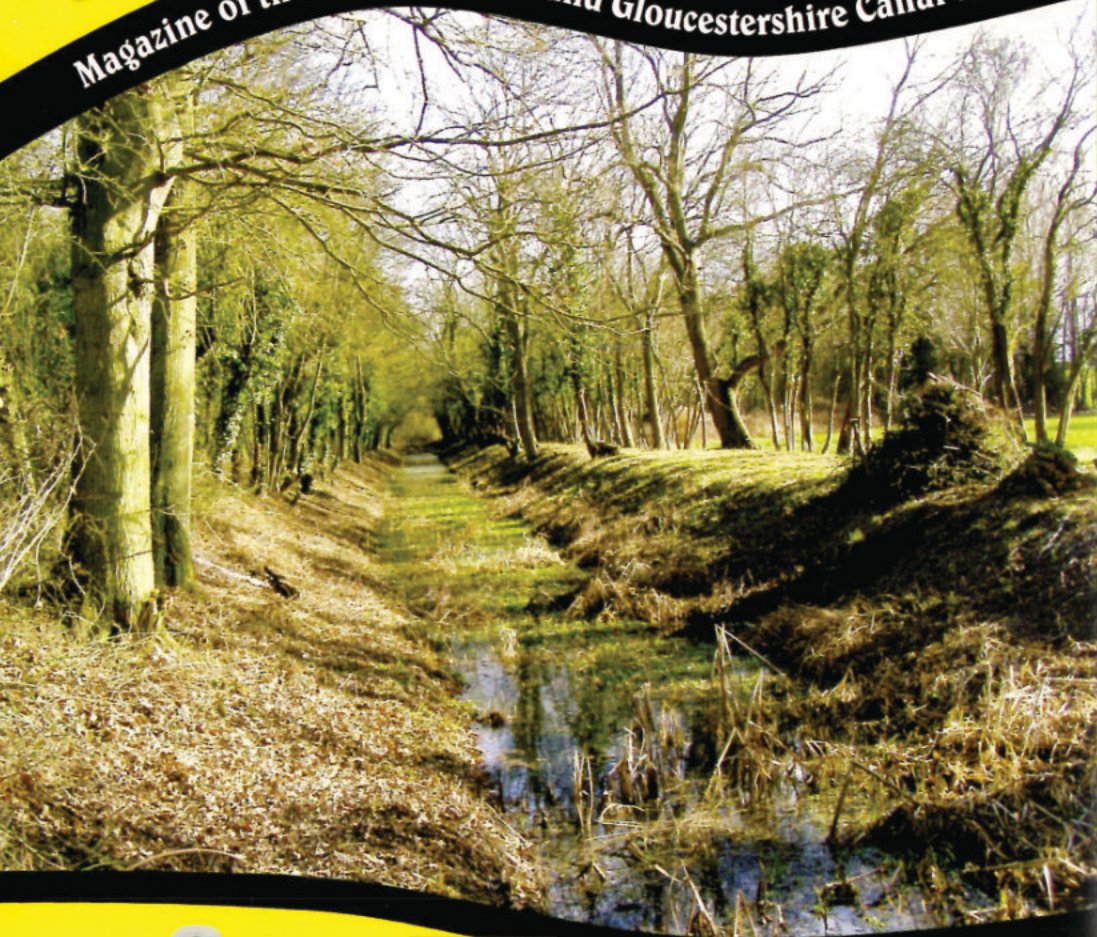


The **Wharfinger**

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



Summer 2006

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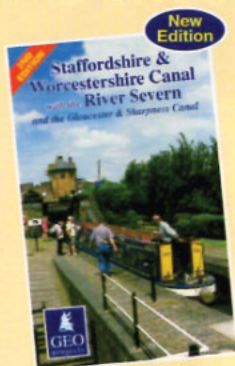
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FRONT COVER PHOTO:

Spring at Yarkhill – by Chris High

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CHANGES & CHALLENGES



by Cliff Penny

OUR CHAIRMAN

Regular readers will note that there is no Chairman's column in this edition. Dick Skeet was advised by his Doctor that he should take a complete break from what undoubtedly are the trials and tribulations embodied in the role of Chairman. The Council of Management were saddened at this news as Dick will be a hard act to follow as an excellent Chairman; but quite clearly he and his family must come first. We thank Dick and wish him and his family well; we fully respect his decision – at present his energies are directed to the healthy twins recently born to his daughter-in-law – *they say a change is as good as a rest!*

Our CofM has a number of serving Directors/Trustees who have collectively spent many years as Chairman of the Trust – the writer being one of them. I believe that each of us stood down because of the immense pressure that the Chairman's role exerts both on the individual and their family. What is important, however, is that so many previous Chairmen continue to serve as part of the CofM. *It is reassuring that Dick has made it clear that in the fullness of time he will wish to do so too.*

Past experience has been that we are unlikely to rush in to appoint a new Chairman and it is for this reason that, at the time of writing, no such appointment has been made. Individual Directors/Trustees are taking turns to Chair individual meetings of the Council of Management and are working together to undertake other specific tasks in the interim.

GRANT AID

By now we had hoped that the second phase of our fitting out at THE WHARF HOUSE would have been completed and the bed and breakfast accommodation open to business. Unfortunately there was a hiccup in the level of grant aid funding that we have obtained. This lack of funding has left us needing to find an additional £60,000 for the fit out and furnishing of the upper floors and the disabled guest's bedroom. We are actively seeking a solution and have a number of influential people supporting our case for additional funding. In the meantime our work has very much reduced to what our volunteers can undertake at modest cost. We remain convinced that a solution will be found but regrettably, for the time being, we have to delay the major work and furnishing leading up to the opening of the B&B facilities.

LOCAL ECONOMY

In the last edition I referred to the indisputable fact that the Canal Trusts work is already benefiting the local economy and to the desk top study by **British Waterways** of the economic benefits that the restored H&G Canal would bring. Within days of publication **Bill Wiggin MP**, whose Leominster constituency includes Ledbury, wrote an unsolicited letter pledging his support stressing how

important to the local economy the restoration of the H&G Canal was. He said *"the continued success of developments such as THE WHARF HOUSE is testament to the Canal's capacity to produce a genuine economic dividend."* **Tewkesbury MP, Laurence Robertson** (whose constituency includes Over) has written an excellent letter in which he refers to THE WHARF HOUSE as *"...an exciting and useful project"* whilst **Lady Knollys** the Chairman of the **Inland Waterway Amenity Advisory Committee** has said *"THE WHARF HOUSE is an excellent example of the Trust's initiative and demonstrates very well the concept of using waterside assets for public benefit ... it is very much the kind of project that we would want to see replicated across the whole of the inland waterway system."*

FULL COLOUR!

