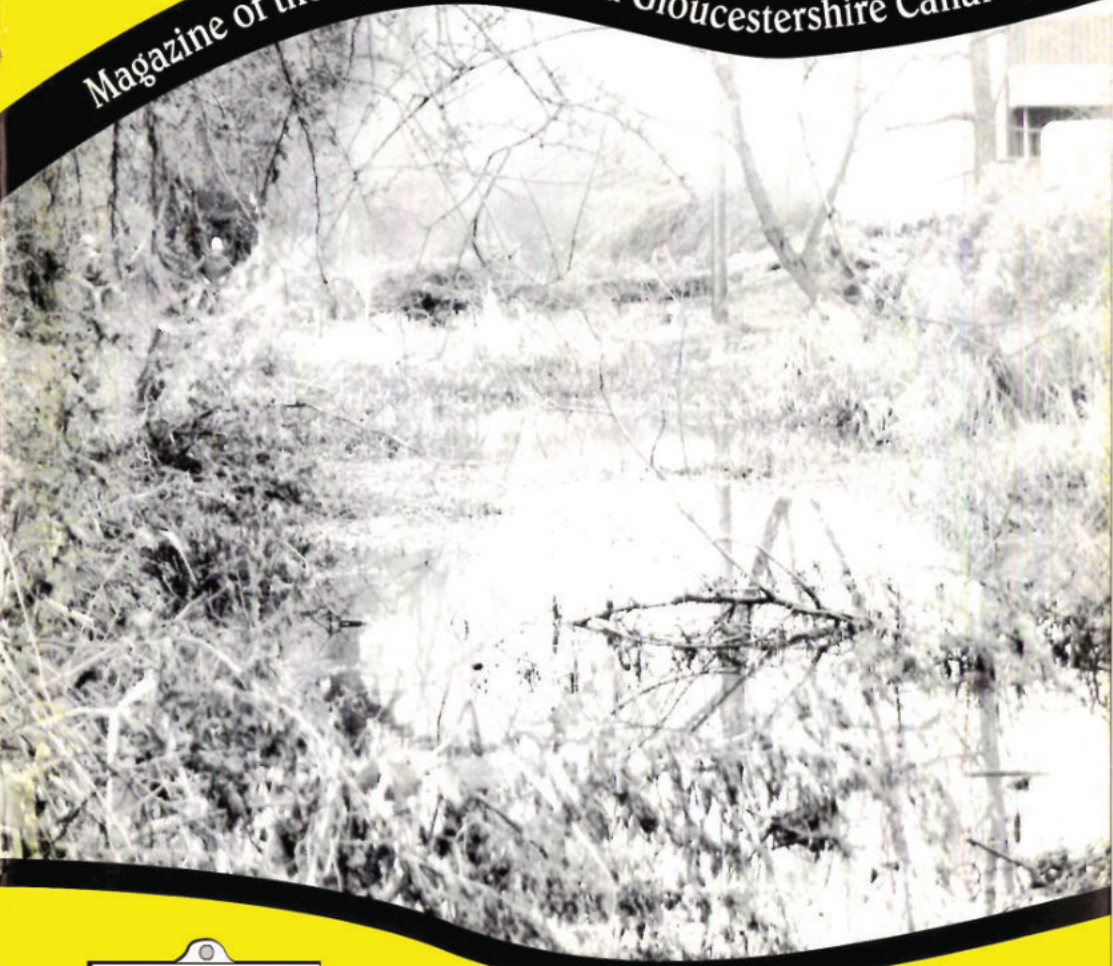


# *The* **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Spring 2003

**50p**  
*free to members*



# WHO DOES WHAT?

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**Vice Presidents:** *R. E. Barnes TD., Duff  
Hart-Davis, Diana Organ MP, David Prout*

**Chairman:** Dick Skeet

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## **Finance:**

**Treasurer/Chairman** Liz Connors  
**Committee:** Brian Fox, David Penny, Nigel Jefferies, Nigel Bailey, Janet Moulton

## **Over Special Projects Group**

**Project Director:** David Penny  
**Secretary/CDM Planning Supervisor** Nigel Bailey

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

**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*

## **Honorary Posts:**

**Archaeologist:** Ron Shoesmith  
**Town & Country Planning:** Penny Environmental & Planning



## THE WHARF HOUSE

**The Wharf House, Over, Gloucester, GL2 8DB:**  
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**Directors:** Caroline Jones, Wilf Jones, Liz Connors, Nigel Bailey, David Penny

**Treasurer/C. Secretary:** Liz Connors

**Committee:** Wilf Jones, Nigel Bailey, *Paul Brown, Caroline Jones, David Penny, Mark Davis (QS), Adrian Fry, Maggie Jones, Roy Jamieson*

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

## **Oxenhall Restoration:**

**Wrinklies Coordinator:** Brian Fox  
**Health & Safety Officer:** Tony Austin-Bailey

## **Liaison:**

**Local Authority/Planning** Penny Environmental & Planning  
**Landowner:** Brian Fox

## **Publicity:** Brian Fox

**Over/Web Master:** Nigel Bailey  
**Web Team:** Mike Hunt, Keith Kitson

## **Member Services:**

**Secretary:** Nigel Jefferies  
**Gift Aid:** Liz Connors  
**Social Events:** Janet Moulton

## **Support to Council of Management:**

**Minutes:** Tony Austin-Bailey  
**Admin.** Dick Skeet, Heather Worth  
**IWA nominated member:** Caroline Jones

## **The Wharfinger:**

**Editor:** Cliff Penny  
**Design/Production:** *Maggie Jones*  
**Advertising:** Heather Worth  
**Postmasters:** Janet Moulton, *D and M Gray, S McManus*

