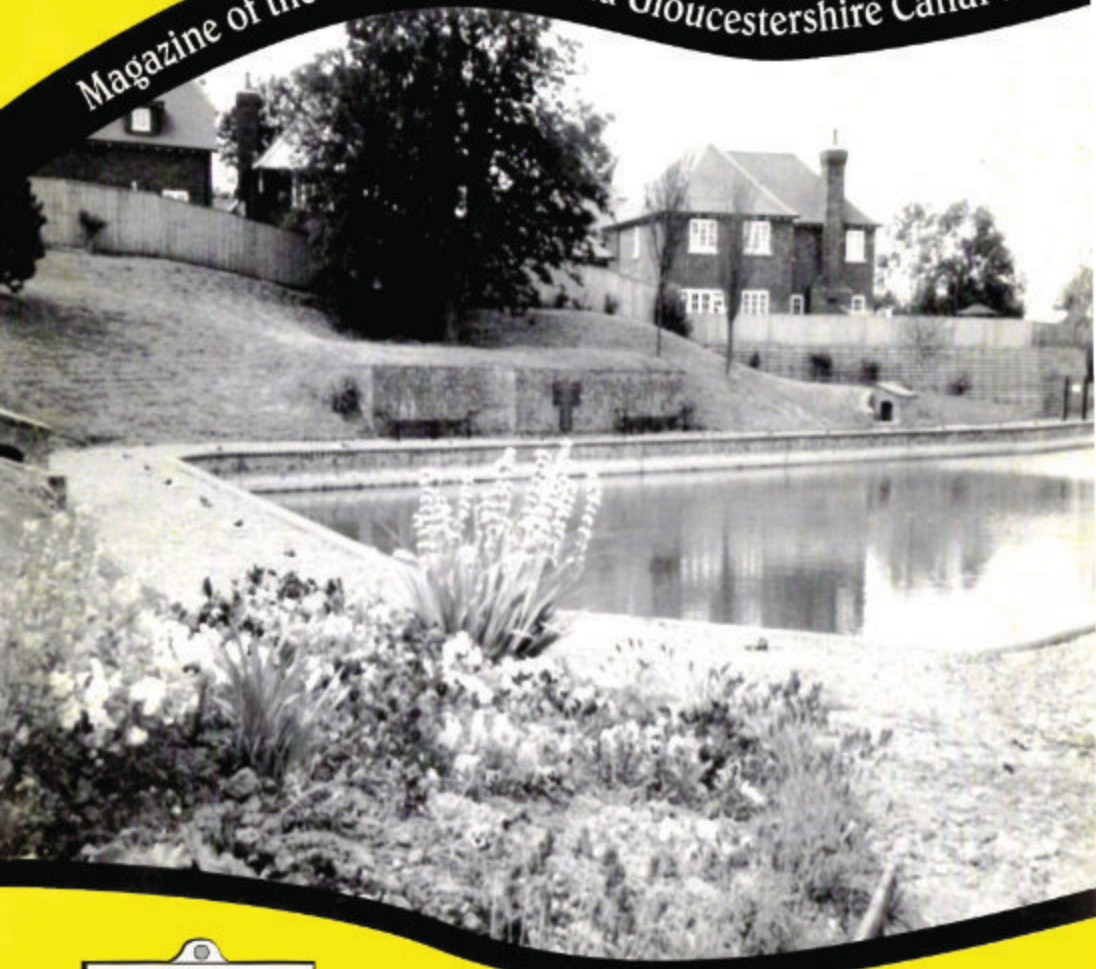


The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Autumn 2002

50p
free to members



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FRONT COVER: SUMMER flowers at the entrance to Over Basin. - Maggie Jones

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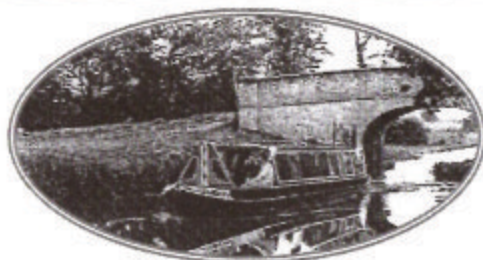
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Pat and I were fortunate to spend the Saturday and Sunday of the Queen's Jubilee Weekend moored in Bancroft Basin, Stratford, at the junction of the Stratford Canal and the River Avon, right in the heart of the town. In a really carnival atmosphere hundreds of people were enjoying the brief spell of summer weather. A constant procession of pedestrians passed us and we lost count of the times we were asked where we had come from, where we were going and whether we lived on the boat. A few yards away, on the river, trip boats were making as many journeys as possible and were fully laden every time. Between them, skiffs and small motor boats, hired for an hour by rather inexperienced crews, dodged each other as they criss-crossed between the banks. The whole scene reminded me of the famous picture of Boulter's Lock on the Thames, but it was interesting to see that, numerous though the boaters were, they were far outnumbered by the spectators on dry land. The vast majority of people enjoying the waterside in Stratford arrived on foot and most remained on terra firma throughout their visit.

On the next day we heard a report that, in Scotland, the road approaching the Falkirk Wheel, Britain's second boat lift to open this year, was blocked with motorists who wanted to see this new "Wonder of the Waterways". The Police had to broadcast an appeal for people to stay away!

Just to complete the picture, when, earlier this year, the Welsh Assembly announced plans to build a new roundabout on the A483 which would have seriously compromised restoration of the Montgomery Canal, such was the public outcry that these plans were withdrawn almost as quickly as they had appeared.

Anyone who has cruised our canals and rivers in recent years cannot fail to have noticed the new waterside developments springing up in towns that had ignored their waterfront for years. Everyone, it seems, now wants to live, work or play near the water. And you certainly *don't* need a boat to enjoy it. In Herefordshire and Gloucestershire there might still be some skirmishes to be fought and won, but it's clear that the public generally is on our side and wants a piece of the waterways action. They want a canal in this beautiful corner of England.

There's never been a better time to get out of that armchair and get really involved! *The New Canal Age really has arrived.*

◆ Dick Skeet, Chairman

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PROGRESS ...

Brian Fox commenced his article for this edition with a comment about what he refers to as the subtle change between our sub-headings of his recent contributions – some being titled ‘updates’, and others being ‘progress’.

