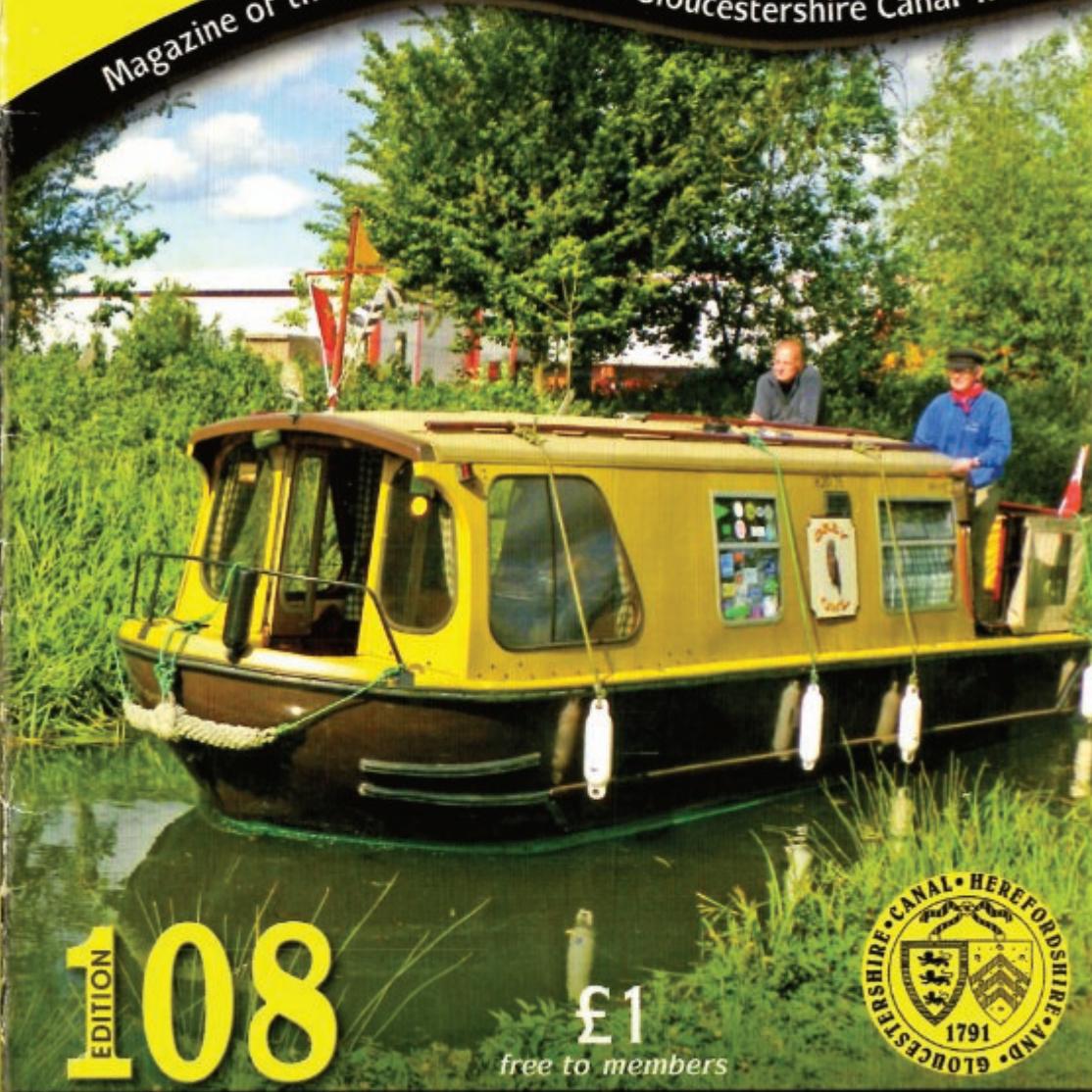


The

# wharfinger

Summer 2011

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



EDITION

108

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free to members



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

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Front Cover: First boat since 1880 on the partly restored canal at Aylestone Park. by Ralph Barber

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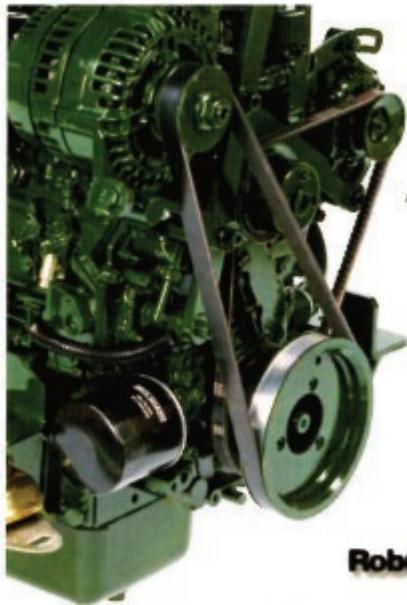
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## Chairman's Column from Janet Moult

I have recently spent a few days in Wales and visited two heritage railways – the well-established Talyllyn and the Corris Railway with half a mile of track so far.

Is it easier to restore a railway or a canal? Once restored it seems that to run a steam train carrying a large number of passengers compared with the carrying capacity of a canal boat must be more profitable. What about maintenance costs of track and trains?

By the time you read this the spring and summer programme will be in full swing. Over have had their first Open Weekend and despite mixed weather had a very successful couple of days. Boats were back on the Canal for the first time for over 130 years at the Aylestone Boat Gathering in Hereford. No excuse for Herefordians not to know of the Canal's existence! (see p.16 and 25) The Trading Company start to go farther afield with visits to Crick and Braunston and will be at as many local events as possible.

If you are unable to come out to events there are still many ways you can support the Trust. A number of vacancies exist:

- Database administrator (see p.39)
- Advertising co-ordinator
- Fund-raising/grant applications
- Press cuttings/non-digital archives
- and any expertise in the environmental, engineering, financial and legal fields is always required.

I think I can misquote – it is not what the Trust can do for you but what can you do for the Trust!

*Hoping for a long hot summer and no mud!*

Mike Holmes, husband of new Trading Company Chairman Margaret Holmes, has been taken seriously ill. Our sincere good wishes to both. For the time being please contact me regarding all Trading Company issues and events. ◆ *Janet Moult, Chairman*

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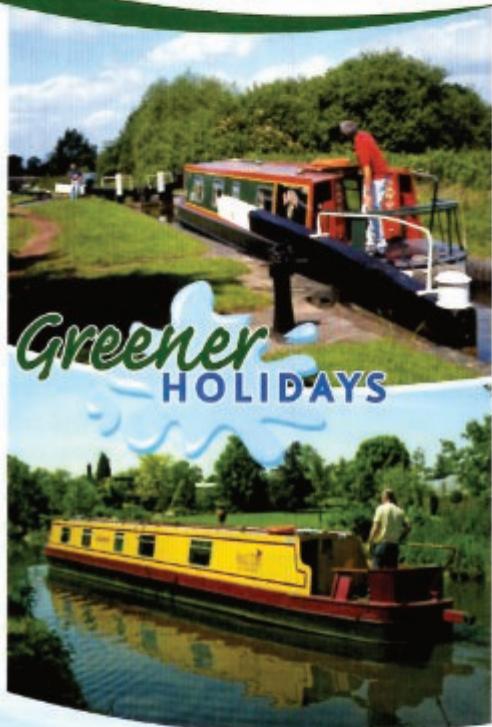


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## Boosting the Local Economy