## **Talks and Walks:**

Nigel Jefferies, Nigel Bailey

*Those in Italics are not Directors.*

## THE TRADING COMPANY

## *H & G Canal Sales*

*DONATING ALL PROFITS TO THE CANAL TRUST*

**Chairman/Manning:** Janet Moulton  
**Treasurer/C of M Rep/Co. Secretary:** Liz Connors

**Mail order sales/Sales goods:** Penny Shetliffe

**Crafts Fairs:** *Pat Skeet*

**Committee:** Tom Bennett, *Simon Dyer, Ray & Barbara Moses, Derek Weaver*

**Boats Group** *Roy Jamieson, Barbara Moses, Pat Skeet.*

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FRONT COVER: The Canal emerges from the undergrowth at Aylestone Park – Keith Kitson

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Photo: S. Gubbay

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This year is the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society. *How things have changed since then!* Certainly the folk gathered in the Red Cross Hall in Hereford on April 13th 1983 didn't entertain the idea of restoring the Canal from Gloucester to Hereford. A short length of canal or towpath here and there might be feasible, but restoring all 34 miles was only dreamt of. The main aim was to promote interest in the Canal before it was lost altogether and it seemed that the best way to do this was as *members* of a society.

Twenty years on, the Society having become the Trust and committed to full restoration, I asked the January meeting of the Council of Management what our priorities for 2003 should be. After some discussion a theme emerged, which, I must confess, I hadn't really expected – it was *membership*.

So why is a strong membership so important; after all we already have a membership of over 1,000? Some of the reasons are obvious. Members are the life-blood of the Trust and if we are going to achieve anything at all, it is our members who will have to do the work. Whilst we will not achieve our objective on our own, we can be quite sure that, unless we make the effort, we cannot expect anyone else to. And then there is money. Our subscription rates are modest, but with a large membership this adds up to a considerable resource.

When it comes to allocating grants, the major funding bodies look for evidence of public support – and a healthy Trust membership is just that. Local bodies are influenced by local opinion and national bodies are influenced by national opinion, so we need not only members from Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, but from Cumbria, Kent and Cornwall too.

Now I know what you're thinking. "*Why is he banging on about membership in **The Wharfinger**? – if I'm reading this I'm, probably a member already*". Well, for better or worse, I joined the former Society because a member told me about it, and that is why *you* are important. Enthusiasm is infectious and new members will join us (or not!) as a result of what we "old" members say and do. Let's see how many new members we can welcome this year. There is plenty for them to do and we can offer a lot in return. *Over to you!*

◆ Dick Skeet, Chairman

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST

*Guided tour of*

## THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL

SUNDAY 27th APRIL 2003

See the remains of the original canal line and the work done by the Trust and former Society.



Take a trip on "Mr Maysey" on the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal at the new Over Basin in Gloucester!

- Fare £19.50 – including:**
- Lunch with tea or coffee,
  - a short boat ride at Over
  - afternoon tea and biscuits
  - mini-bus transport!

**Booking required by: 30th March 2003**

*Tickets available from: Mike & Joyce Potts, 3 Cranstone, Upper Breinton, Hereford HR4 7PL  
Please enclose a S.A.E. Cheques payable to M & J Potts.*

*Organised by Mike & Joyce's Trips & Tours on behalf of:  
The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.*

## PATIENCE!

One of our supporters wrote to me recently complaining that he had been unable to gain entry to *THE WHARF HOUSE* at Over – all he wanted was a ‘quick look around’. Now had he been a Member he would have seen the details (in the last edition) for the opportunity – in mid-January – for Members and supporters to have a look *inside*.

Having commenced work on the fitting out there are serious health and safety issues to be observed and it will be a few months now before there is *another* opportunity of an Open Day that includes access *inside* the building [details on pages 15 and 16].

My correspondent was not satisfied with this and thought it should be possible to arrange to visit *THE WHARF HOUSE* on one of the regular work party days (Wednesdays, Saturdays and many Sundays) for a *personal* guided tour to take place. After all he had actually helped at Over in the past and had his own hard hat etc!

As was the situation when the Over Basin was being reconstructed arrangements for individuals (or even groups) to have a guided tour when people are working is not possible without very serious disruption to progress.

Therefore, access is *ONLY* possible (*inside THE WHARF HOUSE*) on publicised dates. *We appreciate your patience and understanding.*

The only way around this is to become a part of the *regular* team fitting out *THE WHARF HOUSE* – Wilf Jones [see

by Cliff Penny



*Contacts*] would be please to hear from any volunteers – especially those with any specific building trade skills.

### TRADING COMPANY CHAIRMAN

Following the sad death of Brian Moulton in November our Trading Company has had to find a new Chairman. How fitting, therefore, that his wife Janet should step into this role with the full support and encouragement of both the Trading Company Directors and the H&G Canal Trust Council of Management.

Janet had earlier volunteered to take over the role of lead Postmaster for the distribution of **The Wharfinger** – a post that she has commenced with enthusiasm and ideas for improvements!

### STILL LOOKING

A year ago we ran a plea for a secure dry store for our national award winning display and promotional material. Unfortunately we are still looking – and the owner of the current temporary store (a private garage) would like it back!

Do you have a suitable small store – about 10ft square, at ground level with vehicular access to the door, with electric light and accessible at almost any time – and in (or close to) Hereford? Janet Moulton [see *Contacts*, inside back cover] would be very pleased to hear from you. Thank you.

