

The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Spring 2006

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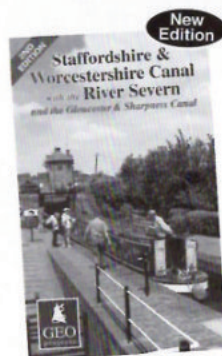
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FRONT COVER PHOTO:

Spring daffodils at Over Basin – by Nigel Bailey

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I was about to sit down to write this column when I received a telephone call from my son (on Friday the 13th). My daughter-in-law that day had had her pregnancy scan and "It's twin boys Mrs Skeet" was the glad tidings. There is something special about twins and surely having two new grandchildren is twice as wonderful as having one? Hopefully those of us privileged to be parents, and also have grandchildren to spoil, can look forward to the pleasure they will give us for rest of our lives, so what is a year or two of very hard work, when that is the result?

Our son and daughter-in-law live near Reading; so taking ourselves and our boat on to the Kennet and Avon Canal for a while might be the best way we can support them through the challenging next few months – to help without getting under their feet. When our son was born, the K&A was still largely a derelict and unnavigable waterway and it is only through the unstinting hard work and support of people just like you, that Pat and I have this opportunity today.

You can see where I'm leading, I'm sure. Trying to get a canal restored can be very hard work too, but surely in the long run it is worth it, for the results will be here for many years to come, not only for our grandchildren to enjoy, but also their grandchildren too. We need to constantly remember this when it seems a very hard grind indeed.

One of the more enjoyable duties as Chairman of the Trust is the writing of "thank you" letters and this serves to remind me constantly of the ongoing generosity of people towards the Canal Trust, giving us both gifts of money and in kind. *The Trust was presented with a Christmas gift by David Bick, author of **The Hereford and Gloucester Canal** and a long-standing Member of the Trust.* David's gift was the second part of the original Railway Map, prepared by the Great Western Railway as part of the building of the railway between Ledbury and Gloucester. The first part of this map the Trust was able to purchase in 2003; the story of this was featured in an article in **The Wharfinger**, Edition 80. Make no mistake, historic documents like this are valuable (they include much detail about the H&G Canal) and we are extremely grateful to David for this very generous gift.

◆ Dick Skeet, Chairman

Since writing this we have received the sad news that David Bick has died; [see our tributes on pages 5&7].

did I realise then that his last act connected with our voluntary work would be to donate this important document to the Canal Trust – as reported by Dick Skeet on page 3; a generous final gesture of support.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The British Waterways desk-top study of potential income generated in the two counties from a fully restored H&G Canal (*adjusted to the current day*) indicated over £7million of **additional** tourism and related income per annum – plus a conservative estimate of at least 170 new jobs created solely as a result of the restored Canal.

There is no need to await completion of restoration! The contribution to the local economy directly attributable to the work of the H&G Canal Trust has taken a major step forward in the past year with ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE now generating employment and additional income for our local suppliers.

We hope this will be rewarded with greatly increased political and financial support for our voluntary efforts – *we cannot be expected to continue to achieve our objectives without major and consistent support.*

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

Yes, it is that time of year again when you can stand an excellent chance of **winning a holiday** and support our voluntary work. Our expenditure on fitting out the B&B element of ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE means that we need to raise a record amount this year, please! As always **all of the prizes are genuine holidays** – no '£50 off' vouchers here – and all have been generously donated as indicated on each ticket. Please note that each ticket costs £1, there are five to a book, and this year we have included two books of five tickets inside each copy of **The Wharfinger** going to Members. *Further details are on page 19. You could win a holiday by supporting us!* ♦ CRP

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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.* ©H&GCT

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SUPPORT AND SUPPORTERS

DAVID BICK

David Bick, author of **The Hereford & Gloucester Canal**, sadly died late in January (*a tribute is on page 7*). David was a long-standing Member of the Canal Trust but when the first edition of his book about the Canal (and the Gloucester to Ledbury Railway) was published in 1979 there was no talk of restoration, let alone a Canal Society or Trust for anyone to join! The introduction to the book said it all – *“Throughout the length and breadth of England, no major navigation is so lost in obscurity as the Hereford & Gloucester Canal”*. In his closing lines in the first edition David said *“As to the future, in the light of local authority’s growing awareness of the amenity potential of old waterways, and the almost unbelievable feats of restoration elsewhere, it is natural to enquire whether something might be done.”*

There were times when I gained the impression that David was of the opinion that it couldn’t be done. However, it became clear that this was due to a fundamental misunderstanding as to what we were proposing. I found out quite recently that he thought our plans included the reinstatement of the original ‘cut’ across Alney Island (to get from Over into the Eastern Channel of the River Severn). Our credibility rose considerably when even I admitted that was impossible (*not a word I use lightly!*); Over Basin would link via the Western Channel, and a restored Maisemore Lock, into the Severn at the Upper Parting (the original cut languishing for posterity under the A40).

In subsequent editions of the book

by Cliff Penny



David was swift to acknowledge our achievements; the latest edition (2003) includes a dedicated chapter on the work of the Canal Trust together with a number of photographs of Over Basin, Hereford Retail Park and Oxenhall Lock. David concluded with the compliment *“As for the future, with the old vision of the 1790’s resurrected in the form of the canal trust, the final chapter in the story of this beautiful waterway is still being written.”* David’s book has been instrumental in gaining many new Members and sales of the book have been a small but important part of the annual income of our Trading Company from the outset.

About a year ago David sent items relating to his earlier research, prior to publishing his book on the H&G, to Lucien Perring for safe keeping (*Lucien is building an archive of photographs and press cuttings on behalf of the Canal Trust*). He also sent a copy of a feasibility study that he had prepared in 1979/80 for the restoration of the section of the historic canal line behind Newent Lake as an amenity for the Town. This short section is now isolated from the rest of the Canal by Newent Bypass and does not form part of our proposals for restoration of the whole Canal as to do so would involve unnecessary crossings to and fro under the main road.

In 2003 we published details in **The Wharfinger** of the Canal Trust’s purchase of a part of the original Great Western Railway Map which shows the detailed route of the railway (and the Canal) from Ledbury to Gloucester. David was immediately in touch with me to say that he had the second part of the Map! Little

did I realise then that his last act connected with our voluntary work would be to donate this important document to the Canal Trust – as reported by Dick Skeet on page 3; *a generous final gesture of support.*

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DAVID BICK

David died at his home in Newent on 20th January, aged 76, after an illness lasting several months. He remained positive and interested in life until the last few days. His interest in industrial archaeology was awakened as a schoolboy by cycling with his father and friends into the Forest of Dean, where coal mining and railways were then still abundant. By the early 1950s, he had graduated with a first from Leeds University and joined Dowty Engineering's design department. Among his projects, he designed a hydraulic retarder for reducing the speed of railway wagons, which in 1980 won him the Bramah medal of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

After taking early retirement at 56, David devoted himself to industrial history and its artefacts, writing over 20 books. In addition to his well known book on The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (and Gloucester to Ledbury Railway) he published a series of books on metal mining, and founded (and for many years chaired) the Welsh Mines Society. He was an active promoter of industrial archaeology – cajoling public bodies, serving on committees and publishing widely; his last article appeared within a week of his death.

Cycling had been a teenage interest and vintage cars took over from that and he was a Member of the Vintage Sports Car Club. He owned a vintage 1928 Morris MG, an aged Morris truck (known as 'the Bick Wagon') and in recent years built a sports version of another vintage Morris that was much admired. One of our Canal Trust Members was riding with him and they were going at quite a rate of knots when David explained that the only



Photo: Gloucestershire Media

disadvantage of owning such a car was that "you are held up by modern traffic"!

Some 200 people attended a memorial gathering and the H&G Canal Trust was represented by the Chairman, Dick Skeet. Some years ago David gave his wife, Sheila, a sealed envelope to be opened on his death. She said she thought it would contain details of his funeral arrangements, the music he wanted etc. but no, it was instructions to his sons Edward and William headed 'Vintage Cars': –

- "1. When not in use chock out the clutch with a piece of timber wedged between the clutch pedal and the dashboard.*
- 2. Starting instructions – switch on, pull out choke, set hand throttle lever up a bit, and then a couple of pulls on the starting handle ..."*

David was a 'no nonsense' man who did not suffer fools gladly – but he was always willing to offer helpful advice and share his knowledge freely. He will be sadly missed.

Cliff Penny

My thanks for background information from Beverley Hicks, Lucien Perring, The Forester (Gerald Isaaman) and The Guardian (John van Laun).

