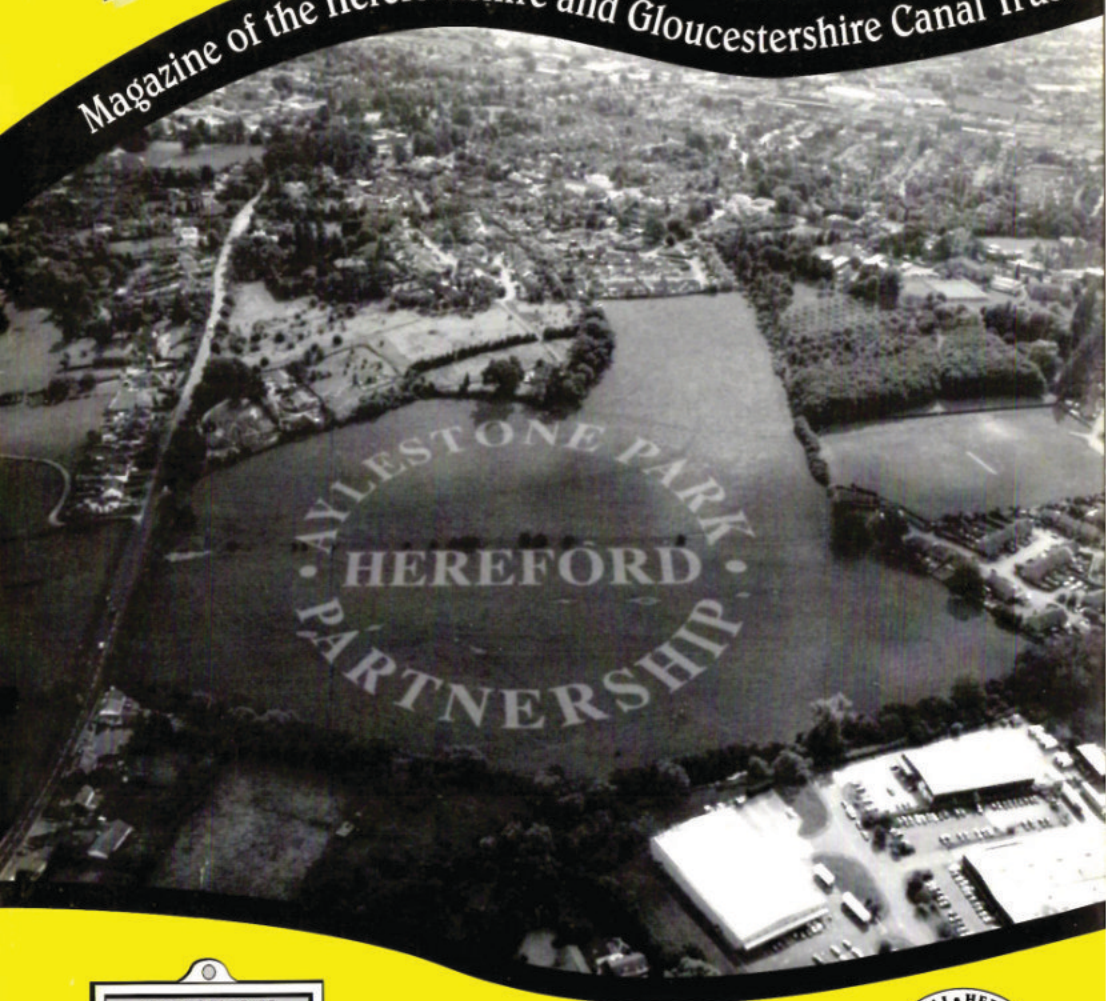


The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Spring 2004

50p
free to members



WHO DOES WHAT?

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FRONT COVER: The proposed site of Aylestone Park. Photo: Herefordshire Council

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STRONGBOW

the pint to
refresh Canal
Volunteers!



PARTNERSHP AT AYLESTONE



by Cliff Penny

I return to one of our 'key' words – **Partnership**. Because this has such a great influence on this specific edition of **The Wharfinger** I have used the Editor's prerogative and moved the *Chairman's Column* to my regular slot so that a minimum of over 2,000* new readers find out as soon as possible why they are receiving this issue through their door. [**assuming, on average, that two people read each copy – and that they start to read at the beginning!*]

In partnership with the **Aylestone Park Association** and **Herefordshire Council** the **Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust** have commenced work on the new public park at Aylestone Hill, Hereford. To celebrate, and to ensure that all of the properties and businesses close to the new Park are aware of what is going on, some 1,000 additional copies of this edition of **The Wharfinger** have been printed (*as part of the Park Project*) and will be hand-delivered to all of the near neighbours. As regular readers will know, the land for the new Park (purchased by Herefordshire Council) also includes the adjacent length of the Canal – where we undertook preliminary clearance work last year.

In the last few weeks our volunteers, together with those from **Waterway Recovery Group's London Branch**, organised preliminary works for the Park and erected the necessary security fence for the temporary works compound. This is the start of the work to be funded

by the £100,000 grant from the '**Living Spaces Fund**' of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, plus in excess of £30,000 from Herefordshire Council, reported in the last issue. Canal Trust volunteers working *in partnership with* WRG, and volunteers from other organisations, will restore not only the adjacent length of the H&G Canal but also construct the footpaths and cycleways within the Park linking it, and the Canal, to the wider community – over 2.5km of new footpaths/cycleways. The work also includes a new foot/cycle bridge over the Canal from Staniers Way to link Roman Road to the Park; extensive tree planting (the first phase has already commenced) and conservation work and fencing – plus the construction of two viewpoints. Further details (including how you can get involved) start on page 6.