An important part of our promotion of the Canal, and the work of the Canal Trust, is **The Wharfinger**. Therefore, we are absolutely delighted that Mark Adcocks one of the proprietors of **Print Plus** (who have printed **The Wharfinger** at a very competitive rate for us over the past 12 years) has offered to sponsor a very large proportion of the *additional* cost of printing this and future editions in *full colour*. We have been very pleased with the service and support from **Print Plus** over all these years and greatly appreciate this very valuable assistance in maintaining and improving our image. *Thank you.* Also our thanks to our regular advertisers for their very positive response to this change – *further details are on page 39.* ♦ CRP

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RESTORATION

at Oxenhall *by Brian Fox*

Progress on the aqueduct has been slow due to the excessive number of frosty nights when stone laying stops as mortar will crack if still wet. We have, however, almost reached the top of the spandrel wall on one side and have made a start on clearing the ground prior to starting repairs to the opposite side. This will be a much more difficult job as more of the original wall has fallen down and there is also much accumulated debris in the bed of the Ell Brook which will have to be cleared before we can see exactly what we are up against. Initial attempts were abandoned because the water level was too high and it was unsafe to continue but hopefully warmer weather and less rainfall should see the Brook level dropping soon.

The non towpath bank above the aqueduct has now been cleared of all rotten and fallen trees apart from a few left to encourage colonisation by varied wildlife. The remainder have been partially pollarded so that the whole length of about 150 yards now looks a bit bare but will soon sprout new growth with the warmer weather.



Volunteers had great fun rigging up a pulley system across the canal to remove all the cut timber, and burned the rest – both very popular jobs on a cold winter's day. The tractor was then set to work transporting all the logs down to the compound where they can now be accessed more readily by our log man who takes all we offer him. More timber has been removed from the wooded section leading down to the old Newent railway station and this has now become a pleasant walk although unfortunately only open to volunteer workers at the moment as the gates at each end are locked when we are not there. The section up by the Oxenhall Tunnel has also been cleared of a large tree which had fallen across the canal.

My request for a stone saw bench has been answered and we are now the



Photos: Brian Fox



Steady progress at Ell Brook Aqueduct

Volunteers had great fun rigging up a pulley system

proud owners of a piece of equipment which will greatly improve the speed and also the quality of the stonework which we turn out for the aqueduct walls. Whilst it was not free it was considered well worth the money as it is anticipated that there will be many other tasks in the future where it will be required. This specialised equipment, and the temporary steel former used to support the 'centring' for the reconstruction of the Aqueduct, [see John Forrest's article on page 10 of edition 86 of **The Wharfinger**] have been funded from the monthly contributions made to the Restoration Fund in the past 12 months – further details are on page 31.

My other request for a lengthsman at Oxenhall was answered by four applicants so the first one who rang got the job! He is Ken Anthony who is a member living in Newent and looks forward to regular walks with his back pack up this stretch of canal. He tells me he carries his camera and notebook with him so I am trying to persuade him to write an occasional article for **The Wharfinger** on the lines of Tony Boonham's Lengthsman's reports at Over. [Our sincere thanks to the other volunteers for this voluntary post – such a good response is very gratifying – Ed.]

We inherited two old railway wagons from the Willows Nursery which had potential for storage/workshop facilities but were in the wrong place. Each one weighed in excess of 2 tons and our tractor couldn't cope with that sort of load. Eventually one was sold for scrap and the other was moved into the compound using the tractor and Dave's 4x4 pulling the wagon as it balanced on improvised rollers. Chris is now in his element as he begins the task of making it secure and watertight before he gets around to putting in a bench and shelving.



The bank above the aqueduct has been cleared of rotten and fallen trees

A word of thanks to Dave whose 4x4 not only pulls old railway wagons but also small trees which need pulling out. He also regularly hitches up our trailer and ferries materials and equipment between sites at Over, Oxenhall and Hereford. Last week he fetched our new stone bench saw and is happy to transport (and probably operate) our new ride on mower now that the grass is growing.

Our Tuesday group now regularly reaches double figures and our maximum so far is 14. The overspill carpark is now being put to use and there is no longer room for everyone in the cabin for tea breaks etc. That shouldn't be a problem now that the warmer weather is here and we can start going 'al fresco'. Looking back at the time on the Lock we never had any shelter up there and *all* breaks were taken outside throughout the year - we must be getting soft in our old age!

Stop Press: On the first Tuesday after writing this report it was generally agreed that the weather was suitable for dining 'al fresco' so 13 of us sat down for lunch – and got wet!

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New Cargoes on the Gloucester & Sharpness

Caroline Jones reports on an important new commercial use of the River Sever and the Gloucester and Sharpness Ship Canal that will one day assist boaters navigating the lower reaches of the River Sever and joining the H&G Canal at Over.

On March 3rd 2006 the ex British Waterways mud hopper 'Perch' passed through Gloucester Docks carrying 150 tons of sand. The sand had been collected from the Cemex aggregate processing unit at Ryall, on the River Sever near Upton on Severn, and was bound for the Cemex concrete plant at Two Mile Bend on the Gloucester and Sharpness Ship Canal, a journey of 20 miles.

The processing unit at Ryall washes and grades raw aggregate taken from the ground at a quarry a couple of miles south at Ripple, the short journey from Ripple to Ryall is undertaken by barges and 'Perch' is usually to be seen on this short haul traffic. The concrete plant at Two Mile Bend, although next to the Ship Canal, has until now only been served by road. The use of barges to make deliveries to the plant will help relieve traffic on the Bristol Road in Gloucester as each delivery made by

The barge Perch on its way through Gloucester Docks – taken from the top floor of Llanthony Warehouse.

barges such as 'Perch' will take ten lorry loads off the roads.

It is hoped in future to use a larger vessel, the 'Transient' to make twice-weekly deliveries to the concrete plant. Transient can carry 300 tons in good river conditions, relieving the roads of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire of 40 lorry loads a week.

As well as relieving traffic on the roads the use of these barges to carry gravel and sand from Ryall to Gloucester is very environmentally friendly as a single barge trip will use less fuel than a single lorry trip – and substantially less than the many road vehicle trips it will replace. Commercial traffic of this size on the Sever will also help to keep the channel of the river clear, ultimately helping all traffic on the river – including, in the future, that heading to Over and onto the H&G Canal.



Work at Yarkhill

Following on from his introductory article on page 16 of the last edition of **The Wharfinger** Chris High reports on progress . . .