RESTORATION

at Oxenhall by Brian Fox



The subject of the photograph on the cover of the last edition of *The Wharfinger* is no more! The steel former built to support the new arch of the aqueduct has done its job and is now languishing in pieces, carefully stored, in the yard. A bit like a flower, it blossomed in August, bore its fruits during the autumn, and by the winter had gone - but it will rise again as the focus moves to the other end of the structure. It was dismantled on a cold, gloomy day in December when the water level in the Ell Brook was low enough to enter safely and by 4 o'clock the volunteers were ready for a hot bath having successfully achieved their target - and the arch is now standing proud, completely unsupported.

The spandrel wall above is now 4 courses deep and the back retaining wall of blocks is even higher as that is simple to build. A concrete sandwich is then made to fill the gap in between but progress is generally slow as the frosty weather stops us mixing mortar and laying stones. The stone cut by the WRGies with the hired stone saw has now all been used and we are back to using the manual stone saw which only has a limited depth of cut. *If anyone out there has a stone bench saw that they don't want then it would make life so much easier and our progress quicker - I would be pleased to hear from you.*

During the cold weather a start has been made on clearing some of the soil and debris which has fallen from the other end of the aqueduct into the brook. It has to come out so that we can see what preparatory work needs doing before we erect the arch former at that end. Work has also started on repairing a hole in the centre of the arch about which John Forrest is reporting on page 10.

This is the time of the year when it is cold and frosty that we have to assess the ongoing needs of maintenance along those sections of canal already restored. The section between the aqueduct and the restored lock has a regular cut of the grass along the towpath but the other bank of the canal has never been touched since we bought the land about 8 years ago. It consists mainly of old willow trees with branches rotting and fallen (one complete tree fell across the canal some years ago), and it has been decided to pollard what is left to encourage new growth. There are other trees along here including much hawthorn but these will be left or trimmed as is felt appropriate.

We always consult with the Nature Trust, Local Authorities and other interested bodies before restoration of a new section of the canal starts to obtain advice and undertake any necessary surveys of flora and fauna which may be needed. As a result of this it is possible to plan the creation of new habitats as the work progresses. It is Canal Trust policy to leave the non-towpath bank as 'wild' as possible but it still has to be 'managed' to get the best out of it and much of the old timber felled is left to provide habitats for wildlife in general. There are those who see the felling of a tree as destruction of a wildlife habitat but, while recognising that this may be the case in the short term, it is our intention to eventually create an environment which will encourage existing wildlife to thrive and new species to move in. We take great care to only remove those trees

that simply cannot stay; and only do so at the appropriate time of year. As we only work on a short section at any one time the impact is localised and short-term. I may be biased but I think that a restored canal with a few swans, moorhens and kingfishers plus the other creatures which are never seen is an improvement on a muddy ditch full of stinging nettles, brambles and the odd dumped car, trolley, tyres etc.

Finally, a few words about Dave Jones who has recently moved from his house opposite Oxenhall Church to a new abode in Newent. He used to walk down the towpath to watch us at work on the lock and it wasn't long before he had been persuaded to join the Tuesday group. His knowledge of tractors proved very useful and he also undertook much of the tree maintenance using his chain saw and later his ride-on mower to cut the grass on the towpath. His back garden workshop proved invaluable in doing repairs and maintenance on tools and also in the manufacture of various turned wooden



Photo: Brian Fox

◆ Dave Jones in front of our trusty tractor.

bowls, pens and lamps for sale on the Canal Trust sales stand. Unfortunately his health is not so good these days and he has decided to retire although he may still potter about in his new house if he can find the space to store a few tools. We fully expect him to pop down on Tuesdays for a chat when the warmer weather arrives. Why not pay us a visit – we don't mind an excuse to stop and chat – *but be warned you may finish up with a trowel in your hand!*

◆ **BF**



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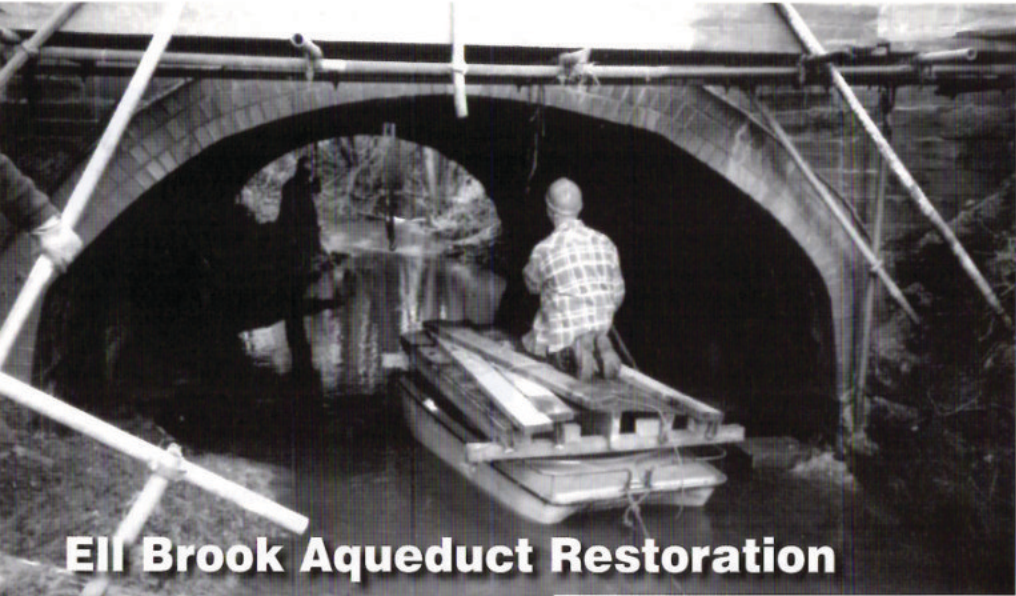
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Ell Brook Aqueduct Restoration Part two

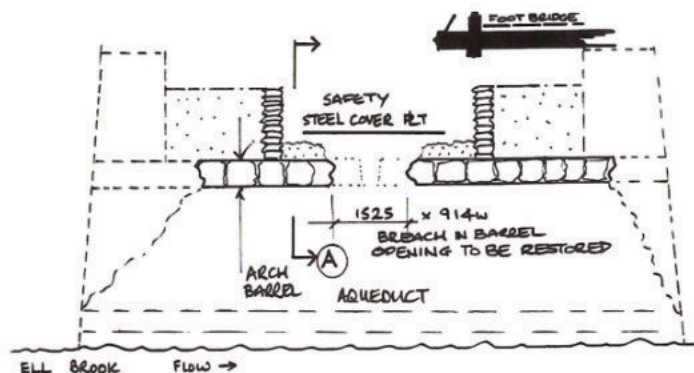
Following on from his article on page 10-11 of the last edition John Forrest brings us up to date with progress on the Ell Brook Aqueduct ...

After the successful removal of the steel arch and the timber former from the upstream face of the aqueduct, the next task was the restoration of the 'bunghole'. This lies midway along the length of the aqueduct barrel. The bunghole was originally used to drain water from the aqueduct for specific maintenance work, however over the past years vandals have been hurling missiles at the exposed masonry and have increased the size of the hole dramatically.

A similar formwork was envisaged to the one used previously. The method used for securing the formwork to the underside of the bunghole can be seen from the sketch on page 11. The screwed rods were installed in holes drilled through the stonework arch. A second set of clamping rods were then attached to the cleats located on the underside of the arch and allowed to hang downwards to accept the timber cross bearers that in turn support the formwork.