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

Our Members will find tickets enclosed for our annual Grand Holiday Draw organised *in partnership with* **Black Prince Holidays, British Marine Federation** and the **Three Choirs Vineyard** (all the holidays are donated – thank you). An excellent chance of winning a holiday whilst supporting our wholly voluntary work. Please note this year each ticket costs £1 and there are now 5 in a book. *If you are not a Member and would like tickets please contact Janet Moulton on 01432 264 366. Also see page 23.*

◆ CRP

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Regular readers of **The Wharfinger** will be familiar with our motto "Working *together*, in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future". One of the prime purposes of our magazine is to keep members and others abreast of what we are doing now and our plans for the future. In recent months, however, the Canal Trust has become increasingly aware of "*the past*". Edition 80 described some important recent acquisitions - the large-scale map of the proposed Newent Railway, which shows the line of the canal in great detail, and a set of notifications of mortgage interest paid by the Canal Company to Lady Kyrle Money in the 1850's or 60's.

Not so widely known is that last autumn a most exquisite and unusual ladies' fan, dating from the very early 1790's and decorated with a map of the proposed canal, was "discovered" in the store of the Hereford Museum. We are currently researching the history of this real treasure and will report our findings in due course. Thus in the space of a few months, we have been able to study artefacts dating from the very early days of the canal, its *hey-day* (if it could ever be described as having one!) and its eventual demise.

In January a group of Canal Trust members and friends met at the Gloucester Records Office, ostensibly to see the Newent Railway map, but also to look at a number of other historical maps and historical documents. What a fascinating evening this turned out to be, as the material on view raised all sorts of questions and we exchanged far-fetched theories as to possible answers. Seeing the signatures on the various old deeds and agreements reminded me that each time I put mine on a similar document today, a little piece of history is being made.

I'm not altogether sure about *reviving* the past - especially the past of a canal originally built too late to satisfy a market that didn't really exist. But I'm sure that, working *together*, we can secure an excellent future, for there has never been a better time for canal restoration and the leisure market has never been stronger.

In a very real sense we are giving the Canal a second chance. You can be part of this continuing 200 year old story and so help to ensure that the H&G Canal's history doesn't, like England's in 1066 *And All That*, come to a

◆ Dick Skeet, Chairman

AYLESTONE PARK CANAL PROJECT

Aylestone Hill

conservation area
and view points

Entrance to
AYLESTONE PARK

parking

junior
football

senior
football

parking

parking

bowling
green

kick
about

pavillion

play
ground

cricket pitch

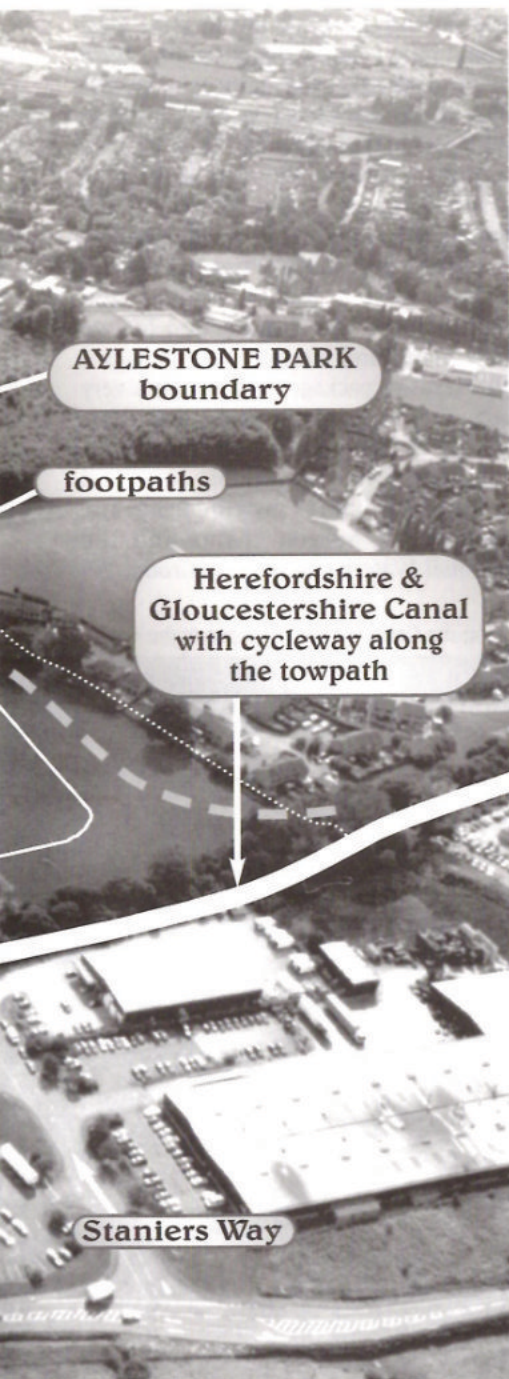
A465

Swan Inn

foot/cycle bridge

Roman Road

Please note that the positions of the items super-imposed on this photo are approximate rather than their exact position.



David Penny, Canal Trust Director and Chairman of the Aylestone Park Association, reviews the background of the project and how it is moving forward.....

As many readers will be aware there have been proposals for some years for the creation of Aylestone Park. Some time ago the Council Compulsory Purchased the site including the adjacent section of Canal to facilitate the creation of this multi faceted facility for the whole community.

More recently, the Council encouraged the Aylestone Park Association to be formed and this consists of representatives of local residents, the Canal Trust, bowling club, police and others. The Association seeks to oversee the Council's plans for the site and ensure these are brought forward in a manner that meets the needs and aspirations of the local community, and works closely with the Council to try and bring forward the completed Park at the earliest opportunity.

The Aylestone Park Project is very extensive and will make provision for new football and cricket pitches along with a bowling green (to replace that at Castle Green) and a multi purpose pavilion on the lower part of the field. Alongside these will be a play ground and kick about area as well as the required parking. Access will be from a new junction off Aylestone Hill which will be built this summer, with pedestrian accesses from Staniers Way, the top of Aylestone Hill and Victoria Park.

The rest of the field will become a public park with a network of footpaths and two view points which will afford wonderful views over the surrounding countryside. Across the bottom edge of the site lies the line of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal which will be fully restored as part of the Project, including a new pedestrian/ cycle bridge linking the Park to Staniers Way and Roman Road.

