request for sponsorship of mooring rings, and proposed benches, at Over - and the December issue of **Waterways World**, reporting on the Grand Opening, has also very kindly publicised our appeal nationally.

MOORING RING SPONSORS:-

1. Mrs M Balderstone, Gloucester
2. Mr B Catton, Gloucester
3. Mr B Catton, Gloucester
4. Mr B Catton, Gloucester
5. Mr B Catton, Gloucester
6. Mr B Catton, Gloucester
7. Mr JC Holland, Hereford
8. Mr AC Greenwell, Northwich
9. Mr AP Goodland, Wimbourne
10. Mr AP Goodland, Wimbourne
11. Mr PG Sharpe, Rugeley
12. Mr J D Wall, Clarbester Road
13. Worcester & Birmingham Canal Society
14. Mr & Mrs D Beard, Tibberton
15. Dr JGM Mortimer, Yarpole
16. Mr A O'Boyle, Haw Bridge
17. Mr & Mrs WR Myers, Bartestree
18. Mr ST Sloan, Aylesbury

TREE SPONSORS:

Our sincere thanks to those who have already agreed to sponsor a tree:-

1. Mr W Marsh, Bristol; 2. Mr & Mrs D Gray, Hereford; 3. Mr NH Peabody, Madley

The generous support of each of the above sponsors will be recorded on site, as promised, in the form of their requested dedication. Please do be patient as we are currently designing the wall for the mooring ring plaque and designing the benches!

By the time that you read this we are confident that all of our Mooring Rings and Benches for the First Phase at Over will have been sponsored - *to each and every sponsor, our very sincere thanks and appreciation for your support.*

19. Mr RC White, Evesham
20. Mr RC White, Evesham
21. Mr & Mrs J Hopkinson, Corwen
22. Mr & Mrs M Quarrell, Bielefeld, BFPO 39
23. Mrs MT Rose, Tibberton
24. Mrs MF Muir, Hereford
25. Mrs M Bennett, Staunton on Wye
26. Mrs M Bennett, Staunton on Wye
27. Mr & Mrs RG Alexander, Basildon.
28. Dr I McKim Thompson, Kingswinford
29. Mr NH Peabody, Madley

BENCH SPONSORS:-

1. Mrs R Ballard, Colwall
2. Mr RJ Moreland, Gloucester
3. Mrs M Carlile, Brookthorpe
4. Mr NH Peabody, Madley

Our sincere thanks to **Martin Clark**, of **Clark's Trees Direct**, Newent, for donating £200 of trees and to **Peter Urquhart** of **CDW Systems Ltd.** of Cheltenham, also for £200. *Thank you for this much appreciated business sponsorship.*

The Watermill

Some Members were sorry to have missed the opportunity to sponsor a mooring ring or bench - but there are still opportunities to support our wholly voluntary work at Over if you wish:-

The next major construction project at Over (subject to *Planning Permission*) is the reconstruction of the stone 'barn' that we salvaged. This was the last surviving part of the watermill that played an important part in the history of Over

[see Nigel Bailey's new book *Over & Over Again* - details on p.34 - for more information] It is to be reconstructed to provide purpose-built accommodation for visiting volunteers, for use by the Canal Trust and as meeting rooms.

SPONSOR A CORNER STONE

Please sponsor a Corner Stone for The Watermill at £25 each. These Cotswold coloured stones are larger than the rest of the stone that made up the barn and are a key feature of it - but not all survived from the original building. Each donors name will be recorded inside the building when completed - maximum 30 characters please.

OR A TREE

We are still seeking support with this autumn's tree planting programme so please consider sponsoring a specimen tree to be planted on the Over site.

Each tree, stake and tie costs £75.

Each donors name will be recorded on site (max. 30 characters).

Please send a cheque for the appropriate amount to our Treasurer Liz Connors, 18 St. Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF.

Unless you state that you are not a tax payer, or that you do not wish us to do so, each donation will be accepted under the new Gift Aid rules [see page 8 of the last edition of *The Wharfinger*.]

Please also enclose your full name and address (and telephone number in case of queries) together with details of how you wish your donation to be recorded.

Thank you for your support.



The Defence Storage & Distribution Depot, Ashchurch, plus Hewden Cranes (Bristol), deliver our trip boat to Over. (Martin Ludgate)

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

■ This special meeting of the CofM was to discuss the initial proposals for the new Interpretative Centre, Tea Rooms etc. at Over for the Canal Trust. These were to be the subject of a Planning Application by Swan Hill Homes and would be submitted together with a statement of support from the H&G CT. David Penny was continuing to negotiate with both Swan Hill and Officers and Members of Tewkesbury Borough Council regarding the proposals.

