

The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Summer 2002

50p
free to members



WHO DOES WHAT?

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Finance:

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Liz Connors

Committee: Brian Fox, David Penny, Nigel Jefferies, *Tom Bennett*, Brian Moulton

Oxenhall Restoration:

Wrinklies Coordinator: Brian Fox

Health and Safety Officer:
Tony Austin-Bailey

Over Special Projects Group

Project Director: David Penny

Secretary/CDM Planning Supervisor
Nigel Bailey

PR: Nigel Bailey, *Jane Jones*

Committee: Nigel Bailey, *Ted Beagles, Mike Bowden, Adrian Fry, Roy Jamieson, Maggie Jones, Wilf Jones*, David Penny

Funding: Nigel Bailey, *Roy Jamieson, Maggie Jones, Wilf Jones*, David Penny

Events: *Liz Bailey, Maggie Beagles, Dot Hicks, Jane Jones, Roy Jamieson*

Executive: Nigel Bailey, *Maggie Jones, Wilf Jones*, David Penny

Wharf House: *Wilf Jones*, Nigel Bailey, *Caroline Jones*, David Penny, *Simon Smith (QS)*.

Liaison:

Local Authority/Planning
Penny Environmental & Planning

Landowner: Brian Fox

Publicity:

Brian Fox

Over/Web Master: Nigel Bailey

Membership:

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Gift Aid: Liz Connors

Social Events: *Janet Moulton*

Support to Council of Management:

Minutes: Heather Worth

Admin. Dick Skeet, Heather Worth

IWA nominated member
Caroline Jones

The Wharfinger:

Editor: Cliff Penny

Design/Production: *Maggie Jones*

Advertising: Heather Worth

Postmasters: *Ian and Francis Roper D and M Gray, S McManus*

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Nigel Jefferies, Nigel Bailey

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

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Committee: *Tom Bennett, Simon Dyer, Ray and Barbara Moses, Dick Skeet, Derek Weaver*

Boats Group

Committee: *Barbara Moses, Pat Skeet*

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

Honorary Posts:

Archaeologist: Ron Shoesmith

Town & Country Planning: Penny Environmental & Planning

FRONT COVER: from a painting of Over Lock by Edward Smith, 1820-1893.
(Prints available from Liz Bailey - see inside back cover)

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STRONGBOW

the pint to
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Volunteers!





One of the undoubted appeals of our canals is the generally simple and functional nature of their architecture and engineering structures. Most canal bridges were built of local materials and each canal tended to have its own individual and easily recognisable style. Locks were strictly functional – generally with no frills - built to do a job. Lock cottages provided a fairly basic standard of accommodation and in their working days were probably rather less attractive than the pretty waterside "des-reses" we often see today.

But most of the Canal Companies, or at least, the more profitable ones, had at least one building which was much more elaborate and designed to exude an impression of wealth and prosperity. This was the building that housed the Company Headquarters - and very grand some of them were, too.

If you walk along the towpath at Oxenhall you can see a (probably !) typical Hereford and Gloucester lock and cottage and, at Coldharbour Lane, a typical H&G bridge, but you will search the whole line of the Canal in vain for the splendid Company Headquarters Building, for as far as I know, there never was one. Rather sad, I think, but then the H&G didn't do wealth and prosperity very well.

So it is all the more ironic that, well over a century after the H&G Canal was abandoned, a brand new Headquarters Building for the Canal is now beginning to rise beside the recently restored Over Basin. **The Wharf House** (*the shell of which is being built, and donated to the Trust, by Swan Hill Homes as a part of the complex Planning Agreement relating to the site*) is described more fully elsewhere in this edition of **The Wharfinger**. It will almost certainly be a larger and more impressive building than any originally built with the H&G Canal.

Like all good canal buildings, The Wharf House will be functional, not only providing a meeting place and headquarters for the Trust, but generating income to sustain the canal in future years. Whether it will also exude an impression of wealth and prosperity, you will have to decide for yourself. As it is designed to complement the rather smart new houses across the road, I suspect it just might.

The New Canal Age really has arrived.

◆ **Dick Skeet, Chairman**

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by Cliff Penny

SUSTAINABILITY!

Many people think that restoring a canal is all about muck shifting, pouring concrete and laying bricks (to name but a few tasks at which our volunteers excel) - but there are certain words that are equally important; none more so than sustainability!

As mentioned by Dick Skeet, construction has commenced on our very own Wharf House at Over. A building that is an excellent example of just how the H&G Canal Trust thinks beyond restoring the Canal to the very real need to promote further restoration and to fund the ongoing maintenance of those lengths that we own. In this edition of **The Wharfinger** we commence a series of articles about The Wharf House at Over - the H&G Canal Trust's answer to sustainability!

GLoucestershire AGAIN!

We know that Members and supporters are increasingly asking (including a number of Herefordshire Councillors) 'when will some more work be undertaken in Herefordshire?'. It is easy to forget very recent and significant achievements right in the heart of the City - two new canal bridges built in 2000 as part of the former School of Farriery re-development. And what an achievement - as they are not on the historic line of the Canal but on the agreed diversion route!

It is also no secret that the former Hereford City Council used Compulsory Purchase Powers to acquire a section of the former Canal line to the rear of Staniers Way, on the edge of the City, when securing adjacent land for a new Park and Sports facility. We are confident that work on restoring this short but important section of the Canal will be under way before too long. The Council have been instrumental in bringing together a number of interested parties (including the H&G Canal Trust), and local residents, to form a steering group - The Aylestone Park Association - to take the whole project on the Council's land forward. At its inaugural meeting our own David Penny was elected Chairman.

Routine maintenance (including repairing a culvert) is also now possible again on the length of the Canal on which we have a legal agreement at Yarkhill - work wasn't possible last year due to the Foot and Mouth restrictions. Brian Moults (see *Contacts, inside back cover*) will be pleased to hear from local volunteers who wish to become involved in this essential work.

BEYOND OUR EXPECTATIONS!

Over the years regular readers will have seen references to assistance given to the voluntary work of the Canal Trust by various businesses, large and small, local and national. We always try and say 'thank you' via **The Wharfinger**.

Sometimes this help is fairly normal 'big business public relations' – which is, nevertheless, most welcome! At other times we know that it represents a very significant disruption to a local business and/or a significant cost – which makes that specific assistance all the more remarkable and appreciated.