... continued

Photo: Herefordshire Council Text H&GCT

Late last year we had the fantastic news that the Aylestone Park Association had secured a £100,000 grant towards the restoration of the Canal and all the non-sports related works from the Living Spaces Fund of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This has since been announced in the House as being the largest grant of its type to date anywhere in the country and was singled out as having been successful due to the high level of partnership that had been demonstrated. This is in addition to the more than £30,000 already pledged by Herefordshire Council to these works.

This initial funding will see the restoration of the Canal on the edge of the Park; the creation of 2,5km of footpaths and cycleways around the Park

and linking the Canal out into the local community – including about one third of the route to eventually take people over the tunnel if they don't want to walk/cycle through it! It will also contribute towards the costs of building a new foot/cycle bridge over the Canal linking the Park to Staniers Way/Roman Road; extensive tree planting and conservation works; fence removal and replacement; the construction of two view points and interpretative signage – an extensive package of works on a very large site. The majority of this first phase of work is being lead by the Canal Trust volunteers with considerable additional volunteers being provided by the Community Service teams and the national Waterway Recovery Group. We

◆ Aylestone Park from above the top of the hill showing the Canal route both sides of the Park.



... looking North looking South ...



Photos: Maggie Jones



Two photos from the proposed bridge point, showing a cleared towpath and hedgerow.

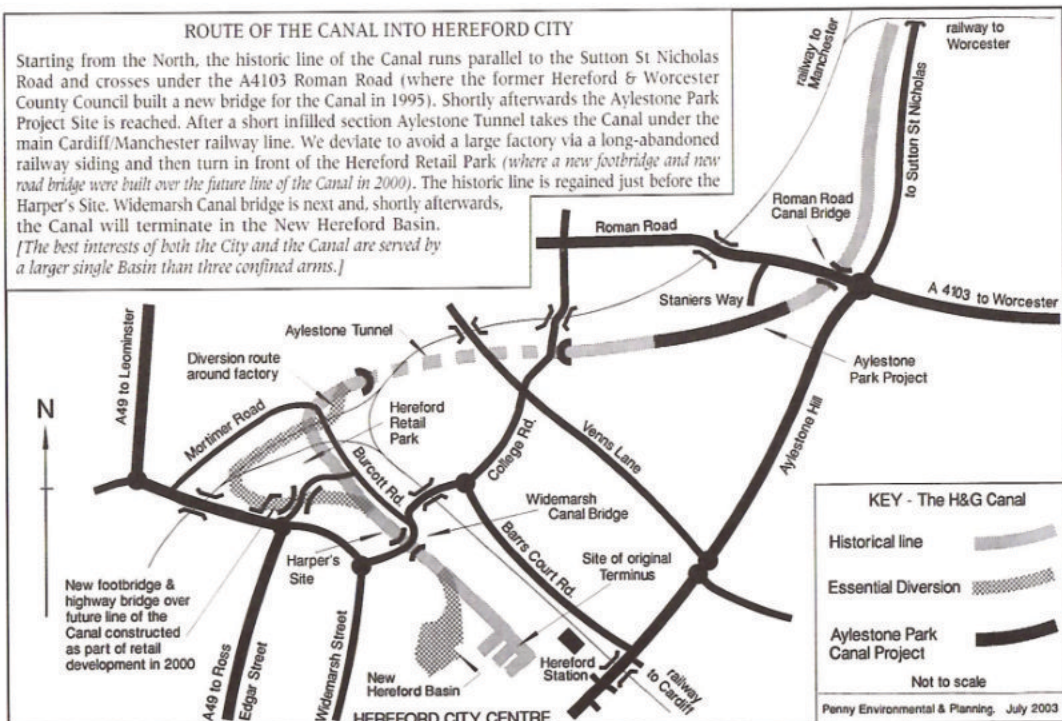
have already had WRG volunteers from far and wide., and this is set to expand as the year continues.

This year will also see the Council using its own funds to build the new access road off Aylestone Hill and placing all the electricity cables underground.

The work at Aylestone is only part of a larger jigsaw in Hereford as far as the Canal is concerned. We already have new bridges at Roman Road; two at Hereford Retail Park (Curry's etc); the existing Widemarsh Canal Bridge, and last month we finally signed the s.106 Planning

ROUTE OF THE CANAL INTO HEREFORD CITY

Starting from the North, the historic line of the Canal runs parallel to the Sutton St Nicholas Road and crosses under the A4103 Roman Road (where the former Hereford & Worcester County Council built a new bridge for the Canal in 1995). Shortly afterwards the Aylestone Park Project Site is reached. After a short infilled section Aylestone Tunnel takes the Canal under the main Cardiff/Manchester railway line. We deviate to avoid a large factory via a long-abandoned railway siding and then turn in front of the Hereford Retail Park (where a new footbridge and new road bridge were built over the future line of the Canal in 2000). The historic line is regained just before the Harper's Site. Widemarsh Canal bridge is next and, shortly afterwards, the Canal will terminate in the New Hereford Basin.
[The best interests of both the City and the Canal are served by a larger single Basin than three confined arms.]





Agreement on the Harpers Site between Newtown Road and Burcott Road. The Harpers site will see more than half their site transferred to the Trust and each of the 14 properties will make annual payments towards the management and maintenance of the Canal within the City. As part of the Edgar Street Grid proposals the Canal within the City will be fully restored and a new basin will be built as the centrepiece of one half of the grid with housing, a hotel, shops and restaurants and a new canal visitor centre etc. (a larger version of ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE) around it.



Slowly the Canal throughout the City is seeing advanced works for its restoration and this summer will see the Canal at Aylestone fully restored and back in water - the first navigable section of Canal in the City in 100 years. So the work at Aylestone on the Canal and all the surrounding works in creating the first stages of the Park is of huge value in its own right but is also strategic in the wider objective of restoring the Canal within the City and creating an integrated foot and cycle network throughout the City with the Canal towpath as its hub.





