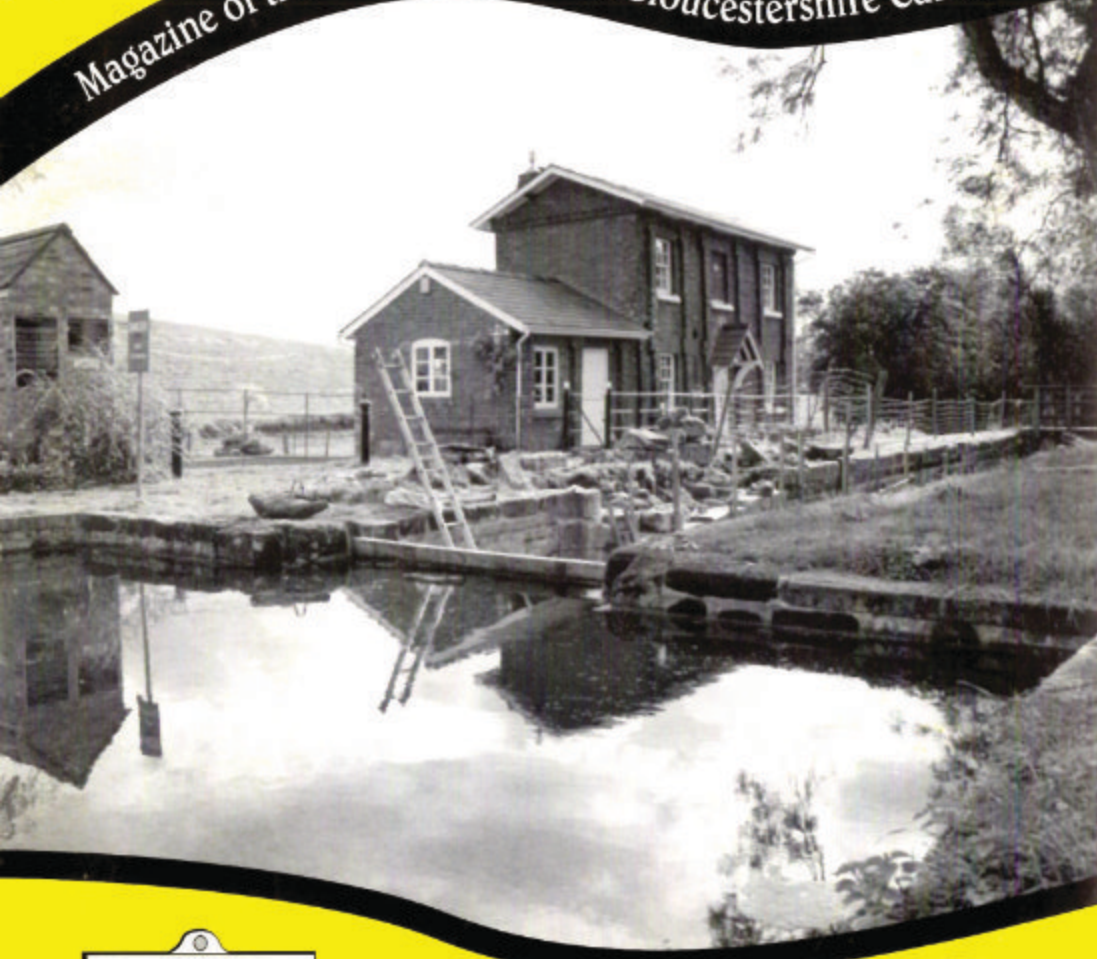


The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Winter 2001/2

50p
free to members



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

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Those in italics are not Directors of the Trading Company, although they may be co-opted members.

Honorary Posts:

Archaeologist: Ron Shoemith

Town & Country Planning: Penny Environmental & Planning

FRONT COVER: Oxenhall Lock and Cottage.

CONTENTS

Chairman's Column	3
Editorial	5
Committee Matters	7
Restoration Update	10
Corporate Spotlight – Starline Narrowboats	14
Christmas is Coming	15
Edward Smith – Victorian Artist	16
Social Evenings at The Verzons Inn	18
Over Open Days	19
Moving a Hole: <i>part three</i>	20
Trading Company Diary: <i>part two</i>	24
A Day at Droitwich	28
Yet More Winners	30
Mister Maysey	31
Not Quite the Last Page	35
Contact names	<i>inside back cover</i>

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STRONGBOW

the pint to
refresh Canal
Volunteers!





They say that life is full of surprises and to find myself writing a column for **The Wharfinger** in the role of Chairman certainly proves the point.

I won't attempt to explain how on earth I come to be in this position - I'm hoping one day someone will do that for me, but I do want to say why I believe the restoration of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal is so worthwhile.

Firstly, I love our inland waterways. Unlike my work colleagues who fly off to the Med. or the Caribbean, my holidays take in the delights of Tamworth, Nuneaton, Rugby or Banbury. Fortunately, my wife agrees!

Secondly, I love Herefordshire. If you are reading this in Gloucestershire, please don't be upset - Gloucestershire is jolly nice too, but I just happen to live in Herefordshire. British Waterways reckon that half the country's population lives within five miles of one of their canals or rivers. Everyone who lives in Herefordshire is in the other half and we are much the poorer for it.

Thirdly, I believe that when restored, the H&G will be one of the most perfect canals in the country. Long enough to provide a good weeks holiday, enough locks to keep us occupied without becoming exhausted and three dark and spooky tunnels. All set in the most glorious countryside you could wish for and linked to the national network.

And finally, I think restoration can be achieved. Unlike the derelict Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which was called the "Impossible Restoration" (until it re-opened earlier this year), the H&G is more than possible. There are considerable lengths just begging to be done, so it's down to us.

On the trip boat the day Over Basin was re-opened, Prunella Scales said to me *"This is going to be such a beautiful canal. Hurry up and finish it!"* Where ladies are concerned, I always do as I am told. You have been warned - and remember - life is full of surprises.

◆ Dick Skeet
Chairman

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CONGRATULATIONS!

by Cliff Penny

The ongoing progress and achievements (*with both pen and spade*) resulting from the hard work of a thankfully ever-increasing number of regular supporters and volunteers is receiving both local and national recognition.

H&G Canal Trust Member Adrian Fry has been awarded the Inland Waterways Association's national Christopher Power prize for his voluntary work in co-ordinating the Waterway Recovery Groups' invaluable contribution to Phase 1 of the Over Project. The Prize is awarded annually to the person or group *'who has made the most significant contribution to the restoration of an amenity waterway'*. Working closely with our own volunteer Project Director, David Penny, Adrian was responsible for ensuring that the national volunteers integrated with our own *'person power'* (*there were hard working ladies present!*).

Our own equally important congratulations go to Janet Moulton, our Trading Company Secretary and Manning Co-ordinator. Janet has worked almost miracles to ensure that the H&G Canal Trust was represented at only one less local and national event this year than last year despite the cancellation of many annual shows and events as a result of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. Thanks to Janet (and the Trading Company Chairman Brian Moulton - plus the hard working volunteers who have assisted them throughout the year) the name of the H&G has continued to be spread far and wide and the all-important fund-raising maintained. This

success continued with the H&G Canal Trust stand winning the Canal Boat award for the best voluntary stand at the IWA National Waterways Festival for yet another year.

The Over Fundraising Team, ably led by Liz Bailey, has gone from strength to strength. Apart from the monthly *'Over Open Days'* (on the last Sunday of each month) there have been a number of other special events at each of which the sales and promotional presence has been maintained. This has been made possible due to an increasing team of *'non-restoration'* volunteers spreading the workload. Add the special skills of the *'cake fairy'* (*I suspect there is now more than one*) and congratulations are definitely in order as, even when it poured with rain, each day resulted in very worthwhile results for the Canal Trust - and the year isn't finished yet!

Last, but not means least, our congratulations are warmly extended to our new Chairman, Dick Skeet. Those who attended the Annual General Meeting in June will have seen Dick ably step into the role (*on a then clearly stated 'just for tonight' basis!*). The Council of Management have no doubt that the H&G Canal Trust is in very capable hands.