Now this started me thinking about how we measure our ‘progress’ as a Canal Trust – which we report to our readers as ‘updates’ by way of **The Wharfinger**. Is it *just* the amount of restoration that has been achieved? So I decided this Editorial should comment on our ‘progress’. Before I wrote it I was just one of a number of volunteers ‘manning’ our display in the heart of Hereford City at the beginning of August.

How things have changed. A few years ago it was “*what canal?*”. This time the only people I spoke to, in a busy morning, who didn’t already know about the H&G Canal were a family on holiday from Germany; a couple from Cornwall, who were only interested in getting a cup of tea (*All Saints Church – in the heart of*

by Cliff Penny

Hereford – has won awards for its innovative incorporation of an excellent cafe within the still very active Church) – and a family from Birmingham who said that they still hadn’t finished exploring the BCN.

Now that’s progress! Yes, I know that there are many of you out there saying that each length of restored canal is progress – but as we have said before, there is far more to restoration than digging out the canal; really, that IS the easy bit! The secret of success is awareness leading to public knowledge and support, and hopefully Membership – something that is critical to us, and now stands at over 1,000. From that comes Local Authority and Regulatory Authority support and from that the essential funding and from that – right at the end – comes restoration! [*Yes, of course we continue with our policy of restoring ‘showcase’ sites and regular readers will know of the fantastic progress on that front!*].

We are beginning to achieve a major objective; increasing public awareness about ‘our’ canal. BUT there is no room for complacency. It is essential that we maintain (and even increase) our efforts to *continue* to spread the word about the H&G Canal all along its length. And, this awareness is equally important *nationally*. So how are we doing there? We reported on



Our Chairman, Dick Skeet (right), presents the 1000th Member of the Trust, Mr R J Powell, of Norton Canon with a pictorial Map of the Canal.

Photo: Cliff Penny



Floral Crest in Churchill House Gardens (the nearest of the Council's floral displays to the Aylestone Site) reads "H & G CANAL TRUST • 10 YRS".

the latest Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Committee's Report in Edition 73. More recently, the map attached both to British Waterways latest Annual Report, and their document "Our Plans for the Future 2002 – 2006", perhaps best marks our progress nationally. This map shows not only the established inland waterways network, the recently completed restoration projects and the next group of nationally promoted restoration schemes, but also a *small* group of others (including the H&G Canal) marked on the map with the legend "Waterway restoration and construction projects being considered."

In our tenth year as a Charitable Trust, to have progressed onto British Waterways 'Plans for the Future' national map is an excellent mark of progress – *but, I repeat, there is no room for complacency!* There is a great deal of hard work to be done over the coming years in advancing our restoration proposals. Not only to ensure that we remain on the national map but also in order to increasingly appear on the local Ordnance Survey maps as a thin blue line – "*canal in water and open to navigation*" – **now that's even more 'progress'!**

The questions from visitors to the Canal Trust display and sales stand in Hereford were very interesting – a very high proportion were really anxious to know "*when will there be some canal in*

water in Hereford City?" They were not really interested in 'paper' progress (important as I can assure you that is!) – what they wanted was "*a bit in water!*". Almost without exception they were aware of what is being achieved at Over and Oxenhall but that was not enough – "*when will you be getting the Canal back into the heart of Hereford?*" was the often-repeated question. As reported elsewhere in this edition we will shortly commence work on the quarter mile length of the Canal, now owned by Herefordshire Council, to the rear of Staniers Way. However, perhaps of far greater importance will be the Council's Draft Unitary Development Plan when that is published for public consultation this autumn. Yes – we are back to 'paperwork' – I can assure you that, ultimately, this will be the most important bit of 'paperwork' that there is in order to "*get the Canal back into the heart of Hereford City*". Working together (in the spirit of our motto) with Council Officers, elected Members and developers we can **progress** to achieve this objective.

THANKS

Lloyd Jones, of Ledbury, has ably hosted our monthly Social Evenings at The Verzons Inn for a number of years. Lloyd announced his 'retirement' from this role in July. Our thanks to Lloyd for forming a part of the team that is yet another way of promoting awareness and reporting on our progress with the restoration of the H&G Canal – whilst giving our Members a much appreciated regular social gathering.

◆ CRP

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GREAT TUNNEL TEASERS COMPETITION

Included in this issue of **The Wharfing** Members will find an entry form for the above competition which is currently being purveyed via the Trading Company.

The competition has been devised by one of the imaginative members of our regular promotional and sales-stand team to test your knowledge of the inland waterways - and raise money for the Canal Trust. All you have to do is solve a series of cryptic clues to reveal the names of many of the canal tunnels that exist (or existed) somewhere on our British canal system.

It's just One Pound to enter and as the "Interesting Prize" to be awarded to the winner has been very generously donated by an anonymous benefactor, all of the proceeds will go direct to our Restoration Fund.

So even if you can't decipher all 75 clues (you'll be guaranteed hours of fun and frustration in the attempt!) give yourself a chance of winning and send in as many answers as you can to "The Tunnel Master" by the closing date of 1 October 2002. The Winner will be announced in the next edition of **The Wharfing**.

Completed (or nearly completed!) entries and payment to:-

'The Tunnel Master', c/o Steve Bence, 35, Lime Road, Southam, LEAMINGTON SPA, CV33 0EQ

Please enclose a SAE with your entry if you want a list of the answers (which will be sent out after the closing date!). Yes, that's right, the ONLY way of getting the answers is to enter (and enclose a SAE, please). Please help to raise funds for the Canal Trust, and have a good chance of winning that mysterious prize.

[Our grateful thanks to Member Steve Bence for organising all aspects of this competition - Ed.]

AYLESTONE

CANAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Launched!

The Canal Trust, in partnership with the Aylestone Park Association and Herefordshire Council, formally launched the first phase of restoration of the H&G Canal in Hereford in mid-August. Previous editions of **The Wharfinger** have reported the long process of the Council acquiring this site, including the length of Canal specifically for restoration.

During the coming winter we plan to clear 100 years of rubbish and undergrowth from the line of the Canal to the rear of the Staniers Way Business Park, off Roman Road, at the base of Aylestone Hill. This work will be undertaken by the volunteers of the Trust in partnership with local residents and businesses, with the volunteers coordinated by Brian Fox.