Over the last eighteen months at Aylestone the volunteers have completed the undergrowth clearance on the Canal in preparation for restoration, and the barbed wire and fence removal around the whole of the Park is well in hand by the Community Service team. February saw London WRG construct a temporary works compound for the Trust off Aylestone Hill and the entrance and a yard area surfaced.

Easter will see a 10 day national WRG camp with some 11 pieces of plant working all over site. The Canal itself will be dredged out to its original dimensions, and the footpaths and cycleways will see construction on three simultaneous faces at once - by the end of April the Park will be starting to take some shape! Meanwhile much tree planting has already taken place and more is planned, and such items as signage and new fencing will start to spring up around site as the year progresses.

Volunteers are working on site Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday undertaking varied works. All volunteers are welcome - you don't need special skills - please contact Brian Fox on 01432 358 628 ♦ **DRP**



Photos: Maggie Jones

■ **Top left:** Outside the compound is graded with a firm surface. **Top right:** The hard core is taken to the compound. **Middle left:** The finishing touches are made to the pallisade fencing. **Middle right:** The bars for the fencing are made into panels. **Above:** Hard core is spread over a membrane. **Left:** The fenced compound.

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contact

Dave Hall

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RESTORATION

at Oxenhall

The section from the tunnel to the aqueduct.

Well we made it as predicted by the end of the year – on the first Tuesday in December the final coping stone was laid to complete the reconstruction of the lock walls at House Lock. It is over 5 years since the name **Wrinklies** first appeared in print and 4 stalwarts started the task of clearing rubbish from the lock in order to determine the magnitude of the task.

There was assistance from Waterway Recovery Group at the beginning but the major part has been done by local volunteers working every Tuesday, weather permitting. There is now a regular group of about 8 (*rising to double figures when the weather is nice!*) so it looks as though we must be doing something right.

Although the lock walls are complete there is still a lot to do before the whole job is finished and we can fill the pound



with water. A list has been compiled filling an A4 sheet of outstanding jobs but perhaps the most important is to rebuild the cill including replacement of the main cill beam and top gate stop. Here we are dependent on our colleagues at Over who have assorted seasoned oak etc. from which they have promised to cut timber of the dimensions supplied to fit the lock at Oxenhall. We have also ordered some timber for new stop planks and some for repairs to the footbridge.

Work has also started on construction of the lower lock gate quadrant on the towpath side, which had disappeared completely. Excavations to ascertain what remains at this point have revealed

part of the old lock wall buttress, which was demolished and rebuilt on a new alignment - probably at the time that the Cottage was built. This has now been buried again, after taking some photos, so that the quadrant can be built on top. The towpath will require regrading at this point to fit in with the new stonework but the



Photo: David Gillman

◀ The 'Wrinklies' put in the last coping stone on Oxenhall Lock, completing their handywork.



Geoff completing lower retaining wall.



Inside Oxenhall Lock, with scaffolding removed.

Photos: Brian Fox

debris from the bottom of the lock should make a good base once it is dried out and will save us barrowing it too far as we clear it out.

The "crazy paving" stone work on either side of the lock has been completed and the grassy bank on the non-towpath side has been graded up to the fence. There were two large ash trees in this fence but they were declared unsafe and have been cut down, courtesy of Adrian Hope. The timber is now for sale as logs and the stumps will be shaped to form a couple of seats for those who wish to rest a while and take it all in. Other large trees further down the towpath within the canal line have been felled by our own trained volunteers to make way for the new

pound below the lock all in all making a very large pile of timber now in the yard. *Contact Maggie Jones if you want any logs at £50 a lorry load.*

Most of the scaffolding has been taken down giving a clear view of what we have achieved and is now in the yard awaiting re-erection when we start on the aqueduct in the Spring. A structural survey has been completed and we are awaiting the results before starting any significant reconstruction, although we do know that the main arch is still sound. This will be another challenge totally different from the lock and we are expecting major assistance from WRG on this one – but still plenty of scope for local volunteers to join in and learn new skills.

◆ **BF**

Oxenhall Lock COMPLETION CEREMONY

**Tuesday, 22nd June, 2004
5 pm**

A formal ceremony to commemorate the completion of over five years of restoration of the Lock structure by the Trust. More details next issue.



Restoration Fund BBQ

**TUESDAY, 22ND JUNE, '04
AT OXENHALL LOCK**

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



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THE TRADING COMPANY H & G Canal Sales

2003 DIARY PART FOUR

NOVEMBER saw our own **H> Craft Fair at Ledbury** – this was Pat's first year as organiser and she appeared to be keeping reasonably calm! *A report by one of our Members appears on pages 26 and 27.*

It was regarded as a great success by all concerned. Don't forget to put this year's Craft Fair date – November 13th, in your diary – an ideal place for purchasing those special Christmas presents.

DEC 6TH was the 150th anniversary of the Railway arriving in **Hereford** (*a late arrival just like the canal*). We had a stand at the Town Hall – Council of



Our promotional and sales stand at the National Waterways Festival 2003.

Management members manned this and great interest in our progress was reported. The following day saw Penny and Derek at the Railway Model Show, sales were good, supplying presents and salving the consciences of those who had bought too many models for themselves!

Mention must be made of the solo sales effort of Steve Bence who once again took advantage of the festive season and supplied his office with cuddly toys of all descriptions.

So ended 2003 a very good and enjoyable year for the Trading Company. ♦ **JM**

THE TRADING COMPANY H & G Canal Sales

Trading Company Outings in 2004

No sooner do we finish our outings for 2003 than we start booking for 2004 and getting those dates in the diary!

Some of the events we hope to attend in the first half of the year are: –

Feb 28-29	Tractor World, Malvern
April 4	Gloucester Boat Jumble
May 3-5	Worcester and Birmingham Canal Event
May 17-18	Moirs Canal Festival, Leicestershire
May 24-26	Crick Boat Show, Northamptonshire
June 5	Hartpury College Open Day, Gloucestershire
June 5-6	Gloucester Model Boat Show
June 26-27	Braunston Working Boats Show, Northamptonshire

If anyone would like to help in any way they will be most welcome – please contact Janet Moulton.