AINA

The H&G Canal Trust have accepted an invitation from the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities to join this influential body. Currently some 30 navigation bodies are represented

including British Waterways, the Environment Agency, Broads Authority, Port of London Authority, Manchester Ship Canal Company, Rochdale Canal Trust, Upper & Lower Avon Navigation Trusts - to name but a few. Towards the end of October we were formally welcomed to our first national meeting by AINA Chairman (and British Waterways Chief Executive) David Fletcher.

SNAIL MAIL

We complained to Royal Mail about their franking service and the ludicrous delays in the distribution of the Summer edition of **The Wharfinger** (see page 3 of the last edition). The (eventual) response advised that the only way to ensure prompt delivery is to use their Special Delivery service [at £3.50 for each item]! A classic example of it being so easy to respond to complaints with standard paragraphs - but illustrating the need to make sure that they are relevant first! However, Royal Mail did ultimately refund £100 - about 30% of the total postage bill for one edition. So my numerous telephone calls to a 'call centre' in Manchester, and a detailed letter of complaint, was eventually rewarded.

In the same article we made a plea for more volunteers to go on a list to be called upon, if needed, to assist with the despatch of **The Wharfinger** just four times a year. Heather Worth (01432 270 552) would still like a few more names from Members who live in Hereford (or are happy to travel) to go on the list, please. It is a vital task made all the easier by a shared workload.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The Council of Management of the Canal Trust wish all supporters and

Members a very happy Christmas and best wishes for the coming year. Please don't forget that our Trading Company may well have the answer to that slightly different present this year. Gift Membership of the Canal Trust, Christmas Cards, cuddly toys, attractive Irish Linen Tea Towels and individually hand crafted woodwork are but a few of the items that are available. Penny Shetliffe (01432 820 623) can take credit card sales over the 'phone and provide additional information. If you have access to the internet then much of the stock is photographed there in full colour [www.h-g-canal.org.uk]. All the sales profits are directed straight back to the H&G Canal Trust so you solve your present problem (at any time of the year) and help restore the Canal at the same time!

◆ CRP

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As a supporter of the H&G Canal restoration (along with a number of other canal restoration societies) I keenly read each edition of **The Wharfinger** from cover to cover. Having read the account by Mike Davis of his Grand Holiday Draw prize narrowboat holiday on the Llangollen Canal (page 30 of the Autumn edition) I felt that I must write concerning his trepidation regarding New Marton Locks. Mike was worried that the Lock Keeper didn't suffer fools gladly!

You should be assured, Mike, that there has been no resident Lock Keeper at New Marton for approximately 16 years - and the Lock Keeper prior to that was an extremely personable fellow! My wife and I have owned the Lock Cottage for some ten years now and frequently and willingly help 'first-timers' through the top lock.

The message is don't believe all that you read in the papers, see on television or hear on the canal towpath telegraph!

Yours in 'canal fellowship'.

Roger & Linda Butler.

[Our thanks to Roger and Linda for dispelling what is clearly a long-standing local myth; also for their much appreciated ongoing donation of plants and bulbs for Over - Ed.]



COMMITTEE *matters*



Tony Austin-Bailey reviews three Council of Management meetings so that our Members and supporters are kept up to date...

JULY COMMITTEE

The Trust is receiving support from both the Gloucestershire County Council and the Forest of Dean District Councils in respect of the Willows site at Newent. FoDDC has resolved to invoke Compulsory Purchase Powers if necessary. Contact with Diana Organ MP and the Highways Agency continues, and it is hoped that a far more realistic price will be asked by the Agency.

The Trading Company will mount a display in Maylord Orchards, Hereford, during the month.

New Canal Trust and Trading Company stationery is being considered.

Work will not be restarted at Yarkhill until the present foot and mouth disease outbreak has ended.

Following a query it was confirmed that Bulmer's proposed re-use of their Hereford railway siding would not threaten restoration of the Canal as all design work on the route was undertaken on the basis that the railway siding would come back into use.

Next year, 2002, is the tenth anniversary of the Trust, and consideration was given as to how we should celebrate it.

AUGUST COMMITTEE

Dick Skeet was asked to consider

becoming Trust Chairman; IWA is to be asked to suggest a replacement for Will Frecknall as IWA representative on Council, following his request to stand down.

It was felt that we should have proposals for more Vice Presidents by the next AGM, and that we should begin considering various individuals. Several names were suggested.

Both excavators are to be sold as being beyond their economic life as far as the Trusts needs are concerned.

Following their request for a raffle prize a 1 year Gift Membership is to be donated to Tibberton Parish Council.

A list of people who might be willing to provide financial assistance in connection with land purchase is to be drawn up.

An article by Nigel Bailey is to be published in "Canal and Riverboat".

Additional volunteers are needed to assist our regular mailing teams for distribution of **The Wharfinger** during holidays or sickness.

SEPTEMBER COMMITTEE

The Council of Management recorded their great appreciation for the continuing and considerable support from Diana Organ MP, in her work on our behalf to gain a satisfactory outcome

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at The Willows nursery site, at Newent.

Dick Skeet offered to undertake the role of Trust Chairman but expressed concern about his ability to do justice to the position due to work commitments prior to his retirement next year. He was duly elected. In his turn, he thanked Will Frecknall for acting as Chairman of the Council of Management for the past few months.

A sub-committee from the Trading Company will prepare a year-long programme of activities aimed at publicising and celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Trust.

The budgets for the last quarter of the financial year were approved and should allow us to end the year with a small overall surplus [or a sustainable negative position after the deduction of committed funds].

Our presence at the National Waterways Festival on the Grand Union Canal at Milton Keynes was very successful, thanks to Brian Moulton and his team. Once again the Trust's stand received the award for the best voluntary stand.

A list of possible additional Vice Presidents was discussed.

It was agreed unanimously that the Trust would accept an invitation to join the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities.

◆ TA-B

Our Own

Annual Ledbury Craft Fair

*Held on Saturday, November 17th at St. Katherine's Hall,
Ledbury, from 10am – 4pm.*

If anyone would like to come and help, please contact Janet Moulton [01432 264 366].

Even if you cannot help, do please come and visit the stand
and see our new sales lines.

NEW *from* **THE TRADING COMPANY**

NEW PRODUCTS FROM OUR SALES COUNTER

Thanks to a lot of hard work from very clever H&G Canal Trust Members, we are pleased to announce that our "woodwork section" is enlarging our Sales Stand more and more.

Apart from an amount of treen*
(donated by John Martin, one of our Members
resident in Wales – thank you), we now
have the following new line:-

Cloth Holders.

A simple arrangement of wood, with a foolproof method of gripping and releasing the drying cloth. No screw fixings and something no boat-owner, or householder, should be without.

Our first batch sold out at the NWF at Milton Keynes, so they must be good!

Price each £2-50 plus p&p if ordered for posting.

A new line which will be available by the spring of 2002, is **winter fleece hats**. Available only in black, with 'H&G C T' embroidered across the front in yellow.

Price each £9-50 plus p&p if ordered for posting.

**Please place your orders NOW
with Penny Shetliffe – thank you.**

(Contact details inside back cover). ◆ BM

[**small domestic wooden objects"
according to my dictionary – Ed.]



RESTORATION

Update!

PROGRESS AT OXENHALL

Restoration on the lock at Oxenhall resumed in August (following an 'all clear' on the Foot & Mouth front) and has been proceeding apace ever since. The towpath wall as far as the ladder recess (2/3rds length) has now been completed and heavy coping stones, from the last section up to the cill, have now been lifted off revealing the total lack of any mortar - just soil with a jumble of roots filling the joints! The soil and root filling goes down amongst the stone and brickwork for about 2ft when the original mortar takes over and the wall is stable. The large lifting tripod, which is about 15ft high, and fairly heavy, has now been temporarily removed to give Lock Cottage owner Nigel Freeman an unimpeded view from the cottage windows once again.