As forecast progress slowed as more arduous tasks were undertaken. To some extent this has been offset by the arrival of more help and twenty-five more work parties! We still have plenty to do so are there any more dormant volunteers out there? *You will be made very welcome.*



Eileen, Colin, Anne and Steve are our new helpers and so far seem willing to turn their hand to any of the tasks I suggest. Eileen drew the short straw, and with a little help from Peter, was banished to ditch clearing for four weeks! Colin, Anne and Steve completed clearing and burning brush from the towpath. The 'wild side' jungle has been attacked, mainly by Tim and John, with Dave M, Bernard and myself following up with fire parties.

A major tree has been cleared with the aid of winches, aerial runways and John and Tim. The stream across the mud dam has been piped and covering has started. Hopefully in the near future this will enable us to control the water inflow and provide easier access to the 'wild side'. Some of the saplings in the canal bed have been beheaded to enable pulling during the nesting season.





Above: 'Heave' – Tim and John use an aerial runway to clear the large wood.

Left: Tim lightens the load.

Below: Eileen begins the ditch clearing



The first sortie was accompanied by the crunching of ice. Meanwhile it rained a little. The second sortie resulted in wet feet due my 'wellies' filling up!

As the bird-nesting season is now upon us major clearance work is

on hold but we have achieved our aim. We now have 220 metres of canal with access along both banks to work on. Bank investigations have already started and preparations are underway to install temporary dams progressively along the canal. *Where should the bank be? Is there any puddle clay lining? Where are the leaks?*

I think there are some wet and muddy work parties coming up! If you are able to come along please contact me for details – 01568 615 575. Also coming up is an Open Day on Sunday August 6th based at Yarkhill Village Hall – *further details are given top right.*

◆ CH

Top left: Steve minds the bonfire

Mid left: John does some precision sawing

Lower left: Easy Tim – where did he go?

Left: Colin minds the bonfire too!



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The Railway Map

(part 2)

In addition to her valuable and interesting research into the historic documents that the H&G Canal Trust purchased at the Bonhams auction last year [see page 28 for the 3rd instalment] Caroline Jones has kindly undertaken a preliminary examination of the latest large map addition to our growing historical archive ...

The Trust purchased the first part of the original hand coloured large scale Great Western Railway survey map for £500.00 in 2003 [see 'Not The Mappa Mundi in edition 80 of **The Wharfinger**]; the map is at a scale of 4 feet to the mile and, when unfolded, is nearly 12 feet long! As the greater part of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway (subsequently axed by Dr Beeching) was routed along, or close to, the H&G Canal the Railway Map shows much detail about the Canal. The Part 1 map showed the Canal from Over to Malswick. At the time it was realised that other maps in the series must exist and it was found that at least Part 2 existed locally. As reported in the last edition, in December we were delighted to receive from David Bick his copy of the second part of the Railway Map as a donation to the H&G Canal Trust. As we know David sadly passed away in January and we are very grateful indeed for his timely gift.

The map is in good condition, though it is not quite as good as the Part 1 map as in places small pieces of the tracing paper are coming away from the backing linen. Part 2 follows on from Part 1, beginning at Aylescroft,

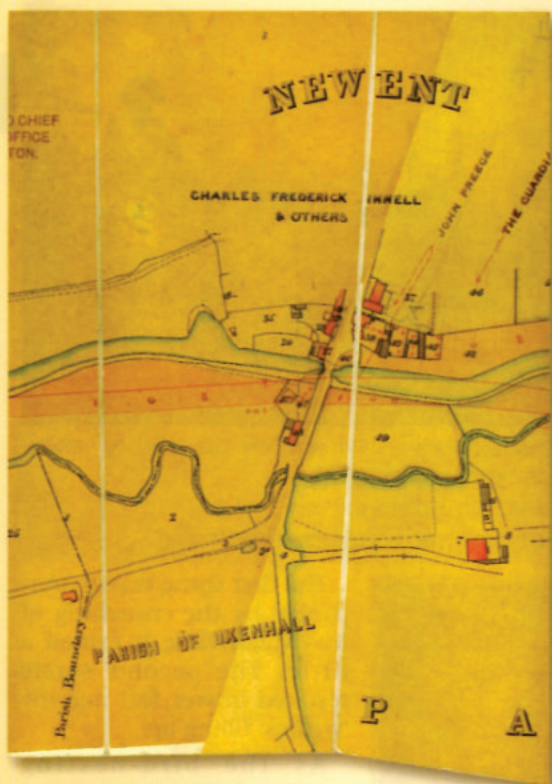


Fig 1: Newent

just north of Malswick, near the third lock below the Ell Brook Aqueduct. The road to Newent crossing the canal is shown along with a number of buildings near the bridge and towards Gloucester from the bridge can be seen a winding hole (fig. 1). The canal can be followed to just north of the Ell Brook Aqueduct (fig. 2) where the canal and railway part company, although this means the canal was not damaged by the railway it does unfortunately mean that the canal between the Ell Brook and just south of Dymock is not shown on the map at all – it was, after all, a map used for Parliamentary purposes for the Great Western Railway. The map picks the canal up again just below 'The Paddocks' south of Dymock where the canal rejoins from the east. In Dymock



Fig 2: Ell Brook

another winding hole can be seen and this map then comes to an end at the north side of Dymock (fig. 3).

Although this map only shows the H&G Canal for about a third of its length what it does show will be very useful, at the Newent end of the map two bridges and three locks can be seen that would have been almost completely obliterated by the railway.

The map will in due course be placed in the care of the Gloucestershire Record Office where it will be stored with Part I and, in the near future, all the documents bought at Bonhams last year. Now the search is on for the missing section, from Dymock to Ledbury, of this series of historical Railway maps which contain so much detail about the H&G Canal. ◆ CJ

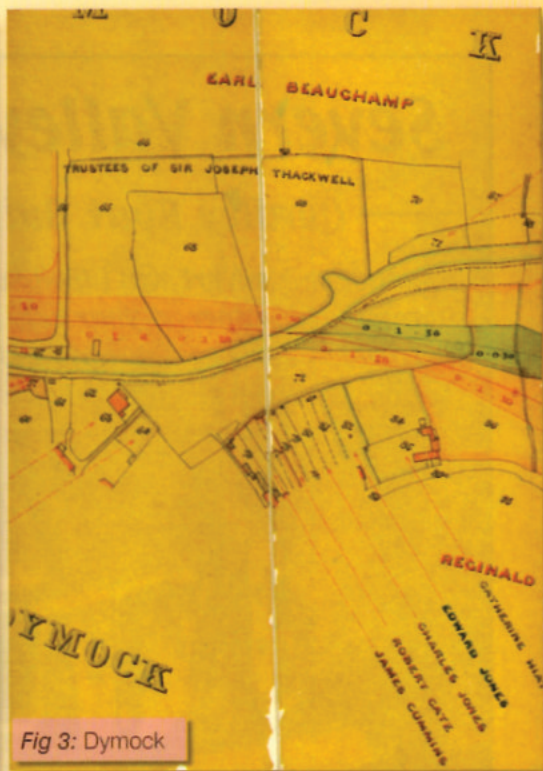


Fig 3: Dymock

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Here we go again! Our first outing of the year was to **Tractor World** at **Malvern** – temperature below freezing but luckily we were in the Avon Hall. The Saturday crowds soon warmed the place up and a lot of interest was shown in the Canal's progress.