Wyevale Hawkins Trees grow very large specimen trees (7–10m tall!) that normally cost many hundreds of pounds each. The business decided to stop growing the trees in open ground and was selling off the remaining stock relatively cheaply (and burning the rest!). Thanks to them giving us a considerable discount we could afford to buy 10 root-balled specimen trees for Over. Challenge – we needed (free!) transport at very short notice. Numerous 'phone calls failed to find a solution – until Hedley Midwinter of **Midwinter Transport** was contacted very late the day before the root-balled trees had to be moved. He re-arranged his planned work, slept overnight in his cab at a motorway service station, and was on site with one of his curtain-sided lorries to collect the trees early the following day - *without any charge*. This is not the first time that Hedley has 'pulled out all the stops' to assist with one or more of his fleet - our *very* sincere thanks.

Thank you also to Luke Chamberlain who lent the Canal Trust a fast tractor and large trailer a day or so later that enabled us to collect another 11 trees from the open ground that had been donated to us by **Wyevale Hawkins Trees** and would otherwise have been burnt – these have now also been planted at Over. Whilst talking about free transport, our repeated thanks to **Ron Mogg** who has been collecting surplus plant and materials donated by the Cotswold Canals Trust for us.

Corporate Member Simon Hayward of **E B Hayward and Company** agreed some months ago to manufacture the four benches for Over at a very competitive price and then went one better and said he would make them for nothing. Then his business became inundated with work and he was unable to fit in the work. Rather than let us down he arranged for another firm to make the benches *at his expense*. Yet another example of the 'behind the scenes' assistance to the Canal Trust that, by any standards, goes way beyond our expectations – *thank you*.

STILL LOOKING...

Our Trading Company received good publicity in both the **Hereford Journal** and the **Hereford Times** (*thank you to both*) following the plea in the last edition of **The Wharfinger** for a new store-room for our award winning display. Unfortunately we have yet to find a suitable home and matters are now becoming urgent. If you have a secure dry store at ground level with vehicular access right to the door in (or close to) Hereford Brian Moulton [*see Contacts, inside back cover*] would like to hear from you. A space about 10ft square (or slightly larger) would meet the challenge!

1,000 AND COUNTING!

Our ongoing growth in Membership means that we have recently welcomed our 1,000th paid up Member. Chairman Dick Skeet will announce details at the AGM [*Tuesday 18th June, The Verzons Inn, 7.30pm – further details on the centre pages*] and make a presentation of a framed map of the Canal.

◆ CRP

VICE PRESIDENTS

Dean Forest Studios



Diana Organ, MP

As a part of its ten-year birthday celebrations the Canal Trust has appointed three new Vice Presidents to join Major Robert Barnes who for some years has been the sole holder of this office.

We are pleased to announce that **Mrs Diana Organ**, MP for the Forest of Dean, has agreed to be a Vice President. Diana is well known as a champion of rural communities and has been a stalwart fighter for the H&G Canal Trust on the political front. In particular, she has taken up the cudgels on our behalf over the issue of the sale of part of the line of the Canal at Newent.

Mr. David Prout will be known to some of our members at the Gloucester end of the Canal as the owner of a thriving business in Dymock and Chairman of the Parish Council. Everyone who was present at the re-opening of Over Basin will have admired his splendid showman's engine which, in more ways than one, added to the atmosphere of the day. Dymock lies right on the line of the Canal on its way between Newent and Ledbury and it is good to know we shall have his support as restoration proceeds.



David Prout

Christopher Jones/The Independent



Duff Hart-Davis

Mr. Duff Hart-Davis is a well known author and journalist having written over 30 books and contributed the Country Matters column to the Independent for 15 years, from 1986 to 2001. Several of his books follow rural themes and his writing for the Independent betrays his love of the countryside and its people. His large illustrated survey of British animals, *Fauna Britannica*, will be published in the autumn. He is married with two children and lives in Gloucestershire, on the Cotswold escarpment, where he keeps Wiltshire Horn sheep.

◆ DS

COMMITTEE *matters*

Cliff Penny reviews three Council of Management meetings so that our Members and supporters are kept up to date ...



JANUARY COMMITTEE

Brian Fox was continuing to liaise with Diana Organ MP regarding the sale of the Willows Nursery Site at Newent. Negotiations were still ongoing with DETR regarding the sale of the Canal corridor that passes through the rear of the site.

David Bick was drafting the next edition of his book about the H&G Canal and we had provided photographs for this third edition. David was also keen to reflect restoration progress in the text and the necessary exchange of information was in hand.

An 'Equal Opportunities' (Discrimination) Statement was agreed [see page 31 of the last edition].

There was ongoing liaison with the Cotswold Canals Trust regarding the gift of weed cutters and a concrete skip. A large concrete mixer was also to be purchased for £100 and another donated to us. This inter-Trust co-operation and support was greatly appreciated.

Herefordshire Council's Parks Department were to depict the H&G Canal's Crest in one of their bedding plant displays to mark the 10th anniversary of the Canal Trust. There was further discussion regarding the nature and extent of anniversary celebrations.

The Membership was fast approaching

the milestone of 1,000 paid-up Members. It was agreed that the 1,000 Member would be presented with a framed map depicting the line of the H&G Canal.

Budgets for the next 12 months were agreed. Our Membership Secretary, Nigel Jefferies, was congratulated on his letter to recently 'lapsed' Members that had increased revenue by some £600.

It was reported that Swan Hill Homes were about to demolish Over Lock Cottage in accordance with the Planning Permission relating to the new Wharf House.

The Trading Company were continuing to plan their presence at events local and national in addition to their special anniversary celebrations. There was a brief discussion regarding the sale price of Grand Holiday Draw tickets.

It was agreed that the Canal Trust should continue to subscribe as a member of the Waterways Liaison Service.

The IWAAC Report on the restoration of the inland waterway system was discussed [see page 5 of the last edition].

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING

A second Council of Management meeting was held in January to review Strategy. Amongst a number of issues

debated a formal 'Vision' Statement was agreed:-

"The Trust's Vision is of a sustainable, fully navigable waterway, with towpath, reconnecting the rural communities between the Cities of Hereford and Gloucester, to bring environmental and economic benefits to both Counties as well as recreational opportunities for local people and visitors alike."

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE

The Chairman reported that Diana Organ MP, David Prout and Duff Hart-Davis had agreed to join Major Robert Barnes as Vice Presidents of the H&G Canal Trust. This news was warmly welcomed. [See page 7]

David Bick was well advanced with the manuscript of his third edition of his book about the H&G Canal. The second edition, published in 1994, was now out of print and our stocks exhausted. It was hoped that it would be published in time for sale at the National Waterways Festival at the end of August.