*We were fortunate to catch the end of the April 'heatwave' and enjoy a period of boating without rain, quite a lot of sun and unseasonably high temperatures. Moored for a few days in an idyllic spot on the Trent and Mersey Canal overlooking Shugborough Hall at Great Haywood in Staffordshire – a popular spot at all times of the year – gave time to observe just how busy the canal was. It was not just boats!*

The Easter, Royal Wedding and early May Bank Holidays combined to produce what must have been a marketing dream for canal boat hire companies and the prolonged spell of exceptional weather had also tempted many private boaters out on the water. So this popular spot (adjacent to the junction with the Staffs and Worcester Canal) was, as we anticipated, busy with boats and boaters enjoying the canal and its surroundings. *However, they/we were not alone!*

It soon became clear that the boaters were in the minority, their numbers were greatly exceeded by the many other people. Canoeists and anglers were enjoying both the canal and the adjacent river. Walkers (with and without dogs and/or children) were numerous as were joggers and (thankfully considerate) cyclists. Talking to some of these passers-by it became clear that whilst many lived in the immediate vicinity many more were visitors exploring the area. *One thing was certain, the number of people on the towpath was far greater than the number on all the moored boats and on those passing through.* Talking to a shopkeeper in the village they were quick to confirm

that they relied on both the passing boat trade and the visitors to the area to maintain a viable business – and just how important they considered the boats were to the attraction of the area.

Boats are certainly a vital part of the equation as was demonstrated very clearly when the Llangollen Canal was, many years ago, breached with no boats able to get to the town. The traders (whose takings from boaters and visitors had plummeted) were soon joining the waterways lobby groups to get the breach repaired!

Professionally managed studies by British Waterways have consistently concluded that canals bring in a considerable additional tourism expenditure to their locality and support additional employment by the creation of jobs both on and off the waterway. Our thanks to Glenn Millar, British Waterways Economic Development Manager, who has updated their earlier study of the potential economic influence of the H&G Canal which now shows that it will bring in an increased tourism spend of £16.5 million to the two counties and create some 400 full time job equivalents (plus Canal Trust and subsidiary business staff).

Our new series of Canal Walk leaflets (see page 30) is a small step towards increasing awareness and use of the H&G Canal by both local residents and visitors. <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE is an ideal base for visitors to enjoy both the canal and the area – slowly but surely we are *already* contributing to the local economy in visitor spend, supporting local businesses and employing staff.

◆ CRP

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*The New Year was kind to us at Yarkhill as it was then that we were pleased to welcome Richard Beard and Tom Fleming to our team. The now reasonable pool of volunteers means that even with holidays, family commitments, laziness (or just plain skiving) we still have a good turn out!*

Admiring – pondering our achievements.

The good numbers enables us to undertake and achieve a number of tasks each week. The site was cleared of cut wood and brush some two months earlier than last year and fires at the lock site, and in both farmer's fields, completing our post winter/spring clean.

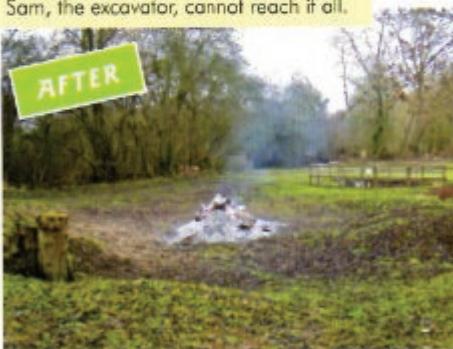
Further levelling of the towpath ditch bank edge has been carried out enabling a larger area to be mowed rather than strimmed making future maintenance easier, also holes from animal and ruts from pick-



Robin and Tim tidy the bottom edge as Sam, the excavator, cannot reach it all.



Brush being burnt ...



... all gone and now tidy!

Right: Logs for special orders – now all reserved.

up activity have been filled. The sandbag dam has been removed from its 680-yard position and rebuilt across the canal just short of the culvert. Excavator 'Sam', with John and Richard, dug out a major stump from the wild side bank and one week I drove some eight miles around the site moving wood and soil. Well actually the pick-up did the moving while the rest of the team did the lifting and shovelling!

Work has just started on profiling a short stretch of the wild side canal bank opposite the milestone. This will be followed by profiling a similar stretch of the towpath bank giving us a test sample of the canal profile prior to extending the work the full length of each bank. This is going to be a long job – in fact 1.1 miles in total!

◆ CH



Wild side canal bank profiling starts.

  
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Wild side canal bank profiling continues.

*Who is going to lend a hand? Is it  
going to be you? Interested? – then  
please ring:–*

**Chris High 01568 615 575**

## **YARKHILL CANAL WALKS**

**Sunday 14th. August 2011**

**10.30 am to 5.00 pm**

**from Yarkhill Village Hall GR 600 436**

**Refreshments • Displays • Tombola • Sales**

**Guided walks of 1½ hours at 10.45 am : 11.30 am : 2.00 pm : 3.30 pm**

Or enjoy a saunter at your own pace along the sign posted route.  
Even bring a picnic lunch. Volunteers at the canal to provide  
canal history and enthuse about our work.

Enquiries to Chris High, 53 Mill Street, Leominster HR6 8EB. 01568 615575.



*Wellingtons if wet,  
else stout shoes.*

The Trading Company hopes to attend the following events.

Please put dates in your diaries and any offers of help will be gratefully received.

<b>June 11 – 12</b>	Garden Festival , Hellens, Much Marcle
<b>Jun 25 – 26</b>	Braunston Boat Gathering, Northamptonshire
<b>Mid July</b>	Sutton St Nicholas Fete
<b>Jul 29 – 31</b>	National Waterways Festival, Burton-on-Trent
<b>Aug 7</b>	Herefordshire Country Fair, Whitfield Estate, Wormbridge
<b>Aug 26 – 27</b>	Tall Ships, Gloucester (revised date)
<b>Sept 3</b>	Alfrick Village Show
<b>Nov 12</b>	Winter Bazaar, Ledbury

Please note: H&G CT attendance at some events is subject to confirmation.

Why not have a good day out with the H&G CT? We cannot promise that you will see the world with us but you may visit an area that is new to you – and we always do our utmost to ensure that you have some time to look around (and your admission to the event will be free!).

We urgently need additional volunteers to help us at these interesting events. Our well established small team will welcome you. Please contact Margaret Holmes (see inside back cover for Contact details) to discuss where and when you can get involved.

*Thank you.*

**Bottle Stall**

*Your  
**HELP**  
please!*

Bottles of all shapes and sizes are wanted, please, for the Bottle Stall at the Winter Bazaar. Any size and drink/food related content. Ideally please bring your bottles to one of our Social Evenings. If that is not possible, or for larger quantities, please contact Janet Moulton.

*Thank you.*



*News from the friends  
of Gloucester*  
**WATERWAYS  
MUSEUM**

By Chris Witts

With increased numbers through the gates the annual Waterways Festival and Boat Jumble held on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April proved to be a most successful day. Weather-wise it was a glorious weekend, which no doubt put people in a good frame of mind to visit Gloucester Docks.

There was something for everyone to enjoy, browsing amongst the stalls of the Boat Jumble, having a go to win a fabulous prize in the duck race, watch the Fire Service in demonstrating their waterborne craft or simply to sit back and enjoy the music provided by Bees Knees and members of Gloucester Sea Cadets. The Friends Ladies Craft Group not only demonstrated their skills with the needle but also ran a stall selling second-hand books. This proved to be very popular and raised much needed funds for the museum.

## Welcome to another new Vice President

Following my retirement as Managing Director of Black Prince Holidays at the end of 2010 I was very honoured and humbled to be asked to be involved as one of your Vice Presidents.