We now have a regular gang of between 6 and 8 and appear to have lost only one member - and I am hopeful that he will return when he gets bored with gallivanting about the countryside in his caravan. It has been found impracticable in the past for too many people to try to work together in the lock so we tend to split up into 2 or 3 teams, each with their own task but all ultimately employed on lock restoration. It is no longer considered productive to do anything but work on the lock as we

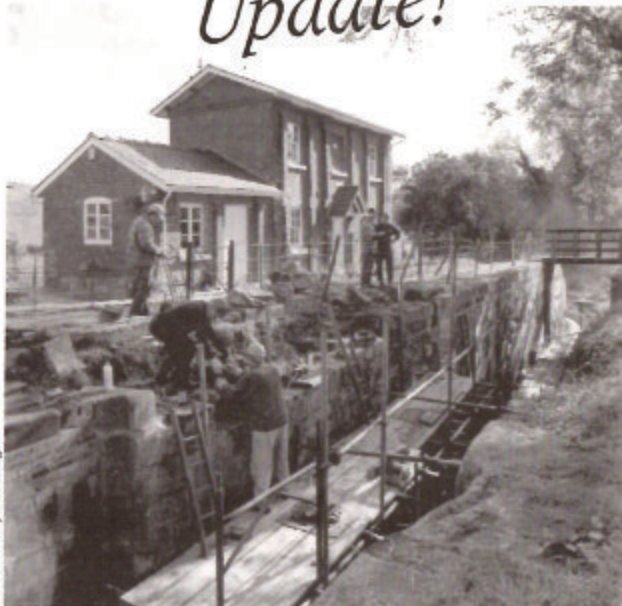


Photo: Jerry Kavanagh

Work progresses at Lock House, Oxenhall

have missed so much time due to Foot and Mouth, and adverse weather, and there is a lot of catching up to do. Work actually started on this lock more than 4 years ago but progress has been by no means continuous and it has only been for one day per week. However it would be nice to finish with a flourish and move onto another job soon!

We are developing quite a range of skills as we go and we try to give everyone a go at each task, within reason. We all know our limits and sometimes the job to do has appeared rather daunting but so far we haven't been beaten by anything and our ingenuity in completing a task can be mind boggling sometimes! Laying bricks and large stones in the precise spot that they should be is definitely a skill as is cutting the stone the right size and shape

in the first place. None of the gang has experience in the building profession and competence at cutting out the damaged stone using a combination of angle grinder, power chisel and manual tooling with hammers and chisels are all skills we have developed as we go along. Even operating our electric mixer and getting the correct mix for the mortar and concrete is a work of art. Much of our work is done perched on scaffolding and I think we are all competent at constructing to standards which would satisfy any inspector. After all, it is in our own interests to get it right because, although it may not be far to fall, who wants to finish up at the bottom of the lock sitting in 6 inches of muddy water?

The annual volunteers trip organised by Mike Potts was to Bristol Docks where two day boats were hired for a cruise through the docks area and then up the River Avon towards Bath. 24 of us (plus one dog) had a very enjoyable day with sunshine for most of the way, as we cruised along eating bacon butties and oodles of tea and coffee - plus a special cake to celebrate Elizabeth's birthday. Lunch was taken at a riverside pub near Keynsham where several members got carried away and forgot the time so that they almost got left behind. Thanks Mike and Joyce for a memorable day.

Finally a plea to the anyone who knows anything about the pile of surplus lawnmower bits and a large fuel tank dumped in the yard at Oxenhall some months ago. If they are not removed forthwith then it will all go to the scrap yard!

Congratulations to Nigel Freeman and Maria, of Lock Cottage, on the birth of their son at the beginning of October. It looks as though the gang will have to keep the noise down on Tuesdays from now on! ◆ **BF**



Despite the stormy weather a steady flow of visitors came to Over's Anniversary.

OVER UPDATE

We've now held the last of this year's last-Sunday-in-the-month Open Days, and very successful they have been. While a proportion of our visitors are Trust members and some come after visiting the houses of Staunton's Hill, many are local people who still tell us "I didn't know there was anything here!". We've gained a lot of new friends and members and enjoyed talking to visitors who are interested in what we've achieved so far and our future plans.

Despite the poor weather, visitors to September's Open Day were able to watch the model boats or try their hand at canoeing or dinghy sailing with Whitefriars Sailing Club or take a ride on Mister Maysey. Over's reputation for excellent tea and cakes has been maintained by the cake fairy who has now built a team of assistant cake fairies - or should that be a "ring" of cake fairies?

My favourite conversation of the year must be the one with an older man who told me he had worked on various canal restoration projects around the country but had now stepped down from active service. He floored me when he asked if I'd ever come across a volunteer by the name of "Tea-cosy" Smith. I had to admit I have not.

We've had to spend time "scrub bashing" on the flood plain to keep the Himalayan Balsam in check. This exotic plant was introduced into British gardens in the nineteenth century but has now become a problem on the damp ground of river banks. It is an annual which grows to about two metres with a fragrant, pinkish flower that resembles a witch's hat. It propagates vigorously by the explosive release of up to 500 seeds per plant over a five metre radius. Whilst it looks quite attractive, unchecked it forms dense stands which suppress the growth of native plants and grasses, leaving the soil bare in autumn and vulnerable to erosion. We have attacked it with the strimmer and with hooks but it is very resilient!

We have also continued planting activities. The Wednesday Crew have built some large wooden containers which now house a variety of donated plants around the sides of the site hut. Meanwhile, a new Saturday group has planted up a border at the entrance to the site. It's been planted following a scheme devised by Craig Smith but, because we don't yet have all the correct plants, we have filled in the gaps with donated pansies.

This new Saturday group is actually three local youngsters doing the volunteer component of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver Awards. We have now established one day a fortnight when we don't run any plant or equipment so that we can invite younger volunteers to join us on site without conflicting with insurance or Health & Safety requirements. If you are (or know someone who is) under 17, or doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award, who wants to join us on these days please get in touch with me (*Nigel Bailey – see Contacts – inside back cover*) **before** attending site as there are a number of requirements to be met to comply with Canal Trust Policy.

The Wednesday Crew have now completed the triple manhole chambers near the site entrance and are moving on to the next one on the Trust's side of the lock – these will carry all services under the Canal for the future. They have also continued brick picking and cleaning, and tidying up our storage areas – not glamorous jobs but essential ones. A combination of Wednesday and weekend effort has now completed construction of the two service huts which are looking very attractive and continually intrigue visitors!



Photos: Ted Beagles

By late summer the water level in the Basin had dropped significantly, mainly due to evaporation, so it became important to find a means of topping it up ready for the "Birthday" Open Day. **Sykes Pumps** of Gloucester kindly came to the rescue, lending us a splendid pump and suitable piping for a whole week.

You may know that we have had a problem [*surely it's a challenge!* – Ed] with blanket weed and have expended a good deal of effort dragging it out of the water. We've used rakes, rakes-on-a-rope, 'Lyndon's patent weed catcher' and the Model Boat Club's sophisticated two-man, twin-roped, weed dredger. They all work to varying degrees but the method that is most fun is to trail a rake behind Mr Maysey. One lady visitor, spotting Maggie Jones engaged in this strange form of fishing, described her as "The Weed Girl".

Next year we hope to prevent the weed growing in the first place. If we put barley straw in the water in early Spring it should prevent the weed developing. As the straw rots the microbes that grow on it are released into the water and very efficiently eat the weed! **Jeremy Chamberlain** of Maisemore has kindly given us sufficient barley straw to try it out next year.

A recent new feature on the site is a flag-pole (*no flag yet, but we're working on it*). Nigel Jefferies acquired the flag-pole, several years ago, from a building development at Bartestree and it lay in his garden until a few weeks ago when Trust member **John Arnold** kindly brought it to Over.

We now have sufficient redundant concrete railway sleepers to complete the layout of the raised beds in the new car

park. Wilf Jones managed to locate a supply at the Sheffield based Track Material Agency. Locating them is one thing, transporting sleepers weighing about 300 kg (about a third of a ton) each is quite another! Trust Member **Ron Mogg** kindly solved our problem by collecting them from Tamworth and delivering them to site – thank you.

Now that the Basin is becoming more established, the wildlife population seems to be increasing. We've enjoyed watching a variety of dragon-flies and damselflies flitting across the water and, despite my lack of knowledge of ornithology, I've also spotted green woodpeckers and kingfishers on the site.

◆ NB

Results of the Telegraph Pole Raffle

*Drawn at the September First
Anniversary Open Day at Over.*

FIRST PRIZE:

A Meal for Four at the **Toby Carvery at Over**, was won by Mr Crombie of Cinderford.