AUGUST COMMITTEE

■ The financial position had improved largely thanks to a donation from the Summerfield Trust of £6,200 towards the eventual construction of foundations for the rebuilding of the barn at Over. This money had not been expected until next year and was greatly appreciated. Budgets were approved for the period September to November.

■ WRG were to pay for 4cubic metres of concrete that had been utilised at Over over and above what had been agreed on the foundation pour for the lock approach.

■ Will Frecknall would be listed in The Wharfinger as "Chairman of the CofM" - the terms "Chairman" and "Vice Chairman" would not be used. Members would be encouraged to contact the most appropriate person listed in The Wharfinger and roles would be clarified as much as possible in the limited space available.

■ Brian Fox would continue to lead Landowner Liaison and Oxenhall Restoration; in addition he was willing to assume the lead for Press and Publicity.

■ Alternate monthly CofM meetings would concentrate on strategy, although any pressing business would also be considered. Written reports would be prepared for CofM on all topics, and circulated in advance to Directors, in order to try to reduce meeting length.

■ A review of priorities would be undertaken in respect of the Over site. A revised strategy would be defined for each major restoration site and the relevant Special Project Group would be invited to participate. Funds would then be sought in accordance with these priorities and the relevant SPG encouraged to generate and spend these funds in accordance with the strategy. A Member of the relevant SPG would attend CofM to report on Group activities and progress (essentially this would continue and refine what had already been practised with the Over SPG).

■ Bylaws had been drafted by SPG(Over) and would be considered by the CofM. These were considered to be essential now that the Canal Trust was owning important sections of the Canal.

■ A revised insert for the colour leaflet about the Canal was discussed. This would reflect changes to Gift Aid and be printed on yellow paper to match the colour within the leaflet.

Committee Matters . . . (ii)

■ Over SPG's Arrangements for the Grand Opening of Over Wharf (Phase I) were discussed in detail.

■ Very considerable progress was being made at Over thanks to considerable efforts by our own volunteers and visiting volunteers from WRG.

■ Steady progress was reported on the restoration of House Lock, Oxenhall.

■ Heather Worth was welcomed as a co-opted member of the CofM.

SEPTEMBER COMMITTEE

■ Brian Fox reported on his ongoing discussions with DETR regarding the Newent Nursery site. CofM agreed that he should again

involve the local MP, Diana Organ, as the Department did not appear to be acting in a manner that was in keeping with the recent statements by John Prescott or the Government's **Waterways for Tomorrow** document.

■ Arrangements for the repayment of the IWA's £10,000 loan (towards costs at Over), and the related interest, were discussed.

■ There were further detailed discussions regarding the Grand Opening of Over Wharf (Phase I). Almost all dignitaries within 20 miles had signified their attendance [see p.1]. However, Herefordshire had 'twinning' celebrations, in Germany, that weekend. Thanks were expressed to Over SPG for all their work relating to the Opening.

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Committee Matters . . . (iii)

■ Revisions to the proposed Interpretative Centre, Tea Rooms etc. were discussed. These had been requested by Officers at Tewkesbury Borough Council and Swan Hill Homes were continuing to liaise with the Canal Trust prior to a revised submission. This continuing liaison was welcomed and the revised proposals (subject to detailed points being pursued by David Penny) were endorsed in principle.


■ Over SPG was asked to recommend a name for the new building at Over.

■ Discussions were continuing within the Canal Trust regarding the draft Bylaws.

■ Appreciation was expressed to Janet and Brian Moulton and the 8

volunteers who had manned the display at the National Waterways Festival at Waltham Abbey. The Grand Holiday Draw was drawn by Mrs Audrey Smith OBE - wearing her unique blue H&G sweatshirt [see p.4 of the last edition.]. [Photo, page 19]

■ Arrangements for the distribution of CofM papers by e-mail were discussed. System compatibility was a challenge.

■ The stop planks on the approach to the lock had been inserted at Over and the Basin brought back into water 10 days ahead of schedule. The CofM expressed sincere thanks to every volunteer and business who had, in any way, contributed to what was regarded nationally as a very significant achievement. 

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Book One of the H&G

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We are fortunate that the original Minute Books kept by the Canal Company have been preserved. Nigel Bailey, with help from Roy Jamieson, has used them to present a fascinating portrait of the creation of the H&G in its first few years.