I have always sought to help you all as you have all always been so keen and enthusiastic in your quest. On a number of occasions, you have appeared close to defeat, only to come out victorious and it will be wonderful for the canal to be restored as a tribute to all the efforts of everyone involved.

I first became involved with canals in 1965, when I was invited by the Scout Master to have a day on a working narrowboat borrowed from Wyvern Shipping. I so enjoyed it that I hired a Camping Boat from Willow Wren and went with school friends (twice). We then went as a family on a number of occasions, covering much of the system, with various operators, now mostly gone.

Gloucester Docks was alive with craft of all shapes and sizes. Looking across the dock from the museum it was a sea of tall masts from the sailing ships moored at Tommi Nielsen's yard. Not a berth free either because of the many narrowboats and others visiting the Gloucester for the weekend. As someone said to me, "It's like turning the clock back, can't we have this more often?"

◆ CW



**Tim Parker**

I set up an Agricultural business with two colleagues in 1980. We decided to diversify into leisure and at the time Black Prince had gone bust. We purchased it from the receiver and, in 1989, I moved from Essex to run it on a day to day basis, although still having an involvement with the Agricultural business as Chairman. Black Prince runs around 100 hire boats and a boat building operation. During my time, we designed and built around

450 boats, and built new marinas at Welford, Chirk and Napton. We also restored various of our sites, particularly at Stoke Prior and Silsden, where we won an award.

In late 2009, the 4 older directors sold their shares in the business to enable the reins to be passed onto the next generation, who are now running the business. It is still wholly owned by its staff and customers, and hopefully will be for many years to come.

◆ TP

Welcome also to another new Vice President, **Jesse Norman MP** – a profile will be included in the next edition.



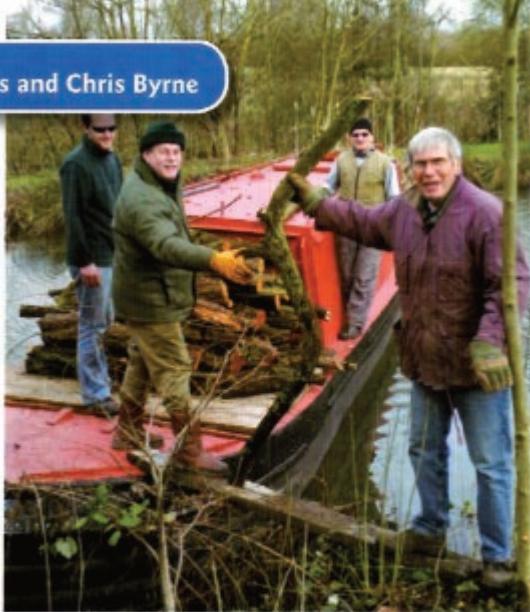
Photo: Chris Wilts

Visitors enjoying the annual Boat Jumble at the Museum.

Improving weather has meant a subsequent upsurge in activity on site after the freezing winter. January saw us all converge on the woodland side at the end of the canal to clear scrub and fell some trees that were overhanging the canal so much that they could not be prevented from falling into the water. An ideal opportunity to try out our "new" Tirfor winch which we had recently obtained for the job!

The Tirfor worked perfectly and we soon had everything back on dry land and cut up. Getting the timber back to the main site area was a bit awkward, since it was at the bottom of a steep bank on the 'wrong' side of the canal, until we came up with the idea of doing it the old fashioned way by canal boat! Alder was soon loaded up and delivering the first cargo into Over Basin for about 150 years.

We were finally able to get Mr Maysey out of the water and under cover so that real progress could be made on the major refurbishment program. Things turned out to be much worse than expected, leaving no option but to completely rebuild most of the cabin structure. Good progress is being



The first cargo carried for almost 150 years!

made, with help from the Saturday team painting the outside of the hull, and we are now working on the upper sections of the cabin – and both teams have also been working on the hull of the 'new' tug Bosley ready for both boats to be returned to the Basin.

Mike Bowden has been busy building a living willow screen along the side of the shipping containers facing the houses on the far side of the Basin. The same technique,



Whilst outside the hull is prepared and painted, new floor joists are fitted within the hull of Mister Maysey.



with help from Sarah Keen has been used to fabricate guards across the inlet pipe entrance of the stilling chamber.

## WRG return to Over

The first weekend in April saw our friends from the Waterway Recovery Group BITM group on site, along with our own local volunteers. Much was achieved during two days of brilliant sunshine and we now have a good hard surfaced towpath for the whole length of the Basin/Canal; the site of the lock and surrounding area is clear of brambles, and there is a proper pedestrian path across the bottom of the lock joining onto the existing track along the flood plain. A team led by Chris Byrne continued the on-going task of reinforcing the river bank below <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE. We had hoped to tidy and level up the old storage areas, but unfortunately a major hydraulic problem on the excavator curtailed this early in the weekend – we completed the work with a contractor just before the Over Open Weekend.

◆ TB

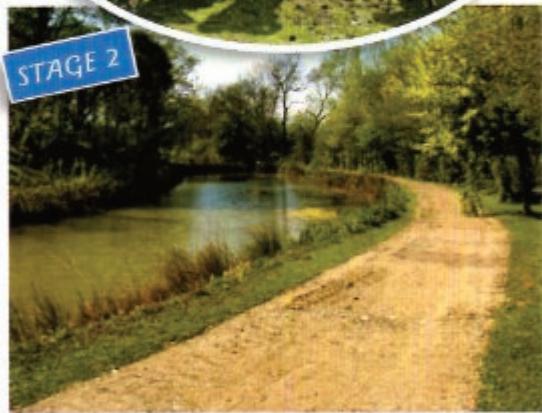


Top right: The walls of the abstraction channel are repaired, whilst the towpath is cleared.

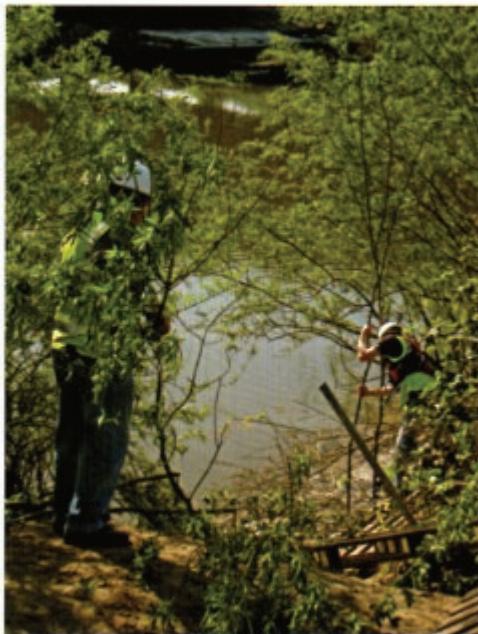
Middle: Excavator and dumper tackle the towpath.  
Right: The planings are moved by hand to the towpath.



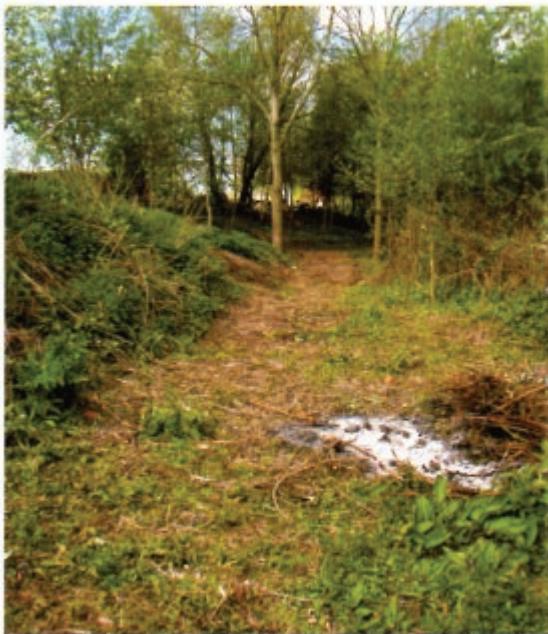
The old towpath is removed and the ground levelled.