♦ **JM**

SOCIAL EVENINGS

Monthly Gatherings at The Verzons by Janet Moul

EVERYONE IS WELCOME to our monthly meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, 7.30pm for 8pm start.

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

MARCH 16TH

S A R A - Severn Area Rescue Association

The people you hope you never need!

- Dave Walker

APRIL 20TH

Dorset and Somerset Canal -

families, friends, foes, feuds,
finance and failure

- Derrick Hunt

MAY 18TH

Claverton Pumping Station -

transferring water from the River
Avon to the Kennet & Avon Canal
in a spectacular manner

- George Eycott

JUN 15TH

Annual General Meeting

7.30 p.m. start

Social Evenings

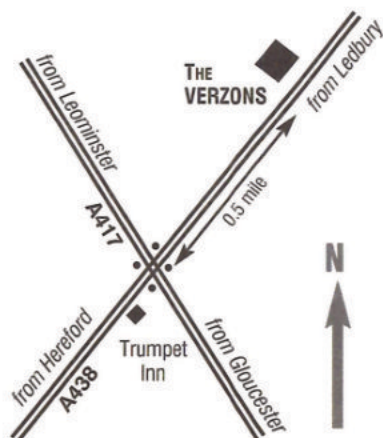
Barbara Moses has run the raffle at the Social Evenings for many years. The money raised usually covers the speakers' expenses and is a small but important part of our activities. Barbara has been trying to retire for some time and is now able to do so as Pat Skelton will take over in 2004.

Many thanks to Barbara for her dedication which has been greatly appreciated.

The 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.



OVER OPEN DAYS '04

A new season of Open Days is about to begin at Over, on the A40 west of Gloucester. So if you haven't been to visit before, or if you want to join us again, we will be pleased to see you. A list of this year's dates are below.

- ◆ View our display of photos showing how we have turned a piece of waste land into a rural Canal Basin at Over.
- ◆ Enjoy the home made cakes and other refreshments whilst relaxing at the waterside, watching the craft of the Gloucester Model Boat Club.
- ◆ Stroll along the tow path or take a free ride on our trip boat, Mister Maysey, and see the increasing range of wildlife, including the resident pair of kingfishers.
- ◆ Come and visit our Sales Stand.

Also ...

- ◆ At 12.30 pm each Open Day (only) there will be a conducted tour of **THE WHARF HOUSE**.



Photos: Ted Boagles



Over Open Days are the last Sunday
of each month, 11am - 4pm
28th March • 25th April • 30th May
27th June • 25th July • 29th August
26th September • 31st October

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OVER BOARD



Over trip boat, Mister Maysey, high and dry ready for a fresh coat of paint.

The past three months have been the quieter ones of the year with no Open Days and only a handful of curious visitors. The Model Boat Club members, though, are clearly made of sterner stuff and some have continued using the Basin right through the winter.

This quieter period gave us the opportunity to lift Mister Maysey out of the water for the first time since the boat was launched at Over in 2000. This gives us the chance to repaint the underside and carry out a few essential repairs before resuming boat trips in March. Our thanks go to Ron Mogg at **Joseph Rice** for organising the lifting operation.

The most concentrated area of work has been in the woodland where we have been reshaping the wooded slope. Quite a few more unsafe trees have been felled around the rest of site, logged and split by our newly-trained tree fellers, Ted, Mike and Dave (*should that be tree fellas?*). The resulting logs have been carted to the slipway ready for transporting to our log-buying customers.

We've said "goodbye" to several Duke of Edinburgh Scheme youngsters and

welcomed a few new ones. Inevitably, some of the jobs they do for us are fairly routine but we've managed to widen the scope to give them the experience of mixing mortar and laying bricks.

We said a special "thank you" to Oli White who has completed both his Silver and Gold Awards with us which translates into 18 months of volunteer work. As a part of his DoE activities he also had the wonderful opportunity to spend a week on one of the Tall Ships sailing from Greenock around the Western Isles – and, yes, he did climb the mast.

Meanwhile we have again been tree planting. Some of the young donated trees which were brought on in the nursery bed have been transplanted to the woodland and others to the surrounds of the car park. Coppicing work has been carried out in the nature reserve between the Mill Race and the River Leadon and a woven fence has gradually taken shape as a feature parallel to the Mill Race. The bare earth around the stilling chamber was planted with grass seed very late in the year but, because of the mild conditions, it has quickly greened the area. ◆ **NB**

Photo: Ted Baughen



THE WHARF HOUSE

THE WHARF HOUSE has made great progress over the last few months with most of the stud work now in place on both the top and middle floor. A somewhat daunting pile of 370 sheets of plasterboard has been brought into the building and is going up in all the bedrooms and manager's flat areas.

Through trial and tribulation we have found a method of getting the large sheets up the winding staircase to where it is required. Electric boxes are now able to be put in place ready for the electricians to do the wiring. Insulation is also well under way for the ground floor ceiling, with members of the team kitted-out in their white suits, goggles and masks to do the work required. Outside the paths are continuing with difficult non-regular brick triangles being cut to finish the sleek curves.

All this work is thanks to the good response we had from volunteers at our work-ins. The January one was for nine days and at least 45 volunteers took part! This figure included around ten young people doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award work. It also includes Liz Bailey produced lunches for the hungry crew each day. Thanks Liz, and thanks too to all volunteers who are lending a hand in THE WHARF HOUSE, especially those who joined us for the first time. Hopefully they enjoyed the teamwork and will join us in future work-ins, (*see list of dates on page 21*).

◆ MJ

ACTION ON ALL FLO



On the TOP FLOOR the walls and doorways take shape.



On the GROUND FLOOR the ceiling is being insulated.



Photos: Ted Beagles and Maggie Jones





The Wharfhouse Weekend Work-ins

Dates for the next Weekend Work-in is: -

March 20/21

... and a 4 day Work-in in April: -

April 23/24/25/26

Lunches will be provided.

The tasks are varied and experience is either gained or shared between volunteers. If you are able to join us in these work-ins, or on our regular Saturdays and Wednesday teams, please contact us (*details are also below*).