Photos: John Forrest



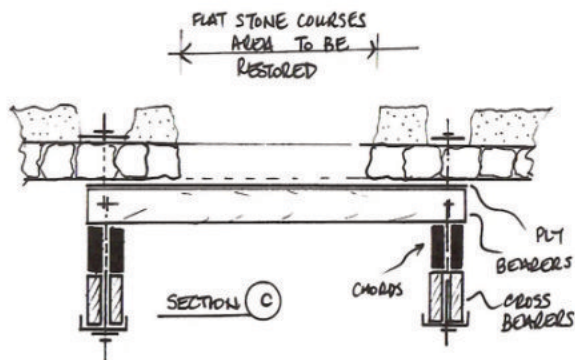
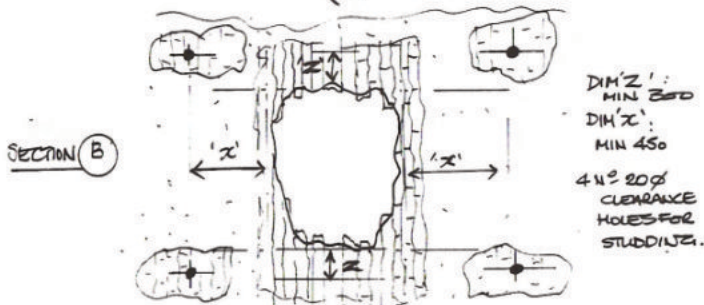
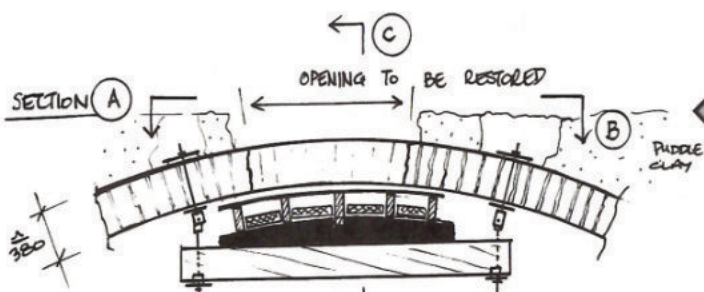
Above: Block and tackle is used to hoist the former to the top of the arch.

Far top left: Floating the former into the aqueduct.

Next: Lifting the former off of the boat.

Next: Hoisting the former up to the opening.

Bottom: Former is finally clamped into position.



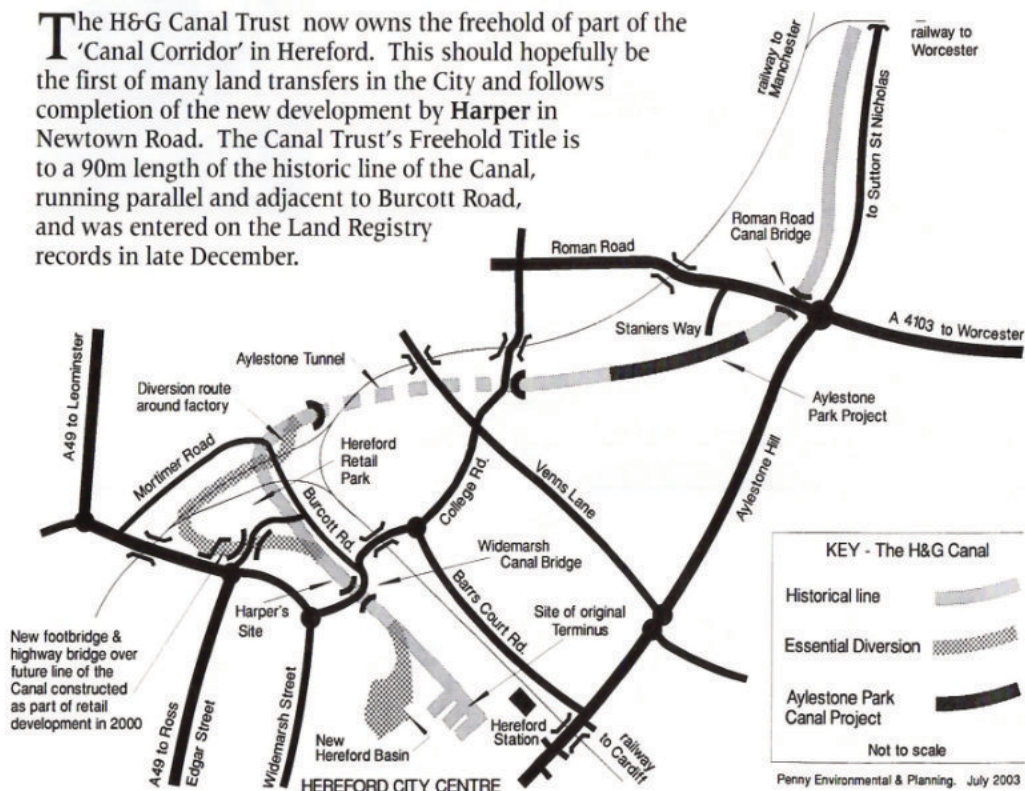
It was agreed that the best way to locate the lifting position of the former was to float it in using a small boat from the upstream stretch of Ell Brook; gradually paying out the rope the boat slowly arrived under the bung hole. A block and tackle was connected to the timber former and it was hoisted up to the cross bearers, these then took the weight. The hanging screwed rods took the strain as the nuts tightened to clamp the former against the underside of the arch. The block and tackle was removed and the new masonry laid to match the existing courses, completely filling the bung hole.

◆ JF

◆ Above: John Forrest's working drawings of the procedure.

First Land Transfer in Hereford City

The H&G Canal Trust now owns the freehold of part of the 'Canal Corridor' in Hereford. This should hopefully be the first of many land transfers in the City and follows completion of the new development by **Harper** in Newtown Road. The Canal Trust's Freehold Title is to a 90m length of the historic line of the Canal, running parallel and adjacent to Burcott Road, and was entered on the Land Registry records in late December.



As reported in **The Wharfinger** previously (*Ed 85 - page 23*) the transfer of the land was a part of the Section 106 Planning Agreement we negotiated at the time that Planning Permission was granted for the redevelopment of the site. As well as the 'Canal Corridor' land being transferred to the Canal Trust, without charge, each of the 14 properties will make annual (index linked) payments towards the H&G Canal Trust's ultimate management and maintenance of the Canal within the City.

Not only are we securing the vital 'Canal Corridor' (waterway width, towpath/s and room for any essential embankments or

cuttings and operational access) but also the basic funding that will ensure long-term maintenance and management of the Canal. Our repeated thanks to the Council and **Harpers** for their support and co-operation throughout.

This is a small but vital part of the ultimate 'jigsaw'; it illustrates how we successfully utilise the supportive Planning Policies of each local authority so that, working together (the Canal Trust, the Councils and Developers), we can eventually deliver a restored and sustainable H&G Canal from Gloucester right back into the heart of Hereford City.

◆ CRP

AYLESTONE PARK CANAL PROJECT

by *Martin Danks*

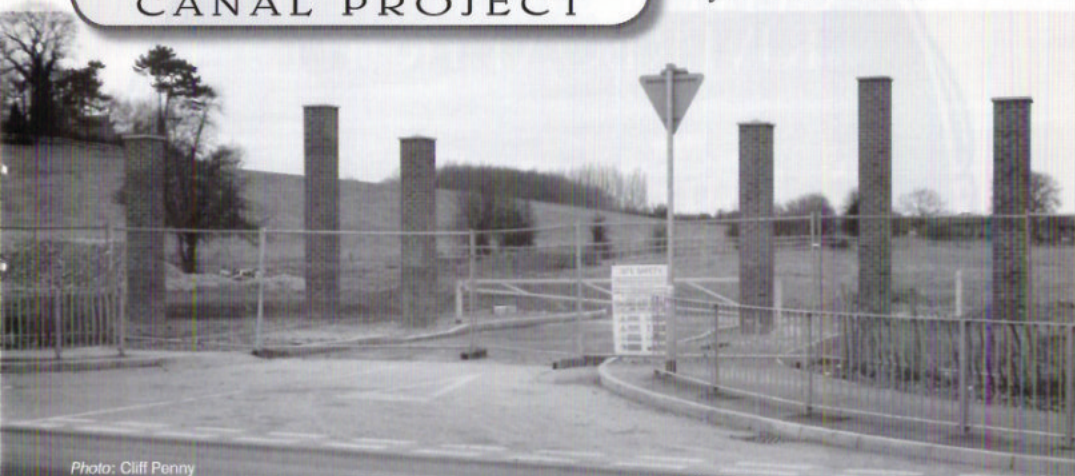


Photo: Cliff Penny

FOOTPATHS

The network of footpaths we were asked to construct is now complete except for some final surface finishing work when the weather is more clement. The viewpoints need completing when they have had time to settle over the winter, and some of the rough ground next to the paths needs landscaping when the weather is drier. The Waterway Recovery Group spent a weekend with us in November when improvements were made to the canal-side cycle path. On two areas of adverse camber on bends, edging boards were installed, new road planings spread and rolled in. The likelihood of cyclists skidding into the brambles has been much reduced!

SILT PLACEMENT

The very good news is that Herefordshire Council have recently received formal agreement from the Environment Agency on the silt treatment method so we now await the acceptance of a tender and work to start on excavating the canal.