Many of the regular visitors to the Show now come to find us – so thanks to Tom, Derek, Ray and Barbara for making our attendance possible. ◆ **JM**

Ray Moses reports on our next outing – for which the weather could have been kinder – to the Gloucester Boat & Watersports Jumble in April.

Setting off at the crack of dawn, we arrived at Gloucester Docks to some confusion on the part of the organisers

as to our exact allocated plot! Despite correspondence and telephone conversations confirming our requested position, we were eventually able to set up in a different location, where we spent the next few hours selling the items generously donated to the Canal Trust for this event.

Just after lunchtime the wind, which had been strong all morning, became very blustery, causing problems for the stallholders, so the event closed somewhat earlier than usual.

Our total sales figure was down on previous years, and with a reduced amount of donated items this year perhaps we will have to review our attendance at this event in the future. *Many thanks to all who donated items for sale, to help raise funds for the H&G Canal Trust.* ◆ **RM**

The **Wharfinger** *A big thank you!*

Over 200 copies of **The Wharfinger** are now hand delivered to members by a band of willing helpers. At the former price of postage (35p) this is a saving of over £70 – and with the recent increase in postal charges this will be an even greater saving.

Nearly all Ledbury, Colwall, Dymock, Newent, Tibberton, Ross, Clehonger, Withington and large areas of Hereford are now covered. However, if the envelope containing this copy of **The Wharfinger** had a stamp on it, and you live in a town or large village, then please do contact me (see *Contacts*, inside back cover) if you are willing to become our local 'postperson'. *Many thanks.* ◆ **JM**



Congratulations

One of our members, **Pat Skelton**, who organises the raffle at the Social Evenings and is a regular volunteer at Over, completed this years London Marathon in April. He completed the run in 5hrs 3mins. *"I was beaten by the rhino but finished ahead of the gorilla",* said Pat. He also completed the run in a faster time than Olympic rower, Steve Redgrave. **Well done Pat!** ◆ **JM**



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.

JUNE 20TH

AGM

(7.30 pm start)

Ted Beagles will be giving an illustrated review of the year at the end of the AGM

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Natter and a Noggin

SEPTEMBER 19TH

Details of speaker to be confirmed in the next edition





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

2006 List of Outings

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]*



A number of our restoration sites hold open days for members and visitors to see our work there. For details of the next ones please see:
page 11 for Yarkhill
page 27 for Over



IWA The Inland Waterways Association

LYDNEY DOCKS

**Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch
Diamond Jubilee Boat Gathering**

Weekend 15-16th July

This will be a major event, a fortnight after Saul Junction Festival and a further gathering before leaving via Bristol for the IWA National at Beale Park

Interested boaters please contact Andrew Goodland

01202 841626
apg@thornet.co.uk

Boat numbers are limited so apply now!

The boat entry fee of £20 includes a plaque and a week's mooring at Lydney

There will be a bar, Saturday night live music and a pig roast, amongst other things!

Non boaters are very welcome – free entry. Saturday is Lydney Yacht Club Open Day with the band concert in the evening – *donations are requested, please.*
There is plenty of parking space.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *of the* **HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST**

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

to be held on **TUESDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2006**
at the **THE ROYAL OAK, MUCH MARCLE,**
NEAR LEDBURY, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 28TH FEBRUARY 2006

AGENDA

1. Welcome and formal opening of the meeting
2. Chairman's Report
3. Group Reports
4. To receive and approve the report of Council, the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Trust (and associated Company) for the year ended 28th February 2006, Report of the Honorary Auditor thereon, and the Report of the Honorary Treasurer
5. To Appoint the Auditors of the Trust (and associated Companies)
6. To Re-appoint those Council Members retiring by rotation who offer themselves for re-election:-

Caroline Jones, Janet Moulton

Dick Skeet retires by rotation and is not offering himself for re-election.

7. Close of Formal Business

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR YEAR ENDING 28TH FEBRUARY 2006

This is the fourteenth **Annual Report** of the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust Limited** [a non-profit distributing company [formed in April 1992, No.2704407], which is a Registered Charity [1010721] and of the wholly owned Trading Company - **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (Sales) Ltd.** [2710215]]. They replaced the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society which was launched in 1983. It is also the report of **THE WHARF HOUSE COMPANY LTD.** [4627931], the wholly owned subsidiary of the Canal Trust, donating all profits to canal restoration. The Canal Trust is indebted to its *Council of Management*, and to the *Trading Company Board*; during the period under review [year ended 28th February 2006] those listed below have been members:-

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT OF THE CANAL TRUST

(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-06)

Tony Austin-Bailey; Nigel Bailey; Liz Connors; Martin Danks; Brian Fox; Geoff Hopper; Nigel Jefferies; Caroline Jones (IWA Nominee); Janet Moulton; Cliff Penny; David Penny; Dick Skeet.

TRADING COMPANY H&GC (SALES) LTD

(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-06)

Tom Bennet; Liz Connors; *Simon Dyer*; *Ray Moses*; Barbara Moses; Janet Moulton; *Penny Shetcliffe*; *Pat Skeet*; *Derek Weaver*; *Heather Worth*

THE WHARF HOUSE COMPANY

(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-06)

Nigel Bailey; Liz Connors; David Penny;

The twelve months ended 28th February 2006 have seen significant activity "behind the scenes", considerable expenditure, the first phase of **THE WHARF HOUSE** opened and very considerable demands placed on a small number of our key volunteers. Of particular note during the year was the number of historical maps and documents that the Trust acquired.

Financially 2005/6 was a particularly challenging year following the decision that the Trust would support the fit out and opening costs of **THE WHARF HOUSE** Visitor Centre, Tea Rooms & Restaurant wherever possible as, longer-term, the Trust will receive all profits from **THE WHARF HOUSE**. However, this clearly could not adversely impact on the cost of ongoing restoration nor of the running costs of the Trust. Major areas of expenditure were at Aylestone Park and Oxenhall Aqueduct. Grant Aid was received for work at Aylestone Park and Yarkhill. We are always very grateful for donations to the **Restoration Fund** – and for the donations received towards the purchase of archive material. **H&GC Sales**, like many others attending shows & other events, found 2005/6 a difficult year but still succeeded in transferring a much appreciated £3,000 to the Trust whilst continuing to increase public awareness of the H&G Canal locally and nationally.