A new hard surface is laid almost to the dam.



Harnessed to the bank, volunteers work alongside the Severn to reinforce the river bank.



Undergrowth cleared and a new path is created from the lock to "Wilf's Way".

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Photos: Ted Beagles, Chris Barnes and Maggie Jones

The banks around the lock are cleared and a new path between the lock and river is laid.

### The Wharf House fit-out

As part of our never-ending campaign to reduce the costs of running <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE, and becoming more energy efficient in our operations, we have now changed all the kitchen lights to new LED energy saving fittings, which will give us the same amount of light output using about 85% less electricity. Following the successful trial of some dimmable LED lamps in the existing Visitor Centre downlighters we have now placed an order to change them all over, and those in the Restaurant, saving even more electricity.

Work continues fitting out Aylestone, our ground floor room for our less able guest, and for guests staying with pets. The plumbing has been installed in the 'wet room' bathroom, ready for the floor tiles to be fitted. Time has been spent in cleaning the reclaimed quarry floor tiles before installation can take place. The ceiling coving has been finished off around

the new bathroom wall and a new attic hatch is being constructed to blend in with the ceiling to give a better appearance in the room. The wardrobe (set into the bedroom face of the new bathroom wall) has been fitted out with tongue & groove cladding ready for the doors and other fittings to be installed.

### Around The Wharf House

The flower borders around <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE have been given a 'spring clean' by removing some invasive plants and a general tidy of the areas ready for work to commence on a new planting scheme created by Maggie Beagles. In common with many other gardeners around the country we may have lost our lovely cordyline plants to the frost and snow over the winter. These are at the entrance to <sup>THE</sup> WHARF HOUSE, and also on the terrace. We have trimmed them down hoping they will recover with the warmer weather.

Belinda Sprigg has taken over the role of looking after the herb garden and has done an excellent job in keeping the bindweed and other weeds at bay, whilst introducing new herbs into the planting scheme, several of which she has kindly grown from seed at home. *Thank you Belinda.*

◆ CB

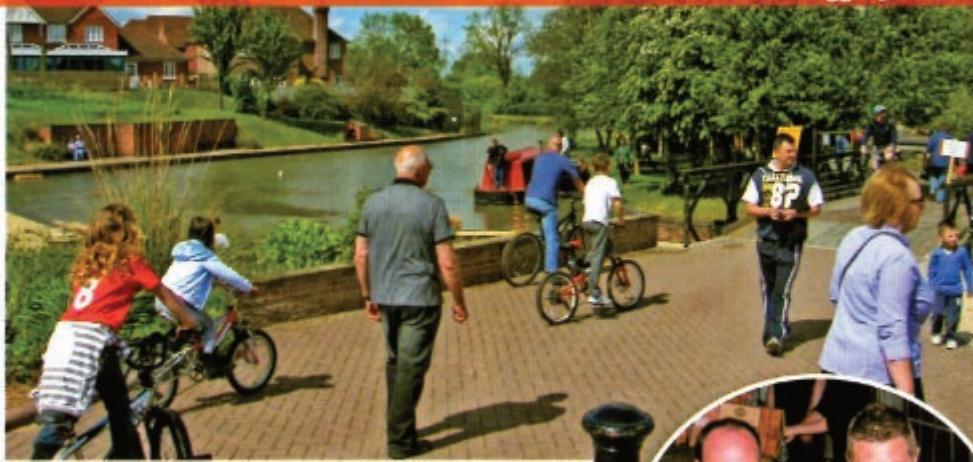
Want to get involved at Over on site or in The Wharf House? - then please ring:-  
Ted Beagles 01452 522 648  
Maggie Jones 01452 618 010



WRG and Over Volunteers take lunch in the shade of the chestnut tree.

# OVER CANAL and BEER FESTIVAL

Report by  
Maggie Jones



Photos: Ned Boogles, Chris Byrne

*A good flow of visitors, many of whom were learning about us for the first time, attended over the two days and the showers held off for most of it. The Festival held at Over Basin on the 7–8<sup>th</sup> May saw some 200 Draw tickets sold, gained a number of new members and new volunteers.*

Great interest was shown in our walk leaflets, especially the one from Over to Llanthony Lock. This was tried by a number of visitors who were welcomed by our Llanthony volunteers when they arrived.

The new path, "Wilf's Way" was officially identified with its own sign by Wilf.



The Wharf House laid on a good number of local beers.



The Model Boat Club displayed their small craft and sailed them from the slipway.



A good range of crafts filled the main marquees and our Trust stand attracted great interest from visitors.



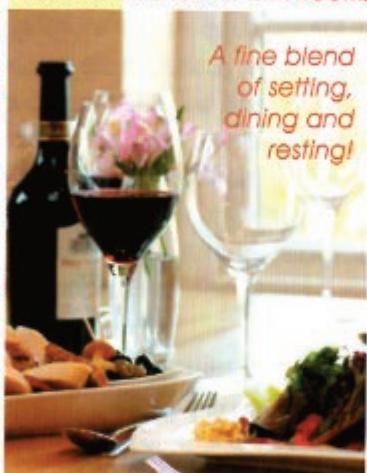
The new towpath surface made walking much easier for our visitors, especially those with prams and wheelchairs.



## THE WHARF HOUSE

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*A fine blend  
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dining and  
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We are a family run business established over 40 years ago, specialising in sheetmetal work and fabrications in most metals including mild steel, stainless steel, aluminium, titanium, copper and brass.

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We have a wide client base with particular involvement in 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 17 years, and we will continue *to work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.*

© H&GCT

For further details please contact Simon Hayward –

Tel: 01452 700384

Fax: 01452 700740



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GL19 4JJ

# Social Evenings at The Royal Oak

Please support our monthly meetings, make a note on the calendar and tell your friends and neighbours; we have an excellent venue and interesting speakers on a wide range of topics. Why not share transport and make an evening of it  
- **everyone is welcome!**

## OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

### THE MIGHTY SEVERN BORE

with Chris Witts

Chris commenced by explaining the cause of the phenomenon, with the twice daily tidal Atlantic water squeezing into the rapidly narrowing Severn estuary and pushing against the river water, causing it to reverse direction temporarily. The general effect is to raise the river level but, when high tides exceed 8.5 metres, noticeable wave fronts can occur on two peak periods during each monthly cycle with the best viewing generally occurring in Feb-Mar and Sept-Oct. Chris did note that the growth of willows and undergrowth along the river bank has restricted the current availability of good viewing points.

A short film then focussed on the sport of surf-boarding and attempts to ride the bore wave, the current record exceeding 7 miles! Chris concluded with a brief look at activities associated with the Severn, such as elver and salmon fishing using traditional nets and baskets, plus a look at problems faced by river traffic such as grain barges when encountering the bore.

For more details, please read Chris's book, similarly titled.

◆ Pat Skelton

The third Tuesday of every month  
(except December)  
at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle  
7.30 for 8pm start.