SECOND PRIZE:

Family Ticket to the **Waterways Museum in Gloucester**, was won by Mr Martin of Cheltenham.

THIRD PRIZE:

Family Ticket to the **Waterways Museum in Gloucester**, was won by Mr Mike Hadley of Malvern.

FOURTH PRIZE:

Family Ticket to the **Waterways Museum in Gloucester**, was won by Mr Roger Butler from the Llangollen Canal.

FIFTH PRIZE:

£5 Voucher for the **Over Farm Shop**, was won by Mrs Boonham from Gloucester.

Congratulations to the winners and our thanks to the sponsors of the prizes.

◆ MJ

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

STARLINE NARROWBOATS

ONE of our long-standing Corporate Members is featured in this edition of Corporate Spotlight. Regular readers of **The Wharfinger** will recognise **Starline Narrowboats** as the biannual sponsor of the first prize in our Grand Holiday Draw - so it is fitting that they should have the opportunity to tell us some more about their company...

Starline Narrowboats is a small family company run by Pauline & Ian Cundy, and this year, we are proud to be celebrating our 21st anniversary. We have been building & hiring narrowboats since 1980, and all our hire boats are owned and have been designed, built and fitted out by ourselves & our dedicated team.

Narrow Boat Holidays are often a slippery slope, developing from an initial casual interest in having a waterways holiday, through the stages of taking regular inland cruising holidays to becoming a fully committed (or certified!) narrowboat owner.

Since starting out, Starline have built over 50 boats, both narrow and wide beam, for our holiday fleet, but mostly for private customers. These have included a wide variety of holiday, weekend, extended cruising and residential boats.

We are able to offer new steel boats, built to any length, width & style, and built to any stage of completion. We normally build to order, with the boat specifications tailored to our customers specific requirements. We design the boats in partnership with our customers, and do our best to interpret any style of layout or individual requirement our customers may have.

In addition to our Hire & Building operations, **Starline** also provide the facilities and general backup for several boats owned by charities catering for disabled and youth groups. In recent years we have also built both wide and narrow



beam, residential and day boats, catering for the many specialised needs of the disabled.

Tillers are often seen to be unsociable and undesirable for skippers left out in the rain, also

for people with limited use of limbs or in other ways disabled or wheelchair bound, tillers often exclude people from steering boats completely. Over the years, we witnessed these problems on a daily basis, so we have designed, developed and been successfully operating a new steering system for the last couple of seasons, and earlier this year we launched the system on the marine market.

In addition to our Hire and Boat Building activities, **Starline** also take on all types of Marine Re-fitting, Engine Servicing & Re-builds, Dry Docking, Re-painting, Signwriting and British Waterways Boat Safety Scheme Certification Work. Our web site also contains a page of second hand boats currently available for sale, and as we are continuously building narrowboats, we also hold a variety of chandlery items in stock. **Starline** are also agents for Yanmar (Shire) Marine Diesel Engines & Spares, together with Mase Marine Generators.

If you are able to visit our Hire Base & Workshop in Upton Marina, we will be only too pleased to show you around. Inspection of our Hire Boats, and a look at the boats being fitted out is always welcome. So if you have the opportunity, do come along and introduce yourself. We are always happy to discuss any aspect of waterways holidays and narrow boat building, so if you would like more information, please give us a ring on:- 01684 574774, drop us an e-mail at:- narrowboats@starline.demon.co.uk or visit our web site at www.starline.demon.co.uk

◆ **PAC**



CHRISTMAS IS COMING



Don't forget your Christmas Cards of Over and Oxenhall, available from Penny Shetliffe (*Contact details inside back cover*).

There are also lots of ideas for presents (*not just for Christmas!*) on the Canal Trust's web site www.h-g-canal.org.uk



Every order received means money into the Trust coffers, enabling us to restore a bit more canal.

In Issue 71 of **The Wharfinger**, a request was made for a name for the Oxenhall bear. Thanks to those who have already replied, but we would like a lot more suggestions. The winner of the competition will be announced in Issue 73, along with the best of the names offered. In view of the importance of this competition, the winning name will be chosen collectively by *The Wrinklies!*



◆ **BM**

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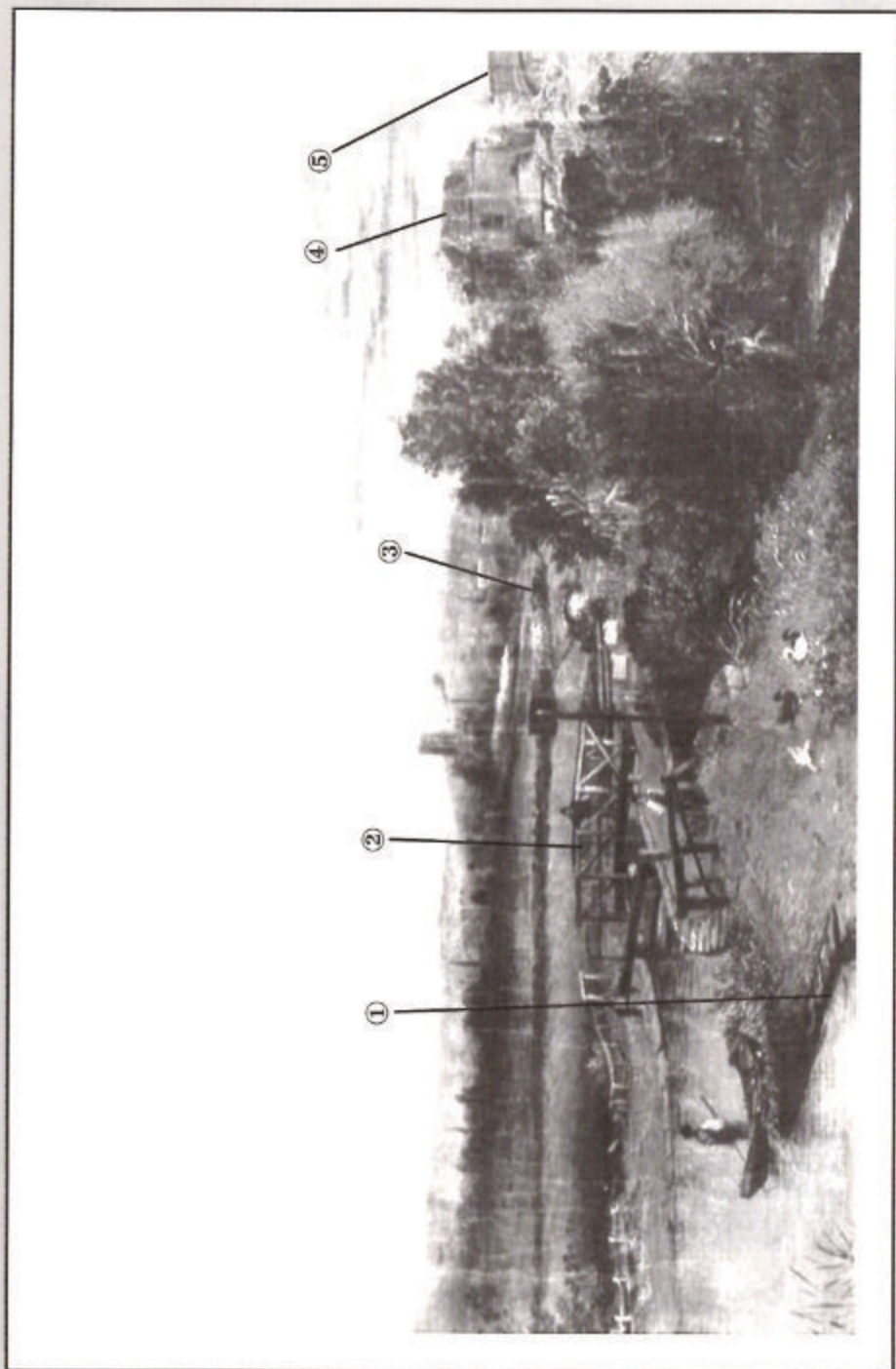
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Edward Smith, Victorian artist, 1820 – 1893

By Nigel Bailey

Over volunteer, Dave Hurran, who runs a small gardening business, discovered this painting of Over lock last year, hanging in the house of a client. Unfortunately, his client then died and it took Dave some time to track down the new owners. Once we had successfully made contact with them, they very kindly agreed to let us have the oil painting professionally copied to raise funds for the Trust.