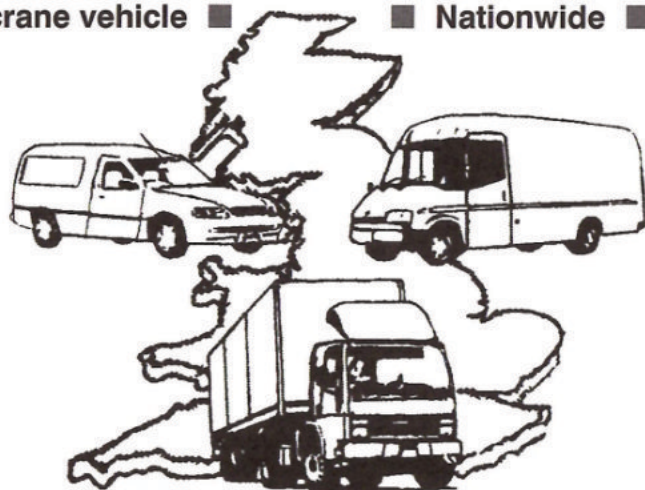
◆ CRP

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# What makes

## THE TRADING COMPANY ***TICK?***

Whereas in past years, the report of Trading Company activities has appeared among the reports presented at Trust AGM, your Trading Company Committee feels that Canal Trust members would appreciate learning about its background activities, which provide the foundation on which we operate.

These activities are ongoing, very often needing us to consider the next year, whilst we are still engaged on the current programme. As well as the venues to which we take our Sales and Information Stands, the Canal Trust Social Programme has to function and planning for next year's **Grand Holiday Draw** to be worked out. The programme of volunteers to staff the venues is also drafted as far as possible, as is

transportation of equipment and goods to and from site. The Sales stock has regularly to be replaced and supplemented, with new products considered, whilst Display Information and Equipment is upgraded on a regular basis. Your Trading Company Committee generally meets once every month, to vet progress, assess improvements and put the final touches to the next venues.

*The most important parts of The Trading Company are its people.* We are fortunate, in that we have only lost one Committee member in the last three years, when Dick Skeet took on the mantle of Trust Chairman. Our loss was the Canal Trust's gain! Whilst we have been fortunate, with a few new volunteers coming forward to assist with the staffing of the Stands (and we are very grateful), *we do need more people to offer their services to spread the load a little more.*

Janet Moulton would be pleased to hear from you and discuss how you might help the Trading Company in some way during 2003.

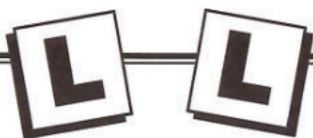
♦ JM

### *THANK YOU from Janet Moulton*

Becca and I would like to thank the members of the H&G Canal Trust for the kind messages of sympathy that we received following Brian's sudden death.

Thank you also for the donations to the Canal Trust.

I shall continue to support the Trust both at the Social Evenings and with the Sales and Promotional Stand as the best tribute to Brian is to continue to press for the full restoration of our Canal. ♦ JM



## **RICHARDSON** **School of Motoring**

**contact**

**Dave Hall**

**A.D.I. RoSPA D.I.A. I.A.M.**

**Phone 01432 270552  
or 07761 177529**





# RESTORATION

## Update!

Two of our volunteers, David and Elizabeth are still beaver away on our 'Bailey' bridge and have now painted all the visible bits - just the difficult sections underneath to do; but that means the decking has to be lifted which is another job for the tractor.

Winter is also a time for cutting back excess vegetation along the towpath and Canal banks. One of our dinghies was brought into service to tackle the overhanging branches on the Canal above the lock and great fun it proved to be and a nice job for a cold day with a roaring bonfire made from the branches.

◆ BF

---

### PROGRESS AT OVER

---

The last three months has been the quarter of the year without Open Days but I'd like to mention the last Open Day of 2002 in October. I was not able to be there but was very aware of the atrocious weather. The next day I received an email from Maggie Jones which illustrates the determination of our volunteers.

*I'll quote in full:- "Despite the storms during the night and continuing through part of Sunday we decided to go ahead with the Open Day. Arrived to find the area having a power cut - (not that that affects us at Over at present). Half the road signs needed to be stood up again. Fences around site were blown over and the 'smart hut' roof torn to shreds. The model boat people came to review the situation and said it was the equivalent to a 600mph gale to their little boats and so phoned around to tell the others not to come.*

◆ Inside the lock chamber at Oxenhall showing the progress of the stonework

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### PROGRESS AT OXENHALL

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We normally progress slowly at this time of the year due to Christmas and bad weather but we have started laying coping stones on the top of the non towpath wall - so there is something to show for our efforts. All the stone cut in the summer has now been transported to the lock by our faithful tractor and awaits a final dressing and positioning into the lock wall. There are still several large stones remaining in the yard which will be taken to the saw mill and hopefully there will be enough altogether to finish the lock.

Photo: Mike Hunt

*First job was to contact local Radio to tell them that we were open for business unlike every other event that had cancelled due to the storm. We were rewarded with a cheer on air!"*

Some 30 or so brave visitors did venture out and a couple of the local residents, who were still minus power, popped over for a cup of tea!

Glyn, one of our Wednesday helpers at the time and a roofer by trade, was so concerned about the damage to the roof that he offered to fix it. So, using his own equipment and a lot of his own materials, he laid a complete new felt roof on top of the old one which was too badly rotted to patch up. It must be said he made a splendidly professional job of it.



Photo: Maggie Jones

◆ The brickwork of the stilling chamber continues to grow.