Over Volunteers please contact ...

THE WHARF HOUSE - Wilf Jones (01452 413 888)

Wednesdays - Ted Beagles (01452 522 648)

Weekends/work-ins - Maggie Jones (01452 618 010)



WANTED - PAINT

Do you have any tins of paint sitting around? If you do and no longer have any use for them, we can use them in THE WHARF HOUSE.

Please contact Wilf Jones, thank you.



On the FIRST FLOOR the stud walls create a wooden maze.



Also on the GROUND FLOOR large stocks of plaster-board are brought in ready for the walls and ceilings.

... and OUTSIDE the edges of the paths are being cut to shape.



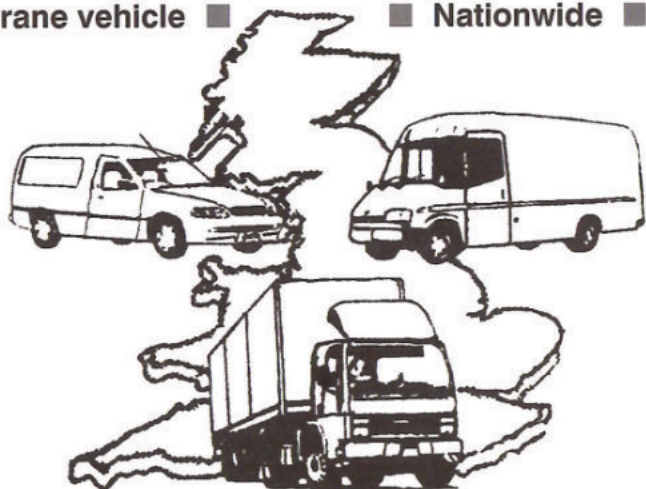
Photos: Mike Hunt and Ted Beagles

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FORMAL NOTICE OF 2004 AGM

TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY 15TH JUNE,
AT THE VERZONS INN, AT 7.30PM.

This is the formal Notice of the 2004 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 18th May and 8th 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 18th 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

This year the GHD tickets have changed. We still have 3 generously donated prizes, but the ticket price is £1 in books of 5.

This cuts down the printing costs and should cut the postage costs, as we shall only include 1 book in each copy of **The Wharfinger**. Only 5 stubs to fill in! More books can be sent to you if required (please contact Janet Moulton).

Printers of the tickets this year are Burton Printing Works of Leigh Sinton who have undertaken the printing at a reduced cost – thank you.

Prizes to be drawn late afternoon at National Waterways Festival, at Burton on Trent on 30 August, 2004.

H&G Sales Grand Holiday Draw
(Stubs and money to be returned to Promoter by 21st August 2004)
(No entries valid for postal entries)

Friends and colleagues will be eager for a great holiday for just £1!

Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust – H&G Sales

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

1st PRIZE

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Excluding Bank Holidays

2nd PRIZE

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+ overnight stay at top hotel. Donated by British Marine Federation

3rd PRIZE

One night B&B for two people at
Three Choirs Vineyard & Restaurant, Newent, Glos.

Promoter: Mrs E. Connors, 18 St. Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF

Prizes to be drawn at
National Waterways Festival,
Burton on Trent on 30/08/2004

Registered with Herefordshire Council under
Section 5 Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976

TICKETS £1 each

Our grateful thanks to Black Prince Holidays, The British Marine Federation and Three Choirs Vineyard for donating the Holiday prizes – 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 Moulton on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets. Thank you.

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Preparations for **major work** this year!

Firstly, my thanks to all those good people who have responded to my appeal for surplus tools; all sorts of interesting items have arrived and there is the promise of more to come. We were even given a battery powered drill/driver which is proving very handy in helping attach all the plasterboard which is going up in **The WHARF HOUSE**.

I have been tasked with getting a number of pieces of equipment ready for the onslaught at Aylestone Park, where major works have recently commenced and to give the rest of the kit a general overhaul. Thanks to the stalwart efforts of Henry and Russell, the Benford dumper truck is ready to go off for a major modification, the fitting of which is a legal requirement before we can use it. Also the big Volvo is running again and we have gone some way in to getting the 4 wheel drive to work. The final job is to get the water pump working; it has been taken to Andrew Sykes Pumps for them to have a look at it, and hopefully get it working.

I am always looking at the way various tasks are done to see if I can improve them in terms of ease, speed and of course with Health and Safety in mind. The latest has

been a stand fitted with a clamp to assist with cutting the brick paviours that are fitted in around the path edges. I still have a minor modification to carry out, but Neil Jones, who was first to use it, said it saved a lot a back bending and made the job much easier. When I saw how many cut bricks Neil had fitted around the path I realised it was much faster as well.

Soon I shall be checking my inventory and I'm sure that all of you who have held inventories will know what a task that can be. It once covered just 2 pages of A4 paper but now covers 7, and when all the new tools have been added to the list, I'm sure it will grow to at least 9 pages! This also gives me the opportunity to paint our colours on the tools for identification purposes, and thanks to Rosie, Sophie and Catherine; hard-working Duke of Edinburgh's Award young people, I am well on with this job.

Well that's enough of this tale for now; thanks again for the support I have received from my appeals.

◆ **TB**



Skittles Evening Report



As advertised in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**, a Skittles Evening was held for vounteers at Newent in January. This regular event was well supported with a good turnout of nearly 40 restoration and sales volunteers from both ends of the Canal. Highest score was attained by Simon Yeung of Over.

Well done Simon!

◆ **MJ**

The Craft Fair

a personal recollection ...

Member Steve Bence lives 75 miles from Ledbury but that doesn't deter him from volunteering to assist - or his Wife, Maggie, from having one of the stalls. Here is Steve's personal account of a day in the life of our very own Craft Fair ...



06.00 – Saturday, November 15th – AARGH !!! - An alarm clock rings in Southam in Warwick-shire,

I didn't realise that this unearthly hour existed at weekends.