It was agreed that it would be inappropriate for the Canal Trust to formally comment on the Government's Green Paper relating to possible major reforms of the Town and Country Planning system.

The Honorary Treasurer, Liz Connors, reported that current finances were very limited mainly due to delays in the receipt of promised funds. Steps were in hand to address this. It was agreed that the Canal Trust establishes an account with the Charity Aid Foundation.

There was further debate about the 10th anniversary celebrations and the Trading Company were congratulated on

their proposals. Brian Moulst stressed the need for volunteers to assist.

It was confirmed that the Special Projects Group (Over) were still meeting fortnightly to continue to plan all work on site and that a number of sub-committees had also been established. The circulation of minutes to Council of Management was discussed and agreed.

The first years funds from the Restoration Fund would be utilised to construct the headwall, towpath bridge and supply channel for the Over Water Supply Pumping Station. Restoration Fund subscribers would be invited to a special BBQ and shown the work. [Liz Connors – see Contacts – has full details of the Restoration Fund (also see page 31) and we would welcome further subscribers].

The Trading Company were planning their first attendance of the year – a new venue – Tractor World at Malvern. It was agreed that our award winning display would be updated with some new photo-panels to reflect more recent work prior to the National Waterways Festival.

Pending Tony Austin-Bailey returning to C of M, Heather Worth volunteered to be responsible for the minutes.

◆ CRP

Amazon.NOT.com

At our Over Open Days this year we will be selling second-hand books – not necessarily canal related. If you have any unwanted books taking up valuable storage space, why not give them to us to raise funds for the **Canal Trust?**

If you have a quantity of books in good condition that you would be prepared to donate Liz Bailey would like to hear from you [see Contacts] – or bring them to one of the Over Open Days. *Thank you.*

◆ EB



RESTORATION

Update!

OXENHALL UPDATE

Unlike Over, we do not have a variety of tasks to get stuck into and mostly have to make do with our prime task, which is the rebuilding of one Listed Lock. Last year, during the foot and mouth outbreak, we were forced to move away from the Lock. We concentrated on several minor jobs, like building the extension fence to make our Horsefair Wharf compound more secure and general tidying up, but we are now all once again immersed in stone and should finish the towpath wall of the Lock by the next bulletin.

When I say 'immersed in stone' it is not quite literal but we have just had 3 lorry loads of it delivered, at 15 tons a load, which has now to be dressed for use in the Lock. Regular readers will remember the old canal bridge on the Roman Road in Hereford which was demolished in 1995 (see edition 47 of **The Wharfinger**) and the stone saved for future use by the Canal Trust. Since then it has been stored at Broomy Hill water works in Hereford (thanks to **Welsh Water**) awaiting a suitable use.

The Lock at Oxenhall has been devouring stone at an alarming rate so that all the stone from our other sources is just about exhausted. The £300 that it cost to transport from Broomy Hill is a lot of money for the Trust but peanuts to what new stone would have cost and we are hopeful that there should now be enough to finish the lock. Unfortunately, the bad news is that it has a rough finish and we now have to cut and dress

virtually every stone to give a smooth face before it can be incorporated into the lock structure. This is nothing new as up until now we have taken most of the stone to a saw mill in the Forest of Dean but we are now hiring a large saw bench so that we can cut much of the stone ourselves. Of the 45 tons rescued from the old bridge at least 50% of it is waste, being rubble infill, and is no use for restoring the Lock, but if anyone wants some good sized rockery stones then please contact me and we can do a deal to assist Trust funds!

You might imagine that working with so much stone would be rather boring but most of our gang have been around for a couple of years at least and I think they still look forward to their day out in the fresh air on a Tuesday. Working with stone on a Listed structure means that each stone has to be individually cut to match the original courses so there is always someone engaged on this final precision cutting and shaping with the portable stone saw. Others may be using a variety of other tools to cut away any bad stone, whilst someone else has the job of setting the stones in place or mixing the mortar to our very precise specifications. These jobs are swapped around as much as possible so that everyone gets a new challenge, and training is given to those without the necessary skills. Why not come along on a Tuesday now that summer is here and we'll see what you are made of?

Some time and money has been spent on renovating a trailer which has been

standing in the compound at Oxenhall for some years and we thank Dave Gilman for all his efforts. We have several jobs lined up for it in the near future so it should be money well spent. Thanks also go to **Les Lane's Garage** at Gorsley for welding the bucket on our tractor - we can now actually put some gravel in it without it falling out of the bottom!

An Officer from **Forest of Dean Council** recently called in to view our progress on the Lock and was pleased with what he saw. We discussed the phasing of any more grants which we hope will be available in the future and are indeed grateful for our annual allocations already received from FoDDC. We naturally do not charge for our labour and so far the stone we have used in the lock reconstruction has been free but considerable expense is incurred by the Trust in purchase of sand, cement and lime, stainless steel tie rods and of course in getting the stone dressed.

While on the subject of funds for restoration of the Canal, we have just found a way of being paid for doing restoration work (of a sort) on two Canal bridges. **Herefordshire Council** are responsible for the maintenance of Skew Bridge and Middle Court Bridge on the road through Monkhide. It was suggested that the Trust may like to do some work, under contract, to clear years of accumulated ivy and brambles from those bridges and the immediate area around. The work was urgent and we submitted a bid, which was accepted, and everything was completed before the nesting season started in March. Brian Moulton was pleased to take on the job with the help of a few of the new volunteers at the Hereford

end and it is hoped that our successful completion may lead to further bridge contracts along the line of the Canal.

Other maintenance work planned on the section owned by Mrs Oram, on the other side of the main road, has once again been halted by a surplus of water in the canal at that point which meant access to the bed was impossible. Plans are still in hand to plug the long-standing leak and remove willow saplings before they become too big. Please contact Brian Moulton if you are interested in working on this site (or anything else which may arise in Herefordshire); or myself (Brian Fox) for the Oxenhall area.

◆ **BF**

PROGRESS AT OVER

You may have noticed our work continuing on the Over car park. We have laid the drains and profiled the surface so that all water runs to a point near the centre and then safely soaks away. We have landscaped the entrance, built a retaining wall from telegraph poles and wooden sleepers. We are now laying out the parking bays using



Photo: David Penny

◆ New trees landscape the car park at Over



London WRG joined us to continue work on the pump channel and silt trap brickwork

donated concrete railway sleepers. At a third of a ton each they are pretty difficult to move around. Some of them need to be sawn – quite a task even with a brick saw.