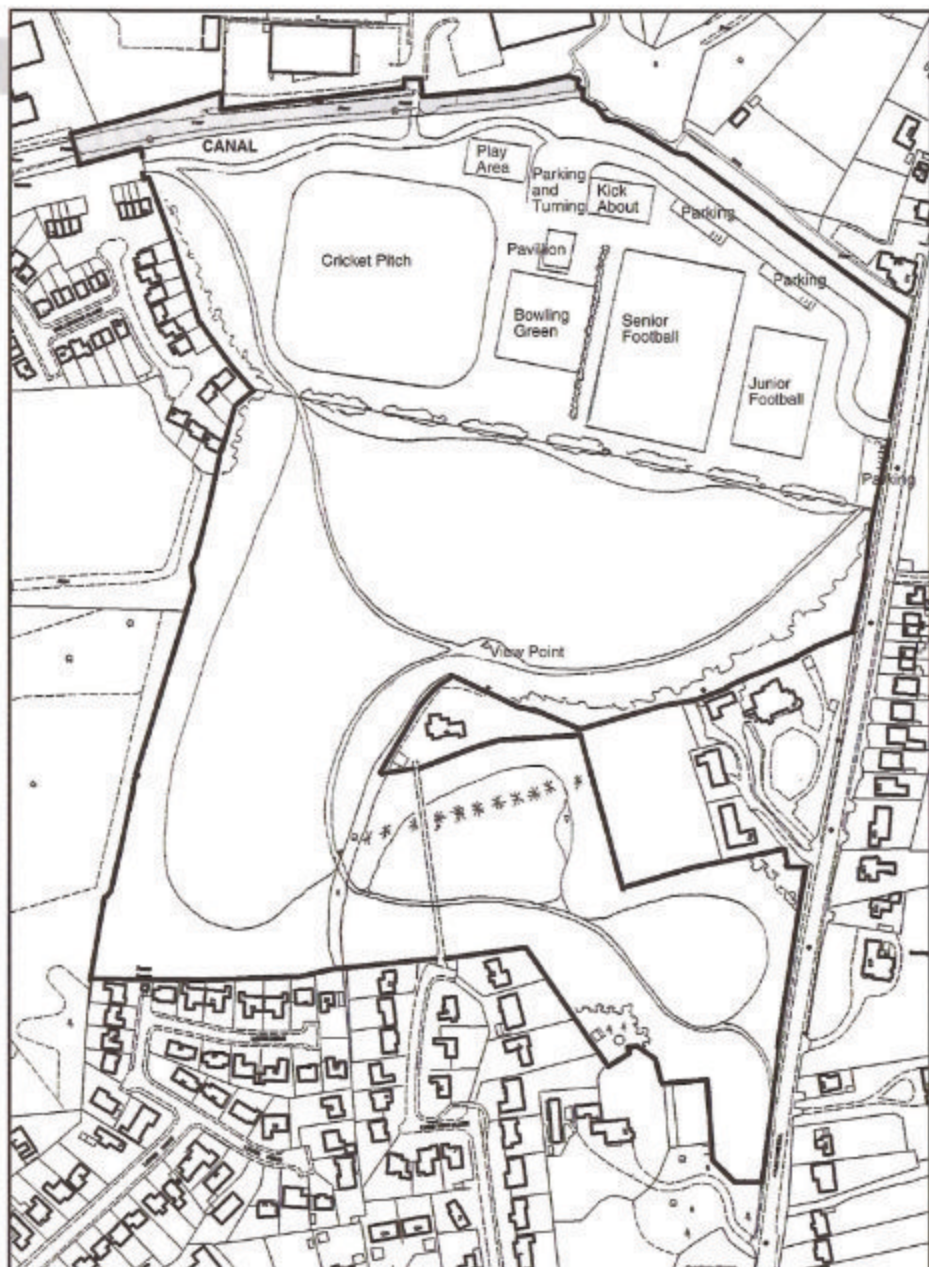
Canal Trust Director, and Chairman of the Aylestone Park Association, David Penny said in a statement to the press to launch the Aylestone Project, *'This is an exciting time for the Canal restoration, and we welcome the opportunity to mark the tenth anniversary of the Canal Trust by commencing work on this quarter mile section of the Canal within the City of Hereford to create a major asset for the whole community. This has only come about due to the forethought and vision of the former Hereford City, and now Herefordshire Council, in acquiring this site and the adjoining land. The restored Canal and planned adjoining sports and recreation facilities will create a major amenity for both the local residents and the wider community. As more of the Canal is restored it will also*

provide a long term economic and tourism resource of significant value to the county. The restoration of the Canal will create an environmental corridor that will eventually stretch right into the heart of the City, with a cycleway and footpath along its towpath with links to the Great Western Way, the Railway Station and a number of residential and business areas, thus forming a key off road route across the City'.

Advance works for the restoration of the Canal into the heart of the City have been taking place for a number of years, with the route protected since 1991. Amongst more notable actions, 1995 saw the former Hereford & Worcester County Council replace the defunct Roman Road Canal Bridge with a new navigable structure on the City Limits and 2001 saw the Farriery College redeveloped into the Hereford Retail Park with a quarter of the site reserved for the Canal and new full specification highway and footbridges provided at the developers expense. This was all within a few hundred metres of the proposed new terminus, which will be located between Widemarsh Street and Commercial Road.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the clearance work at this new site this winter, then please contact Brian Fox on 01432 358 628 now so that he can build up a database of interested volunteers.

◆ **DRP**



**LOCATION PLAN - Aylestone Hill, Hereford
Park Proposals**



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RESTORATION

Update!

At Oxenhall, the wall on the towpath side of the lock has now been completely restored.

and the whole lot graded into the footpath in front of the Lock Cottage boundary. The top lock

Photo: Brian Fox

PROGRESS AT OXENHALL

I wonder how many of you noticed a subtle change to the headings under the Restoration Report in the last edition? At Oxenhall we only justified an "update" - whereas at Over they managed to make "progress", whilst, for the 3 previous editions, it has been the other way round and we, at Oxenhall, have been making the "progress"! Now I don't know whether this is the Editor's subtle way of marking our individual efforts or whether, as I suspect, it was a slip in the typesetting (or whatever they call it these days). I'm sure that both sites consider that they are making considerable progress in whatever they happen to be reporting on - even though, at Oxenhall, it may not be immediately obvious. *[It would be more than my life is worth to 'mark' the efforts of our volunteers! - Ed.]*

However, having said that, I believe there is currently justification for reporting very visible progress at Oxenhall since the last report. The wall on the towpath side of the lock has now been completely restored; the final coping stones being replaced at the beginning of July. The flagstones, which make up the level area at the top, have also been reset

gate quadrant has also been restored as near as we can guess to the original specifications. Finally, the fence along the top of the wall has been reset in preformed post-holes to stop anyone from falling into the lock. The general conditions in front of Lock Cottage have left a lot to be desired over the last few months and I am sure that Nigel Freeman and family (who own Lock Cottage and live there) will be happier now that it is tidy once again. It will also enable passers-by to look down into the lock more comfortably.