The stilling chamber, which will intercept silt on the output from the pumping station, has grown steadily. All of the white brickwork and the pair of arches facing the pump shaft have been completed. Although several more courses of bricks have been added, it may look as if nothing has changed. That's because, while the chamber has grown in height, the land around (which we had to cut back to construct the chamber) has been brought back to towpath level, thus burying the new work. Just a few more courses of brickwork to go and we can top it off with a seat.



Photo: Maggie Jones



Photo: Mike Hunt

◆ Top: The ariel view of car park from <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE. Above: More planings being laid in front of one of the dry-stone walls. <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE in the distance.

A great deal more progress has been made in the car park. About three quarters of the total area had been surfaced by the day of <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE handover, so we were able to use the area as a car park for visitors for the first time. The final quarter still needed levelling but the ground was too "gluey" even for "Blue" (the Waterway Recovery Group's tracked mini excavator) to make a decent job of it. Then, in early February, a few dry days gave ideal conditions and the opportunity was taken to level off the next section. The Wednesday Gang then laid more Terram geotextile and spread road planings over the newly levelled area so that 35 of the planned 37 parking spaces should be completed by the end of February.

We have found the most effective way to retain the soil at the rear of each parking bay is with a dry-stone wall.

However, we rapidly ran out of Cotswold stone. We then realised that our colleagues at Oxenhall had the solution to our problem. They had a lot of surplus stone that is not large enough for their work on the lock and was destined to be sold off as rockery stone. Using the Waterways Museum's lorry we have collected about seven loads so the wall-building has sped along as a result. It's an interesting point to realise that this reclaimed stone from the Roman Road bridge in Hereford (rebuilt in 1995) is being used to complete this walling job at Over.

We held our third annual volunteers Skittles evening, this time at the King's Arms at Newent. The change of venue was to ensure a more central location which successfully resulted in attendance by volunteers from Over, Oxenhall and Hereford. After two years

of male dominance, Joan Jones took the prize for champion skittler.

During the evening our Member Roy Jamieson was presented with a cake, a framed print of himself steering *Mister Maysey*, (our trip boat at Over), and card to congratulate him on his retirement. Roy worked for British Waterways for many years and more recently, as Archivist for The Waterways Trust based in Gloucester Docks. The card had been carefully chosen because it showed the Grand Union Canal at Stoke Bruerne where Roy once worked. What we did not know was that the picture included the actual house that Roy used to live in!

We have been tidying up some of the woodland areas, felling trees which had either died or been damaged by the wind. Much of this was done by hand by our Duke of Edinburgh Awards team. Working in teams of two, with one bow

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We have a wide client base with particular involvement in the hydraulic press, concrete, materials handling, feed and flour milling industries.

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

For further details please  
contact Simon Hayward –  
Tel: 01452 700384  
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SHEETMETAL WORKS  
ASHLEWORTH  
GLOUCESTER  
GL19 4JJ



Photos: Maggie Jones

◆ Nigel Bailey and some of his enthusiastic, and ever-increasing number of Duke of Edinburgh volunteers at Over, sawing up logs for sale to boost the Trust's funds.

saw to each pair, they worked very effectively. They also keep increasing in number so that we now have a team of eleven working on various levels of award.

At the same time we have been tree planting, replacing a silver birch on the Canal bank near the gabions, and planting in the car park a splendid potted chestnut that came to us as a donation. Several trees have been moved out of the nursery, making way for others. Most recently, several poplars have been planted in the nature reserve and we've started clearing undergrowth and ivy on the woodland bank of the Canal.

Early Spring will have seen all the management work in the woodland

completed. We will then be able to replant with a variety of native species to create a visually and environmentally interesting small patch of woodland adjacent to the Canal. This also acts as an important screen to reduce the visual impact of the residential development on the Leaden Valley.

Any volunteers who wish to join us on either Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays or Sundays would be very welcome and should contact the people listed below. Work will be continuing outside throughout the Summer to maintain and enhance the site as well as some small building projects. Of course there will also be the huge task of fitting out THE WHARF HOUSE. ◆ **NB**

◆ The installation of the two pairs of sponsored benches on the Wharf wall has been completed.



### *New volunteers please contact ...*

#### **OVER** (Gloucester)

Wednesdays – Ted Beagles  
(01452 522648)

Saturdays (and some Sundays)  
– Maggie Jones (01452 618010)

#### THE WHARF HOUSE

– Wif Jones (01452 413888)

Duke of Edinburgh volunteers  
– Nigel Bailey (01452 533835)

#### **OXENHALL** (Newent)

Tuesdays – Brian Fox  
(01432 358628)

#### **AYLESTONE** (Hereford)

Saturdays – Brian Fox  
(01432 358628)

## RIVER CANAL RESCUE

*Continuing our occasional series – featuring this time the Sponsors of our Trading Company's distinctive carrier bags who have also Sponsored the print costs of this years Grand Holiday Draw tickets – the 'AA' and 'RAC' of the inland waterways system; River Canal Rescue.*

**R**iver Canal Rescue employs both full time, casual and contract marine engineers across the UK. The engineers work from their home base and are equipped to locate, attend and repair vessels in trouble, our primary aim is to get our members cruising again. The casual staff are employed during the summer months, and contract engineers are used to support us during the busiest boating periods, bank holidays etc and are inspected before becoming registered with our company.



Last year the average time between the initial call out and the engineer attending the craft has been two hours, and although we do not quote a minimum callout time we hope to continue achieving this standard in the future.

At our Stafford base we provide 24 hour emergency contact for our members, the office staff are trained to deal with breakdowns and emergencies, and provide advice and assistance. We also have an 'in house' engineer, who can be called upon to deal with difficult situations, or help the customer to run through fault finding tests. We pride ourselves on our customer service as well as our engineering capabilities. Our service speaks for itself, and our members are our best form of advertisement.