Working in the car park through the winter has been tough – it's that notorious Over mud! So it's a relative pleasure to be working there now the weather has improved.

We managed to keep the excavator "Blue" for a few more weeks than expected so we have now completed the excavation of the mill race, in two sections either side of the water supply inlet. The most recently dug section has now been landscaped and surrounded by young trees, thanks to a grant from **Tewkesbury Borough Council**. We seem to be in exactly the right place too. We found some of the clay which had originally ensured the channel was waterproof – 750 years ago! On a platform on the canal side of the mill race we've placed a large log as a seat. Once our building materials have all been used or moved, and once some grass has grown, it's going to be a lovely spot to sit and watch the river flow by.

Work has continued on the ducting and manholes on "our side" of the

'Bailey' bridge. At the same time, the ground between the headwall and the pump shaft has been excavated. The final half concrete ring has been manoeuvred (well done Wilf!) into place to act as a silt trap and the concrete has been poured ready to build the brick channel which will carry water from the shaft to the Canal. Now the channel is complete we have added a bridge so that the towpath can pass over the top.

We resolved that early in the year we would try keeping the blanket weed at bay by using our stack of barley straw. For a while we were stumped for an economical way to obtain netting so that we could make a couple of giant straw "sausages". Fortunately, Rob Keen from **Over Farm Market** came to the rescue giving us a supply of the netting he uses for wrapping Christmas trees (thank you). By the next edition of **The Wharfinger** we will know how successful we have been.

During the last few months Roy Jamieson has been building new windows for Mister Maisey. He has made five new frames and fitted new perspex so that our trip boat now has smartly painted windows which you can actually see through.



The concrete sleeper bridge is installed over the channel



Photos: Maggie Jones and David Penny

This month we have said goodbye to Jonathan Mulcaster. He's been helping us for a year now as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award and he's been a big help to the team, happy to do whatever was asked of him. During the winter we've also had help from Nick and Richard, doing their Bronze awards and we still have Ollie, working on his Silver. We have to take care that we are not using machinery on the days the youngsters are with us so they have been of greatest help on the "gardening" side of our activities. They've also had an introduction to some of our mainstream tasks like bricklaying.

We were determined to have smarter road signs for Open Days this year. Our Duke of Edinburgh helpers cut a dozen (re-cycled) boards to a uniform size. They helped paint them and then sprayed on the lettering using stencils. Each is fixed to a post so we can easily place them at the roadside and collect them in again. Having used them once for the first Open Day of the year they seem to be succeeding. A number of visitors came to the site simply because of the road signs.

One of the items we rescued from the hospital was a large steel cabinet. We intended it to be used as a tool store, the

only snag being that it had no roof. Fortunately, Pete Sayce, a new volunteer, has his own welding equipment and he has now fixed the roof in place and got the doors into working order. It will be greatly superior to our previous arrangement with tools piled on top of each other in a steel chest. We should even be able to keep the new store tidy.

If you've driven into Gloucester recently you've probably noticed that the Lock Keeper's Cottage has been demolished to make way for the replacement building (The Wharf House). If all goes according to plan, by late summer the building should be ready for the hand-over to us to fit out internally. That is going to be a tremendous challenge on a very tight budget! We will particularly need the skills of various tradesmen such as electricians, plumbers, plasterers and carpenters so if anyone who would like to help, please respond to our volunteer Project Manager Wilf Jones' request on page 25.

The demolished Cottage has provided us with a further supply of bricks to recycle. That, of course, means more pallets are needed to stack them on and it occurred to me that **Grahams Builders Merchants** had stopped

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delivering pallets to us about a year ago. As it happened, that did not matter at the time but now that we could do with more, I decided to phone and see if they could resume deliveries. I soon discovered why the source of pallets had dried up. My contact's office had been re-decorated and the note with my name and phone number had been painted over!

Work stopped for a few minutes on a recent weekend while we watched a heron consume the nine-inch fish it had just caught in the very swollen and muddy water of the Leadon. The real puzzle was how the bird had managed to see the fish in the first place.

We keep a Log Book to record the work done on site and one recent entry about Fudge, the cat, is worth a mention. Fudge lives at Staunton's Hill but whenever we are working Fudge is never far away. We've got so used to this that one Saturday's list of jobs accomplished included the concerned comment: "*Haven't seen Fudge all day*". All turned out to be well because, in a different handwriting, is another note: "*Fudge spotted at 4.20 pm*".

◆ NB



Photo: David Penny

► Our most regular volunteer, Fudge

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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.

JUNE 18TH *Note: 7.30PM start*

Annual General Meeting

Members and friends will be made very welcome.

JULY 16TH *7.30PM for 8PM start*

The Macclesfield Canal - *Tim Boddington*

Tim tells us about his local waterway.

AUGUST 20TH *7.30PM for 8PM start*

Natter and Noggin

SEPTEMBER 17TH *7.30PM for 8PM start*

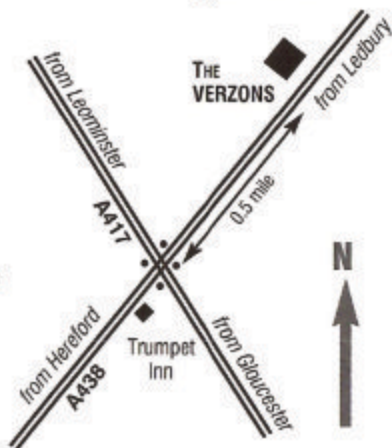
Somersetshire Coal Canal - *Roger Halse*

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 all meetings.

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



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST

WORKING TOGETHER IN THE PRESENT, TO REVIVE THE PAST, AND SECURE A BETTER FUTURE

to be held on **TUESDAY, 18TH JUNE, 2002**

at the **VERZONS COUNTRY INN,**

TRUMPET, NEAR LEDBURY, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM.



ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 28TH FEBRUARY 2002

AGENDA

1. Welcome and formal opening of the meeting
2. Chairman's Report
3. Group Reports
4. To receive and approve the report of Council, the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Trust (and associated Company) for the year ended 28th February 2002, Report of the Honorary Auditor thereon, and the Report of the Honorary Treasurer
5. To Appoint the Auditors of the Trust (and associated Company)
6. To Re-appoint those Council Members retiring by rotation who offer themselves for re-election:-

Tony Austin-Bailey; Cliff Penny; David Penny

7. To note that the following co-opted Member of the CofM has been Nominated a Director of the Canal Trust:-

Caroline Jones

8. Close of Formal Business



ANNUAL REPORT



This is the tenth Annual Report of the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust Limited** [a non-profit distributing company (formed in April 1992, No.2704407), which is a Registered Charity (1010721) and of the wholly owned **Trading Company - Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (Sales) Ltd.** (2710215)]. They replaced the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society which was launched in 1983.

The Canal Trust is indebted to its Council of Management, and to the Trading Company Board; during the period under review [year ended 28th February 2002] those listed below have been members:-

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT OF THE CANAL TRUST

(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-02)

Nigel Bailey; Tony Austin-Bailey;
Liz Connors; Brian Fox; Will Frecknall
(IWA Nominee) (r); Nigel Jefferies;
Caroline Jones (IWA Nominee) (c); Brian
Moult; Cliff Penny; David Penny; Dick
Skeet; Heather Worth

(r) Resigned during the year

(c) Co-opted during the year

TRADING COMPANY H&GC (SALES) LTD

(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-02)

Tom Bennet; Liz Connors; *Simon Dyer;*
Ray Moses; Barbara Moses; Brian Moult;
Janet Moult; *Joyce Potts;*
Penny Shetliffe; Pat Skeet;
Dick Skeet; Derek Weaver

Italics in the first list indicates not a Director;
in the second not a Member of the
Trading Company Board.

After the spectacular success of the re-opening of Over Basin, 2001-2 was always likely to be something of an anticlimax and, as the devastating Foot and Mouth epidemic in 2001 curtailed so much of the Trust's activity, one might be forgiven for expecting this Report to be a very short one indeed.

Looking back, despite this, there is much to report. Although several months of restoration work at Oxenhall on House Lock was lost due to Foot and Mouth, the opportunity was taken to extend and improve our compound in Horsefair Lane. Once restrictions had been lifted work continued apace including the excavation and re-watering of 100m of the Canal below House Lock. Work on the Lock itself has made steady progress, although taking longer than was hoped due to the poor state of much of the original stonework. The end is, however, well in sight and we have plenty of stone with which to finish the job.

At Over, which was not affected by Foot and Mouth, considerable progress has been made in various projects including the commencement of construction of the car park and the restoration of part of the ancient Mill Race, and general landscaping of the site. One of the greatest achievements at Over is entirely invisible - the 10 metre deep pump shaft which will bring water from the River Leadon to the Basin. This is believed to be the deepest hole ever dug by volunteer canal restorers - another record for the Over Special Projects Group.

Open days at Over were held every month through the summer, proving

very successful, with a steady flow of visitors, thus promoting the canal and raising funds for further small scale restoration.

The Trading Company's activities were badly affected by the Foot and Mouth epidemic as so many events were cancelled, but new venues were found and by the end of the year the Company attended only one less event than last year and achieved an excellent income for the Trust. Our Membership continues to increase and in February reached 1,000. A successful programme of monthly social events has continued to run at **The Verzons Inn**.

In September, Will Frecknall resigned from the Council of Management. Our thanks are due to him for all his work for the Trust and for Chairing the Council for 18 months. Caroline Jones was

nominated as IWA Representative to the Council and Dick Skeet was elected as Chairman of the Trust.

It is difficult to over-estimate the amount of volunteer effort that is currently being put into the Trust. It must certainly be true that every single day there are people, somewhere, working to further the cause of the Trust and the Trading Company. A far cry from the days of a working party one morning a month!

The H&G Canal Trust is in good heart, and has every reason to be, and this is due entirely to the efforts of our volunteers. The Council of Management does not take the work of supporters for granted and expresses its great debt of gratitude to all those who so freely give of their expertise, effort, time and money.

◆ DS

Apart from the formal business there will be a lively mix of overhead projections and commentary on the successes of the year. Light refreshments will be available. Members and friends will be made very welcome.

Summary (abridged) Accounts will be included as a loose insert (*for Members*) or Members may obtain a full set by sending a large SAE to the Treasurer; they will also be available at the AGM.

Every Member who is entitled to vote at an AGM may appoint a proxy to vote in his/her stead. A proxy must be someone entitled to vote at the meeting. Proxy forms are available from Liz Connors. The forms must be completed, signed and returned to her so that they are received **at least 48 hours prior to the commencement of the AGM**.

We aim to allow people ample time for general questions after the close of formal business. Prior notice of questions should ensure a comprehensive response and would be greatly appreciated.

Note regarding Agenda item No.6: one third of the Members of the Managing Council are required to stand down each year. All those standing down (listed at 6. on p. 17) are offering themselves for re-election unless otherwise stated. New volunteers to serve on the Council of Management are welcome; as reported on p.6 of the last edition of **The Wharfinger** formal Nominations (on forms obtainable from the Treasurer) have to be received between 21st May and 11th June. The maximum size of the CoM is 18 and, unless new nominations bring the total in excess of this number, the above stated Members will be returned un-opposed. The CoM is also empowered to Co-opt Members during the year (subject to the maximum size not being exceeded).

MEMBERSHIP FORM

New member ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift ☐

Please print thank you.

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Tel. _____

Details please of any skills which might assist us in our work? _____

GIFT AID: as a Registered Charity we can increase our income from subscriptions, and any donations, by almost one third provided you pay tax. If you DON'T pay tax or DON'T want us to do this tick this box. ☐

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Please help us to keep our Subscription Rate low and to

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The sum of £ _____* on this day and thereafter, Annually (on the anniversary) until further notice.

*Please insert above the amount of your subscription and any voluntary donation, thank you.

My A/C No. _____ Signed _____ Date _____

(Your name and address to be given above)

This Cancels any previous Bankers Order in favour of the Trust.

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YOU could win a superb holiday whilst supporting us!

Additional Tickets available from: Janet Moulton, at the AGM; or at the monthly Social Evenings; or see contacts page.

Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust - H&GC Sales

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

1st Prize



NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY
for **FOUR** - ONE WEEK PRIOR TO 31/5/03.