**June 21<sup>st</sup>**

Pauline Annis -  
*Stourport - the Canal and the basins.*

**July 19<sup>th</sup>**

**AGM** - (starts 7.30 prompt)  
- includes illustrated reports from our  
restoration sites.

**August 16<sup>th</sup>**

*An informal get together*

**September 20<sup>th</sup>**

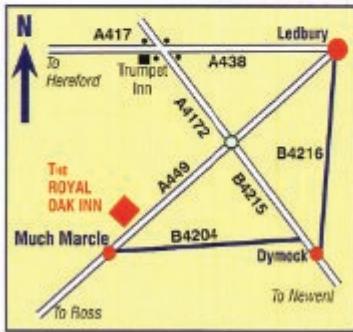
Paul Henshaw -  
**Llanthony Lock** - Our own site  
leader will tell us the history and  
restoration progress around Llanthony  
Lock. We shall also draw the winners of  
our **Grand Holiday Draw**.

**October 18<sup>th</sup>**

David Skitt

**Severn Valley Railway**

*Details in next edition.*





# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*of the*

## HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST

WORKING TOGETHER, IN THE PRESENT, TO REVIVE THE PAST AND SECURE A BETTER FUTURE<sup>®</sup>

*to be held on TUESDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2011  
at the THE ROYAL OAK, MUCH MARCLE,  
NEAR LEDBURY, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM.*

### ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2011

#### AGENDA

1. Welcome/formal opening of the meeting.
2. Apologies.
3. Approval of previous AGM minutes.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. To receive and approve the report of Council, the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Trust (and associated Companies) for the year ended 28th February 2011, Report of the Honorary Auditor thereon, and the Report of the Honorary Treasurer and of the Membership Secretary.
6. To Appoint the Auditors of the Trust (and associated Companies).
7. To Re-appoint those Council Members retiring by rotation who offer themselves for re-election:—  
*Janet Moult and Martin Danks*
8. To note the Council intend to increase UK Subscription Rates as set out on page 23.
9. Close of Formal Business.

*After the formal business there will be a lively mix of overhead projections and commentary on the successes of the year. Members and friends will be made very welcome.*

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.**

This is the nineteenth 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 <sup>the</sup> 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 2011] those listed below have been members:-

**COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT OF THE  
CANAL TRUST (12 MONTHS TO 28-2-11)**

Tony Austin-Bailey; *Ralph Barber* (co-opted); Liz Connors; Martin Danks; Brian Fox; Nigel Jefferies; Caroline Jones (IWA Nominee); Maggie Jones; Wilfred Jones; Janet Moulton; Cliff Penny; David Penny.

**TRADING COMPANY H&GC (SALES) LTD  
(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-11)**

Liz Connors; Margaret Holmes; *Mike Holmes*; Ray Moses; Barbara Moses; Janet Moulton; Penny Shetliffe; Pat Skeet; Derek Weaver; *Heather Worth*.

**<sup>the</sup> WHARF HOUSE COMPANY  
(12 MONTHS TO 28-2-11)**

Liz Connors; Janet Moulton; David Penny

*Italics indicates not a Director.*

**The 12 months ended 28th February 2011** was another busy year with *physical work continuing* at all of our canal restoration sites - Llanthony, Over and Oxenhall in Gloucestershire; Aylestone Park and Yarkhill in Herefordshire. Work also continued to complete the fitting-out of <sup>the</sup> WHARF HOUSE at Over and on the restoration of our small '*heritage fleet*' of former British Waterways workboats. As always, extensive *negotiations* continued in respect of a number of sites in both counties.

The Trust continues to support <sup>the</sup> WHARF HOUSE with volunteers; no loans were made to <sup>the</sup> WHARF HOUSE during the year under review. <sup>the</sup> WHARF HOUSE made a final repayment of £2,271.25 in

respect insurance paid by the Trust during start up. Following our purchase of Llanthony Cottages we have adopted a policy of investing 50% of the income from our tenants into the properties. The final instalment (£9,374.31) was received from the Miss Beth Gadesden legacy and we were also able to reclaim £134 tax on this element of the legacy. Donations and grants were received towards our work from members and businesses: Tim Parker, the recently retired Managing Director of Black Prince Narrowboats donated £5,000, £4,000 was donated by Cargill and £200 was donated by Braunston Boat Show. We are very grateful for this support, and for the donations to the Restoration Fund where we saw an increased income of £1,766 and for the donations that we receive from many members with their membership renewals. Gift Aid of £2,100 was received from the Inland Revenue. We have started to receive regular income from the advertisement signs on our land in Hereford (£627 this year). We continue to try and transfer any unallocated income into a land purchase fund. Gaining funds to support & increase our current level of restoration has continued to be a significant challenge. Each restoration site team gained income for use in the restoration of their site via the sale of items such as scrap metal and logs and via Open Days. Volunteer time worked for the Trust amounted to just over 2,000 days this year with a value to the Trust of £127,000. [Figures for individual restoration sites are given with each report - the significant balance being derived from all of our volunteer time involved in other activities during the year.] During the year the *Membership* of the Trust has increased to 1,334. Four Canal Walk Guides have now been produced for the benefit of members and also to raise funds for the Trust. Produced in full colour and including a map, description of the route and a commentary on interesting features, they are; Canal Walk No. 1 Staplow, No. 2 Withington Wharf, No. 3 Dymock and No. 4 Llanthony Lock.

Our small team from Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal (Sales) Ltd. once again spent many weekends at Canal Festivals and Shows both locally and nationally - but we could do with more volunteers. Sales were hard won this year, but the publicity generated by our presence keeps up the profile of the Canal Trust in a world where pressure is increasing to gain

support both with finances and volunteer time. The Grand Holiday Draw made over £2,000 and we were able to hand over £3,000 to the Trust. Our very highly rated magazine **The Wharfinger** continued to attract many contributors with both 'pen' and camera. Our Social Evenings at the Royal Oak, Much Marcle enjoyed increased attendance, helping to defray the costs involved. Room hire and speakers' expenses were covered over the year with a balance of outside speakers and our own members & supporters who give their time for free. A range of subjects are covered to encourage a wider range of audience, but more publicity is required.

In Gloucestershire at our site at **Llanthony** there has been much activity over the past year. A WRG group provided valuable help over a spring weekend removing the footbridge from the lock and digging up tree stumps. New fencing has been erected at various points around the site and there has been more clearance of undergrowth. Power has been also connected to the hut. 9 new windows have been installed in the cottages and a start has been made renovating the old lock-keepers office/porch. Volunteer numbers times days worked equalled 296 giving a value of £24,450. At **Over Canal Basin** our volunteers resurfaced the main site area with road planings and landscaped the area between <sup>the</sup> **WHARF HOUSE** and the lock, and the area once occupied by an old site hut. Brambles and undergrowth were cleared from the main site storage area and a new path was constructed from the flood plain road. The extended loan of a SPC pump helped maintain water levels. Many volunteer hours were spent on routine mowing around site and grounds maintenance. Our volunteers at <sup>the</sup> **WHARF HOUSE** completed the 6<sup>th</sup> bedroom and started on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Major renovation work was carried out to the manager's flat; regular maintenance continued both inside and outside the building. Preliminary painting was undertaken on Alder and Bosley was offloaded to land to permit the hull to be inspected and painted. Mr Maysey was fitted with new outboard motor and remote controls and removed from the water for a major structural refit. Our Over volunteers and <sup>the</sup> **WHARF HOUSE** staff ran another successful September Open Day. 434 volunteer days = a value of £21,700. At **Oxenhall** work has continued as last year when we reported that our efforts were concentrated on maintaining our mile of restored canal. There was more work

required under the aqueduct than first assessed and this is ongoing. Volunteer numbers have been around 6 and with work greater than expected may last us the year and could well keep us going for a while yet! 228 volunteer days = a value of £11,400.