ENTRANCE GATES

The brickwork to the entrance gate pillars is now complete and we look forward to the gates being installed soon.

◆ MD



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THE WHARF HOUSE

It was our first Christmas season and our restaurant became a popular new venue for Christmas parties and family get-togethers. The originality of the menu gained a very favourable response from our diners, some of whom wrote or phoned the staff to say 'thank you' for their service. Being a new business it was very heart-warming to know we were keeping our customers happy. Here are some of their kind comments that we have received ...



Thank you to your staff for making my sister's surprise meal on the 4th such a lovely occasion. The cake was superb. I'm still drooling at the memory. We all had a great time.

Jo Kennedy, Ledbury

Following my enjoyable visit to The Wharf House on 22nd December, I would like to congratulate the Trust on a fine modern restaurant serving excellent food ...

Warren Marsh, Bristol

...the meal was 'scrummy' and we thoroughly enjoyed our evening. ... they were so busy it's a wonder the kitchen door didn't come off it's hinges!

Elaine Sellwood, Coombe Hill

... and from a review in
Glos Magazine ...

During the evening, The Wharf House turns itself into one of the most stylish restaurants in the county. ...

... The staff are friendly, welcoming and approachable. ...

... In conclusion, The Wharf House is an excellent restaurant for those who love fine food and are also proud of the region in which they live ...

Opening Times

Visitor Centre: 10 am – 5 pm daily

Tea Room: 10 am – 11.45 am
and 3 pm – 5 pm daily

Lunches: 12 noon – 3 pm

Evening Restaurant: from 7 pm.

Prior booking advised. Last orders 9 pm

Tel: 01452 33 2 900

All profits from THE WHARF HOUSE will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal.

Combine the excellent food of THE WHARF HOUSE with walks and views around Over Wharf and along the River Severn to Telford's famous bridge.

THE WHARF HOUSE is conveniently located for both Cheltenham and Gloucester, opposite Telford's Bridge near the junction of the A40/A417, on the western edge of Gloucester.

Work at Yarkhill

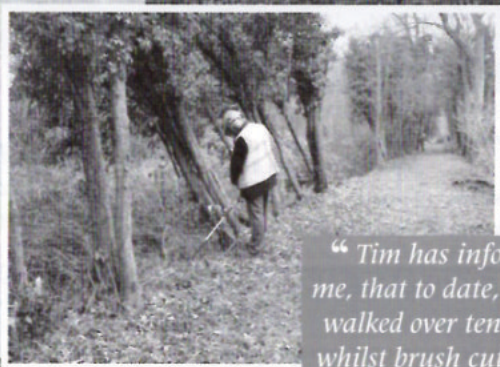
by Chris High

New Canal Trust Member Chris High was encouraged to take a walk by our Herefordshire Committee Chairman Martin Danks - and got well and truly involved in work on the H&G Canal (and writing articles for **The Wharfinger!**) - here is his report ...


Ever since Martin 'led me up the towpath' in the summer, I've been itching to get to work on the stretch of canal at Yarkhill. Located to the north of the A4103 and starting 300 metres from the road, the Canal Trust has a Licence from the owner Mrs. Oram to restore and maintain 900 metres of the canal up to a point just short of the completely filled in Barrs Lock. The canal is well defined and manages to hold water for a short period after consistent rain but brush, vegetation and trees have taken over the boundary ditches, towpath, canal and banks.

Martin was tasked with producing a Management Plan, I offered to help - *big mistake!* The Plan was drafted, but time was short for it to be submitted for the next Council of Management meeting. Following a work weekend at Aylestone Park, Martin ended up at my place for a Sunday evening meal (*and, for the concerned of you, no, my cooking didn't make him ill!*). Following our meal the report was studied and amendments pencilled in. Monday saw the finished report e-mailed for consideration by the CofM.

The CofM accepted the report and my impatience to get started continued to grow. I finally got my wish when Tim and John joined me on Sunday 11th December for our first workday. Making our base camp at the road end, John and I trimmed the tree/hedge line back whilst Tim wandered off down the towpath with brush cutter in hand purring happily - *the brush cutter silly!* We squeezed in another workday on the Sunday before Christmas. Christmas was obviously a bit much for some as workdays on the 27th and 29th were well supported. To date, seven



"Tim has informed me, that to date, he has walked over ten miles whilst brush cutting!"



◀ The partly cleared Canal corridor and ...
... as it was before! ▶

workdays have taken place continuing as we started, trimming the hedge line, brush cutting and clearing towpath and canal bank. Tim has informed me, that to

date, he has walked over ten miles whilst brush cutting! I am grateful to Peter, Bernard, Dave G and Dave M who have swelled the work party numbers, to Mr. Mess, who farms adjacent to Crews Pitch, for vehicle access and to the Forestry Commission who are advising us.

As the vegetation is cut back discoveries are being made. We have a mud dam that isn't – water erosion has created a stream across it and rabbits, silly enough to dig their burrow half a metre off the bottom of the canal, will not be getting flood compensation!

Considerable progress has already been made, it is now an easy walk along the towpath and the visual impact is great. Passers by have stopped for a chat and are full of encouragement and quick to praise our efforts. Noticeable change will slow in the future as more arduous and time-consuming tasks are undertaken. The current volunteers working on site are already active at Alystone, Oxenhall and/or Over so we need new blood! Why not become an active supporter and join us? One volunteer actually thanked me for a very enjoyable day, so are there any other people out there who would like to volunteer for a very pleasant, if a little dirty and tiring, day? *Please 'phone me for details of our next day on site – 01568 615 575.*

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FORMAL NOTICE OF 2006 AGM

TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY 20TH JUNE,
AT THE ROYAL OAK, MUCH MARCLE, AT 7.30PM.

This is the formal Notice of the 2006 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 24th May and 13th 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 24th 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

H&G Sales Grand Holiday Draw
(Stubs and money to be returned
to Promoter by 15th August 2006)
(No cash prizes)

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

Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust - H&G Sales
GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2006

1st PRIZE	NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY for FOUR ONE WEEK PRIOR TO 31/5/07. Donated by Black Prince Holidays <small>Excluding Bank Holidays</small>
2nd PRIZE	Two VIP tickets to The London Boat Show 2007 + overnight stay at a top hotel. Donated by British Marine Federation
3rd PRIZE	One night Dinner, Bed & Breakfast for two people at THE WHARF HOUSE , Over Gloucester.

Promoter: Mrs E. Connors, 10 St. Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford HR1 1BF

Prizes to be drawn at
National Waterways Festival,
Beale Park 28-29.08.2006

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

TICKETS £1 each

This year, due to popular request, we have sent you two books of tickets to sell to family and friends. More books can be sent to you if required (please contact Janet Moulit - see inside back cover).

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 Beale Park on 28 August, 2006.

Our grateful thanks to Black Prince Holidays, The British Marine Federation and **The Wharf House** 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 Moulit on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets. *Thank you*.

Social Evenings at The Royal Oak

Everyone is welcome to our monthly meetings held on the third Tuesday of every month, 7.30pm for an 8pm start.

MARCH 21ST

Scotland's Millennium

Link – David Saady

will take us north of the border with a trip on Scotland's Millennium Link – including the Falkirk Wheel

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

*You will be made
Very Welcome!*



APRIL 18TH

Transport artist

Eric Bottomley

"Trains and boats and planes" – Eric will tell us how he became an artist specialising in transport scenes

MAY 16TH

Newport Transporter Bridge

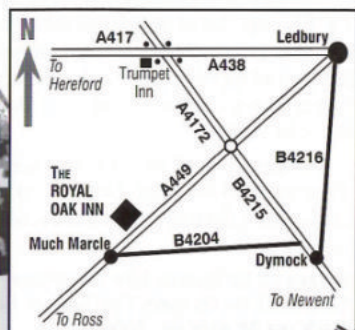
Anne Gatehouse

– we cross another border to another engineering feat – celebrating its centenary.

JUNE 20TH

AGM

(7.30 pm start)



HEREFORD Volunteers' Socials 2006

WEDNESDAY 1ST MARCH

Meet at 7.30 pm
at the **Bridge Inn**,
College Road, Hereford.

WEDNESDAY 5TH APRIL

meet at 7 pm
at the **Hopton Arms, Ashperton**

WEDNESDAY 3RD MAY

Ashperton for a walk
near the **Canal**

(For details contact Martin Danks
see Contacts list at the back.)

Why not join us?