Donated by **Black Prince Holidays**

2nd Prize

TWO VIP tickets to The London Boat Show 2003
+ overnight stay at top hotel. Donated by **British Marine Federation**

3rd Prize

Week-end B&B for 2 at timbered farm house, close to Welsh border.
Prize to be taken April - November 2003. Donated by **T&M Plant Hire**

First and third prizes exclude Bank holidays and are subject to availability

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Prizes to be drawn at National Waterways Festival, Huddersfield on 26-08-2002

TICKETS
25p each

OVER OPEN DAYS

Come and join us on one or more of our increasingly popular Open Days or Events during 2002. The Sales Stand, Display and Refreshments are present at each Open Day and you can see the latest progress on site. Alternatively, you can just watch the escapades of the **Gloucester Model Boat Club** or take a free ride on the trip boat and see the range of wild life, such as kingfishers, that are increasingly making our site their own.

SUNDAY JUNE 30TH

Strawberry Fayre

to include freshly
picked local
strawberries
with cream.



There will be **Over Open Days**
from 10am-5pm on the last
Sunday of the month:-

28TH JULY
25TH AUGUST
29TH SEPTEMBER
27TH OCTOBER

SUNDAY JULY 14TH

Over Walk and Picnic. – A repeat of this very popular walk featured in Nigel Bailey's book 'Over and Over Again'. Nigel will lead the circular walk of about 8 miles, which will leave the Over site at 10am. A picnic lunch will be provided on the route and tea and cake served on your return at about 4pm. Cost £7.50p.

To reserve a place please send a SAE with payment to - Liz Bailey, 30, Fieldfare, Abbeydale, Glos. GL4 4WF. Please make cheques payable to 'The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust'. Tickets will also be available at the June Open Day.



TO OVER BY BUS

A reader enquired recently if it is possible to reach Over by public transport. Well, it certainly is from Gloucester Bus Station. Here is a selection of times, which apply to Sundays, and are therefore appropriate for Open Days, through the summer:

Gloucester Bus Station to Over

Operator	Bus No	Time
Stagecoach	325	10.05
Dukes	733	10.15
First Midland Red	32	11.35
Stagecoach	325	12.05

Over to Gloucester Bus Station

Operator	Bus No	Time
Stagecoach	325	1.18
First Midland Red	32	3.14
Dukes	733	4.37
First Midland Red	32	5.14



THE WHARF HOUSE

PART ONE

Although the Canal opened in the early 1790s, it was not until 1831 that the Canal Company built the cottage by Over lock. Up till that time the keeper lived in rented accommodation somewhere in the hamlet.

It was a modest building with three upstairs rooms and two downstairs plus a back kitchen and a free-standing privy. Its most interesting feature was the cellar which was actually a stable for the mules which hauled the boats on our Canal. The first occupant was a Mr John Haskins who acted as lock keeper and ticket clerk. At some point late in the 19th century the cottage was extended to form an "L" shape.

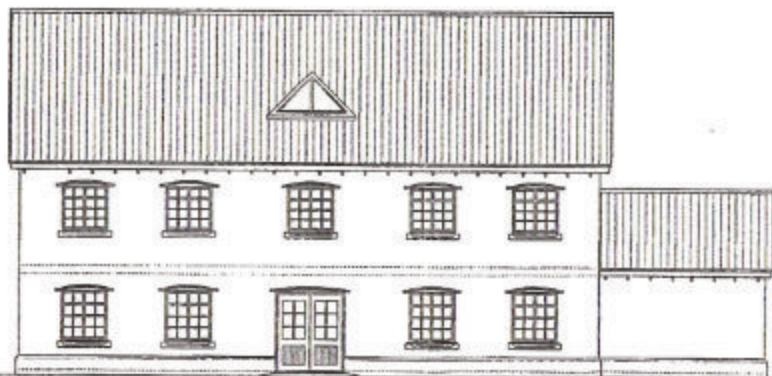
By the 1940s it belonged to the hospital and was known as The Lodge.



Photo: David Penny

The former Lock Cottage at Over

Its last occupants were the Davies family – David worked at the hospital as engineer and electrician while Marjorie was the cook. It was last occupied in 1977 and then fell into a very unsafe state of repair, eased a little by the temporary roof that the Health Authority constructed at an early stage in our



River Severn Elevation East



Photos: Maggie Jones



Now you see it...

negotiations relating to the whole site. Any chance of repairing and restoring it, however, disappeared when a wide split developed the full height of the wall at just the point where the extension had been added.

The original agreement with **Swan Hill Homes and Tewkesbury Borough Council** required the restoration of the old Lock Cottage. By the time that **Swan Hill Homes** took over the site the Cottage was beyond economic recovery. Therefore, the Canal Trust (through **Penny Environmental & Planning**) negotiated with **Swan Hill Homes** a revised Agreement. Subject to Planning

...now you don't. We sadly say goodbye to the structurally unsound Lock Cottage.

Permission, the old Cottage would be demolished and replaced by a purpose-built modern building that would be far more suited to the needs of the Canal Trust.

Provided Planning Permission could be obtained this was a 'win - win' situation for all concerned. **Swan Hill Homes** secured an attractive and in-keeping building on the entrance to their prestigious development; whilst the Canal Trust gained a critical purpose-designed asset that would meet our requirements. Thanks to some very hard bargaining by our (unpaid) representatives the new building would have a



Canal Elevation North



A40 Road Elevation South



◆ The ground is levelled for The Wharf House piled foundations.



◆ The Wharf House foundations begin!

usable floor area well over 4 times that of the old Cottage and be specifically designed to give us a perpetual promotional and income base at this strategic location.

Following discussions by both **Swan Hill** and **Penny Environmental & Planning**, **Tewkesbury Borough Council** Officers and the Councillors appreciated the common sense of this suggestion and resolved to approve both the demolition of the old Cottage and the design of the new building. *The Wharf House at Over was born!*

In February the old Cottage was substantially demolished within an hour

or two of the work commencing; an indication of just how unsound it was. Within weeks **Swan Hill's** specialist contractor had begun the task of piling the new foundations - essential as the ground beneath is either river silt or previously made-up ground - we don't want the new building breaking its back like the old one! All being well the shell of the building will be finished by late summer ready for the Canal Trust to fit out. Follow the progress (inside and out!) in future editions of **The Wharfinger** - or come and see for yourself on the last Sunday of the month Open Days.

◆ **NB/CRP/DRP**



Detailed plans of The Wharf House will be on display at the AGM and Over Open Days.