In Gloucestershire steady progress continues at Over and Oxenhall, thanks to the regular support of both volunteers and site leaders. Throughout spring and summer last year major works were carried out by Severn Trent Water at Over. The foul sewage pumping main passed adjacent to the old lock and away towards Gloucester under the River Severn. Renewal created the opportunity to relocate the main some two hundred metres north, greatly simplifying future lock restoration – thank you Severn Trent Water. Also at Over volunteers completed the construction of the silt trap and channel from the pump


Italics indicates not a Director.

shaft. The unfortunate Enforcement Action in respect of the temporary site offices and storage facilities was the subject of a successful (but time consuming) Appeal. Considerable voluntary hours have worked wonders within ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE and immediate surrounds. At Oxenhall, following completion of the House Lock stonework in 2004, metal ladders have now been fitted and a replacement footbridge built and installed. The main restoration effort has now moved to the Ell Brook Aqueduct. Much of the stone of the outer walls has collapsed over the decades. The Trust was fortunate to secure a considerable tonnage of stone following the demolition, as part of a road improvement scheme, of the Stretton Sugwas railway bridge in Hereford. Our thanks to Herefordshire Council for the generous donation and delivery of the stone.


In Herefordshire work has recommenced on the Yarkhill Canal site with an enthusiastic team being formed with every confidence of a greatly enhanced length of rural Canal being the eventual outcome. Work has continued within the Aylestone Park Partnership to assist in delivering the new public Park for the City. We continued to demonstrate our commitment to work together undertaking considerable work to construct the Park

footpaths and cycleways – including one under the ‘safer routes to school’ initiative. The commitment to this and other work outside the narrow corridor of the Canal, integrating it into a wider public amenity, has not gone unnoticed. During the year Herefordshire Council and their Consultants reached agreement with the Environment Agency over the removal and treatment of the contaminated silt from the Canal – an important milestone for which we are grateful – and a contract was let by the Council for the removal and treatment of the silt later in 2006. Whilst progress has been slow we are grateful for all who have contributed in any way. Town and Country Planning liaison remains an important ongoing role, with at times very little to show for it in the short term. Within the City this is particularly important in ensuring that opportunities are not lost for the City to gain maximum benefit from the Canal – and for the Canal to gain maximum benefit from the City (and the development planned within it).

Our work continued to interest diverse groups from near and far. We were pleased to welcome group visits from the Herefordshire WI's, the Warwickshire IWA, the Waterways Interest Group and the West Midlands Branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute.



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



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

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

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

Note regarding Agenda item No.6; one third of the Members of the Managing Council are required to stand down each year. All those standing down (listed at 6. on p.19) are offering themselves for re-election unless otherwise stated. New volunteers to serve on the Council of Management are welcome; as reported in the last edition of **The Wharfinger** formal Nominations (on forms obtainable from the Treasurer) have to be received between 24th May and 13th June. The maximum size of the CoFM is 18 and, unless new nominations bring the total in excess of this number, the above stated Members will be returned un-opposed. The CoFM is also empowered to Co-opt Members during the year (subject to the maximum size not being exceeded).

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete below and return this form to:
HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST
6 CASTLE STREET, HEREFORD HR1 2 NL

Name

Address

Post Code:

Telephone:

E-Mail:

New member ☐

Renewal ☐ Gift ☐

Please help us to keep our subscriptions low and to accelerate our restoration progress by making a donation.

Subscription £

Donation £

Total payment £

Thank You

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

Date: / /

Please give details of any skills you have that might assist us in our work.

Details of membership rates can be found on the inside back cover.

BANKERS ORDER

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Sort Code:

My A/C No.

Signed

Date

Please pay to account No. 11600694, Sort Code No. 16-21-20 of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust at the Royal Bank of Scotland, 21 Broad St. Hereford, HR4 9AP, the sum of £ on this day and thereafter **annually** (on the anniversary) until further notice.

This instruction CANCELS any previous Annual Bankers Order in favour of the Canal Trust or former Society.

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(Prizes are to be paid in cash)

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Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust - H&GC Sales

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Excluding Bank Holidays

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
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Update at OVER

Warm sunshine has encouraged the volunteers at Over to get busy outside once again. With the grass growing at a fast pace and four Open Days to prepare for, there can be no let up in our work. Much clearing and tidying has been happening in various parts of the site.

Mister Maysey has been lifted out of the water for a thorough overhaul and fresh coats of paint. Work has begun on getting the weed cutter boat functioning, as the weed in the basin is also flourishing. Gloucester Model Boat Club are looking forward to the water being clear for their small craft.

The smart hut is also getting a makeover by a young team of new Duke of Edinburgh volunteers. We are determined that they will make it live up to it's name once more!

Alongside the Bailey bridge a pedestrian access has been created which also allows wheelchairs and pushchairs to reach the towpath beyond the compound. Around the lock there is a new fence extending its length down to the river.

The flowerbeds at the entrance to the

site and around ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE have been weeded and old growth removed. Plants in pots have been given new homes in the beds and others in pots given bigger, smarter pots. The plants on the terrace need a regular watering, being careful, of course, to avoid Fudge, the local feline celebrity, basking in the sun!

Much speculation abounds regarding the sunken bath at one end of the terrace. It is the location of a proposed water feature, the design of which is yet to be unveiled. The bank just below the terrace is to get a planting scheme designed by a new volunteer and professional gardener, Paul Costello. Watch this space for news of the development in this area.

Down at the willow growing area, Mike Bowden is kept busy tending the fresh new stems. As the plants mature we are expecting an array of coloured willows. The otter holt has at last been completed and word has it that suspect footprints have been seen in the fresh mud by the entrance. Its precise location is kept private for the benefit of the possible inhabitants.

So you can see life at Over is rarely dull and we look forward to seeing you all over the summer.

◆ MJ



Photos: Maggie Jones



THE WHARF HOUSE *fit-out*

Whilst the Spring Bores race up the Severn past our doors, flooding the plain below us, work continues inside **THE WHARF HOUSE**.

Coving has now been completed in all the bedrooms and stairwell and much of the reclaimed architrave is fitted around the bedroom doors, most of the skirting is completed and varnished in the bedrooms.

Nigel has fitted the last of the reclaimed solid wood window sills to the stairwell. Windows are being prepared for painting and walls rubbed down for a fresh undercoat.

Recently, while working in the building, volunteers were surprised when looking out of the window, to see a massive aerial rising past the roof from a car parked outside. It was BBC Radio Gloucestershire doing a live broadcast from **THE WHARF HOUSE**!



Top: On the A40 we have erected a new sign to welcome visitors to **THE WHARF HOUSE**.

Above: Martin shapes the architrave.