In Herefordshire work continued to complete the slipway at **Aylestone Park**; paving slabs were laid on both sides, the ground landscaped and sown with grass. A metal barrier to prevent unauthorised use was designed, fabricated and installed by our volunteers. They have controlled vegetation in the canal by dragging it out - including watercress, a sign of clean water. Our volunteers also helped install a telescope on the viewpoint giving panoramic views across the canal line towards Withington. 148 volunteer days = a value of £7,400. Volunteer support at **Yarkhill** has remained strong with three new people joining us. Site restoration work has progressed and continuing maintenance has been appreciated by the folk walking in the area. An article in Herefordshire Life and a spot on BBC Hereford and Worcester Radio helped publicise a further successful Open Day. The site operated for the year with nearly £300 greater income from the Open Day and wood sales than site costs. Volunteer numbers times days worked equalled 533 giving a value of £32,250.

Our 'Heritage Boats': 'Alder' has helped with weed clearance at Over and has a new coat of red oxide and is now ready for top coating and signwriting. 'Renton' has been used by Gloucester Waterways Museum volunteers for a number of tasks and has had running gear maintenance and a fuel system overhaul. Bosley, a 'new' tug, was delivered to Over and is on land for a short while to enable the hull to be checked and painted. These boats have now been purchased for a total of £3 from British Waterways. 16 volunteer days = a value of £800.

*The Council of Management thanks all of our volunteers for the splendid effort and hard work which has been undertaken on the various projects along the line of the Canal and all of those who have worked at <sup>the</sup> **WHARF HOUSE**, on the boats, on our display and sales stand and to those who have assisted the H&G CT in many other ways during the year.*

Summary (abridged) Accounts will be available at the AGM or Members may obtain a full set by sending a large SAE to the Treasurer. The full accounts will also be available at the AGM.

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.

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 not less than 7 days nor more than 28 days prior to the AGM. 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:

*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.*

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: / /

## BANKERS ORDER

To: (Name and Address of Bank)

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.

# Subscription Rates

After very careful consideration the Council of Management have reluctantly concluded that an increase in subscription rates is inevitable. The decision was not taken lightly – the rates having been held at the same level since 1995. For many years the H&G CT has had one of the lowest (if not the lowest) subscription rate when compared to over a dozen other canal societies/trusts around the country. The revised rates will apply to existing Members when their subscriptions become due for renewal from January 2012.

The need for an increase has been debated on a number of occasions over the years and each time the CoM have concluded that it would not be timely to increase the annual subscription. However, postal and related costs of serving our Members has most certainly not stood still over the 17 years that will have passed by the time the increase

## UK Subscription Rates

Existing rates are indicated (£7.50) etc.

	Annual	Life
Individual	£10 (£7.50)	£200 (£150)
Joint/Family	£15 (£10.00)	£300 (£200)
Senior Citizen	£7.50 (£5.00)	£115 (£80)
Joint Senior Citizen	£10 (£7.00)	£150 (£110)
Corporate	£25 (£20.00)	£500 (£400)

Senior applies to a Member 60 years and over.

is due to take effect for existing Members. In arriving at the revised rates it was agreed that whilst an increase was now inevitable subscriptions should still be kept as low as possible. Also, whilst it was noted that a number of other canal societies and trusts no longer offered a Senior Citizen rate we would continue to do so.

Although not a requirement of the Articles and Constitution of the H&G CT the revised rates will be put before the AGM and will then apply immediately to all new Memberships and to existing Member renewals as from the 1st January 2012.

## GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2011

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

We are very pleased to report that the printing of the tickets once again is sponsored by Bulmers – thank you.

Please note that this year prizes to be drawn at September Social Evening, The Royal Oak, Much Marcle, on 20th September 2011. Our grateful thanks to Black Prince Holidays,

Mrs A Wood 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



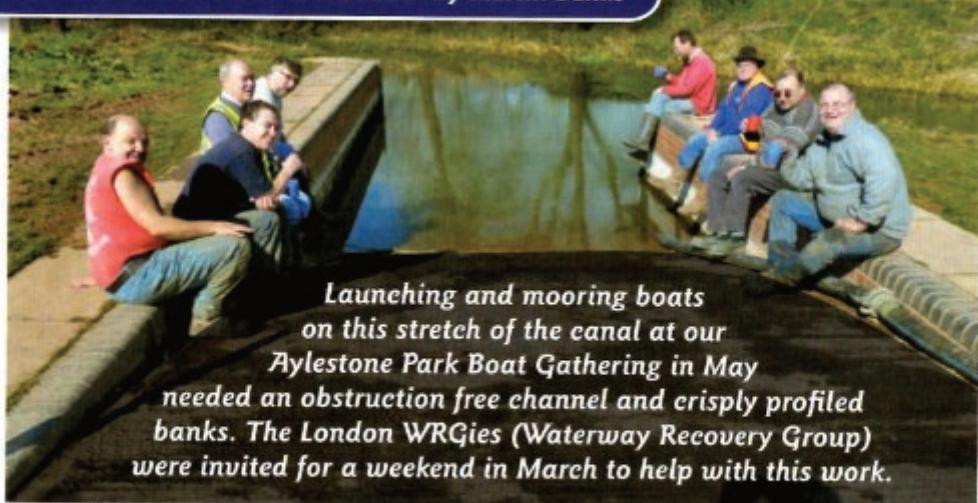
### HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST - H&G SALES GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2011

<b>1<sup>ST</sup> NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY for FOUR</b> Prize Donated by Black Prince Holidays ONE WEEK PRIZE 11th - 18th September 2011
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> ONE WEEK SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY</b> Prize For four people at a self-catering holiday home in Herefordshire or Gloucestershire Prize to be drawn on 20th September 2011. Donated by Mrs A Wood
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> ONE NIGHT BED &amp; BREAKFAST for TWO</b> Prize At THE WHARF HOUSE, DULCOYER, Much Marcle, Herefordshire Prize to be drawn on 20th September 2011. Donated by Mrs A Wood TICKETS £1 each

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 Moult on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets.

Thank you.





*Launching and mooring boats  
on this stretch of the canal at our  
Aylestone Park Boat Gathering in May  
needed an obstruction free channel and crisply profiled  
banks. The London WRGies (Waterway Recovery Group)  
were invited for a weekend in March to help with this work.*

Photos: Alan Lines

So plant was hired for removing material from the sides and bottom of the new slipway and we lowered the water level as much as possible by removing the sluice planks and bung – pumping down using the Lister pump. This was overhauled last year by Dennis Morgan; thank you Dennis, it performed well. Volunteers also had fun constructing a small dam to temporarily stem the flow of water into the canal. These measures enabled the excavator work to be done on the Saturday whilst the rest of us tackled the weeds in the canal.