Elevation facing Staunton's Hill access road - West

Busman's Holiday

electricians

Weekends!

by Wilf Jones

plumbers

painters plasterers

carpenters

and of course... decorators

willing volunteers!

As outlined in this, and previous issues, at Over we have been very fortunate to be having the shell of a purpose designed interpretation centre/tea room etc. built and donated by Swan Hill Homes Ltd as a part of the complex Planning Agreement that governs the whole development. That's the good news, the bad news is that the Canal Trust has to fit out the interior - which is where these busman's holidays "fit in" - excuse the pun!

Enjoy your holiday!

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Barry or Anthea

Tel 0207 221 4870

HOME SITTING PLUS

As the voluntary Wharf House Project Manager, I am co-ordinating the fit out. The plan is to fit out the Wharf House in stages, by asking Trust Members to donate a weekend or two to help complete the various phases, to supplement the existing volunteers on Wednesdays and Saturdays. In addition to general willing volunteers we need skilled/qualified electricians, plumbers, heating engineers, carpenters, plasterers and multi-skilled and single-skilled helpers, or those willing to learn, please.

This will be a major task to co-ordinate, and if you are able to help the Canal Trust, please either e-mail me on **Wilf.Jones2000@btinternet.com**, or phone me on **01452 413888**. I will then plan the weekends and notify every volunteer of the arrangements made.

Accommodation could be provided for those long distance volunteers. Food will be provided on each day at lunchtime, also an endless supply of tea and coffee!

[There will be opportunities for virtually any of our Members to become involved as this exciting project proceeds. Initially though, as Wilf has said, we are particularly looking for those special skills that, to date, we have not had a use for. So please, please do volunteer and support the Canal Trust in completing a building that is going to be the envy of every canal society and trust throughout the country

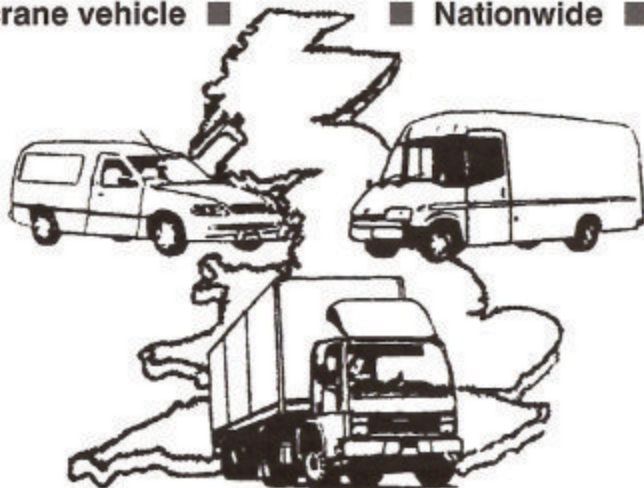
- Ed.]

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Energetic Assistance

Anyone who buys their gas or electricity from **npower** may have spotted a photograph in the Winter edition of their newsletter, "**energise**". It shows Paul Brown with five young ladies who came to work on site as part of **npower's** Community Volunteers initiative. You may recall that the flooded River Leadon prevented them building the otter holt - but they assisted us with the

mammoth car park scrub-bashing task for which we are most grateful.



THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G Canal Sales

OUT AND ABOUT IN 2002

We have booked up a number of visits this year to promote the H&G Canal, and to raise much-needed funds – *there may be more to come!*

Jun 1-3	Crick Boat Show
Jun 8-9	Gloucester Model Boat Show
Jun 15-16	Wiltshire Waterways Festival, Wootton Bassett
Jul 6-7	Saul Gathering 2002
Jul 20-21	Marcle Steam Fair
Jul 20-1	IWA Tewkesbury
Aug 3	All Saints, Hereford
Aug 23-26	IWA National Waterways Festival, Huddersfield
Sep 7	Newent Onion Fair
Sep 22	Hereford Society Model Engineers, Broomy Hill
Oct 20	Oxenhall Open Day
Nov 16	Our very own Ledbury Craft Fair

The usual plea - any help in transporting the display and sales stand, and the odd hour on the stand, would be most welcome.

Please contact Janet Moulton [see *Contacts*] if you can help – or if you know of other events that we could attend – *especially ones local to the line of the Canal.*

◆ JM

Normally the first event of our trading year is **Gloucester Boat Jumble**, for which Ray & Barbara Moses take collection of any nautical and waterway orientated items, however tenuous, to sell for Trust funds.

This year, a new venue became our starting date - **Tractor World**: This event was held at the Malvern Showground, at which we set up our stand on Friday 1st March, ready for the two days of the show on 2nd & 3rd. We really did not know what to expect, as we do not often see tractors on our restoration sites. Mark you, there were a number of vehicles there which

would have quite definite uses for us, all caterpillar tracked machines. In my mind's eye, I could just see them coping easily with our site terrain and ground conditions. Of course, members will recollect that one of our displays shows a caterpillar bulldozer shaving the canal bed at Yarkhill !

The stands and displays were under cover, in what are normally animal show areas. Once the big doors at each end were closed, people heat warmed up the buildings quite well, as did the refreshment stalls. Over the weekend, we made reasonable sales and were pleased to find a lot of interest from the visitors, some of whom were

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surprised at the size of the plant we use.

The stand was manned by Ray, Barbara, Derek, Taryna, Brian and Janet. Our attendance was organised by Mike Hadley. Thank you to all concerned.

APRIL 7th, **Gloucester Boat Jumble** at Gloucester Docks: Ray and Barbara Moses had a good day with their annual stand at the above venue. They were blessed with good weather although it was quite bracing early on. The organisers were very pleased with the turnout of the general and boating public and believe that the attendance figure total was close to the best yet achieved.

Many thanks to those who donated items for sale, with special thanks to Member Tim Burgin who undertook a

round trip of nearly 150 miles to deliver to Ray and Barbara's home nearly enough items to fill the stall!

Ray and Barbara were pleased with the income from the day, which was about 30% up on last year. The Trading Company and Canal Trust recognise the amount of work that attendance at this venue generates, not to mention the time which must be spent on the logistics to get there. *Thank you both very much.*

An important part of our trading year is our very own Craft Fair, held in Ledbury each Autumn. We are still looking for a volunteer to organise this single event – Trading Company Chairman Brian Moulton would be pleased to hear from potential volunteers and to discuss just what is involved.