Before we move over to resume working on the other wall of the lock we shall be taking stock and spending a few weeks tidying up the general area around the lock. The scaffolding will be removed and all the accumulated debris from the wall rebuild will be barrowed out from the bottom of the lock to reveal the restored wall in all its glory. There is also grass to cut, gardens to weed and hedges to trim - but it will make a change from stonework. The scaffolding and planking will be re-erected along the non-towpath wall just above water level ready to start work. It will also provide a viewing platform for those who may wish to inspect our work at the Open Day on October 20th. Why



Volunteers from Oxenhall and Over cut the stone into manageable pieces and load them onto pallets.

not come along? There is a large car park, refreshments in the village hall and there will be no steps to negotiate at the hall or the lock so we should even be able to cope with a wheel chair.

In the last edition I described the origins of a large pile of stone in the yard at Oxenhall. Well, we hired a bench incorporating a large diameter stone saw for a week and saw off the pile with a day to spare. What a wonderful machine and I wonder why we didn't hire one before as it was so easy to operate. Thanks to all those who helped, including the Over gang, who just happened to be looking for a change of scenery and were between urgent jobs at the time. We now have several pallet loads of cut stone for the lock and tons of reject stone that has been designated as 'rockery' stone. Some stone which was too large for the bench saw will be going to the Forest saw mill for them to cut but we are hoping that overall we now have enough stone to finish the remaining wall and cill. Working should be much faster now that all the stone is faced and only needs a bit of trimming around the edges.

The offers to buy the rockery stone

have not been overwhelming and there are still several tons left. Delivery can be arranged within reasonable distance for an extra charge and every penny raised will go towards the lock restoration costs.

Our resident kingfisher has been spotted idly perched on the jetty in the pond at the back of Lock Cottage – there are several large ponds as well as the canal and brook to keep him happy. Moorhens are nesting once again on the pound above the lock and we are also creating 'havens' for other birds. A great tit nested on top of one of the dumper engines, a goldfinch in the air filter chamber of another dumper and a wren behind an Acrow prop in the lock about 2 metres from where we were working. The whole of the canal corridor is home to numerous butterflies which thrive on the thistles, buddleia and other wild flowers which are in profusion at this time of the year. However, the footpath is still perfectly clear and a pleasure to walk at any time. Be warned that those who venture along it on a Tuesday may be press-ganged by a motley group who are now to be found back in the depths of the lock – *making progress!*

◆ **BF**



Photo: Mike Hunt

PROGRESS AT OVER

If you've driven past the Over site you will have noticed progress in our car park. We've continued dividing the parking bays with raised beds formed from the anonymously donated concrete railway sleepers.

Having got the surface levelled (well, sloping actually, so that it drains) we were ready to lay a surface. The problem was that the most convenient material was difficult to get hold of. The material is road "planings" which are what is scraped off the surface of tarmac roads when they are re-surfaced. So long as the surface is lifted in small pieces they can be re-cycled.

Although there have been several road contracts in the area recently, we had to wait for the re-surfacing at Minsterwoth before we struck lucky. We struck a deal with the contractors, **Keyway**, which provided us with 15 lorry loads of planings. There's a little more to it than just spreading them on the car park because over time they would disappear into the native clay. To prevent this we have laid sheets of a geotextile which forms a barrier that they cannot pass through. The material is quite expensive but it does ensure the car park surface is a permanent one. After cutting it to fit around the complex shapes of the parking bays we should be qualified for jobs at Carpet Right.

One of the mature trees is carried round the Basin to its position on the grassy slope above the wharf wall.

The highlight of work in the car park was the arrival of a dozen or so mature trees which have been planted in the raised beds. "Arrival" is actually a bit of a simplification. One of our volunteers borrowed a tractor and trailer and drove over to Hereford to collect these 15 year-old trees. Back at Over, unloading them was quite a challenge, requiring six people to lift them into place. Some of them were planted beside the Basin and were finished in the dark at just after 10 pm.

The other simplification is "planting". We dug holes for each using the mini excavator and then four of us gradually swung, levered and shoved them into upright positions. The term "watering" also needs a bit of explanation. As luck would have it, this planting period was rather dry so we had an extra challenge.

"Watering" involved filling the dumper with water using our pump, driving carefully to the car park so that the minimum water is spilled and then using buckets to water each tree.



Photo: Tony Peters



Below: A panoramic view of "Mister Maysey" passing the new head wall for outlet from the pumping station. Viewed from Tony Peter's house overlooking the canal.

Alongside: The same area from the opposite direction.

Photo: David Peary

Despite the hard work it is worth it to see these magnificent trees, including Scots pine, black poplars, Turkish hazels and chestnuts, standing in place.

We had one unusual month with a good deal of our activity taking place away from the Over site. We spent a couple of days helping Brian's team at Oxenhall. We were all extremely impressed with the stone cutting bench. With its diamond-tipped wheel it was actually a pleasure to use, cutting through large blocks almost as fast as a wire through cheese.

Meanwhile, our "Wednesday Crew" have spent several days down at Eastington. The Cotswold Canal Trust have given us several lock gates which were surplus to their needs. The only problem was that they are too large to be transported by road without a police escort! Our solution to the problem was to dismantle them so that they could be moved in smaller sections. Not all of the wood is sound but they should give us sufficient to construct two or three "new" lock gates – the first of these likely to be at Over. Thank you once



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Photo: Mike Hunt
Photo: Nigel Bailey

◆ Dave Hurren of the "Wednesday crew" building the manholes at the side of the lock.

◆ Long sausages of barley straw in production.



young trees in the nursery bed and added some anonymously donated Lavender Hidcote to the bed beside the entrance.