**River Canal Rescue** takes great pride in the support we give to the valuable Trusts and Charities that help to rebuild our waterways system. In addition to our

main business our engineers and managers attend meetings and shows to give presentations on 'Preventative Maintenance' and 'The Boaters Essential Tool Kit'.

Also, RCR (in conjunction with **Canal and Riverboat Magazine**) has launched an award scheme to recognize the valuable contributions made by individuals to restore the waterways for the enjoyment of others. Last years award went to David Suchet, who received honorary membership to RCR for two years and nominated 'schools outreach' to receive a donation from RCR.

This year the following people have been nominated: –

- Brian Moulton for his contribution to the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust (postumus).
- John Pearson for his contribution to the CBA.
- Timothy West and Prunella Scales for their support and promotion of the waterways.

If you would like to add your vote please email the RCR office on [votes@rivercanalrescue.co.uk](mailto:votes@rivercanalrescue.co.uk), or telephone the office on 0870 2078021 quoting 'votes 2003'.

In addition to this RCR also promote the many Charities and Trusts through sponsorship and contributions. If you join RCR using an application form with details of the H&G Canal Trust we will donate 10% of your membership to the Canal Trust.

◆ SH

# FORMAL NOTICE OF 2003 AGM

TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY 17TH JUNE,  
AT THE VERZONS INN, AT 7.30PM.

This is the formal Notice of the 2003 AGM in order to give Members the opportunity to make a note in their diary. The Agenda and the Annual Report will be in the next Edition of **The Wharfinger**.

In accordance with the H&G Canal Trust's Articles and Memorandum of Association those members of the Council of Management who are retiring on rotation but offering themselves for re-election do not require to be formally nominated to serve an additional term. However, new nominations to serve on the Council of Management are welcomed and have to be made in writing, in a prescribed form.

Nominations must be submitted not less than 7 days nor more than 28 days prior to the AGM. The form is available from Liz Connors [see *Contacts on the inside rear cover*] to whom it should be returned *to arrive between 20th May and 10th June*.

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 will be available from Liz Connors from the 20th May and must be completed, signed *and returned to her at least 48 hours prior to the commencement of the AGM*.

*Thank you.*

*Once again we have some great prizes for this year's*

## GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

**1st  
PRIZE**

### NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY

for 3-5 ONE WEEK APRIL-MAY 2004 (excluding bank holidays).

Donated by **Starline Narrowboats**

**2nd  
PRIZE**

### One Week Self-catering Holiday for 4

Private bungalow in quiet West Herefordshire village near Welsh Border. Donated by **Mrs A Wood**

**3rd  
PRIZE**

### Two Nights D B&B for 2 in Hereford's Largest Hotel

Valid until October 2003. Donated by **The Green Dragon**.

We wish you good luck in buying and selling of the tickets. If you would like more tickets than we have sent to you, please contact Janet Moults [see below].

Prizes to be drawn late afternoon at National Waterways Festival, at Beale Park, Pangbourne on 25/08/2003

Our grateful thanks to Starline Narrowboats, Mrs A. Wood and the Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford for donating the Holiday prizes and to River Canal Rescue for sponsoring the costs of printing the tickets - so every pound raised is a pound towards restoration of the Canal.

We appreciate that some recipients are not prepared to buy or sell draw tickets - we apologise but we do not have the resources to be selective in who receives tickets. *There is no obligation to return unsold tickets.* In order to save costs we have not included tickets in copies of **The Wharfinger** sent to Councillors, Local Authorities etc. If you wish to support us please contact Janet Moults on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets. *Thank you.*

*Friends and  
colleagues will be  
eager for four  
chances of a great  
holiday for just £1!*

# 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.

**MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>**

### **Dudley Canal Trust – Vic Smallshire**

A long tunnel and a living museum in the heart of the Black Country.

**APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>**

### **From 52.5° North to 65° South – Steve Bence**

a member's travels in Antarctica

**MAY 20<sup>TH</sup>**

### **Canals of South West England – Bob Dukes**

An illustrated tour of the inland waterways of the South West.

**JUN 17<sup>TH</sup>**

### **Annual General Meeting**

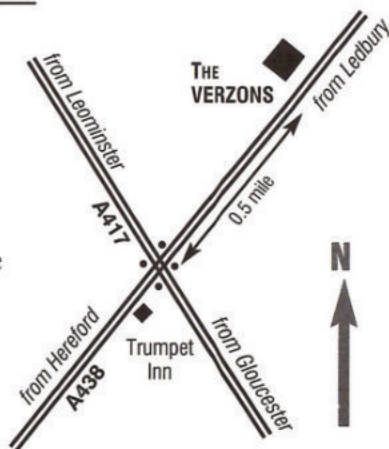
7.30 Start

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.

*Why not join the 50–60 strong attendance at our highly successful socials for an enjoyable evening!*



# OVER OPEN DAYS



Come and join us on one or more of our increasingly popular Open Days or Events during 2003. The Sales Stand, Display and Refreshments are present at each Open Day and you can see the latest progress on site. At 12.30 pm each Open Day there will be a conducted tour of <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE.

Alternatively, you can just watch the escapades of the Gloucester Model Boat Club or take a free ride on our trip boat and see the increasing range of wild life, such as the resident pair of kingfishers, and other wildlife that is increasingly making our site their own.