Right: The spring bore spreads across the flood plain

Top left: Spring daffodils by the slipway

Far left: access has been created for visitors to the basin

Left: A new wooden fence along the side of the lock.



◆ MJ

**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)

THE WHARF House



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... a fine blend of setting and dining ...

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Morning coffee and cakes:

10 am – 12 noon

Lunches served:

12 noon – 3 pm

Afternoon Tea and light bites:

3 pm – 5 pm

Evening Restaurant:

from 7 pm

Prior booking is advised. Last orders 9 pm.



Over • Gloucester • 01452 33 2 900

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

Over pen Days

Visitors are always welcome at Over but on **Open Sundays** throughout the summer we are offering you even more, including:

- ◆ guided tours ◆
- ◆ boat rides ◆
- ◆ photographic exhibitions ◆
- ◆ handicraft stalls & demonstrations ◆
- ◆ model boat demonstrations ◆

25th June • 30th July
27th August • 24th September
11am – 4.30pm

The original Canal Basin at Over, where the Canal connected with the River Severn, has been restored; at the time, it was the largest all-volunteer canal restoration project in the UK.

The free **Visitor Centre** explores 750 years of the Leaden Valley, including the Roman vineyards, the Civil War, willow growing, basketry and the Severn Bore, to the ongoing restoration of the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire 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.



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 third of a series of articles by Caroline giving more detail about some of the interesting documents that we purchased for just under £4,000.



THE **BONHAM'S LOT**
153

3rd instalment **The Share-Related Documents**

Having looked so far at plans and documents related to land on the line of the canal this time we will have a look at a series of documents which relate to how that land was paid for by reference to a series of share related documents.

Possibly the most exciting of this series are the two share certificates numbered 525 and 529 in the name of Hubert Edy, the Canal Co Solicitor, whose collection comprised the Bonhams Lot. The certificates are very similar, both being dated 1839, and have very good, intact Canal Co wafer seals (fig.1), which would have been made by a die like the one on display in THE WHARF HOUSE.

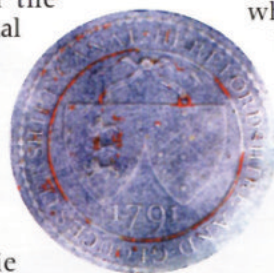


Fig 1: Canal Co. wafer seals

Also from 1839 are two printed lists of **Applications for Preference Shares**, they are similar documents again, listing roughly the same names but one seems to be an update of the other. Both are annotated to show increases in the number of shares bought or to add names to the list. Those buying shares seem to have come from all over the United Kingdom including a *James Cocks, Esq.* from *MayFair, London*, a *Miss*

Jane Martha Hicks Beach from *Oakley Hall near Basingstoke* and a *Miss Frances Hereford* from *Penaley Cottage near Tenby*. Most of the share applicants however are local including *Mr C Pritchard*, wine merchant from *Ledbury* and a *Mr E Weight* from *Over*. The lists hold 145 names between them, some of the more interesting ones being; *Gen. Sir James Kyrle Money*, *Bart* from *Much Marcle* who wanted 50 shares; *The Very Rev. the Dean of Hereford* who wanted 5 shares; *Mr C Bulmer*, wine merchant of *Hereford* who wanted only 2 shares and *WB Clegram, Esq.* who wanted 5 shares. Common names in the lists are understandably *Edy* and *Ballard* but the largest application was from a *Joseph Gibbins, Esq.* a banker in *Birmingham* and a *William Gibbins, Esq.* who each wanted 150 shares.

A little later we have a printed list of **Preference Shareholders**, presumably those who did actually end up buying some shares, this list is dated 1842 and has 126 names owning a total of 2096 shares. The occupation of many of the shareholders are given and these range from a watchmaker to an engineer, from a tanner to an ironmonger and from a boatbuilder to a blacksmith. Dated later still at 26th August 1844 is a handwritten List of Old Shareholders,

presumably those holding earlier issues of shares, this time there are a total of 750 shares held by such people as Henry Howard Duke of Norfolk, William Price of Withington, Right Honorable Earl Somers of Eastnor Castle and an Edward Hawkins from Macclesfield. The biggest shareholder is, as before, Joseph Gibbins, Esq. who has 78 shares. Many of the names of old shareholders differ from those of the newer shareholders, perhaps they didn't want to buy into the Canal Co. again!

The remaining documents in this series are mainly correspondence about the sale and transfer of shares, there are quite a few and I will go through them briefly in chronological order.

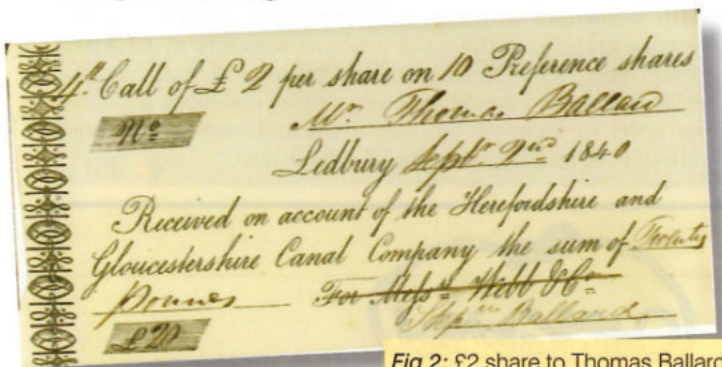


Fig 2: £2 share to Thomas Ballard

The earliest documents are dated 1828 and relate to the sale of 10 shares from the estate of John Mathews of Linton for £5.00 each to Hubert Edy, who then sold 3 each to a Mr John Spencer, a Mr Thomas Baylis and Thomas Ballard, keeping the tenth for himself.

From 1833 there is a series of correspondence totalling 11 letters relating to the sale of 10 shares dated 1793 of a Mr Wainwright from Birmingham and the purchase of 6 of those shares among others by Mr Gibbins, our large shareholder from the lists mentioned above.

Dated 1839 to 1842 are three documents referring to Baron Oscar de Thoren's five shares. In 1839 he is asked to pay a share call of £2.00 per share by 2nd December, but is also told that preference shareholders will be entitled to 7½ per cent per annum from the time of payment of their calls. Later in 1842 he has transferred his shares to Hubert Edy for the sum of £80.00, a good price of £16.00 per share, perhaps the 7½ per cent wasn't enough for his needs!

Still in this period we have a number of calls to pay £2.00 per share to Thomas Ballard (fig.2), the calls total £138.00; a lot of money then. Following on from these is a document certifying that he has paid £120.00 followed by a receipt for a further £60.00. Mr Ballard seems to have owned between 5 and 15 shares in this period, which have cost him a total of £180.00, a veritable bargain – or perhaps not!