The picture dates from just a few years before the canal closed in 1881. Some of its interesting features are:

- ① the overflow weir allowing water to escape to the mill race which shows in the foreground to the right
- ② the swing bridge in its closed position
- ③ the bridge carrying the Maisemore road on Alney Island; this is where the canal originally continued its course towards Gloucester
- ④ the lock keeper's cottage with a single storey extension; this was replaced by the two storeys we are familiar with late in the 19th century
- ⑤ Telford's bridge to the extreme right.

The artist was Edward Smith, one of a family of painters who worked in and around Gloucester throughout the 19th century. He began his professional life, not as a painter but as an architectural draughtsman and surveyor, working on the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal.

For many years he combined teaching with the painting of local scenes, leaving us a valuable record of the contemporary Gloucestershire countryside. He was quick

to adopt photography as a way to boost his income but as his reputation as a painter spread in the 1870s, he was able to move to a house and studio overlooking the Park in Gloucester to concentrate on his paintings. He painted several versions of Over Lock – compare this with the one in my book, "Over & Over again!", to find a number of differences. Presumably, he easily sold the first picture and returned to the scene to produce more.

Many of Edward Smith's paintings hang in the Gloucester Museum and Art Gallery and others hang in Stroud Museum; many more are in private hands. We know he painted several other pictures featuring the H&G Canal – "Skating on the Newent Canal" and the "Newent Canal at Highnam" seem to be in local private collections. He was also fascinated by local corn mills, the quay at Gloucester and the River Severn.

If any reader knows the whereabouts of any of these H&G paintings I would love to learn more.

◆ NB

FRAMED PRINTS OF OVER LOCK

The print is available in either mounted form or framed at: –

Print £12 (36 X 28 mm), Mounted £18 (50 X 40 mm) or Framed £35

Over & Over again!



Published to coincide with the opening of Over Basin last September, Nigel Bailey's book has sold sufficient copies to cover its printing costs and is now in profit.

REMEMBER, ALL OF THE £6 COVER PRICE IS NOW DONATED TO THE TRUST.

SOCIAL EVENINGS

Monthly Gatherings at The Verzons

by Janet Moulton

EVERYONE IS WELCOME to our monthly meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month and hosted by our "Master of Ceremonies" Lloyd Jones.
All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.

NOVEMBER 20TH

Work of a Police Wildlife Officer – *George Cebo.*

This replaces the meeting advertised in the last edition.

DECEMBER 18TH

Christmas Social Evening

JANUARY 15TH

Underwater photography – *Pam Bowden*

Forget the winter blues and narrow canals-
explore under the warmer waters of the oceans

FEBRUARY 19TH

Tramways of Herefordshire – *Martin Hudson*

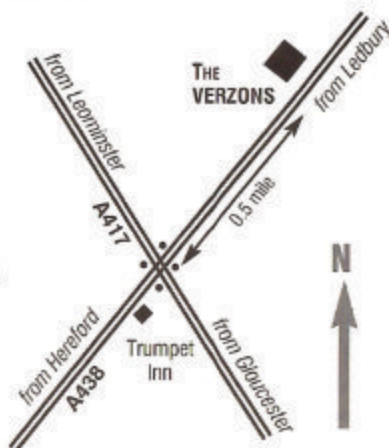
Transport links to the canals.

Meetings are held at **The Verzons Inn**, Trumpet, nr. Ledbury 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).

PARKING AT THE VERZONS

Please park in the overflow car park - inside the entrance on the right - for future meetings.

Janet has gone to a lot of trouble to organise a superb range of social evenings - please support them - everyone is welcome!



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HOLE!

PART THREE

Part two of this series, in the last edition of *The Wharfinger*, covered the start of the construction of the Over Water Supply Project, with large amounts of material being excavated. Where did it all go? Well we just happened to have another project running simultaneously at the front of the site which needed a lot of muck, or was it the other way around:-

THE WHARF HOUSE CAR PARK

Well we may not have a Wharf House yet (the building that will replace the decrepit Lock Cottage), but we do already need a car park. The provision of suitable car parking on site might be one of the least interesting parts of our work,

but it is critical for us to live in harmony with the residents at Stauntons Hill that we make full and proper provision. That does not just mean having sufficient car parking for our future needs, but also ensuring that it is done in as attractive a manner as possible. All of which must also be in the long-term interest of the Canal Trust as well.

The Wharf House Car Park is situated on the land between the cottage; the A40; the main site access road, and the River Severn. The access had already been built for us by Swan Hill Homes in the form of the turning head adjacent to the cottage – it was not put where it was by accident! Swan Hill's groundworks contractor, CJL Construction, had last year built the bund down the edge of the access road, so that all our work in June would be screened from the access to Stauntons Hill.

The car park formed a crucial part of the planning application for the new Wharf House building which Swan Hill Homes will be building later in the year. The only place to put the car park was partly within the flood plain, and this involved building the level of that part of the land up to well above flood level. To gain agreement to do this you have to replace every cubic metre of flood storage



Photo: Roy Jamieson



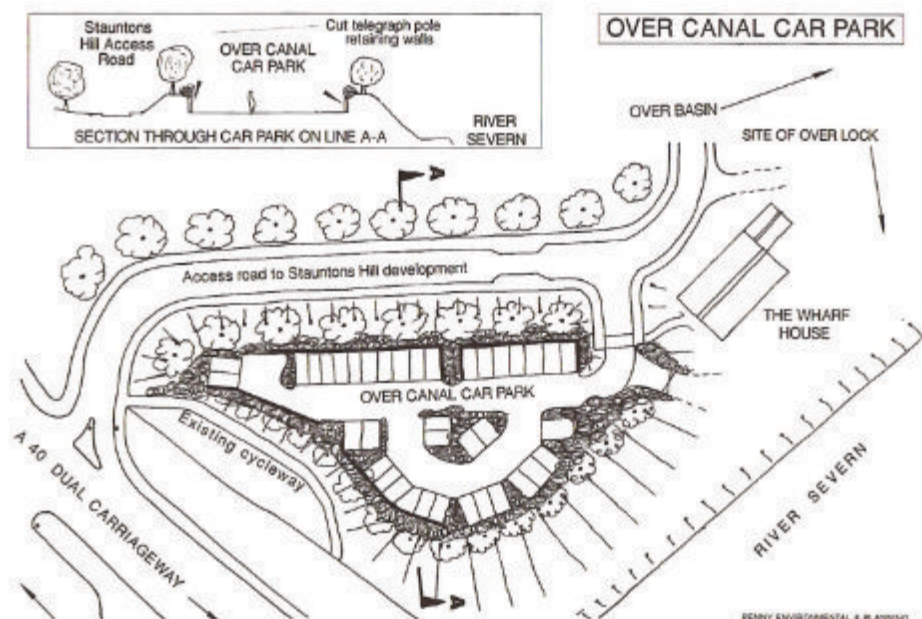
Volunteers at Over plant the banks of the new car park as effective screening.

capacity you remove. It is no accident that our work in June involved lowering the level of other areas of the site – we literally ‘moved a hole’ from one end of the site to the other! Once we have finished on site the Environment Agency have confirmed that we will have actually created a net increase in flood storage capacity. In a future edition of The Wharfinger we will look at some of the other works undertaken at Over to achieve this, such as the restoration of the Mill Race. All these works were not just done for the obvious reasons, all were planned specifically to permit us to build The Wharf House Car Park . . .

As part of the major work in June and July Keyway took on the responsibility for constructing the landform for the car park for the grand contract price of one penny! This involved the provision of a dozer and driver for a week compacting and shaping the material that we were placing having been excavated by our

team from elsewhere on site, and placing the additional material that Keyway were shipping in, as well as reshaping the back face of the existing bund. By the end of the first week the basic shape was complete and the dozer left. During the next week we deposited dozens of Volvo loads of top soil on the car park site (from the line of the abstraction channel which consisted of a 3-4m depth of top soil), ready for Keyway to come back in and spend the 3rd week using a 20 ton excavator to undertake the final profiling/topsoiling of all the bunds surrounding the car park. To give an idea of scale, the riverside bund on the car park is now nearly level with the A40 River bridge, ie. some 6m higher than it was when we started.