**SATURDAY 7TH JUNE**

**Alney Island Walk and  
BBQ**

**SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER**

**Restoration Fund BBQ**

*[by invitation only – annual gathering of contributors to the Restoration Fund to hear what their contributions have funded over the previous 12 months.]*

Open Days are the last Sunday of each month, from 11am – 4pm on the following dates:

**SUNDAY 27TH APRIL**

**SUNDAY 25TH MAY**

**SUNDAY 29TH JUNE**

**SUNDAY 27TH JULY**

**SUNDAY 24TH AUGUST**

**SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER**

**SUNDAY 26TH OCTOBER**

THE TRADING COMPANY  
**H & G Canal Sales**

**Trading Company  
Outings in 2003**

By the time you read this we will have taken the Sales and Information stand to the Tractor World Show at Malvern. Ray and Barbara Moses will be attending the Gloucester Boat Jumble on April 6th and then we start our travels in earnest. Our May events are:

**May 3-5 Worcester and Birmingham Boat Gathering**

**May 17-18 Moira Canal Festival**

**May 24-26 Crick Boat Show**

Details of the remainder of the year will appear in the next edition of **The Wharfinger**. Any offers of help, transporting displays and stock, helping on the stand or sponsoring our entry fees would be very welcome.

◆ JM



# THE WHARF HOUSE

Restaurant, Tea Rooms, Superior B&B,  
Visitor Centre overlooking Over Waterside  
– donating all profits to canal restoration.

On 3rd January <sup>THE WHARF HOUSE</sup> Company was born. It is set up just like the Trust's existing Trading Company and will Gift Aid its profits to support Canal restoration and maintenance. It will have a 15 year lease on <sup>THE WHARF HOUSE</sup> to complete the fit out, establish, run and maintain the business and site.

The voluntary Directors are listed in the completely reworked inside front cover of **The Wharfinger**, and like The Trading Company we report back to the Canal Trust Council of Management. <sup>THE WHARF HOUSE COMPANY</sup> (TWHco) is now applying for VAT registration, which will not effect the rest of the Trust, and Liz Connors acts as Treasurer for the whole of the Canal Trust group of companies.

Apart from being a requirement of the Charity Commission that the Trust does not 'trade', and so requiring the day to day operation of TWHco to be split off from the Trust, it ensures that this group remains focussed on the business. Very importantly it also financially separates TWHco from the Trust, and ensures that the only security that is used for any loans for TWHco is the lease and not the building itself, protecting the long term asset for the Trust.

On site, the last few weeks have seen the major task of the insulation and boarding in of the roof completed, and the connection of electricity and telephone services. The amount of behind the scenes work to just get services connected is phenomenal, and poor Wilf looks set to be bald by the time

we open for business!! Unfortunately this massive amount of behind the scenes work is replicated for every aspect of the fit out.

Alongside you will see the final (probably a silly word to use!) layout for the top floor, showing the office, staff room, residents lounge, and the two prime letting bedrooms. To maximise use of space the wardrobes etc in the bedrooms are set between the verticals of the rafters out in the eaves as are the filing cabinets etc in the office. Every square inch that can be used is, and it is amazing how much storage you need – space that is at a premium.

By the time you read this the top floor layout will have received its final Building Regulation approval and work on constructing the internal walls on the top floor will have commenced. You may ask why we are starting at the top? Well it does actually make sense in construction terms to take this floor as far as we can as quickly as we can. We also cannot start on the ground floor until the screed is in, and this has got a bit delayed for reasons beyond our control. However, by the first Open Day (in April) you should be able to see very major progress on both the top and ground floors – so please come along if you can for the guided tour around <sup>THE WHARF HOUSE</sup> at 12.30. There is only one tour at lunch time each open day so as not to interrupt work to meet the tight deadlines.

More volunteers, skilled or unskilled, are always welcome for the myriad of tasks, please contact Wilf Jones (01452) 413888.

◆ **DRP**



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Yet again our Members Ray and Barbara Moses (01989 780325) will be organising and staffing a stall (on behalf of the **H&G Canal Trust**) at the annual **Gloucester Docks Boat & Watersports Jumble** to be held on Sunday 6th April. This is an important part of our fundraising and we greatly appreciate the considerable time and effort – prior to and at the event – that Ray and Barbara put into this.

They would be grateful for watersports or boat related items (*no matter how tenuous the connection!*) to sell, either

donated outright or to be sold on commission, to raise funds for the **H&G Canal Trust**. No more magazines though, please. Items can be brought to the March Social evening at **The Verzons**, or delivered to Ray and Barbara in Ross on Wye – or collection may be possible – please 'phone to discuss.

The Annual Boat Jumble is held at **The National Waterways Museum** in Gloucester Docks from 10am to 4pm on Sunday 6th April. Admission is £3.50, which includes entry to the Museum itself, and accompanied children are free.

## Distribution of *The Wharfinger*

As postal costs are to rise later this year we need to find ways of saving on the costs of distributing **The Wharfinger**. We are very grateful that Thorpes Solicitors, in Hereford, arrange the bulk distribution of copies to a number of Local Authorities for us (which are then distributed, via internal mail, to the Councillors thanks to the co-operation of the Council's administration staff).

What we are seeking is assistance with the main mailing as currently our annual postal bill for **The Wharfinger** is approaching £1,500. If anyone is able to hand deliver some copies in their own area

please contact Janet Moulton [see Contacts]. Supplies of **The Wharfinger** would be delivered to you ready enveloped and addressed. Initially we are looking to start with the Hereford area, and even if only half a dozen people take up this challenge more of our hard earned income could go towards restoration of the canal.