THE TRADING COMPANY H & G Canal Sales

2006 List of Outings

The Trading Company has a very busy summer planned with local and national events to attend.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| MARCH 4-5 | Tractor World, Malvern |
| APRIL 2 | Gloucester Boat Jumble |
| MAY 13-14 | Moirs Canal Festival |
| MAY 13 | Minibus tour of Canal for local society |
| MAY 27-29 | Crick Boat Show |
| JUNE 3 | Hartpury College Open Day |
| JUNE 17 | Hampton Bishop Village Fete |
| JUNE 24-25 | Braunston Boat Show |
| JULY 9 | Evesham Water Festival |
| JULY 15-16 | Marcle Steam Fair |
| AUGUST 5 | All Saints, Hereford – displays and Book Sale |
| AUGUST 19 | Tibberton Flower Show |
| AUGUST 26-28 | National Waterways Festival, Beale Park, nr Reading |
| SEPTEMBER 9 | Newent Onion Fayre |
| SEPTEMBER 17 | Oxenhall Open Day |
| NOVEMBER 11 | Ledbury Craft Fair |
- Most of these are firm bookings – if any one can help at any of them *(even for an hour)* please contact Janet Moults. [see inside back cover]



IWA The Inland
Waterways
Association

Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch

Forthcoming meetings:

- Thursday, 2nd March** Branch AGM, followed by
Peter Payne on Life as a Thames Lock-Keeper
- Thursday 6th April** Ray Wilson, 'Gloucestershire's Industrial Heritage'
- Thursday 4th May** Ian Jarvis (BW SW Waterways Manager), 'BW SW News & Q&A.'

Members and non-members welcome. Enquiries to 01453 860133.

Meetings start at 7.30 pm in the School's Room, National Waterways Museum, Gloucester.

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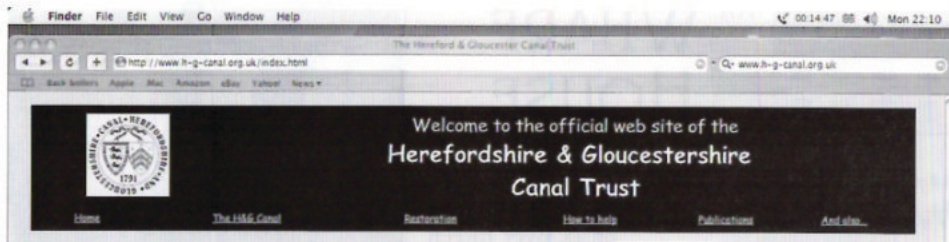
and here.

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CASTLE CEMENT

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Any organisation of substance now has a presence on the world wide web. Council of Management Member Nigel Bailey counts amongst his roles that of 'Web Master' for the H&G Canal Trust. Nigel reports on our progress:-

The Canal Trust has had its own web site for nearly 5 years - www.h-g-canal.org.uk. In that time it has expanded to become a valuable resource for anyone wanting to learn more about the Canal and the activities of the H&G Canal Trust.

The site includes a history of the canal, maps of the route and details of upcoming social evenings, along with a variety of historical items and details of ways readers can help the Trust. By far the largest part of the site is the section called Restoration. Here we try to keep you up-to-date with progress on our restoration sites. It now contains many hundreds of pictures. The early ones were scanned from prints but now that more people use digital cameras, the task of adding them to the site is simpler and produces a better quality result.

Last year we split the task of keeping these pages up-to-date so that I now look after the Gloucestershire pages and Colin Dymott deals with Herefordshire. Most of the pictures are arranged by year so you can either view recent progress or delve back in time to look at some of our early projects.

You may wonder where the web pages you look at are actually stored. Strangely, I have no idea! We 'upload' new or changed pages to our Internet Service Provider, *Fasthosts* who are appropriately based near

Gloucester docks. I assume their servers (banks of computers used to store web pages) are in Gloucester - although they could be anywhere and they will certainly be backed up at some distant location. *Fasthosts*, by the way, was established in 1999 in a bedroom when the founders could not find a suitable host for a post A-level web project they were developing! *Fasthosts* is now the largest web hosting company in the UK, looking after tens of thousands of web sites, employing some 65 staff and with an annual turnover of around £10 million.

As "web master" I receive an email or two most weeks enquiring about all sorts of aspects of the

Canal. Very often they are from youngsters working on school projects who send me a questionnaire to complete! The most recent was from a minister, unknown to me, asking us to recommend a suitable reading for the funeral of someone who had been passionate about canals.

Statistics about the web site throw up some strange facts:

- ◆ in our busiest month we attracted about 450 visitors
- ◆ the most popular time of day to visit is between 9 and 10pm
- ◆ the most popular day of the week is Monday.

If you have digital pictures of the Canal that we can add to the web site, please email them to us:

Gloucestershire:

nigel.bailey@blueyonder.co.uk

Herefordshire: colin.kd@virgin.net

◆ NB

Visit our Website ...
www.h-g-canal.org.uk



THE WHARF HOUSE

Fit-out



Over the Christmas break over fifteen volunteers felt the need to escape the festive telly programmes and family visits. They turned up at ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE, "to get back to the normal routine" I was told by one volunteer. "To work off some of the excess food" I was told by another. Whatever their reason, it was good to have their help and it meant that we were able to make a concentrated effort on the annexe, which up to that point, had lagged behind the rest of the fit-out.

There is now a rear access to the boilers. A bedroom and bathroom has been created and their walls plastered.

The other six bathrooms now also have plastered ceilings and tiled walls. (We did get some outside contractors to help with some of this.) Most of the bedrooms now have their covings and skirtings complete.



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perhaps we should be talking.....



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It was Martin's turn this time to spend his time in confined spaces, where, on the top floor, he has started constructing the backs to the wardrobes and cupboard spaces in the eaves. It makes excellent use of the space and creates a large floor area for two spacious bedrooms.

Those of us who are there regularly are too close to the project see the progress over the weeks. It is a real boost when a volunteer, or visitor who hasn't been around for a while, comes in and exclaims, "Hey, this has moved on a pace since I was last here!" We then know that our efforts are being effective and that the fit-out of the Bed and Breakfast part of the *THE WHARF HOUSE* is progressing.!

We are moving into the painting and decorating area of the fit-out. Those of you who enjoy wielding a paint brush will be very welcome if you can join us. If you can spare a few hours of your time, please contact either, Nigel, Ted, Wilf or Maggie on the numbers in the box. *Thank you.*

◆ MJ



Top left: Pat and Martin working on the coving.

Above: In the annexe Wilf and Paul start the stud wall.

Left: Wilf and Ted drill the wall for the outside lighting.

Below: The volunteers can always stop for a cuppa.



Just some of the jobs undertaken by volunteers, recently ...



Over Volunteers please contact ...

Wednesdays – Wilf Jones (01452-413 888)

Ted Beagles (01452-522 648)

Weekends – Maggie Jones (01452-618 010)

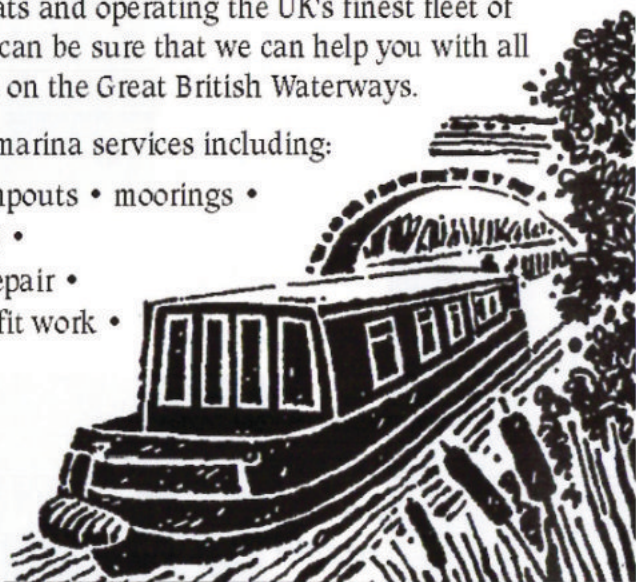
Nigel Bailey (01452-533 835)

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Rehab at OVER

Member Tony Boonham wrote about his 'Green Gym' activities on the Canal in an earlier edition of **The Wharfinger** – here is his update on his personal rehabilitation progress ...