Following our mention last time of our attempt to rid the Basin of blanket weed, we are glad to report that up to now, the sausages of barley straw seem to have kept it at bay!

A major part of our time has been taken up with tending the grass which has grown at amazing speed. Charlie deals with the flat areas with his sit-upon mower. The slopes are a bit more difficult. On the gentler ones we can use a petrol mower but the steep slopes by the wharf wall have to be cut with a strimmer. This makes it quite a slow job but well worth doing because the site is now looking very smart – and very green.

◆ NB

again to Ron Mogg for the transport.

The "Wednesday Crew" have also completed the duct-laying and manhole-building either side of the lock, a substantial job which is easily overlooked because all the hard work is buried underground. This enabled them to finish the landscaping between the bridge and the site huts and they completed the job by edging the grassed area with (re-cycled) granite setts.

The middle of the month saw our first annual barbeque for our Restoration Fund members. They, along with a group of residents from Staunton's Hill made up a party of 45 who were shown the brickwork on the water supply channel which is what their contributions have helped to fund this year. Since that visit, the base of the stilling chamber has been concreted and Neil Jones has cut away the steel pilings which kept the water out of the working area so that the headwall now presents another attractive feature on the canal.

We've been planting elsewhere on the site. We know that the original Canal Company planted many thousands of "red osiers", presumably as a cash crop. While Mike Bowden's enquiries have failed to identify this actual willow, we've maintained the tradition and planted several rows of willows near the Leadon. We've also planted several donated trees, increased the stock of

L
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contact
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A.D.I. RoSPA D.I.A. I.A.M.

Phone 01432 270552
or 07761 177529



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, 7.30pm for 8pm start.

SEPTEMBER 17TH

Somersetshire Coal Canal - *Roger Halse*

OCTOBER 15TH

Have boat - will travel - *David Saady*

NOVEMBER 19TH

A Naturalist on the Malvern Hills - *Dudley Brook*

DECEMBER 17TH

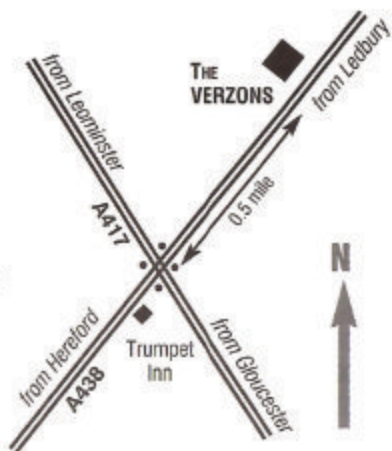
Christmas Social and update on Over

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!



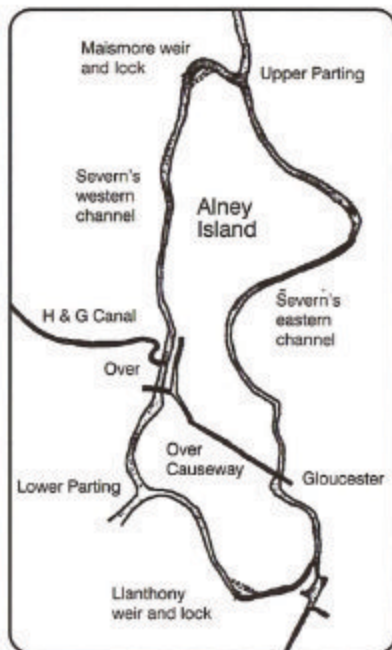
OVER OPEN DAYS

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 & District Model Boat Club or take a free ride on the the trip boat and see the range of wild life, such as kingfishers, that are increasingly making our site their own.

The next **Over Open Days**
from 10am-5pm on the last
Sunday of the month:-

25TH AUGUST
29TH SEPTEMBER
27TH OCTOBER



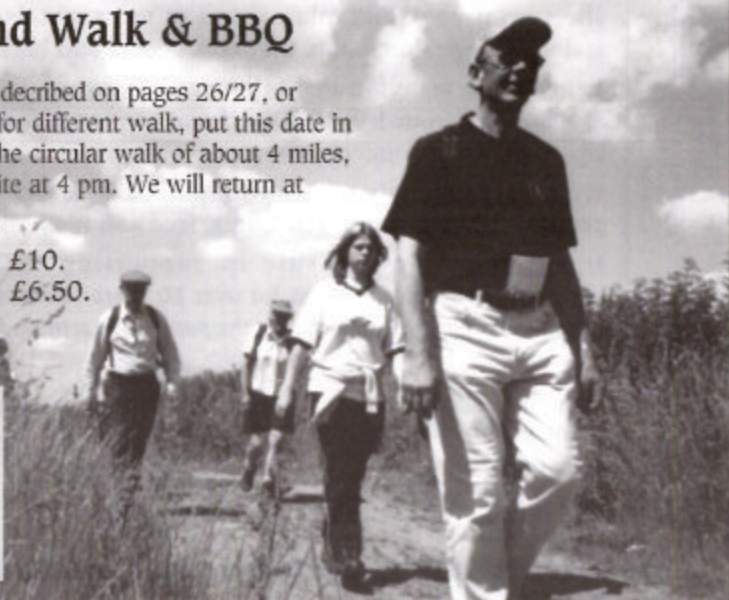
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH

Alney Island Walk & BBQ

If you missed our last walk, described on pages 26/27, or would like to join us again for different walk, put this date in your diary. Nigel will lead the circular walk of about 4 miles, which will leave the Over site at 4 pm. We will return at 6 pm. for Barbeque at Over.

Tickets: Walk and BBQ £10.
BBQ only £6.50.

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 August Open Day.





Civil Engineering Recognition

The Institution of Civil Engineers holds an annual Midland Project Award sponsored by **The Birmingham Post**. The H&G Canal Trust's Over Project was shortlisted as one of six projects in the 'less than £1.5million' classification. Together with the other shortlisted entries in our class we were featured in a special full page spread in *The Birmingham Post* titled "Engineering our Future". The winner of the class was a £1.25million new bridge near Wolverhampton (part of the West Coast Mainline Railway project).

The awards were presented by Institution of Civil Engineers President Mark Whitby at a special lunch in Birmingham in May. Cliff Penny (who is a Fellow of the Institution) attended and represented the H&G Canal

Trust and, together with the other finalists, erected a small display which attracted a great deal of interest.