Other documents include a letter packet from 1844 containing letters about the sale of the shares of a Mr Scudamore to Hubert Edy and a receipt dated 1840 for the purchase of a preference share by Hubert Edy for £25.00, also a letter to Hubert Edy dated 1842 which accompanied a cheque for £22.16.4, this being half a years interest on his own preference shares.

Finally dated 1871, somewhat later than the other documents, we have a letter to Robert Edy, Hubert's brother about the re-allocation of Hubert Edy's shares (perhaps he had died?) and two letters to Thomas Ballard from the Canal Co, requesting that he verify his share ownership before claiming the

£70.00.00 advanced on 7 shares, he had not returned the appended form so perhaps did not want the money he was entitled to!

As can be seen this series is quite varied, the most useful documents are undoubtedly the lists of shareholders, however the other letters and receipts give us an idea of how the value of shares progressed. It is interesting to note that in 1839 a share in The Dudley Canal Co. was worth £96.00 compared to the £5.00 those in The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Co. were worth at that time.

◆ CJ

Donations for the Bonham's Sale Purchase

The total cost to the Canal Trust was just over £4,000. We promised to acknowledge all donations of £200 and over in **The Wharfinger**. At a time when our financial resources are very heavily committed (to say the least!) it is very gratifying to have a number of our Members making substantial donations. Whilst we have previously reported all of the following donations our repeated thanks to:-

Nigel Bailey, Gloucester £200

Mrs Rosemary Ballard, Colwall £200

Caroline Jones, Lydbrook £200

Mr Hugh Conway-Jones, Gloucester £200

Mr Warren Marsh, Bristol £200

Mr J Martin, New Radnor, Presteigne £250

Janet Moul, Hereford (in memory of her late husband, Brian) £500

Mr Robin Stiles, Bristol £250

Mr Michael Wright, St Albans £250

With a number of other donations - for which we are equally grateful - the total amount remains at £2,430. Thank you. Our Treasurer, Liz Connors, (contact details inside back cover) would welcome further donations towards our costs in securing this important and very interesting collection of historical documents - thank you.

◆ Ed



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Restoration Fund News

The Restoration Fund has been running for some 4 years and we greatly appreciate those Members and supporters who pay a regular monthly sum to the fund. The Canal Trust spends the money raised on an identified project or item/s and annually we report in **The Wharfinger** how this money has been spent. *Later in the year supporters will be invited to this years exclusive Restoration Fund social event to view progress on the current project.*

Council of Management have decided that our most recent Restoration Fund

expenditure should be to support (literally!) the reconstruction of the Ell Brook Aqueduct at Oxenhall. Twelve months income from the Fund has paid exactly the cost of the sectional steel former used to support the 'centring' that in turn temporarily supported the stonework – see page 10 of Edition 86 – and for the 'new' stone saw that we have very recently purchased – as reported in Brian Fox's Oxenhall update that starts on page 5 of this Edition.

Currently the fund is raising some £900 each year – *we would welcome more Restoration Fund Members to help swell this amount* – the requested minimum contribution is just £3 per month by Standing Order – full details were on page 39 of Edition 86 or our Treasurer, Liz Connors (see *Contacts, inside back cover*) will be pleased to send you the appropriate form.

◆ CRP



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Lock Keepers on the H&G

Council of Management Member, Nigel Bailey, also author of 'Over and Over Again', reports on some interesting new information about the lock keepers on the H&G Canal . . .

We know little about the people who earned their living on the H&G in the days when it was a working canal but, recently, two sets of information about lock keepers have come my way.

Eric Freeman's family go back many generations in the Newent and Kents Green area. His great-great-grandfather, William Millard, was a lock keeper on the H&G, although we do not know which lock he looked after. Eric lent me a notebook written in 1992 by his second cousin, Dorothy, recording her memories of the family. In it she writes:

"Little was told me of my great-grandfather Millard, except that at one time he owned some kind of boat and did work as a carrier on the River Severn. Later in his life, he became a lock-keeper on the Newent stretch of the Gloucester canal, now quite dry and overgrown."

She also recounts the story of her grandfather seeing a man and wife swept from their horse and trap by the Severn bore and drowned in the river.

The photograph is of William's wife Hannah who lived from 1793-1885; almost exactly matching the working life of the canal. Both are buried in Taynton churchyard.



In "Over & Over again!" I mentioned the first lock keeper to live in the Over cottage in 1831, John Haskins, and also



*Hannah Millard
1793-1885*

M. Bayliss who was keeper in 1876. Susan Stroud has passed on information researched by her daughter Victoria into their family's involvement as lock keepers at Over which expands on my account.

Samuel Langford became lock keeper in (or before) 1841 and held the post of "Lock keeper and clerk" until he died in 1871. For the next nine years his eldest son William, described as a Pilot in the 1861 Census, held the keeper's post until his death in 1880. Samuel's youngest daughter Mary was described as Canal Toll Collector in the 1881 Census, the year the canal closed, while a boarder in the cottage, James Goode, must have been the last Lock Keeper.

There is an apparent contradiction here with my M. Bayliss and the Strouds' William Langford both seeming to hold the post on 1876!

Susan Stroud writes: "Regarding the Baylis-Langford name, we don't know why they call themselves Baylis on the earlier Census, as they were all christened Langford. Baylis was the maiden name of Samuel Langford's mother." One of Samuel's sons seems to have taken to using both surnames.

We are grateful to Eric Freeman and Susan Stroud for passing on these items of research.

◆ NB

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A CANAL DAY OUT

DEDICATED TO THE LATE DAVID BICK

by Nigel Jefferies

Accounts of canal excursions have occasionally appeared in **The Wharfinger** and I thought Members, and Corporate Members in particular, might be interested in this outing which occurred in August 1799. It was organised by Matthew Boulton, the sort of Mike and Joyce of his day! It is recounted in Jenny Uglow's excellent book, entitled **The Lunar Men**. Admittedly it does not take place on "our" canal.

After a visit to the theatre to see Hamlet, followed by dinner, the climax was an excursion on the canal in a specially upholstered barge. The barge was preceded by another barge carrying

musicians playing trumpets, French horns, clarinets, flutes, bassoons and a large double drum. After sailing into the foundry for a brief tour, they went on to another site where they saw steel being forged, steel plates and sad irons being ground, gun barrels being bored and spectacle glasses being ground. The highlight of the excursion was a return voyage along the Dudley Tunnel and into the limestone caverns under Dudley Castle. Boulton relates:-

"We again entered our Boats & by the assistance of the Musick we increased the apparent population of the County immensely. After stopping several times to see Coal Mines, Iron



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Matthew Bolton
in later life

Furnaces, Fire Engines & sundry works we at length entered the regions of darkness wch I dispelled by 100 Torches wch I had provided. New & immense Caverns opened as we proceeded, through wch we often espied through openings the Inhabitants of ye Earth looking down upon us. The Band of Musick playing all the time & beautifully echoed from the Salons of Erebus".