07.30 – Maggie and I load up the car with our travelling show and hit the road, Ledbury bound, for the H&GCT Craft Fair. Thankfully it's a beautifully bright, crisp and sunny morning, a marked contrast to the gales and driving rain of the previous day. Maggie would be purveying her range of hand-wrought, greetings cards and I would try to be generally useful in some capacity or other.

08.45 – A totally trouble free journey sees us arrive at St Katherine's Hall and the scene is already of hustle and bustle as many of the other stall holders are well into their setting up. A brief word with Pat helps us to locate Maggie's pitch for the day and "Igor" Bence then leaps into action, bow-hauling display stands and boxes of stock from the car park while the "Boss" works on turning an innocent looking table into an eye-catching cornucopia of delight.

09.45 – It's still 15 minutes before the official opening time, but already some early worms are milling around the outer door waiting for the starting gun. "Igor" would now assume the role of doorman and, armed with an appropriate glove puppet as bait, welcome visitors in with a friendly smile and a few kind words.



10.00 – We're open, and the stalls are immediately besieged by eager shoppers looking for those Christmas gifts, maybe a little bit different, for their special friends and relatives.

12.00 – High Noon, and after 2 solid hours of steady customer flow (and several nicotine breaks for the "staff") I observe that our attendant great *Joe Public* are beginning to form into 2 distinct types - the "Committed" and the "Need to be Convinced", and type 2 definitely need the personal touch.

Clearly we have an established core of supporters who need no encouragement to sample the fine fare on show, but with the hall entrance sited on a footpath between Ledbury main street and the principal car



park, many passers by are not actually aware of our little shindig. Until, that is, they see the signs by the door and are hailed by an idiot and a puppet (you can make your own mind up *which one is which*). There then usually follows an exchange of banter which often concludes with "is it free to get in ?", responded by a simple "yes" and "welcome".

13.00 – My good lady beckons for a lunch relief so I temporarily hand over the puppet to a colleague. The "restaurant at the end of the universe" is at the bottom end of the hall – and there's a perpetual queue for the glut of tasty morsels on today's menu, alongside the Canal Trust's own goody stall, with Janet and Penny in their 'full selling glory'. To my left are several "crafty" displays of hand made leather and metal goods, soft furnishings and knitted toys while at the top end of the hall a pair of bowler-hatted supporters appear to have something of everything for sale on their "Arkwrights Store" style treble-table length stand.

On my right side I see jewellery of all shapes and designs, another greetings card trader (*but totally harmonious with our own little selection*) and a dispenser of patent remedies and home made recipes (*or jams, preserves and Christmas puddings to you*).

On my left in the centre island of stands sits a toy stall tendering amusements for young and old, on my right is fellow Trust member Caroline, magically turning everyday objects into artefacts of beauty, festooned with the traditional roses and castles decoration (*the artefacts, not Caroline*), last but not least I see me, sat there wondering where all of the customers have gone, for although Maggie did a good morning's business, I've sold zilch !!, so I'll think I'd better stick to cuddly toys in future.

13.30 – My cover duty is over so I'm off to sample the whisky fruit cake before



resuming my role as commissionaire.

15.00 – The last hour of trading begins but there's no sign of a drop in patronage, they just keep on a comin'.

16.00 – It's time to try to lock up and close down, but stragglers are still sneaking in and looking for last minute knockdowns and our good traders are happy to oblige them.

16.15 – The doors are finally shut and all locked in are feverishly engaged in packing up and taking down, cashing up and winding down, but all seem agreed that the day has been both a successful and an enjoyable one, so what more can you ask for?

Maggie is especially delighted with the reception that her craftwork received and the number of resultant sales made, so much so that she pledges her support there and then, along with several other stall holders, to next years event.

16.45 – We're reloaded and ready to roll so after a brief round of 'goodbyes' and 'see you again soon', it's back on that long and winding road to sleepy Southam.

18.00 PM – Exactly 12 hours after that dratted alarm call, we're home again greeted by 2 hungry moggies and a welcome singing kettle.

Oh it's so nice to put your feet up.

◆ *SJB*





An Evening with a MAP!

In the last edition of **The Wharfinger** David McDougall told the story of our 'Mappa Mundi' – the original Part 1 'Newent Railway' construction survey (from Over to Malswick) recently purchased by **THE WHARF HOUSE COMPANY** on behalf of the Canal Trust for £500. Gloucestershire Records Office are kindly storing the map for us and in January, as a part of our fund raising specifically to pay for the map, our Caroline Jones organised a visit to see it . . .

I turned up at Gloucester Record Office at 6.30pm, mainly to see the evening's set-up and help out with the display if I could. As it happened there was no need, everything was laid out ready. To my surprise there was already someone waiting, and by 6.45pm a quarter of an hour before the due 'starting time' there were perhaps twenty people waiting – *just as well it wasn't raining!*

At 6.55pm the Record Office staff opened the doors and twenty-three enthusiastic people poured in, four were late and three were ill; the evening was sold out.

The assembly was divided into two groups, each taking a turn at a tour of the Record Office and a viewing of the document display, but before all of this a video about the work of the Office was shown to everyone. Tours were undertaken by their own staff. Each group was shown some of the various strongrooms where the documents are kept, here they learned of the environmental controls necessary for safe archive storage. The groups were also shown a conservation display where they learned how the various types of documents can become damaged and are subsequently repaired and conserved.

The other half of the evening consisted of a display of documents from Gloucester Record Office, The Waterways Archive and The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust. These included the pre-proposal plan of the canal from 1791, acts for the canal

dated 1791 and 1793, a plan of the Leaden Valley dated around 1843 and the GWR map recently bought by **THE WHARF HOUSE COMPANY** and dated around 1880.

To start things off I gave a quick rundown of the history of the Canal as related to the documents on display, nobody corrected me so my lesson must have been OK! Each group was then allowed to have a good look at the documents under the watchful eyes of the Record Office staff. Lively discussion ensued among various groups, the staff later told me they were very impressed with the enthusiasm and knowledge that everyone showed.