◆ **BM**

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The H&G RESTORATION



fund

For the equivalent of half a pint of beer a week or a Sunday paper, you could help progress projects such as:

At OVER:

- ◆ **Water Supply Project**
- ◆ **Rebuilding the lock**

At OXENHALL:

- ◆ **Completion of House Lock**
- ◆ **Restoring Ell Brook aqueduct**

Elsewhere

- ◆ **Land Purchase**
- ◆ **Other opportunities that arise**



Restoration Fund members, residents and volunteers at the Restoration Fund BBQ.

Over the next few years we have very ambitious plans for restoration which will require money as well as time. Currently, we are dependent on income from Membership and donations and running additional fund-raising events, especially at Over. The uncertainty of grant funding makes budgeting and restoration planning extremely difficult.

HOW IT WORKS:

We invite you to contribute a small, regular payment each month to the Restoration Fund which will help finance specific projects.

- ◆ Contributors pay a minimum of £3 per month by Standing Order. Gift Aid can enhance this at no cost to the contributor.
- ◆ Annually, **The Wharfinger** will report how the money has been spent.
- ◆ Annually, we will invite contributors to an exclusive social event at an H&G restoration venue that has progressed during the previous year for a talk and/or tour and a buffet meal.

To:- The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust

I wish to contribute to the H&G Restoration Fund:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Please return to:- Liz Connors, 18 St Ethelbert Close,
Sutton St Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF.

BANKERS ORDER TO: *(name and address of your bank)*

Please pay to account No. 11600694, sorting code No. 16-21-20 of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust at the Royal Bank of Scotland, 21, Broad St, Hereford, HR4 9AP, the sum of £ _____ on this day and thereafter monthly on the 1st of the month until further notice, in addition to any other sums already instructed to be paid.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

My Account No: _____

If you **DO NOT** wish the H & G C T to treat your donation as Gift Aid please tick box. ☐

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- Lee and Stort Navigations £4.00
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NEW from

THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G Canal Sales

Over the winter months, your H&G(Sales) committee has been sourcing new products and generally negotiating for our 2002 stock. We have found some interesting articles to supplement the range of items available for sale, which we list below:-

- ◆ A **wooden tin opener**, designed to take the hassle out of ring pull cans.
- ◆ A wooden framed **noughts and crosses game**.
- ◆ A handle to ease the carrying of plastic bags - which also doubles as a foot massager!
- ◆ Our popular **tea towel holder** is now available in two finishes, plain or stained pine.
- ◆ A new line for junior visitors - **finger puppets!**
- ◆ 2002 will also see some new '**cuddlies**' available.

The above items are on the shelf NOW. They will also shortly figure on our web page.

The Trading Company Committee are also working on some **NEW** home grown products, which should please the younger visitors to our stand. Please support us - all profits are donated to the H & G Canal Trust

◆ **BM**



Resting on the bridge at Boyce Court, left to right: Roy Jamieson, Chris Swain, Sally, David Penny, John Wood, Liz Bailey, Lyndon Bowen, Nigel Bailey

It's Not All Work! by Lyndon Bowen

A few weeks ago, the Saturday volunteers at Over were having a spot of lunch and during the conversation it was noted that one or two of the volunteers had not visited Oxenhall Lock and Tunnel, so a day out was hastily arranged. Nine volunteers turned up at Over and when we had sorted out the seating arrangements in the cars, it was off to Oxenhall.

First we visited the Lock then onwards along the canal bank to the south end of the Oxenhall Tunnel. Towards the Tunnel, the canal towpath gets a bit soggy underfoot so wellies were definitely a benefit. When the volunteers had finished ogling over the portal, it was back to the Lock then along to the

Photos: Maggie Jones



Remains of tunnel entrance at Boyce Court

aqueduct over the Ell Brook, which had further inspections from the volunteers.

We noted how well the Tuesday volunteers had done at Oxenhall Lock considering the stringent guidelines from English Heritage they have to work to. Well done everyone.

Next it was off to the pub at Dymock for a bite to eat and a drink before we made our way to the north end of the Oxenhall Tunnel. It was a sad sight not to be able to see the Tunnel entrance at Boyce Court. Some remains were found of the entrance but not enough to see it in its full glory. Maybe one day in the not too distant future it will be fully restored along with the rest of the canal.

There was a fantastic display of daffodils through Boyce Court. Group photos were taken on the bridge at Boyce Court and in the wooded section leading to the Tunnel where the daffodils were like a sea of yellow in amongst the trees.

While walking back to the cars and talking about the events of the day, it was suddenly brought to an abrupt end when it started to rain. This was the only blot on the day. A good time was had by all and maybe a visit to another part of the canal will be of interest next time. ♦ **LB**

[Ed - Thank you for organising the day out, Lyndon. One of the party was so impressed that he returned with his wife the next day!]

Oxenhall Tunnel – South portal



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◆ Not Quite ...THE LAST PAGE ◆

Our friends from
**The Gloucester
and District
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are holding their
ANNUAL SHOW
on 8th and 9th June
in Gloucester Docks.
Admission is free.



ADVANCE NOTICE
FOLK EVENING
Saturday 5th October
Another part of the
**H&G Canal Trust's
10th Anniversary
Celebrations**

Commencing at 7.30pm in
Bartestree Village Hall

Music by
'Meet on the Ledge'

Further details from
Derek Weaver 01432 870 53

Thank you...

MORE BOOKS

Many thanks to Andrew Pyke for his large donation of books for our sales table and to Michael Peach for bringing his books to The Verzhons for sale for Canal Trust funds.

◆ **JM**

ALL MAPPED OUT!

During our Trading Company travels last year Jonathan Davey, the proprietor of Hereford Map Centre, offered to provide a new map of the Hereford central area for us to use as part of our display. We now have the encapsulated map and would like to register our grateful thanks to Jonathan for this generous gesture.

◆ **BM**

Wanted please...

ASSISTANT TO THE WEB MASTER

We are looking for someone who enjoys working on the Web. Nigel Bailey would welcome an assistant to help him keep the website up-to-date and running smoothly. If possibly you are that someone please contact Nigel, [see contacts list overleaf].

◆ **NB**

STILL LOOKING...

We are still looking for a 'sit on' lawnmower for use at our sites at Oxenhall and Over. David Penny would welcome details, please.

◆ **DRP**

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FOR THE NEXT
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19TH JULY, 2002



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www.h-g-canal.org.uk

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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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 Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the city of Hereford, utilising some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. the Canal was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway 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 1,000 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.