Packed with illustrations, this book makes a fascinating read. You'll find out about the vineyard that occupied the Over site from Roman times, the Abbot's Residence that stood at the top of the hill and the corn mill that operated for some 750 years.

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The book gives an overview of the H&G Canal Navigation together with chapters on:-

- The Vineyard
- Over's Bridges
- Over Mill
- Mill House
- Building the Canal at Over
- The Lock Keeper's Cottage
- The Changing Course of the River Leadon
- The Daffodil Line
- Over Isolation Hospital
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[Membership rates are on the facing page]

[not quite] The Last Page

THANKS SWAN HILL & OTHERS!

Whilst our own volunteers (and all of those from WRG) have been acknowledged for their part in the huge success of the Official Opening Weekend it would be wrong not to thank Swan Hill Homes, and their groundworks contractor, CJL Construction, for all of their co-operation, especially in the days leading up to the event - and for ceasing all work on site from the Thursday afternoon until the Monday morning.

We are also grateful to apprentices from the Defence Storage and Distribution Depot, Ashchurch, for collecting our spare 'Bailey Bridge' from Oxenhall and assembling it at Over. The Depot also transported our trip boat from Oxenhall. Thanks to Hewden Cranes (Bristol) for a days use of a crane to lift the boat at both locations. [Photo', page 29].

THANKS, PRINT PLUS

Without tremendous support from Print Plus, the printers of **The Wharfinger**, the last edition would not have been available at the National Waterways Festival (this year at Waltham Abbey) for four days over the August Bank Holiday. Anxious to include the latest photo's of the newly watered Over Basin we left them with two days to print, collate and stitch the last edition rather than the normal week! It was not just a question of printing from our 'camera ready' copy, they also had to create the panoramic photo of the whole basin (*p. 17 of the last edition*) from about 20 photo's. In addition, they produced and laminated our large scale display version of this as well as laminating half a dozen of our newly prepared display panels of Over and the Farriery College bridges. *To everyone at Print Plus, thank you for a job well done.*



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A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

However, if you are reading this in 2001

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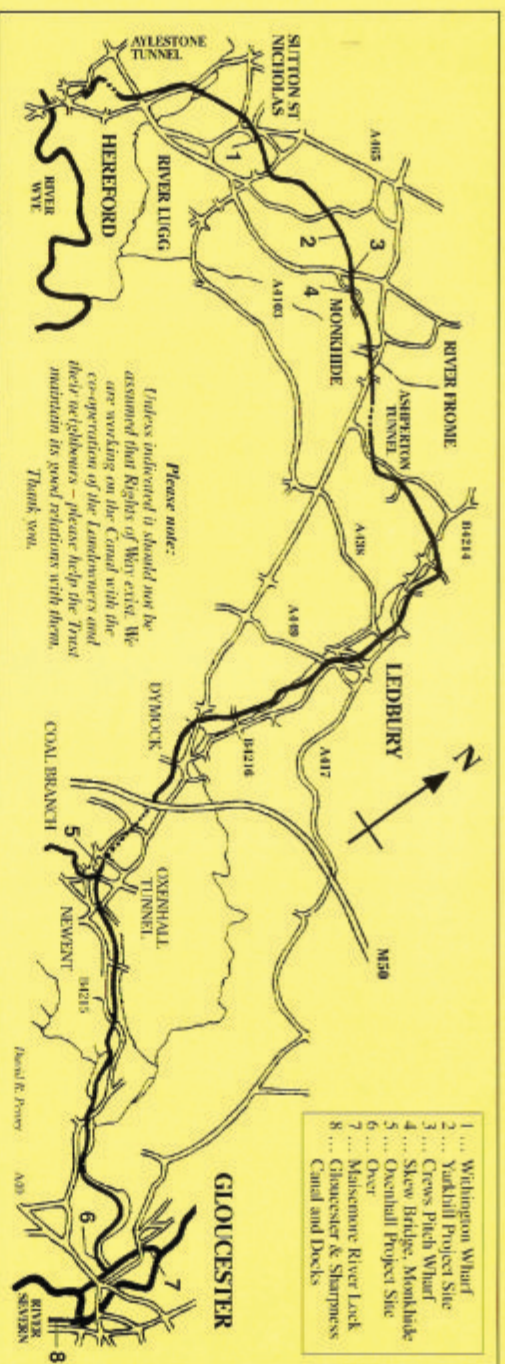
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The Canal Society was formed in 1983 and replaced in 1992 by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership exceeding 700 from all over the country – and abroad! Our objective 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.