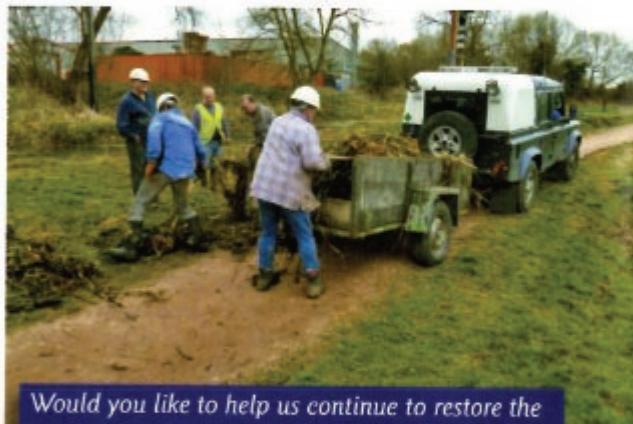
Weed seems to grow on the surface, from the bottom and from the edges – and probably in the middle! With the low water we donned waders and we grappled and pulled, and also raked and pulled from the towpath. We made a big impression on the fast growing vegetation.

The accommodation was, as usual, at Yarkhill Village Hall. After judicious use of fire clay during the week, the wood stove was lit and logs collected from our Yarkhill site. And it did not smoke! On another WRG weekend location in Oxfordshire the old pot-

bellied woodstove in the village hall is kept as a museum piece ... WRGies enjoy using an original in Herefordshire! Saturday evening was spent at the Cross Keys Inn near the canal at Withington, which seemed appropriate, and the beer was good!

On the Sunday we continued with removal of the weed taking many a trailer full to the disposal site. The canal looks so much better. *Thank you, London WRG.*

MD



*Would you like to help us continue to restore the  
canal at Aylestone Park? Please contact:-*

*Martin Danks on 01432 344 488*

# AYLESTONE BOAT GATHERING

Report by Martin Danks



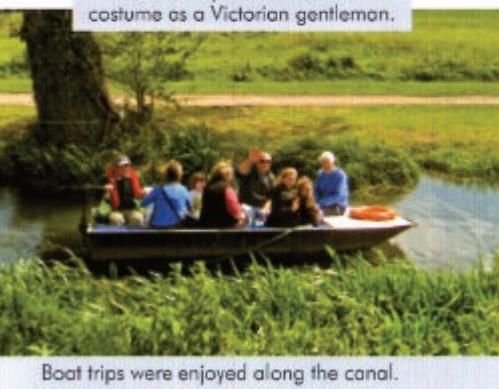
Over 2,100 was the estimate attendance over the day at the ABG on Sunday 22nd May at Aylestone Park. Families enjoyed all the activities and attractions on offer including steam engines, vintage cars and boat trips.



The Mayor of Hereford, Councillor Julie Woodward cut the tape attended by Martin Danks in costume as a Victorian gentleman.



One of the first boats to use the new slipway.



Boat trips were enjoyed along the canal.



Wilderness Boat Club's Snapdragon, Grey Owl, Tophyl and Olive were the first occupied boats on this stretch of the H&G Canal since the 1880s.

# LLANTHONY LOCK

By Paul Henshaw

*With the onset of the better weather we have been able to make good progress on a number of projects.*

New fencing has been erected on the North West wing wall of the lock and the area has been landscaped in preparation for a planting scheme. 6 new bird boxes have been placed around the site and already we have "lettings" for at least 2 of them!

The volunteers' car park has been extended to provide parking for an additional 3 cars. A lot of hard work went into the preparation of the base as it was dug out by hand. The surface dressing (20 tons of scalpings) was levelled and compacted to complete the job.

The old lockkeeper's office has been the subject of extensive renovations and the walls and ceiling have been replastered. The final fitting out and decoration will be carried out during the course of the summer.

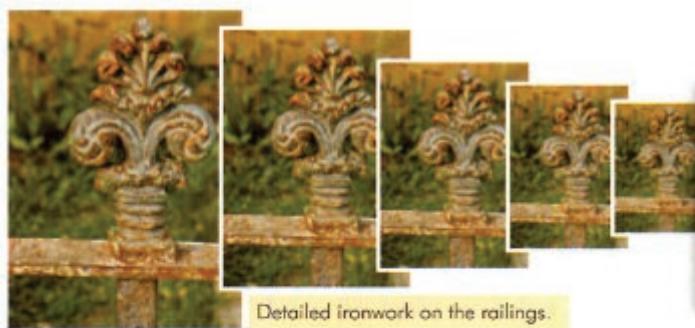


Above: An unusual visitor to Llanthony – very tame.

Right: A new nesting box.

Below: Digging out the base for the car park extension and the completed work.





Would you like to join  
our team at Llanthony ?

Please call  
Paul Henshaw on  
01684 292997

Detailed ironwork on the railings.

"Five a day" has a different interpretation at Llanthony from the normal association with healthy eating! The old paintwork on the iron railings in front of the cottages is being painstakingly removed prior to repainting and in the process it is revealing some fine detail in the ironwork. Wendy has set herself a target of cleaning 5 vertical railings a day. 15 down - only 120 to go!

Finally a new signboard has been installed in the lock chamber. This comprises part of the Alney Island Nature Walk and provides interesting background to the history of the lock.

◆ PH



The new signboard in the lock.

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*Now Spring is upon us and we are already in the middle of a drought with long sunny days and our tans looking like we have just come back from Spain. I'm not suggesting that we sit around all day sunbathing but breaks can stretch a bit and we no longer have Dave Mordaunt around to chivvy us back to work!*



Spillweir nearing completion.

Lack of rain never seems to stop the flow of water down the canal but it certainly doesn't stop the growth of weed in the canal. Attempts have been made, while the vegetation was dormant, to dredge the bed of the canal to remove the ever increasing amount of reeds in the pound above the Cottage with some success. A large triangular rake about 3 ft wide was attached to the back of the tractor, dragged up and down a few times and this did indeed result in a large pile of vegetation on the bank which has been duly removed. But unfortunately, there is still an awful lot left and now growing vigorously with a helping of blanket weed. Both encouraged by this unseasonal weather. We have now retreated from operations while we consider a plan B. Minimal work has been done on the non-towpath side to keep the vegetation under control. The boat was launched one day to assist operations as the bank is very steep.

The team working on the rebuilding of the spillweir next to the cottage have resumed operations. This is another example of our ability to tackle new tasks. The plan had been to remove all the old bricks which had been laid with very little mortar to hold them in place and rebuild the whole lot on a



We too have destructive woodpeckers at Oxenhall. A risk assessment has been taken!

concrete base using mortar to strengthen the bond but there turned out to be a problem with water seeping in from all directions. No sooner did we bale out the working area than it began to fill with water again, so the bricks have been laid on a bed of gravel with no mortar. Having laid about half the bricks the water problem disappeared and so the bricks, which by now were half bricks were sat on a bed of mortar but with nothing in between. The whole weir will have a mix of dry mortar brushed over to fill in the inevitable small gaps and that will hopefully last for another 100 years or so.

The area below the old Willows nursery, which is generally wooded has been given a makeover this winter but unfortunately this has opened up the area and revealed more patches of Japanese knotweed which will require treatment to eradicate it. Paul, from Llanthony, is our expert on this weed, and by the time you read this should have dealt with it. Otherwise it is a very pleasant area just to walk through and at the moment, as the daffodils are just finishing, the smell of wild garlic is everywhere.

At the far end of the wooded area is the old Newent railway station where readers may recall we had some bother with a couple of illegally parked caravans a couple of years ago. They were eventually removed but recently another trailer was deposited on our doorstep. It is not a caravan this time but an old builder's site hut and it was parked outside the old station some months ago where it has been sitting ever since. The decision was taken to get rid of it by towing it back to our compound where it will sit for a few weeks in case anyone wishes to claim it. If there are no claimants perhaps someone wants to make me an offer for it!

The front of our yard which is visible from the road has been given a springclean. Piles of old bricks have been moved as well as some old concrete railway sleepers and empty oil drums. Brambles have been dug up and the rough areas levelled off and seeded with grass. All we need now is some rain to make it germinate.