When the President announced the Award winners in each category he said that the principle was to congratulate everyone for getting this far but to then just announce the winners. However, when he made the Award in our class he said that he '*intended to break a habit of a lifetime*' and single out another project for a special mention. He congratulated the Canal Trust, and all those associated with the Over Project, on what he regarded as an example of just what could be achieved by working *together*. Later, when he brought the event to a close, Mark Whitby said that the profession needed to learn from all of the shortlisted projects – and, by way of example, then quoted part of our 'motto' – "*Working together, in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future*".

♦ CRP

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It has been our pleasure in supporting the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for over 10 years, and we will continue to *work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.* ©HEGCT

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THE WHARF HOUSE



Photos: Mike Hunt and Maggie Jones

As you can see above, **THE WHARF HOUSE** continues to grow. The foundations and ground floor walls are nearing completion. If you are interested in helping us fit out the inside, once the shell of the building is

completed in the autumn, then Wilf Jones, **THE WHARF HOUSE** voluntary Project Manager would be pleased to hear from you (01452-413888 or WilfJones2000@btinternet.com).

COMMITTEE *matters*

Photo: Maggie Jones



Members of the Council of Management visiting Over Basin recently.

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

APRIL & MAY COMMITTEES

OSPG is to produce a design brief for the Over Lock Project and is attempting to secure design of the new structure.

Further proposed changes will be incorporated in the revised version of the High Level Strategy presently in preparation.

Cliff and David Penny, and Tony Austin-Bailey, will stand down as directors at the AGM, but will offer themselves for re-election.

Following approval of the budgets for the next quarter, Liz was given a vote of thanks for all her hard work.

Duff Hart-Davies has kindly agreed to accept the invitation to become a vice-president of the Trust.

The Trading Company will have a prime location at the National Waterways Festival at Huddersfield. Brian Moulton confirmed that he is working on new materials to ensure a

first class display, for which Michael Hunt is providing new photographs and, it is hoped, a new panoramic view of the basin at Over. The display will also include the latest developments on The Wharf House.

JUNE COMMITTEE

A draft of our proposed High Level Strategy is to be presented to the next meeting and then to be made available to IWA, BW, IWAAC, The Waterways Trust, and to a Local Authority, for comment.

The subject of insurance cover provided by the lender of borrowed vehicles was raised. Whereas the position was uncertain and needed clarification, it was agreed that Liz Connors should be informed prior to the use of borrowed vehicles.

Council discussed how the The Wharf House business would be operated and managed, what decisions needed to be taken prior to startup, how startup would be funded, and when it would occur, what projections of income and expenditure could be made and what data (on letting and tearoom operation) could be used to aid and refine the existing business plan projections.

WHOSPG planned that the hand over of the completed shell would involve some form of ceremony; local residents, our sponsors/potential sponsors, and the two principals, Swan Hill Homes and the H & G C T. Upon completion of The Wharf House fit out WHOSPG proposed that sponsorships would be recognised in a way similar to the basin restoration.

It was reported that the Canal Trust and Herefordshire Council had gained positive PR from an interview given by David Penny at the request of BBC Hereford & Worcester regarding Herefordshire Council's acquisition (earlier in the year) of the land forming the the Aylestone Hill Project Site, and the adjoining Aylestone Park. It was expected that the project would be formally launched later in the year, in partnership with Herefordshire Council and the Aylestone Park Association.

JULY COMMITTEE

All the Officers of the Canal Trust were duly re-elected.

The Trading Company is to mount a display in All Saints Church in August because the planned venue, Maylord Orchards, will be unavailable owing to refurbishing work.

A basic Confidentiality Policy Statement has been adopted to cover volunteers on all our sites. It could be expanded later.

A display board has been erected on the J C Kavanagh site on Holmer Trading Estate, where it borders the Canal. Mr Kavanagh partly restored and landscaped the section of Canal some years ago, and at the time his integration of the Canal into his site won a BBC Midlands Today award for environmental improvements.

♦ TA-B

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Aug 23-26	IWA National Waterways Festival, Huddersfield
Sep 14	Newent Onion Fair
Sep 22	Hereford Society of Model Engineers, Broomy Hill
Oct 20	Oxenhall Open Day
Nov 16	Our very own Ledbury Craft Fair

Any help in transporting the display and sales stand, and the odd hour on the stand, would be most welcome. Contact Janet Moulton [see Contacts] if you can help – or if you know of other events that we could attend local to the line of the Canal.

♦ JM

FOLK EVENING

Saturday 5th October

Part of the

H&G Canal Trust's 10th Anniversary Celebrations

Commencing at 8 pm at Bartestree Village Hall

Music by 'Meet on the Ledge' and supporting acts

Licensed Bar – Raffle

Tickets in advance £5 from Janet Moulton – 01432 264 366

Further details from Derek Weaver – 01432 870 537

Canal Trust Craft Fair

Please support our very own Craft Fair.

An ideal opportunity to purchase that special gift!

Saturday November 16th, 10am - 4pm

St Katherine's Hall, Ledbury

Apart from a wide selection of crafts on sale there will be our own sales stand and display of restoration photographs.

Home made cakes, filled rolls and other refreshments.

Offers of help, or to request a craft stand, please contact

Janet Moulton – 01432 264 366

MAY 4TH AND 5TH. Ray and Barbara Moses, with Derek and Taryna Weaver took a Sales Stand and display to **Tardebigge**, to support our friends on **Worcester & Birmingham Canal**. Our intrepid volunteers made good sales and enjoyed themselves despite chilly weather.

The same weekend, we delivered an Oxenhall display to Rae Heath of Furnace Farm for her to use as part of her contribution to the Five Churches Flower Festival, in Dymock Church. Her letter of thanks after the event indicated that all visitors were impressed with the work being done there by The Wrinklies.

MAY 18TH/19TH found Brian and Janet Moulst at **Moira** to meet Des Pick and Lesley Steans, and Steve Bence, at the **Ashby Canal Trust** event. The weather did not look promising but improved during the weekend, as did our sales and we finished up with a respectable total.