Everyone had an enjoyable evening and learned something new to boot, and we were all very grateful to the Record Office staff for their hospitality.

The evening raised a total sum of £145.00, £95.00 of which has gone towards the purchase price of the GWR map and £50.00 of which we donated to the Record Office. The cheque was gratefully received and will be used to help purchase more documents for the Office's collection.

The evening was oversubscribed, all tickets being sold before Christmas. So as not to disappoint those who missed out, another similar evening has been arranged, this will take place on **Tuesday, 27 April, 7.00pm to 9.00pm** and £5.00 per ticket. Please contact me for tickets on 01594 861286 or at caroline_jones@btinternet.com. ♦ CJ

Specific donations towards the purchase of this very important map would be greatly appreciated. All donations will be acknowledged and those of £100 and over will be reported in **The Wharfinger** and permanently recorded as part of the eventual display in **THE WHARF HOUSE**. Please send donations to our Treasurer Liz Connors (see Contacts, inside back cover). Thank you.

Our sincere thanks to Members for their donations and, in particular, to **Robin Stiles**, of Bristol, who has donated £110 towards the purchase costs of the map. Thank you

THE TRADING COMPANY H & G Canal Sales

ALL JUMBLED UP

Our Members Ray and Barbara Moses organise and 'man' an important part of our fundraising by attending the annual Boat and Watersports Jumble at Gloucester each year – for which we are very grateful. However, the success of their annual efforts do depend on having appropriate items to sell...

Once again we are organising a stall at the Gloucester Boat and Watersports Jumble in April. As usual we require items to sell please, either donated or to be sold on commission. The items must have a waterways connection, however tenuous, but please, no magazines as we still have plenty left from previous years.

We can collect items from Social meetings at **The Verzhons**. If this is not convenient, please phone 01989 780325 to make alternative arrangements. *The more donated items we get, the more money we can make for the H&G Canal Trust.*

The Annual Boat and Watersports Jumble is held at **The National Waterways Museum**, Gloucester Docks. This year the event is on Sunday 4th April 10am to 4pm. Admission is a bargain at £3.50 as it includes entry to the Museum as well as to the Jumble – and accompanied children are free. ♦ **BM**

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Why not LEDBURY?

One of our Members wrote to our Chairman last year asking for a map to be published of the proposals for the Ledbury area. As long-term readers will be aware the historic route of the Canal was obstructed by development in Ledbury Town long before the comprehensive Planning Policies were put in place that protect the historic line throughout. Where restoration is impossible on that route then a viable 'essential diversion route' is protected from adverse development – and that is the case at Ledbury.

The new route will follow outside the bypass (and its ultimate extension). The extension of the bypass would include a local realignment of the Bromyard Road under which a bridge would be built for the Canal as part of those works. The

Canal from the Hereford to Bromyard roads would effectively be an extension of the waterside park. Apart from advance works when the opportunities arise we do not plan any restoration work in the Ledbury area in the near future.

As explained in the last edition we only publish plans in **The Wharfinger** when several issues in an area are coming together as had been the case in Hereford where we had the Aylestone Park, Roman Road, Farriery College, Harper development, and Edgar street Grid all leading to significant interest in that area. We have no plans to publish any plans for Ledbury in the foreseeable future as we would not wish to raise anyone's hopes that work is imminent in the area.

◆ CRP

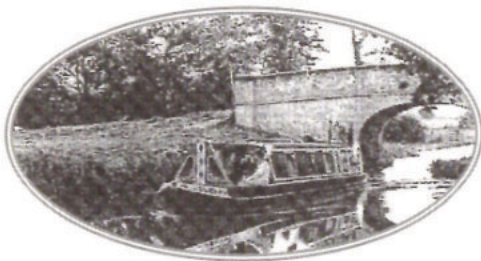
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◆ Not Quite ... THE LAST PAGE ◆

POSTPERSONS

Thank you to all those who offered to deliver **The Wharfinger** in their area. Over 150 are now being hand delivered and as the postage per issue is usually 34p this is quite a substantial saving of our funds.

A few more clusters have been spotted in the Clehonger, Longhope, and Tibberton areas. Please contact Janet Moulton if you think you can help so that we can save even more of our funds for restoration. Thank you. ◆ JM



Books

We raised almost £400 on our book sales this year. Thank you to all who donated – with special thanks to Mr Young for the canal books – and to all those who bought books. **The Trading Company** will continue with the sale of books this year – if you have any good quality books to donate please contact Janet Moulton. ◆ JM



LOGS FOR SALE

We are continuing to run the log delivery service. Last year's loads proved very popular with our customers.

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17TH APRIL, 2004

THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G Canal Sales

**SALES STOCK
& MAIL ORDER**

Penny Shetliffe, who has managed the Mail Order Sales and stock for our Trading Company, is taking a break – whilst she assists husband George with his voluntary efforts in the vintage motoring field. *They say a change is as good as a rest!* Our sincere thanks to Penny for the considerable time and effort in undertaking this important role. It is not really farewell as Penny will still be on the Trading Company Committee and still be a familiar face at the Sales stand.

Penny has kept us in order controlling our stock levels and we have added many new ranges – this is important so that the display looks different when we attend the same events for a number of years. A big thank you to Penny from all the Trading Company and especially from me for all her help this last year

Heather Worth has volunteered to swap roles and will be responsible for stock and all Mail Order Sales as from the end of February – see *Contacts*, inside back cover, for details. ◆ JM

Wanted please ...

We need a volunteer to undertake the liaison, once a quarter, with the existing advertisers in **The Wharfinger**, to check existing advertisements remain up to date and ensure that payment is received. This is a relatively simple task and only requires a few hours 4 times a year. Volunteers please contact Cliff Penny (*see contacts*). ◆ CRP



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Want to help? ...

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Individual	£7.50	Joint/Family	£10
Senior Citizen	£5	Joint Senior Citizen	£7
Corporate	£20		

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Individual	£150	Joint/Family	£200
Senior Citizen	£80	Joint Senior Citizen	£110
Corporate	£400		

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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.