Even better, is there anyone, corporate or individual, who could sponsor all or part of our postage costs, please? Perhaps 4 companies each agreeing to put one issue of **The Wharfinger** each year through their franking machine? ♦ **JM**



## SURCHARGED MAIL

We are aware that Royal mail has surcharged some Members and supporters for envelopes containing **The Wharfinger** that were not stamped. In other cases the envelope has not been accepted by the recipient and has been returned to the Canal Trust. However, we have been utilising the Royal Mail's bulk franking service for some time now so the fact that some envelopes are being

despatched without any sign of postage having been paid is their fault not ours!

This is being taken up with their Customer Services. If you have been inconvenienced then we apologise and hope that you will appreciate that this is beyond our control. In order that we can monitor the situation more accurately in future please return any envelope on which you have been required to pay a surcharge to 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL. Thank you. ♦ **CRP**

## AYLESTONE PARK CANAL PROJECT

**A**t last there is action to be seen on restoring the Canal in Hereford! There has been a lot of talking going on over the years and we even have three new bridges but no sign of anything looking like a Canal. The Canal Corridor is promoted in the draft Unitary Development Plan for Hereford and the benefits of a restored Canal are now being far more widely recognised.

This is about the only section of the Canal in Hereford City, which is still recognisable as such, and it actually holds water at about the original depth of 4ft. Unfortunately there is about 4ft of accumulated silt as well which makes rather a squidgy mess and is certainly not for walking on – 2 inadvertent attempts have been made so far and the culprits had to be pulled out and taken home for a change of clothing! A small dinghy was initially used to gain access to the far bank but a bridge of pallets has now been constructed and seems to "float" quite well on the mud.

The old white mobile dental surgery which has become a site hut and has done service at Over is now parked adjacent to the Canal and looks very smart having been given a makeover and a new yellow stripe around the middle – a bit like a



▲ Dave Mordant keeps the bonfire burning!



▲ Aylestone's volunteers scrub-bashing



▲ The tree-lined towpath

cheese sandwich! It has already proved its worth because, true to tradition, it always seems to rain or snow on Saturdays.

The start of "jungle bashing" on a 300yard stretch was reported last time and work has been progressing steadily so that the towpath is now accessible. Numerous bonfires have been built to dispose of the bramble, hawthorn, holly and even privet and many of the larger branches (mostly willow) have been taken for home fires although they tell me it doesn't burn very well. We do have some hawthorn and other timber which it is hoped to add to the pile offered for sale in the last edition. A start has now been made on the more difficult task of dragging out the trees growing in the bed of the canal which is where the skill of not falling in the mud is required. Alan Flexman, who is now learning it, is one of our new recruits and he comes with a tractor which is very handy for this sort of work. We have had several new recruits and hopefully more will join us as the year continues. Vegetation clearance has to finish before the nesting season starts in March so that is our deadline. We are hoping to keep the new team of volunteers together and move on to other jobs after then – but more on that next time.

◆ **BF**



◆ The original 'canal corridor' re-appears



◆ becomes accessible



◆ The original canal line emerges from the undergrowth

Photos: Keith Kinson

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**SUNDAY 20TH OCTOBER – our Open Day at Oxenhall**, when we showed off the progress made by The Wrinklies over the past twelve months, not just at the Lock, but all the way down to the Ell Brook aqueduct.

The team had to be at the village hall quite early to set up the Refreshment, Sales and Display areas, to ensure that we were ready for even the earliest visitors. As always, we are very grateful for the donations of cakes, scones and other sustaining items and this year was no exception. We were also fortunate with the donations of items for the Sales Stand (woodwork, knitwear and some pot plants), all of which help to swell our income on the day and impress our visitors with the variation. For the first time at this event we had a second-hand book stand, which included some quality canal books.

The weather was less than pleasant throughout the whole day. Even so, people arrived at a steady pace and our guides were kept busy, with the Refreshment and Sales Stalls waiting to greet them on their return to the warmth of the village hall. The Display Stands also provided additional interest with information about the other parts of the H&G Canal.

A group of visitors from The Somersetshire Coal Canal Society came up to see us (and 'our' Coal Branch) and were shown over the whole site by The Chief Wrinkley, Brian Fox – who like the other guides, got more wrinkled and wet with each tour undertaken! We were also pleased to welcome the Mayor of Newent, and Officers from Forest of

Dean Council. A successful day overall with good income and donations, for all of which we are very grateful.

**3RD NOVEMBER – Hereford Model Show and Swapmeet.** This event takes place in The Leisure Centre beside Hereford Racecourse and is always well attended. Our prime function here is Sales but one will always meet visitors interested in what we are doing. This was especially so with the new restoration site in Hereford and the issue of the initial proposals for the County in The **Unitary Development Plan**, which includes many important aspects of interest to Canal Trust. This venue, organised by Hereford Model Shop brought in a lot of visitors, among whom were many who are keen to see the Canal return to Hereford and promised their support.

Sales were reasonable considering the weather and a good return for five hours work.

**16TH NOVEMBER – Our own Craft Fair at Ledbury.** This is the last year that we had the pre-fair organisational expertise of Joyce Potts and we shall miss her involvement that has extended over the last few years.

As in previous years, setting up in St. Katherine's Hall meant an early start for the organising team (Liz Connors, Janet and Brian Moulton, Penny Shetliffe) to lay out the stand tables, run the power cables where necessary and organise the eating area.

Some of the standholders, coming from a distance, arrived early and were waiting for us when we arrived, so we really had to get a move on! Twelve

stalls had been taken up with the stall holders coming from near and far, to demonstrate their manufacturing skills as well as sell their products.

Thanks to Penny, Janet, Dick and Pat and Peter on Sales and Liz, Ann, Barbara, Jill and Margaret providing the refreshments. Thanks also to David Mordant who brought in yet more examples of his woodworking skills, for us to sell. Good Sales and Refreshment returns were achieved and everybody went home tired but happy with the result.