Matthew Boulton was one of the most important entrepreneurs of the early phase of the industrial revolution. He established a business in Birmingham manufacturing many types of metalware. Perhaps however, his most important contribution was that he purchased an interest in James Watt's condensing reciprocal steam engine and successfully encouraged Watt to perfect his design and then set about manufacturing it. Many reciprocating engines were used to drain coal mines and copper and tin mines in Cornwall and to provide a water supply for a number of canals. Occasionally steam pumping engines

were used in the construction of canals and David Bick relates that the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Navigation Company, were forced to purchase two steam pumping engines to drain water during the construction of Oxenhall Tunnel. One was erected on the ninth shaft from the south end and one on the eleventh shaft from the north end.

Later, Boulton realised the potential for a rotating engine and encouraged and cajoled the hypochondriacal Watt to develop such an engine. Boulton also established a mint at Soho in Birmingham, which he used to manufacture coins and tokens during the war with revolutionary France, at a time when coinage was in short supply.

The outing described was organised for the Russian Ambassador when Boulton was negotiating to establish a mint in St Petersburg. It must be one of the first examples of corporate entertaining and is typical of the man, who always had an eye for promoting his business interests.

◆ NCJ



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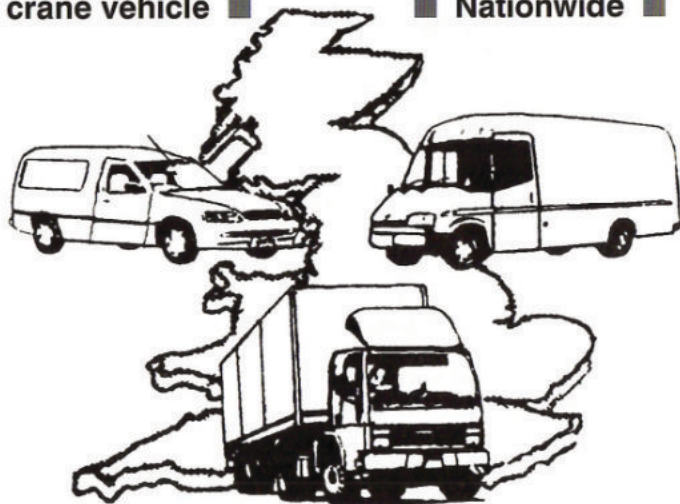
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A TYPICAL TUESDAY

*Member John Forrest has become a regular contributor to recent editions of **The Wharfinger** – this time John tells the tale of a ‘Typical Tuesday’ in Gloucestershire . . .*

The light of a new Tuesday morning shines through the curtains as the alarm is silenced. Old clothes on, a good breakfast, a packed lunch with a hot drink and a wait in the hall as the shadow of a car draws up outside. After the usual chat about the weather prospects, we are on our way through the countryside to the Oxenhall Canal site. We park and unload the car, greetings and pleasantries are exchanged with the other volunteers already waiting for action. Normally there is a time as others arrive where the work from the previous week can be inspected and appreciated. Any new members are cordially introduced to the established teams and given a guided tour of the local canal. Numbers have been steadily growing this year which means there is now a choice of work available throughout the day and members are encouraged to try out different aspects.

Apart from the current restoration project on the Ell Brook Aqueduct, another vital job comes under the heading of ‘*extreme gardening*’, which is an all year round commitment, keeping the canal route clear from the invasion of nature! Other tasks include repairing equipment, keeping the Horsefair Wharf compound tidy, surveying and walking the canal towpath – and

spreading the restoration word to interested passers by.

Tools are collected and taken off to the respective sites and work begins. Eleven o’clock signals a break and we troop back to the crewcab at Horsefair Wharf to sit down and to enjoy a welcome bite to eat together with some friendly banter. An enthusiastic sole leads the workforce back to the sites and after getting stuck in for an hour or so, we all return for lunch. More food and refreshments are consumed and more chat and information spread amongst the volunteers. Suitably refreshed, we go back to our relative jobs for the afternoon.

By this time the Aqueduct wall has had some new stones cut and dressed ready to be laid. Mortar has been mixed, and concrete poured into the large wall cavity. The ‘*extreme gardening*’ gang has a roaring bonfire up on the canal bankside devouring all the cut brush wood, while the logs are transported over the canal using an aerial runway to the tractor waiting on the towpath.

Four o’clock beckons and it is time for all the volunteers to return to the Horsefair Wharf compound to collect their belongings, say “*see you next week!*” and travel home having spent another productive day restoring and maintaining this part of the canal.

Interested in joining this restoration project on Tuesdays, at Oxenhall near Newent, in Gloucestershire?

Please contact the Site Leader; Brian Fox on 01432 358 628.

◆ JF

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Our thanks to Colin Dymott for his work in liaising with our advertisers and to Maggie Jones in introducing all the necessary changes. Please do support all of our advertisers whenever you can.

◆ CRP

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Gloucestershire Committee, Geoff Hopper, has advised the CofM in mid April that, having reviewed his personal interests and commitments, following some two years on the CofM he has decided to resign from the role and as a Director and Trustee.

Geoff has said that he will continue to support the Trust with hands-on physical restoration work. We are grateful to Geoff for his contributions and for his ongoing work. The new Chairman of the Gloucestershire Committee will be announced in the next edition of **The Wharfinger**.

◆ CRP

COPY DEADLINE THE FOR NEXT ISSUE:

4TH July, 2006

Tales from OVER

by Tony Boonham

We recently had a great donation from Mr Chris Dainton of a block and tackle, we shall get it tested to comply with H&S requirements and then it will be a very useful addition to our tool store. Thank you. We have quite a programme of work around the Canal Basin this year with all the usual mowing, strimming etc., some of the work that we have already accomplished is reported on p.24.

During the first warm Wednesday of the year, whilst having our lunch outside, out of the corner of my left eye I caught a fluttering movement. When I looked carefully there was a tiny goldcrest about 3ft from me and, to my surprise, it moved even closer, a delightful little summer visitor about the size of a wren but with greenish plumage and a crest of gold on its head. Just one example of the wildlife that is thriving at Over.

There is an ever expanding list of planned work with something to suit almost any skills, or why not try something new? In the immediate future we will be getting our small trip boat at Over, Mr Maysey, ready for work during the planned Open Days this summer. Mr Maysey needs overall cleaning and checking plus some painting - and we will need to give the engine a thorough check and service - plus a few test runs around the Basin for good measure. Please contact me, Tony Boonham (see Contacts, inside back cover); *you will be very welcome to join us.*

◆ TB



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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!

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The Wharfinger

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal

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