The space for the car park was limited, and so to make the most use of the area we are installing an approximately 3ft high retaining wall built from telegraph poles driven vertically into the ground



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around much of the internal face of the car park. The individual groups of parking bays are separated from the landscaping beds using concrete railway sleepers. The surface of the car park comes in the form of road plannings which are laid on top of a geotextile membrane to stop them mixing with the soil underneath. We can't just lay this surface straight on the soil however. We need to install drainage across the site to ensure we don't have future problems, and we are also installing ducts to the centre of the car so that low level lighting and a security camera can be installed at a later date, if required, without ripping up the car park surface.

As we go to press some 750 plants are being planted on the bunds and bank down to the river. This very varied selection of plants has been provided by Wyevale Transplants at significant

discount – thank you. They will very quickly grow up to give an effective screening of the A40 from the houses (and visa versa). Within no time at all the car park will be hidden from view from the A40 and Staunton's Hill.

We also want to create a pleasant car park for our visitors to use, so the planting will not be restricted to the edges. The space is divided up internally into a number of bays and considerable additional planting will split up the internal area, and so create a 'woodland car park' in the longer term. All of this landscaping will take a considerable amount of effort, and we would welcome any additional assistance over the next few months either on the ground or through the donation of trees and hedging (contact Maggie Jones on 01452-618 010).

◆ **DRP**

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THE TRADING COMPANY *H & G Canal Sales*

2001 DIARY

PART TWO

7TH/8TH JULY saw the Sales Stand visiting Saul Junction for the Boat Gathering organised by the Cotswold Canals Trust. A fine, hot morning saw us set up the stand next to the Royal Navy travelling recruitment articulated vehicle (*more of which anon*). A brisk start to trading was pleasing, which was followed by over two hours of sheeting rain and a further period of less severe precipitation! This rather dampened everything and everybody, especially the visiting dignitaries. Sunday, however, turned out to be dry, if cloudy. The local populace turned out to view and the day was profitable, albeit foreshortened by the above RN vehicle needing to leave site just when business was accelerating. This meant that our stand had to be not merely dismantled, but packed away, as anywhere we could have moved was required by the juggernaut for manoeuvring. We have promised Cotswold CT to return next year provided we are not near any large vehicle or Wetlands and Wildlife Trust Stand (their tent blew away in the high wind just before the Saturday storm)!

An interesting lesson was learned about anchoring our gazebo (3m x 3m). Rather than pegging down, difficult on a hard standing, it is better to hang weighty bags from the roof corners. This works extremely well - *such bags will be standard kit for future events*. They will however need filling with suitable material before suspending them (obviously no problem at Over!!!) Grateful thanks to Barbara and Ray Moses, Derek and Taryna Weaver for

helping to staff the stand and Caroline Jones for taking home what could not be packed in Brian and Janet's car (Ray and Barbara having brought the stock, Brian and Janet, the gazebo and stand).

Bearing in mind the percentage of damp venues we seem to attend, a vacancy exists within the Trading Company for a good weather fairy. Applications please to the Trading Company Chairman. *References will be required!!!*

21ST/22ND JULY took us to Tewkesbury Marina with our good friends from the Inland Waterways Association's Gloucester & Hereford Branch. The writer enjoys this venue (apart from its proximity to the bar) which enables him to meet IWA branch members who also support our Trust. A number of VIP visitors, including several mayoral parties and Sonya Rolt were present and the opportunity was not lost to paddle our canoe. A good weekend, thanks to help from Nigel, Judy & Max Street, Ray & Barbara Moses and Caroline Jones. A big thank you also to IWA Gloucester & Hereford Branch for their donation of £150 towards our restoration work.

The following **SATURDAY, 28TH JULY**, we erected a local display in Maylord Orchards Shopping Centre in Hereford, to spread the word about our progress on canal restoration. Generous donations were received from the general public and we sold a fair number of Grand Holiday Draw tickets. Thanks to Pat & Dick Skeet, who put in some time, in spite of what sounded like a hectic weekend ahead of them, Heather Worth, Brian Fox, Derek Gray, Derek Weaver and Cliff Penny who all took a share of the long but positive day. What did come over was the local awareness of the canal and the wishes of the visitors to our stand to see the canal back in navigation, particularly within the City. Herefordians obviously have long memories!


SUNDAY 5TH AUGUST – hooray, the weather men got it wrong *OR* we do have a good weather fairy! We spent a warm, almost balmy day at Hereford Racecourse, courtesy of Hereford and District Preservation Society at their annual Steam and Vintage Rally (the sun shining on the righteous, maybe?). A very fair turnout from the enthusiasts and general public to view some excellent examples of both categories of exhibit. Also, we hope, they came to see us! As a result, fair Sales figures were achieved, thanks to the set up and manning help from Tom and Charlie Bennett, Derek Weaver and Dick Skeet.

SATURDAY 18TH AUGUST – Tibberton Flower Show & Village Fete. An afternoon event. *"It has not rained on the day of our flower show for 44 years"* Mike Bowden said. Ha!!!! Fortunately the show field has no drainage problems and the villagers supported their Horticultural Society very

well. We, as a result, produced fair sales figures and expect to get more memberships. *All that remains now is to dry out the gazebo.*

The IWA National Waterways Festival was this year held at Milton Keynes. This venue started for Derek, Simon and the writer on **WEDNESDAY 22ND AUGUST**, when we picked up the hire van and packed up most of the display material from Broomy Hill Waterworks in Hereford (our display store, courtesy of Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water). Then, back to load all the Sales stock, delivered by Penny Shetliffe that morning. *Yes - all the Sales stock;* it makes a large pile! On the Thursday, Derek drove said vehicle to Milton Keynes, where most of the Sales team were waiting to set things up to the designed layout. Many hands make light work. The H&G Canal Trust Stand was staffed by fourteen volunteers, working short shifts, which was essential, considering the temperatures on three of the four days. This enabled off-duty personnel to look up old friends, take refreshment or just do their own thing. *(Do not believe any tales you hear- your correspondent did not spend all his off duty time in the beer tent, however good The Tring Brewery bitter!!)*

The financial return was very good and the additional displays were well received. These new features, plus the general stand format, products and "nice people" resulted in us being awarded a commemorative plaque from Canal Boat and Inland Waterways, who judged our stand 'Best non trade in Show'. A comment was received from another canal organisation - *"Well done, it will be difficult to cap this"*. Your correspondent's reply was *"Thank you - watch this space!"* [Canal Boat and Inland Waterways carried a photo of the presentation in their October issue.] We were also able to make good contacts relating to extra, much needed restoration plant, new sales



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products, new display ideas etc. At the close of the show, knowing the mayhem which always occurs when all exhibitors want to get their vehicles onto site at the same time, the team packed up our kit in the marquee, ready to load the next morning and travel home. The return journey and unpacking completed an eventful week.

Grateful thanks to Derek and Taryna, Simon, Kelly and Matthew, Des and Lesley, Ray and Barbara, Elizabeth, Caroline, Steve and Tony for their individual and collective contributions towards making this a very enjoyable, as well as profitable, venue.

This year saw a good increase in the number of Grand Holiday Draw tickets sold, both before and at Milton Keynes. People must like the new colour and design. Des Pick enjoys persuading people to support us by buying our GHD tickets (and is very good at it!!). I can reveal that this year he increased his personal 'bag' by nearly 30% from an already impressive number last year. Well done Des. The winning tickets in the Grand Holiday Draw were picked by Stephanie Horton, a director of River Canal Rescue, ably supported by her MD., Trevor Forman. [See page 30]

NWF 2002 is at Huddersfield, a little further afield than the last three years! Janet will be pleased to hear from anyone wanting to volunteer to help staff our Sales & Display Stand there. Talk to any of the above; we have a good time, wherever we go.

SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER took The Trading Company to Newent, for the annual Onion Fair, which takes over the entire shopping area of the town. Tom Bennett organised our stand, helped by Penny Shetliffe, Brian Fox and Chris Blunden. Liz and Nigel Bailey came over from Gloucester to join the team. A good

day and bottom line, plus a lot of interest from local residents and nearby landowners.

SATURDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER – we supported Herefordshire Archaeology with our display stand in College Hall, Hereford. The meeting was very well attended for presentations by Andy Boucher (Archaeological Investigations Ltd) and Julian Richards (of Meet The Ancestors fame) and the audience took considerable interest in our display before and after the speakers.

SUNDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER found us at Oxenhall Village Hall for our annual Oxenhall Open Day, enabling people to see how we are progressing at House Lock and the surrounding area. Visitors to the village hall found our Sales and Display Stand plus a refreshment area. A pleasing number of visitors requested guided tours of the immediate area and donations for the tour were gratefully received. Unlike last year, the weather was dry, if overcast. Pleasing figures for sales, donations and refreshments resulted. The event was well staffed by Liz, Barbara, Janet, Penny, David M., as well as your correspondent. Thanks to all helpers, not forgetting members and friends who donated cakes, scones, gateaux etc.

The last four venues of our trading year will be reported in the spring edition of The Wharfinger. These will be Ashby Canal Festival, Hereford Model Exhibition, our own Ledbury Craft Fair and the Leominster Canal Annual Event. **This will bring our total of venues for 2001 to twenty, only one less than last year.** Well done to everyone who helped in any way. The above figure does not include Sales events at Over, 10 in total, at which Liz Bailey and her team also provide a Sales Stand to match the particular purpose of each event there. Well done Liz and team.

◆ **BM**

A Day at **Droitwich!**

On Sunday 5th August a small band of our regular volunteers decided the time had come to have a day off from Over. They say that a change is as good as a rest - so they spread their wings and undertook some voluntary canal restoration work elsewhere on the inland waterways network. Jonathan Mulcaster tells the story of an unusual day out helping to restore another canal ...

Seven volunteers willing to work at Droitwich were unwillingly directed to the site by David Penny! When we finally arrived, we were given a short brief on what was needed. I immediately noticed two features of the site, which were to be a major source of amusement throughout the day. Firstly, there seemed to be a small ditch across the site, between the third lock and the site hut. There was scaffolding in the third lock, but the lowest horizontal bars were so low that you had to bend double to walk along the lock.

Paul Brown was the first of our



 H & G volunteers join the WRGies refacing the lock chamber



Photo: Maggie Jones

 View across the Hanbury Locks' Site, at Droitwich, towards the No. 2 Lock.

volunteers to reach the site. He thought that he'd impress the Waterway Recovery Group volunteers as quickly as possible, so he decided to trip over the ditch! I also managed to trip over the ditch three times during the day. The most common phrase that day was: "Ow!"

WRG had asked for help to build the wall inside the third lock, which had already been laid and taken down again three times! We all stooped below the scaffolding and observed the remains of the wall that we would be building. Nigel Bailey, David Penny and Phillip Marshall spent a good part of the morning cleaning the wall before we could even think of starting to build it. Roy Jamieson and Maggie Jones were given a different job for the morning - elsewhere on the site. Paul and I seemed to spend the whole morning running about the site providing people with mortar and concrete.

Several of us picked up the bricks we were going to use and innocently asked Mike Palmer, Chairman of WRG: "What are these?" We hadn't recognised them,



Photo: Maggie Jones

because they were new! The other strange thing was that we had been asked to build the wall exactly straight, yet the part that had already been built was bowed!

Just as we seemed to be settling in, we heard a huge bellow: "Teeaaaaa!" I noticed that WRG are fond of their tea breaks, since they lasted quite a long time! On the way to the site hut, Nigel expressed his thoughts about the morning's work by saying: "They're so organised, we've been here for two hours and I've managed to lay two whole bricks!" After the prolonged tea break we continued with our jobs from earlier.

Maggie was very pleased that she and Roy were given everything they needed, when they needed it, thanks to me! She pointed out that I'd make an excellent slave. Just before lunch I got a chance to start bricklaying in the third lock with the others. I think I managed to do two before we stopped.

Mike Palmer had a look at our morning's work and exclaimed: "Bloody volunteers, who needs 'em?!" [That's WRG speak for 'very well done' - Ed.]

The afternoon proved to be slightly more successful in the way that there was some actual progress! Several people stood up to straighten their backs and legs during the afternoon and immediately started cursing, as they crashed their heads into the scaffolding. Someone commented: "It's definitely a hard hat day!" Yet again there was a tea break, which probably lasted at least half an hour.

We managed to lay two complete courses of new bricks along the length of the lock by the end of the day. I'm not sure about the others, but a few less tea breaks and we could have achieved more!

◆ JM

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Yet MORE Winners!

Our annual Grand Holiday Draw is a vital part of our fund raising activities. Unlike many raffles we have always ensured that all three prizes were very worthwhile *holidays* – and not just a voucher for a supposed 20% off either!

There have always been a number of factors that are all necessary for the H&G Canal Trust **Grand Holiday Draw** to be a success; the generosity of the holiday prize donors, the sponsorship of **npower** (who pay for the tickets to be printed) - and the many people who sell (and buy) the tickets. Also **Waterways World** who donate a years subscription to whoever sells the most tickets. *Together* this makes a winning combination – to everyone involved a most sincere thank you for raising £1,500.

The winners were drawn by Stephanie Horton of **River Canal Rescue** (the sponsors of our Trading Company's new

Stephanie, from River Canal Rescue draws the winning tickets in our Grand Holiday Draw whilst our volunteer, Des Pick, looks on.



Photo: Janet Mount

golden yellow H&GCT carrier bags) at the IWA National Waterways Festival at Milton Keynes on August Bank Holiday Monday. They were:-

FIRST PRIZE – Narrowboat Holiday for 3-5 people for one week (**donated by Starline Narrowboats of Upton upon Severn**) – was won by Mr G Parish of Letchworth, Hertfordshire.

SECOND PRIZE – Self Catering Holiday for 4 for one week in west Herefordshire (**donated by Mrs A Wood**) – was won by Mr R A Crockett of Feltham, Middlesex.

THIRD PRIZE – One Night for two B&B at Listed timber framed Garford Farm, Herefordshire (**donated by Mrs H Parker**) – was won by Mr M Bird of Upminster, Essex.

The prize for the most ticket sales was won by Member Chris Blunden.

Once again our sincere thanks to each and everyone who made this possible.

♦ CRP

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Mister Maysey

An increasing number of visitors to our highly successful Over Basin Open Days have enjoyed a short boat trip on 'Mr Maysey'. The majority have probably not even stopped to wonder who he was – and why the H&G Canal Trust trip boat should carry his name. Waterways Trust Archivist Roy Jamieson (an H&G Canal Trust Member, and active volunteer) has been delving into the historic records ...

When the young man of 23, so well thought of by John Biddulph of Ledbury Park, a man of 60 of wide experience, partner in Cocks & Biddulph bankers of Charing Cross and well versed in mining and industry generally, was in 1827 put in charge of the Hereford & Gloucester Canal; Stephen Ballard, for such was his name, was taking over from a man who had spent over 35 years in the Company's service. William Maysey after his long loyal service was retiring in 1827 and was leaving a residue of £1,200 to his successor.

Stephen Ballard has been well reported on, with good reason, he was enlightened and to become an engineer of genius, but what of his more humble predecessor described by one writer as "a kind of general faciotum"?

William Maysey did in fact receive many orders from the regular Meetings of the Committee of Proprietors of the Canal Company, who were proceeding with the construction of the canal during

the period 1791 to 1798. For instance on 15 April 1795, "Ordered that Mr Maysey do purchase Mr Deykes oak, elm and ash at Cuglies if he thinks it will be useful to the Company". One of his duties was to make agreements, as was that of Mr Hall the sub-engineer, so at the next Meeting of Proprietors on 22 April 1795, "Ordered that all agreements made by Maysey or Hall be regularly indorsed (stet) and filed". He was also entrusted with the funds for at that same Meeting, "that the coal at Newent be sold to whoever will fetch it at 14shilling per waggon load of two tons at the Pits Mouth, the money to be paid to William Maysey or Robert Hall at Newent who are to give checks for the delivery of the coal." Later that year he was to "endeavour to procure a blacksmith to work at the Colliery" and at a Meeting on 17 June 1795, "but that especial care be taken by Mr Maysey that no bricks be passed that are not well burned".