JUNE 1ST-3RD. The Trading Company were at **Crick** for the annual **Boat Show**. Brian and Janet arrived on the Friday to erect the display, ready for a bright and early start on the Saturday and bright it certainly was - and very warm. The weather brought out the crowds with the Sunday just as good - and even on Monday, when the weather turned a little overcast, the crowds continued to arrive and spend money with us. We had our new displays showing recent progress at Over and Oxenhall. The results financially were as good as the visitor numbers and the final figures were well in excess of the previous year. British Waterway's Simon Ainley should be congratulated for a

well-organised swan song show. Grateful thanks to Ray and Barbara, Des and Lesley, Steve, Penny and Janet.

Whilst this was going on, an unmanned display was on duty in **Oxenhall Village Hall**, supporting the village in their efforts. Thanks are due to Dave Jones for erecting this. Not only that but in **Ledbury Church**, at their Flower Festival, Judy Street had borrowed a narrowboat and lock entrance model from us as part of her display. *[There is no doubt about it, we have brought the presence of the H&G Canal into the minds of the local population - Ed.]*

JUNE 7TH. Brian and Janet set up the display part of the stand at **Gloucester and District Model Boat Club's** show in the Docks, ready for an early start on Saturday and Sunday. We enjoy attending this venue as everybody in GMBC are very friendly - and Corporate Members of the Canal Trust. On the first day, Saturday, the hosts were slightly concerned over the arrival on Friday night of a flotilla of sea cruisers, who moored up exactly where the control centre for the radio controlled displays would operate. As it turned out, most of the cruisers were off upstream by the time the show opened on Saturday, so all was well with more money coming into Canal Trust coffers - and spreading the word about the Canal.

JUNE 15TH/16TH found the stand at **Wootton Bassett**, to support the **Wilts and Berks Canal Trust**. Competing with the dawn chorus with a very early start on the Saturday, we were ready for business at 10 o'clock. Unluckily Brian was taken ill and had to go to hospital.

Fortunately, Steve Bence was with us for the weekend and was able, single-handed, to maintain the stand until closure and then dismantle and remove everything, in his car, home to Warwickshire. *Thank you, Steve!* Taking advantage of the unusual situation of having sales stock at his disposal, Steve was able to offer office colleagues the opportunity of buying from the Canal Trust, which they did to an appreciable amount, thereby improving the bottom line figure considerably – *a double thanks to Steve!*

JULY 6TH/7TH. The two day **Saul Show**, organised by our neighbours the **Cotswold Canals Trust**, was manned at very short notice by Nigel and Liz Bailey. Together with Ray and Barbara, Derek and Taryna and Heather they did excellent business. Derek reported an unusual sighting during the Saturday

evening. A creature of the bovine persuasion, whilst attempting to drink from the canal, fell in, swam around, evaded rescue for some time, before succumbing to a well aimed mooring line. The bull's owner, subsequently arriving with a trailer to take the animal home, announced that this was not the first time this had happened. So, if you see any 'Beware of the Bull' signs along the canalside, it might not refer to the field in front of you!

JULY 13TH took the Trading Company to **Evesham** for their **Water Festival**, a venue we had not attended for some years. Considering that the show only started at 11am, we did very fair business in six hours. Thanks to Ray and Barbara for looking after the stand and displays.

to be continued ...

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Over Walk & Picnic

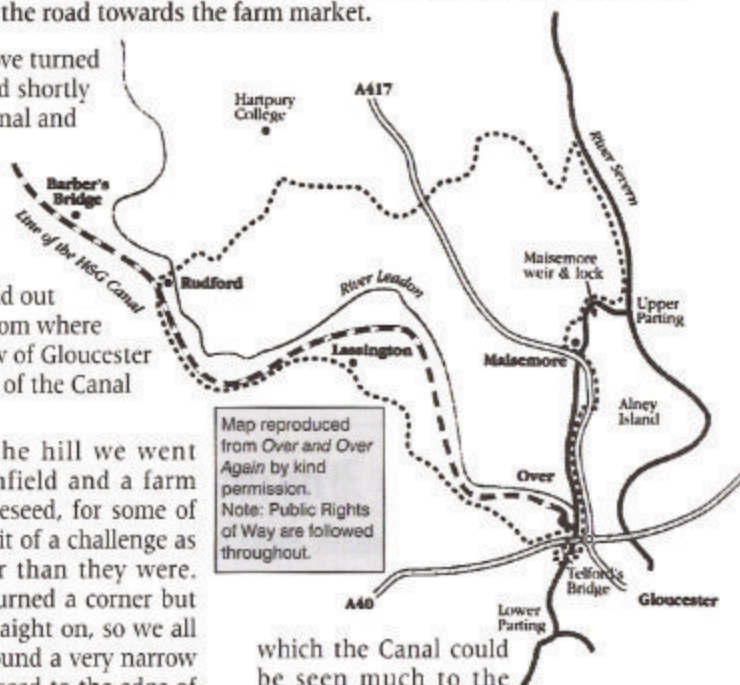
by Caroline Jones

I arrived at Over with my 12yr old daughter in tow just before 10 o'clock on a very fine, sunny Sunday morning in July. There were about twenty people there already and in a short time we all set off on our walk. We didn't get very far before Nigel brought us to a halt outside the rapidly growing shell of The Wharf House to explain something of what the Canal Trust does and what we get up to at Over. That bit over with we set out along the road towards the farm market.

At the farm market we turned up Lassington Lane and shortly saw the lines of the Canal and The Leaddon, both of which were easy to spot. We then walked up through Lassington Wood past The Lassington Oak and out onto an open hilltop from where we had a fantastic view of Gloucester and again saw the line of the Canal quite clearly.

From the top of the hill we went down through a cornfield and a farm into a field full of rapeseed, for some of our group this was a bit of a challenge as the plants were taller than they were. Further on our path turned a corner but Nigel wanted to go straight on, so we all turned explorer and found a very narrow path through the rapeseed to the edge of the field. We hadn't lost anyone so set off on the next bit which if anything was more intrepid than the last section as it was completely overgrown and full of nettles, not so good if you're wearing shorts as my daughter will testify! However we had a man in long trousers carrying a long stout stick, he did the scrub bashing while the rest of us followed carefully, until gradually the Canal became evident alongside us.

We finally escaped from the scrub and found ourselves in an open field through



which the Canal could be seen much to the delight of two ladies from Cam who'd thought they were coming on a canal walk - a nice gentle stroll along the canal-not a cross country scramble!