Regular readers will recall that there was a time in my life, now nearly 9 years ago, when I suffered quite a severe stroke, which was nowhere near as severe as the one that Mr Sharon has recently suffered - if his was 9 on the Richter Scale, my Doctor told me mine was between 6 & 7 – bad enough! My earliest thoughts were to get fit and back to work as soon as possible, but reality was something else. I improved steadily for 2 years and, in fact, continue to improve even now.

A great deal of my improvement has taken place since 2001 when I joined the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust. At first I felt well and truly out of my depth, but I was told not to worry because if I fell in, the water was only four feet deep! Nevertheless I was very nervous at first about walking anywhere near the bank. What I really wanted was a job that I knew and which needed sorting out and luckily for me there was one right there. I spent the first 25 years of my working life as an RAF Engineer, and then 13 years as the owner of a motor engineering business, and the Toolstore at Over was an anathema to me. I've worked really hard to get it something like 'right' and I think many of the volunteers now appreciate that they have machines whose engines start and operate correctly! The WRGies slogan "The right tool for the job" says it

all. This work forced me to get my right side working and especially my right arm, hand and fingers; they are still not right and I have to admit now that probably they never will be. To achieve that I would have to live for about another 100yrs! But they have improved up to the point where I have started model making again

Another job that I took up was that of "Lengthsman". Some of you will remember Rupert the Lengthman's dog who used to often accompany me on my twice weekly visits to check that nobody had nicked a yard or two of the canal, that it hadn't sprung a leak and that all the moorhens were present and correct! Sadly Rupert died in November but we took delivery of his successor, called Ruben, in late December and he will be joining me on my rounds in February. I can walk reasonably well

and I am always most careful not to get into situations which present a real hazard. Walking around the site offers very varied surfaces, from road, track and grass to steep and slippery slopes, rough ground and densely wooded slopes all of which I can now negotiate with complete confidence but always with due caution, because I know that if I slip into the canal it will be in the one spot that is 6 ft deep.

If you know anybody who suffers from any form of disability, show them this article and if they like to get in touch with me [see 'Contacts' inside back cover] I will be pleased to give them some more information.

I had told Cliff that I hadn't got any 'Tales from the Toolstore' this time round but he came straight back and said "Well write something about your work in THE WHARF HOUSE then". I think I can leave that for next time!

◆ TB



Ruben

Following the H&G CT's purchase at auction of the numerous historical documents relating to the H&G Canal [see article on page 24 of edition 85 of **The Wharfinger**]

Council of Management Member Caroline Jones (whose 'day job' is in the Waterways Trust's archive at Gloucester) willingly undertook the initial recording of the documents for us in her own time – and also ensured their safe-keeping. Following her evenings delving deeper into the collection – here is the second of a series of articles by Caroline giving more detail about some of the interesting documents that we purchased for just under £4,000.



2nd instalment **The Land-Related Documents**

Following on from the first article in this series, we will now have a look at the documents in the Bonham's Lot that relate to land ownership in some way.

The earliest documents, dated 1840, are two letters (both to the Canal Co) one of which accompanied a form used by Messrs Swain, Stevens & Co in London for compelling Landowners to part with their property, and another was from a George Watson about the value of the land belonging to a Mr Miles; unfortunately no details of Mr Miles' land are given. Also dated 1840 are a collection comprising a legal document and three receipts. The legal document tells us that the Canal Co bought a piece of land for the canal in *Oatleys orchard from the trustees of the real Estate of the late John Dew of Ledbury Gentleman* for £148.10s, various named people with an interest in the estate wanted this money spent on building a house on part of the orchard and as such authorised the trustees to pay out the money, the rent from the house being payable to the trustees. The builder employed to build the required house was Robert Ballard, the agreement was decided in February 1840, he was paid that July

and the house was complete by August. In effect the Canal Co got a piece of land to build the canal in exchange for the erection of a house! Very enterprising, David Penny would have been proud!

There are three interesting documents from 1842, the first is entitled Conditions of Sale of and relates to the lease of *All that Cider Warehouse situate at the Wharf Ledbury now in the occupation of Richard Higgins as a yearly tenant*. The terms of the lease were 18 years starting on August 1st 1837! with an annual rent of £3.00.00 payable to the owner a John Biddulph, interestingly the auction took place on March 3rd 1842 at The Biddulph Arms Inn, Ledbury. Could this be the same Biddulph family? The reverse of the document tells us that the lease was bought by a *George Hayes of Coleford in the County of Gloucester gentleman*, for the grand sum of £350.00.00.

The other documents from 1842 are land conveyance forms transferring land ownership to the Canal Co, one is for land in the Parish of Withington, sold by a *William Harvard Appleby of the Parish of Withington in the City of Hereford Gentleman*, for £312.00.00. The other is for land comprising *Two loads & Twenty four perches, situated in hay Meadow in the Parish of Sutton in the County of Hereford*, this being bought from the Reverend, the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Hereford for

£40.10s. These last two will undoubtedly receive more attention when we come to restore the canal in those areas.

From 1843 there are two letters to Hubert Edy both referring to Mr Pococks land at Shelwick, the earlier letter is from Stephen Ballard expressing concerns over title of Shelwick Estate, the other from an I.J. Wright who is, anxious on the part of my client to get this matter settled. There seems to be a question over money paid and a draft conveyance expected by Mr Ballard. Dodgy goings on it seems!

Moving on we come to a pair of documents, one is a copy of the other, and is dated 1845. These are in fact a land agreement relating to the plan of John Martin Esq discussed last time, who it seems was residing at Berkeley Square, Middlesex at the time. The document mentions some interesting points, not least of which is that the meerstones marked on the plan actually delineate the boundary of the land sold to the Canal Co in 1840, it also tells us that access is to be maintained to Bye Street Bridge, Ledbury, that the public are to be allowed to use certain stretches of towpath and that Mr Martin is to be allowed to use certain parts of the

Land use as follows

1 Gurney's Yard &c	a r p	
2 Long Acre	" "	3 1/2
3 Spruces Meadow	" "	2 " 10
4 Horn House Orchard	" "	33
5 Sexton's First Ground	" "	2 " 38
6 Co 2 nd Co	" "	1 " 26
7 Co 3 rd Co	" "	13
8 Taylors Meadow	" "	1 " 22
9 Cales Ground next Turnpike Road	" "	1 " 16
10 Lewis's Hill adjoining Portway Road	" "	3 " 10
Richard Cales Ground next	" "	1 " 22
11 Turnpike Road	" "	1 " 28
12 Co for Landing place	" "	3 " 0
13 Richard Cales Ground	" "	3 " 8
14 Robert Hoskins 1 st Ground	" "	3 " 8
15 Co 2 nd Co	" "	1 " 26
		<u>7. 1. 0</u>

watercourse for irrigating his lands through which the canal passes. The document lists the areas of all the lands concerned (see above) and is of great interest in conjunction with its associated plan.

Also from 1845 there is a Deed of Exchange between The Trustees under the Marriage Settlement of The Reverend H Glossop & Charlotte his wife and The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Company. The document runs to 19 pages and relates to another of the hand drawn plans described last time. The land in question is in the parishes of Withington, Marden and Monkhide and

seems to have belonged to a number of people who sold it via an agreement with the Revd Henry Glossop to the Canal Co. It is of interest to note that in addition to details about the sale of land the document tells us that the Canal Co and it's successors, workmen etc have *full & free liberty license & authority to enter & go upon the said Banks for the purpose but for the purpose only of maintaining & keeping the same in good & proper order & repair...*

The last few documents are letters, one dated 1846 from a Mr C.A.Mason to Hubert Edy about the purchase of land from The Dean and Chapter of Gloucester following the death of an Edward Foley Esquire, this letter is requesting the speedy completion of the conveyance, perhaps the Canal Co didn't want to pay up? The second dated 1847 on the same subject mentions Monksbury Court and Grove Court and a Lady Emily Foley, probably Edward Foleys widow, who has the leases

on both. The last letter is dated 1847 and is from The Dean and Chapter of Gloucester to the Canal Co and states that they can't give the required information, perhaps the Canal Co are dragging their feet over the earlier conveyance - as this little series of correspondence goes no further we may never know!

This is just a quick study of these documents and shows that the affairs of the Canal Co in the 1840s were complicated indeed, perhaps we should take heart that matters concerning land ownership and our canal have always been a little complicated and it's not only today's restorers who have challenges. Some of the complicated agreements and deeds certainly warrant closer inspection and no doubt this will be undertaken when the time comes. ♦ CJ

*Further reports on the collection will appear in future editions of **The Wharfinger**. - Ed.*



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Sweeping News at Yarkhill Village Hall

One Saturday night in October, a gathering of the South West Division of the Waterway Recovery Group was hosted by the H&G CT at Yarkhill Village Hall. Hereford volunteers bathed in the warmth from a wood burning stove, enjoying curry and freshly caught trout washed down with samples from various bottles. However, as John Forrest reports, the atmosphere might have been a lot cooler if the chimney to the stove had not received a lot of attention the Wednesday before that weekend ...