When Mr Maysey reported on 26 August 1795 that the valve of the Letoff Trunk in the canal at the top of Oxenhall Pool had been drawn up by a servant of Mr Dowell's, prosecution was ordered by the Committee and as a follow up 500 Notices were printed for distribution on the line of the Canal to the effect, "That by virtue of the Act passed for making and maintaining the said Canal, if any Person shall wantonly or negligently open any Lock Gate or any Paddle, Valve or Clough belonging to any Lock erected on the said Canal", they would be "subject to a forfeiture not exceeding £5 nor less than forty shillings. By order of the Committee, William Coley, Clerk." Perhaps it is not impossible that of these 500 printed Notices of August 1795, one or two might still exist? It would be interesting to see such a survivor.

Mr Maysey's next job was to direct the building of the blacksmiths shop on the tunnel at Oxenhall, 9 September 1795. In the same month he was dealing with

James Jackson a contractor and Mr Powles one of the Commissioners of the Roads for the Bird in Hand Bridge upgrading, and in October the Committee was authorising him to put a dam across the Mill Pond at Newent if the miller Mr Morgan prevented, "the utmost possible supply of water" to the Canal.

On 23 November 1795 a Special Meeting of the Committee was convened to see into the "non arrival of the Newent Market Boat in due time on Saturday last and for better regulating the boats on the Canal." William Maysey was ordered to provide, "proper people" at Newent to load and unload the three boats already registered. Also "that it be the business of William Maysey to provide a proper and able horse for towing the Boats", and an extra such horse if circumstances warranted it. He was also to procure the repair of 'The Newent

Trader' so that "she may be ready to come down on Friday next". He was probably so busy with these orders of the Committee that they found it necessary to reprimand him for non attendance from the Meeting of 25 November and that "Mr Coley do inform him that the Committee are highly displeased at such neglect and disobedience". However, in December he was reporting the neglect of James Wakefield, the boatmaster, so causing an extra expense of 4/3d to the Company, which was thereafter deducted from Wakefield's wages.

By 30 March 1796 he was being ordered to forward coal to Newent and to report on its quality to the Committee. This was after the poor quality of the coal produced from the pits on the Coal Branch at Newent. Another possible commodity for transporting on the Canal was identified when the Clerk was ordered to write to all woolstaplers in the two counties, and the Committee told Maysey, "do attend at the Fair at Hereford and wait upon the Dealers in Wool in person". The Committee must have realised somewhat the efforts made by their "general factotum" when on 23 June 1796 they made a present of the three loads of coal he had had freely from the Colliery, after he had made representations to this end.

The works in the tunnel for some months past had been hampered by great amounts of water and when Thomas Glover, who was in charge, was struck down by illness, William Maysey was ordered on 5 October 1796 to inspect them, "and that a pair of waterproof boots be provided for his use".

In February 1797 the Committee were directing the Clerk "to purchase 150 ton of coal, if it can be procured, at 13 shilling per ton", to be forwarded to Newent where "William Maysey is directed to sell it at 16/6d

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per ton". From this it will be seen that things were not well with the finances of the Company and that recourse to any means of bringing in income were being resorted to. The situation becomes even clearer when on 20 October 1797, "*The Committee in consideration of the Resolution of the last General Assembly relative to the Company's Clerks and Officers*" decides to "*discharge Mr Coley, Mr Hall and Mr Maysey at Lady Day next, and Mr Glover at Christmas next*". They go on to say that the Principal Clerk in future will also manage the Carrying business and will, therefore, need to be young and active and thereby able to be obtained "*for a much smaller Sallary (stet) than has hitherto been given*". Their generosity was, however, still in place when at this same Meeting the Committee gave their haulier Robert Miles as, "*justified in his present necessitous circumstances*" one of the Company's waggons valued at £10. Ordering "*Therefore, that William Maysey deliver him the worst of the Company's two waggons immediately*".

On 10 January 1798 Mr Maysey seems to have been in the Committee's bad books once more when he was directed to discharge the boats at Newent immediately and send them down to Gloucester, "*as soon as ever the weather breaks*", and "*that he be strictly enjoined never to detain the Boats at Newent anymore*". They also paid his salary of £20 on 24 January 1798, plus £10 on account on 14 February. Things must not have been as bad as they seemed for William Maysey when on 5 April 1798 he attended the Committee Meeting and agreed to become Clerk of the Company at Ledbury at a salary of £30 a year. The Company would build him a house on the wharf there for his residence, and until a house be built, the Company to pay the rent of one. By 25 April he was valuing the trees

in Moat Meadow which had been purchased by the Company from Mr Biddulph for the Ledbury Basin.

An interesting fragment about the minor players, the people on the craft using this Canal; only half built to Ledbury at so much toil and financial endeavour; was the mention, at the Committee Meeting of 2 May 1798, of Mrs Margaret Skipp and her account of tonnage due, Mr Maysey being directed to apply to her for this payment and reminding him that tonnage should in future be collected weekly. Also, "*Mrs Skipp having applied for the hire of a boat. Ordered: That she be supplied with one at 8 shillings per week*". Her brother in law John Powell, together with her brother Thomas Skyp (stet) of Ledbury, also applied to hire the Company's boat 'The Gloucester' in June 1798. He was to load coal next day.

One of the last orders given to Mr Maysey in this Hereford & Gloucester Canal Committee Minute Book of the years 1791 to 1798, dates from 8 August 1798 where he is directed to use every exertion to complete the steam engine and feeder at and from the Leather Mill to Ledbury pound. This was after the millers Hill and Hartland had threatened actions against the Company for taking water from the Leaden.

The final action for him was to be ordered to take possession of the account books kept by Thomas Smallbridge, who had attended to the Company's concerns at Ledbury from 30 March to 1 August 1798, when he, William Maysey took over, and loyally worked for the Canal Company for twenty nine more years until he retired in 1827. ♦ RJ

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◆ Not Quite ... THE LAST PAGE ◆

Thank you...

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM

Thanks to the generosity of Member Martin Mottram from Salisbury, your Canal Trust now has its own 'all weather Public Address System', thus ensuring that any future outside activity will 'sound just right'. *Martin, we thank you.* ◆ **BM**

HOVER MOWER

Our sincere thanks to Member Michael Wright, from St. Albans, who not only answered our plea and donated a Flymo hover mower, in excellent condition, but also drove all the way to deliver it too! ◆ **CRP**

PLANTS GALORE

We have had a great response from readers of **The Wharfinger** to our request for plants, shrubs and young trees at Over. Thanks to all of you. They are much appreciated and helped to brighten the site on our First Anniversary. ◆ **MJ**

Wanted please...

EASEL/MUSIC STAND

The Trading Company need a small easel, or music stand, to display our new framed pictures at events – Janet Moulton would be pleased to hear from you – (see *Contacts* inside back cover.) ◆ **BM**



Photo: Janet Moulton

◆ Brian Moulton receives a cheque for £150 from Gloucester and District Model Boat Club

ANOTHER VISIT TO GLOUCESTER DOCKS

On August 20th Brian and Janet Moulton went to Gloucester Docks for a meeting of **Gloucester & District Model Boat Club**, at their invitation. The radio-controlled fire hydrant (*see edition 71 of The Wharfinger*) had, at their June Show, collected donations from the general public to be shared amongst local charities. We were pleased to have been informed that the amount collected was such that the Canal Trust was to be included in the list of organisations to benefit. Alongside The Royal British Legion, The Willows Trust and The Cobalt Unit Appeal, the H&G Canal Trust was presented with a cheque for £150. To our Corporate Member friends at G&DMBC we offer our grateful thanks. ◆ **BM**

JULIET DIXON

One of our regular supporters, and a long-standing Member, Juliet Dixon sadly passed away recently. As reported in the last edition, Juliet was one of our most recent tree sponsors at Over. She was a frequent supporter of the monthly Social Evenings and invariably attended the AGM each year. Regrettably she lost her battle against cancer in August.

◆ **CRP**

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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 a shovel or pen.

◀ **Contact any of these names TODAY!**

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

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 Sever 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 which in its turn was closed by Dr Beeching in 1964.

The Canal Society was formed in 1983 and replaced in 1992 by Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership exceeding 900 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 waterway network at Gloucester to the centre of Hereford. A steering Committee of 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.