Following the Canal and railway we came to Rudford but not before we'd escaped the attentions of a herd of bullocks; that now slightly shorter stick came in handy again.

Having crossed The Leaddon and followed a field or two or three of broad beans we came to a farm which had a barn which held Liz, who was waiting



Photos: Nigel Bailey

Walkers enjoy the fantastic view from the top of Lassington Hill.

with a delicious picnic and lots of cold drinks. As it was a hot day we were all very grateful for the food and drink and I think we just about cleared her out, I don't think Liz carried much home that day!

We left Liz and headed off across country, past Hartpury College, across the A417 and through yet more crops until we came to Maisemore Apiaries whose offices seemed to be full of bees let alone anything else. From there we followed fields along the edge of High Ridding Hill from where we had wonderful views over the Severn towards Wainlodes and Chosen Hills. Descending the end of High Ridding Hill, we came to meadows along the Severn, some descended a bit quicker than others. In particular my daughter chose to run down the hill and nearly came to grief in a large patch of nettles at the bottom.

Carrying on along the edge of the river we presently arrived at Maisemore Weir where we got a good view of the lock and decided that would probably be a

challenge for the future. Heading on through Maisemore we crossed the Severn and walked along Alney Island until we saw Over on the opposite bank, by now we were all a little tired and hot to say the least and the temptation was to jump in and swim across!! However common sense prevailed and we walked to Telford's bridge where Nigel nearly went in as he'd promised the ladies from Cam that there were no more hills – and this bridge definitely counted as a hill.

We got back to Over at about 4.30pm hot tired and ready for more of Liz's hospitality in the form of lots of tea and delicious cake. A very good day out, and well worth the effort.

◆ CJ



If you missed Nigel's walk in July, don't despair! Details of the route can be found in his book *OVER AND OVER AGAIN! 750 YEARS OF CHANGE AT OVER*. All profits from the book are being donated to the H & G Canal Trust.

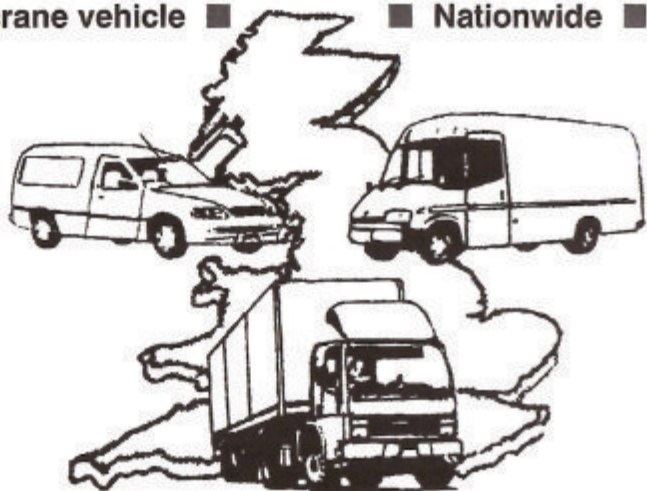
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OXENHALL OPEN DAY



Photo: Brian Fox

Sunday October 20th • 11am - 4 pm

You've read the progress reports on our 'Wrinklies'
weekly work at House Lock – come and see for yourself.

GUIDED WALKS REFRESHMENTS DISPLAYS SALES

H & G LAUNCH THE WATERWAYS TRUST FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Earlier this year H & G volunteers, Roy Jamieson, Angela Jones, Jane Jones and David Penny turned up at the Waterways Museum to be trained how to convince people to donate to **The Waterways Trust**. If people can be persuaded to set up direct debits to their favourite charity, statistics show that most of these DDs have a life of at least four years. This predictable monthly income, boosted by another 23% by gift aid, means that charities can commit to long-term projects.

The reason we came in was to trial the project for **The Waterways Trust** – so successfully that they have now rolled it out nationwide. The H&GCT benefited by 33% for every DD. The return for the visitors was free entry to the museum, or a soft toy. **The Waterways Trust** is keen for volunteers from H&G to do the same again. If you could help, please contact David Penny.



STOP PRESS!

New Site at NEWENT!

Although there may not be anything that we can currently report on The Willows site at Newent, we can announce that the Trust gained access to a major tract of land at Newent from Gloucestershire County Council in mid August. The area of land stretches from the Newent bypass, past the fire station, over Bridge Street (the Dymock Road) and heads towards The Willows site. In addition to the Canal corridor, it includes the area of woodland and open land surrounding the Fire Station – part of our strategy of seeking wider corridor restorations, not just the Canal itself.

We are grateful to Gloucestershire County Council for their support in making this site available to the Canal Trust. This is an exciting new site for the Trust, to follow on from the work at Oxenhall. A future edition of **The Wharfinger** will look at the future of the site in more detail ...

◆ **DRP**

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◆ Not Quite ...THE LAST PAGE ◆

QUIET WATERS

During the Jubilee Weekend, visitors to the Flower Festival at Ledbury Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels heard the sound of trickling water in the porch. Closer inspection revealed an idyllic river scene on one side and a patient horse getting ready to pull his barge away from the tail of a lock on the other.

The theme of the Festival was "Raise the Roof" and the arrangements were based on lines from well-known hymns. At the planning stage, Judy Street, the organiser and a member of H&GCT, decided that the theme for the porch would be "He leadeth me the quiet waters by" and explained to the arrangers, Faith and Aryan Gordon, that she wanted a canal and river scene. Perhaps rashly she also said that she was sure that somehow the Trust members would help with providing a model of a canal boat to add authenticity to the arrangement.

At the Craft Fair in Ledbury, David Mordaunt was approached and agreed to help – then he remembered that somewhere there was a model of a lock and butty. This was duly produced and Brian Moulton delivered it to Ledbury where it took up residence on the Street's dining room table while Nigel cleaned it up, gave it a new coat of paint and practised his Canal Art - even the horse was smartened up!

The river and canal arrangements were much admired during the Flower Festival and certainly gave the feel of quiet waters. The H&GCT was acknowledged in the programme and several visitors asked about it. Hopefully this little bit of publicity may result in some new members!

◆ JS



Photo: Judy Fisher

Model narrowboat that formed part of Judy Street's display at Ledbury Church Flower Festival in June.

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19TH OCTOBER, 2002

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Nigel and Liz Bailey

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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 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.