The story unfolds as an innocent comment was made 'oh will you please just call into the village hall and quickly sweep the chimney'. So two brave souls decided to do just that, say, half an hour with the brush, a bag of soot for the garden and back home. Not Quite! We arrived and found the pot stove in the main hall, first the access plate was cut out of the fire cement seal and the brush with four rods were then easily pushed upwards. Soot started to fall. With the fifth rod connected and pushed in – all went solid – it would not go up any further! The rods were pulled out and then a smaller brush head was rammed up against the blockage. After another five minutes of effort, sticks of all different lengths started to appear in the access to the chimney. The rods once again failed to make any headway.

This was not the half hour job that was expected! After some deliberation it was decided to go

back to Hereford for a set of ladders and some more equipment. Upon returning to the hall the ladders were carefully tied to the chimney stack and a brave volunteer in true Fred Dibnah style assaulted the blockage from the top of the pot. The length of the obstruction was calculated to be about five foot long, made up from sticks placed by nesting birds over the past seven years!

Back inside the hall a double worm screw was sent up the chimney and with Herculean strength hammered into the stoppage time and time again. Suddenly more debris cascaded towards us, sticks, soot, things we don't even know the name of, half a brick and a mummified blackbird made a grand entrance on the hearth. The dust in the hall suddenly disappeared with the huge draught created by the clean opened chimney. The final task of removing the debris eventually resulted in four full black plastic bags.

Just four and a half hours of toil, by the now two blackened souls - that's ALL it took to unblock the Yarkhill hall chimney! It helped in making the weekend a roaring success.

◆ JF



Photo: John Forrest

A weekend exploring the H&G

IWA Warwickshire Branch Members John and Helen Bedingfield live in Bucharest, Romania, and spent a weekend with other Branch Members exploring the H&G Canal. Here is their story of the weekend ...



Looking towards House Lock at Oxenhall.

For the last 17 years or so a group of friends (of the waterways) from Warwickshire and around have met in early November to explore derelict canals and restoration projects. The target for this year was the Hereford and Gloucester Canal. Organisers Allen and Liz and Dave and Liz did the research and planning. Our weekends away were planned originally to coincide with BW's stoppage programme that always kicked in with regularity in early November. But over the years it has become more of a reunion. Our weekend began when Helen and I left Bucharest on Thursday pm to join the party Friday evening, returning to Bucharest on Monday for work on Tuesday.

Our party was booked into the Malvern Hills Hotel at Little Malvern which proved an excellent base for the weekend. Saturday morning's walk on the H&G started at Monkhide and ended at Westhide Church where we had left cars to take us to the Hopton Arms for lunch. The more energetic took cross country footpaths but were late for lunch. After lunch we explored the Ashperton Tunnel and adjacent stretches of Canal completing a circular walk back to the Hopton Arms.

These sections of the 34 mile Canal

are very rural and cut through beautiful countryside. It reminded me of the Southern Stratford, one of our 'home' canals. When the H&G Canal is restored it will certainly form one of the most rural and beautiful cruise and walkways on the system. Although, one of the last narrow canals completed on the system, nature has taken its toll and much of the Canal has been filled in. However, it is good to see that several cottages and wharf buildings remain.

Sunday morning we headed for Newent, where we met Brian Fox who gave us a guided tour of Oxenhall locks and aqueduct. Here we gained the distinct impression that the canal restoration is moving forward. Brian cautiously said restoration of this section could be completed in 5 years. The work undertaken by volunteers is impressive and the restored lock chamber and pound in water only need boats (oh yes ... and lock gates and paddle gear!) Even the aqueduct is not causing insurmountable problems – H&G CT members are tackling it. What seemed the most daunting problems were the fact that the canal line is currently owned by 102 landowners (a challenge!).

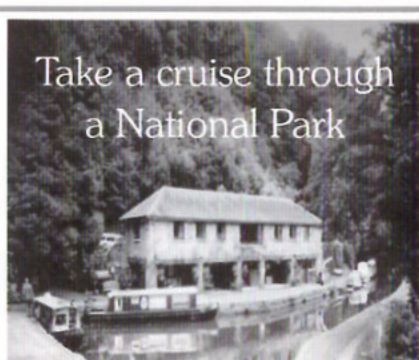
Following our visit to Oxenhall we transferred to Over Basin at Gloucester where we were met by Nigel Bailey. We were impressed with the Trust's truly entrepreneurial approach to restoration – your work should be a role model to others. It was pleasing to see the way the Trust took advantage of the opportunities presented when private housing was built next to the restored Over basin and how this has helped build flagship premises for the Trust to raise both awareness of the Canal and (by way of their use of these premises) some 'seed funding' for the Canal in due course. For those who haven't been yet, the tea rooms and restaurant offer high quality meals in excellent surroundings (prior booking is strongly recommended). The chef provides a varied and imaginative menu and there is a good choice of wines. We saw the progress the Trust is making in fitting out the 7 'B&B' suites which should provide a good base for further canal exploration.

The visitor centre is of great interest and is well stocked with high quality goods. One of our 'team', Doug Smith, was not able to be with us this year, due to illness but his famous Lockmaster maps – H & G Canal edition – were on sale in the visitor centre. So Doug was with us in spirit!

The restoration progress made, and the energy the Trust demonstrates, gives me the impression that this is a restoration that will definitely happen. *Solving major difficulties seems to be no problem, just a challenge!*

Thank you for a most enjoyable weekend and congratulations to the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust – your work is worth our personal support and should be a priority for future IWA support.

◆ JB & HB



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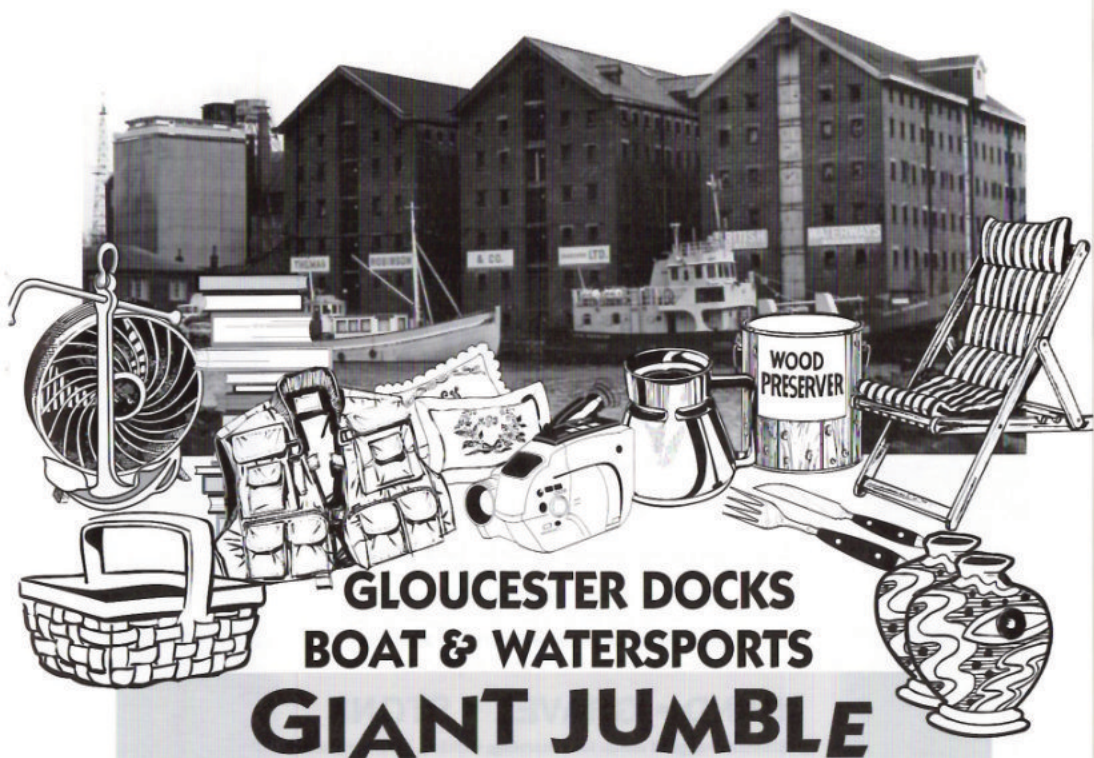
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SUNDAY 2nd APRIL 2006 10am – 4pm

Ray & Barbara Moses will be once again running a stall at the Boat and Watersports Giant Jumble in Gloucester Docks on 2nd April. Items are needed, please, to sell to raise funds for the H&G Canal Trust. *These should be boat or watersports orientated, but the link can be quite tenuous!* Please search your attic/shed/boathouse(!) for anything that may be sold to raise a few pounds. It all adds up to a worthwhile total! *Please, no magazines as they already have plenty.*


Items can be collected from Social Meetings, or contact Ray & Barbara on 01989 780 325 for further information or to make alternative delivery arrangements. Ray & Barbara can also be contacted by email at r_w_moses@yahoo.co.uk.