◆ **BM**

*This was Brian Moul's last report for **The Wharfinger** before his untimely death.*

## THE TRADING COMPANY **H & G Canal Sales**

### ANNOUNCEMENT

The Trading Company is very pleased to announce that Pat Skeet has agreed to both join Trading Company Committee and assume the mantle of Craft Fairs Organiser.

Pat, working with Barbara and Janet, has already laid the groundwork for new products for our Sales efforts this year.

With this announcement, The Trading Company would like to place on record its appreciation of the work done by Joyce Potts, over a number of years, in the organisation of Trust's annual Craft Fair. *Thank you Joyce!*

◆ **JM**

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As I am sure our Over volunteers will have noticed the toolstore, and the container lock-up (where we store the larger parts of equipment), are looking decidedly crowded. The good news is I have been told that we shall be getting a large part of one of the containers to expand into. *I am very much aware that, no matter how much space you provide someone, they will always expand to fill it - and with your help I fully intend to do just that!*

During the Summer months (that all too brief period between a wet Spring and a rainy Autumn) vegetation, and especially the weed variety, grows at a numbing pace. We will, without a doubt, be spending more and more of our time keeping it neat and tidy. With all this gardening about to kick off (*in fact Tim has already started by mowing the grass - and very smart it looks*) we really could do with a few more gardening tools. So, please do have a look around your garage/toolshed, and if you have any tools



you are willing to donate then please pass them our way. If necessary, we can buy the odd new handle etc.

Our 'Tool of the month' requirement has got to be a garden roller, preferably a medium size type which two persons can pull with ease. I'm sure visitors will have noticed that our dumper 'Dream' is good for ploughing the ground up, and we really need a roller to do a good repair job on the many odd areas of uneven ground. So if any kind soul out there has one that they are fed up pulling around, please donate it to a worthy cause! (Tony is on 01452 700 476). *Thank you.*

Following my last appeal for the electric motor and blade shaft from an electric cylinder mower a gentleman from the Hereford kindly brought one to one of the Social Evenings at the Verzons. Thank you - we will hopefully shortly have a brick cleaning machine!

*Now for my 'Little Moan' - and remember as i/c tool store this is one of my perks! Could all our volunteers please ensure that tools are put away in the correct store in a clean condition. If they are not cleaned then the next person has to and this is simply not fair; also if they are caked in clay, as is often the case, it becomes nicely baked on making cleaning much more difficult. I do not want to be told, "We worked until it was too dark to see to clean them". We are all volunteers here so please pack up in daylight and get them cleaned - uncharitable thoughts will then disappear from my head!*

◆ TB

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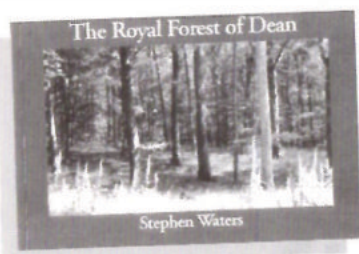
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# ◆ Not Quite ...THE LAST PAGE ◆

## THE ROYAL FOREST OF DEAN



Arriving early at my Dentist's for a check-up, I was looking at the magazines on offer and the toothbrushes for sale when a poster on the wall caught my eye. "*The Royal Forest of Dean*", it announced above a picture of an attractive woodland glade; while beneath the picture was printed "*Stephen Waters*". Stephen Waters? But he's my dentist!

The poster advertises Stephen's new book on the Forest of Dean, which presents a portrait of the Forest in words and very attractive full-page pictures. Stephen's "forest" encompasses the whole area bordered by Gloucester, Chepstow, Monmouth and Newent so it includes the H&G Canal. Just a few pages into the book, following a few pages devoted to Gloucester City, are

several pictures taken at Over, showing surfers riding the bore, Telford's bridge and a sunset flood scene taken from the bridge. Then comes a full-page view of Over Basin ("*...this beautifully restored canal basin*") taken, I would say, late last year. Accompanying this is a smaller photograph of the Canal and Lock Cottage at Oxenhall.

The book provides a comprehensive account of the magnificent views on offer in the Forest, many of them new to me such as St Anthony's Well and Flaxley Abbey. There is a watery theme to many of the pictures with varied views of the Rivers Severn and Wye and the various forest lakes such as Soudley Ponds.

I'm not sure what the theme is of Stephen's next book – but he says he wants to take some photographs from the top floor of *THE WHARF HOUSE*!

You can obtain a copy by sending a cheque for £11.99 (+ £2 p&p) payable to 'H&G Canal (Sales)' to Nigel Bailey, 30 Fieldfare, Abbeydale, Gloucester, GL4 4WF

*or* from the Trust's sales stands during the coming year – including Over Open days – (*which will save you the p&p and help swell Canal Trust funds*).

◆ NB

## Thank you...

### BOOK SALES

Thank you to every one who donated and bought second-hand books during 2002. We raised £280 towards the restoration of the H&G Canal.

If you have any good condition books for sale, please bring them to any Social Evening or contact me to arrange collection. ◆ JM

### ASH LOGS

The ash logs have proved very popular with **The Wharfinger** readers. We have found it 'challenging' to keep up with the orders. But our thanks must go out to all of you who have helped us saw/chop/distribute them – in particular Chris Handscombe and his team. **Thank you**

More logs available available for delivery in Gloucestershire @ £45 a load, contact Maggie Jones. ◆ MJ

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14TH APRIL, 2003



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Membership records are computerised. Your entry is available for inspection if you send a SAE to the Membership Secretary.

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 1,100 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, 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 3.5 miles.