The Jumble is organised by The Friends of the National Waterways Museum to

which all proceeds are donated – however, thanks to their support (and Ray and Barbara's hard work) *all proceeds from the H&GCT stall are donated to the H&G Canal Trust.* On site there will be boaters crafts demonstrations, 'music of the cut' (on traditional instruments) and a rope making machine in action – in addition to the many and varied stalls. There will be 'Jumble Day Discounts' in Docks shops and eateries.

Admission for the day is only £3.50 for adults (with accompanied children free) – and there is a free car park. This really is an opportunity to have a great day out as admission to the Boat Jumble includes FREE entry to both the National Waterways Museum as well as the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum – *a real bargain day out for all the family!* [also see p 37]

◆ CRP



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From Norfolk
to Rutland
to Hereford
to the
JUMBLE!

Long standing Members and supporters may recall support received from (and events at) The Colwall Park Hotel when it was owned by Members Basil and Elizabeth Frost. Some years ago they sold the hotel and retired to Uppingham in Rutland - from where they remain staunch supporters of the Canal Trust. They have a great boating friend, Stewart Orr (who lives in Norfolk), who joins them from time to time for holidays on the inland waterways system.

To complete this part of the story Basil Frost has a decorator in Hereford who often does work for him in Rutland ... at the crack of dawn just before Christmas said decorator delivers a heavy box to the Editor's back doorstep containing many 'previously owned' mooring spikes, windlasses etc (in excellent condition) - with a note from Basil - *for the Jumble!*

Basil's friend Mr Orr has a fishing hobby - *not with a hook but a magnet!* In a recent letter to the Editor he explained:-

"I must admit to the excitement and enjoyment of the chase. To get out a powerful magnet, trail it along the bottom of the canal, and after several false alarms, eventually to land a windlass, mooring spike or part of some luckless boater's tool-kit gives a great sense of achievement! Even better when watched by a number of hirers (what on earth is he doing? Is this some sort of traditional sport? etc.) which invariably brings applause when a catch is achieved. The thought that these objects are going to make a small contribution to such a noble purpose as the reinstatement of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal is just the icing on the cake as far as I am concerned, and it generally impresses the gongoozlers! I must point out one or two aspects of this activity, however. Firstly Mr. Frost, the owner and master of Jersey Girl, the boat upon which these activities take place, actually has much more involvement than I do. I merely find various bits and pieces, give them a cursory wash in the canal to remove the worst of the mud, and hand them over to him. It is he who lovingly cleans and oils them, to bring them up to that very nearly new condition which you see on delivery by his decorator. Secondly, I must confess that on one occasion many years (perhaps a quarter of a century) ago, I was fishing and a curmudgeonly British Waterways employee explained, somewhat briskly, that anything in the canal belonged to him, and that I should stop forthwith!"

A brief letter of thanks to Mr Orr (with a 'back issue' of **The Wharfinger** and our colour leaflet) resulted in his letter - which concluded:-

"With such interests, both present and awakened by your letter and your splendid journal, I feel happily obliged to ask if I may join the ranks of your members. I may be on the other side of the country, but I will certainly be with you in thought, particularly on the cold winter days when your volunteers are hard at it in the mud."

Our thanks to everyone - near and far - who support Ray and Barbara with donated items for this annual fund raising initiative. Also our thanks to the volunteers from the Friends of the National Waterways Museum for organising the day.



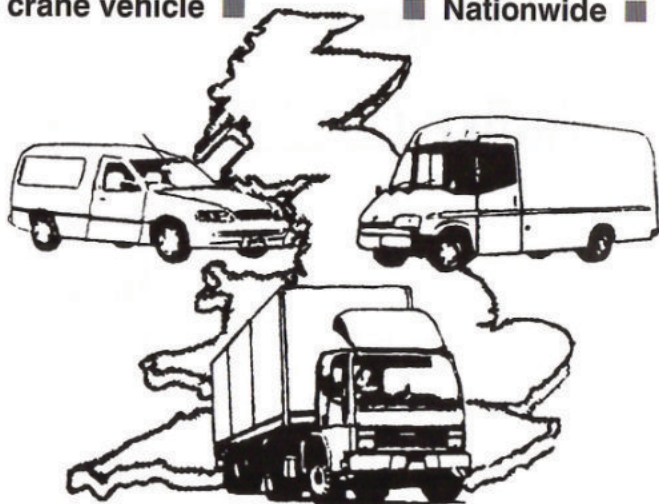
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Walker needed!

Do you live in the Oxenhall/Newent area? Following the 'retirement' of Dave Jones (see page 9) a 'vacancy' has arisen for a new 'Lengthsman' (or lady!) for the Oxenhall/Newent area. The volunteer would ideally be someone who regularly goes for walks in the area (or has made a New Year resolution to do more walking!) and would be ideal for someone who perhaps cannot get too actively involved in actual restoration work.

Tony Boonham's article regarding his work in this role (on page 27) gives some idea of what is involved – Brian Fox (see *Contacts inside back cover*) would be very pleased to discuss the role in greater detail with anyone who wishes to consider assisting the Canal Trust in this unusual way.

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Report on the volunteers SKITTLES SOCIAL

This year we moved our venue for the Annual volunteers Skittle Social to The Royal Oak. There was a good turn out from both our Over volunteers and those from The Trading Company.

Just to try something different we played 'boys' versus 'girls'. The 'boys' were winning and their opposition knew they had to do something more if they were going to win at least some of the rounds. As luck would have it, there was a late comer – a female late comer! With the extra pair of hands the 'girls' drew two—all by half time. There is a moral to this story of which all volunteers will probably agree – *just one more pair of hands can make all the difference!*

After a splendid ploughman's supper we played *Killer*. This year the winner was Ted Beagles. Well done Ted!

If you have a 'pair of hands' that would like to help us in the Canal Restoration – we would be pleased to hear from you.

◆ MJ

Membership Leaflet?

Do you have friends neighbours, contacts, to whom you would like to give the new membership leaflet? Are there pubs, clubs, community halls, workplaces in your locality where a few leaflets would be of interest?

If you would like some leaflets please contact Janet Moulton (see *inside back cover* for details).



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CONTACTS

Want to help? The Canal Trust is always in need of new volunteers as our activities continue to expand. We can normally find a use for any skill from gardeners to first aiders, brickies to those willing to help with a shovel or pen.

Contact any of these names TODAY!

Dick Skeet

Stoneham House,
Maund Common, Bodenham,
Herefordshire, HR1 3JB
Tel: (01568) 797 032
dick@skeetr.fsnet.co.uk

Liz Connors

18, St Ethelbert Close,
Sutton St. Nicholas,
Hereford, HR1 3BF
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Liz@Harbinger4.freemove.co.uk

Cliff Penny/David Penny

"Coppice", Burley Gate,
Hereford, HR1 3QS
Tel: (01432) 820 420
Fax: (01432) 820 877
canal@penny-ep.co.uk

Brian Fox

1, Holmer Hall Cottages,
Roman Road,
Hereford, HR4 9QU
Tel: (01432) 358 628
brianfox@tiscali.co.uk

Janet Moulton

Tel: (01432) 264 366
jmoulton@tiscali.co.uk

Nigel Jefferies

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

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The Wharfinger

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal

Work started in 1792 but was not completed until 1845, making this the last major route built in Britain, but for the navigations of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The canal stretched for 34 miles from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the city of Hereford, utilising some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. The Canal was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway which in its turn was closed by Dr Beeching in 1964.

THE CANAL TRUST

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 1,200 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 major restoration sites in each county, which together extend to some 3.5 miles.