We always carry 2 paddles on board just in case ...

The warm weather and low water levels in the Brook have encouraged us to get back under the aqueduct to finish off the repairs to the stone work. It is pleasantly cool under there and it should soon be finished and then there will be new projects to be tackled – watch this space.

◆ **BF**

Would you like to join our team at Oxenhall?  
Please call **Brian Fox** on 01432 358628



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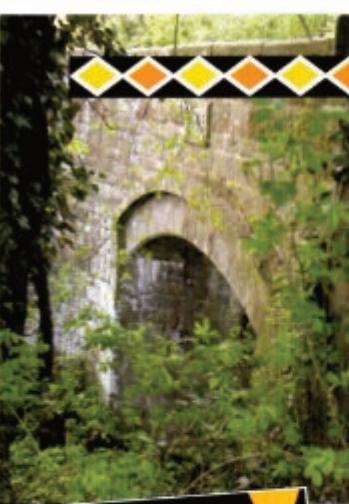
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**Warwick Top Lock, Lower Cape, Warwick CV 34 5DP**



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GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
CANAL TRUST

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the past, and secure a better future

30p

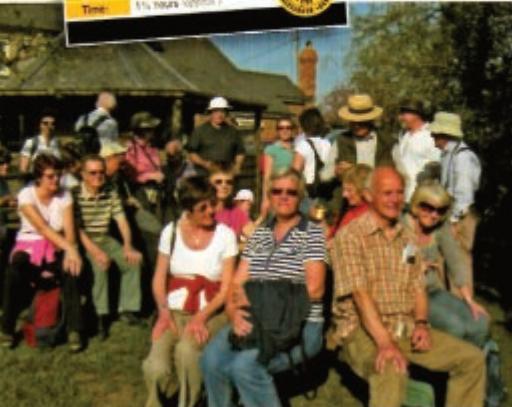
CANAL WALK NO. 2  
**WITHINGTON WHARF**

This circular walk follows part of the alignment of the canal and visits Withington Wharf, where Stephen Ballard, who built the canal between Lenbury and Hemford, and aspired to be an architect, constructed several buildings, which remain in near original condition.

**Location:** The village of Withington is on the A38 Hembury to Bremridge road, about three miles northeast of Hembury.

**Parking:** You may park your car at the Cross Keys Inn, where you can obtain refreshments late afternoon and at mealtimes from lunchtime. Please notice the limitations that you have left your car.

**Distance:** 6 miles  
**Time:** 5½ hours (without stops)



## Inaugural Canal Walk No 2

# WITHINGTON WHARF

Report by Peter Ridley

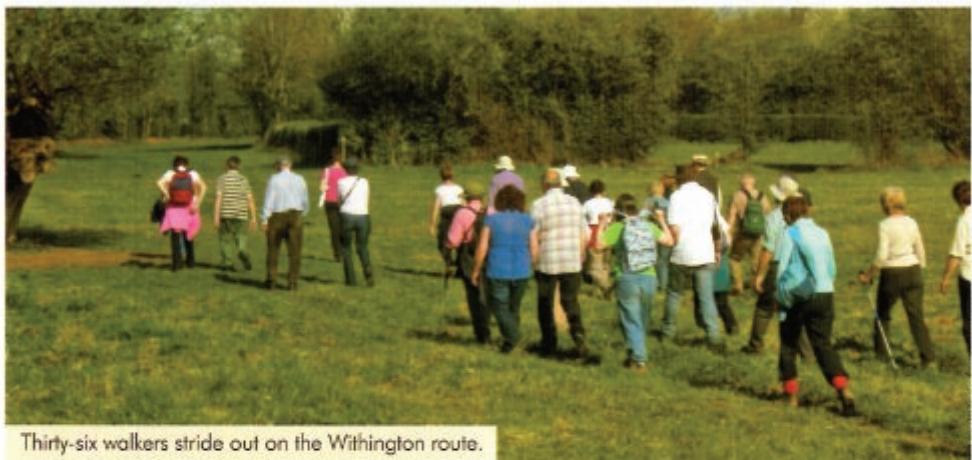
*The second inaugural walk was held at Withington on Sunday 10th April 2011. It was a 4 miler and in true canal traditions, had no hard climbs. It was a lovely sunny day and walkers came wearing t-shirts and sun hats. Attendance was excellent, 36 walkers of which 19 had also indulged in the memorable lunch beforehand at Len Gee's restaurant.*

Nigel Jefferies organised the event, and we appreciated the many days he must have spent researching. He has produced a well detailed and illustrated colour leaflet describing the walk which is available from the Canal Trust and a number of local outlets.

It was a lovely combination of food, sun, exercise, company and industrial archaeology. The latter was the walk's purpose, to follow the clues to re-create a picture of where the canal went, and to visualise the wharf, buildings and bridges in use. As a boy in the late fifties, I used to explore old railway lines, but since rusting track and buildings were invariably still in place, it was all easy. This canal though is very different. It has been derelict for well over 100 years and without Nigel's research and guidance, most of us would have been completely unaware of its existence at this location and the significance of the relics.

Most of the structures were at Withington Wharf, where we went to first. The canal reached here in 1844 and what a busy place it must have been. There are 4 original canal houses here, all in fine condition and well lived in. All were built to commendable standards by the Canal's engineer, Stephen Ballard. Nigel pointed out the details, the symmetry, quality materials, and the window and roof construction. On the ends of two of the properties, you could see the remains of the very large painted words "WHARFINGER" and "SALT". The wharf site today is a rural backwater, and perhaps we should be grateful for that. It has escaped the commercial pressures to develop land and so these buildings have proudly stood for 167 years and look as though they will continue to do so for a few more centuries yet.

Walkers take a moment to relax and enjoy the sun.



Photos: Peter Ridley and Nigel Jefferies

Thirty-six walkers stride out on the Withington route.

The walk included a  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile stretch along a tree lined, not yet restored part of the canal. Other structures on the way included two very impressive bridges and a lock cottage. All three had unusually been built in ashlar masonry, which is an expensive material and presumably had been a requirement of the landowner.

Quite a legacy. Both road bridges are in excellent condition but the skewed one, about a mile upstream of the Wharf, deserves special mention. It had been built to a grand

design, and included a key stone in its crown inscribed "1843".

It was an excellent, informative walk. Everyone enjoyed it and a special thanks to Nigel for organising, delivering and giving those quality responses to the never ending stream of questions. ♦ PR



The terrace Withington.



## MORE Guided Walks

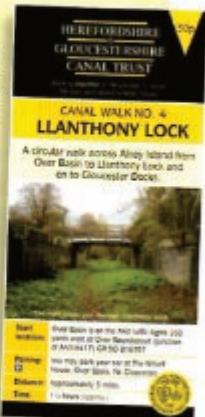
### CANAL WALK NO. 3 **DYMOCK**

As with the first two of these leaflets the Dymock walk has been researched and written by Nigel Jefferies. Our thanks to Dymock Parish Council for their donation of £50 towards the cost of printing this walk leaflet.

### CANAL WALK NO. 4 **LLANTHONY LOCK**

This walk has been researched and written by Maggie Jones, and Belinda Sprigg. Our thanks to THE WHARF HOUSE for the cost of printing this walk leaflet.

The leaflets are available from THE WHARF HOUSE or by post from Nigel Jefferies (address inside back cover). Please send your name, address and a loose second class stamp for each leaflet plus another loose stamp for return postage.





# MODEL BOAT CLUB at Over

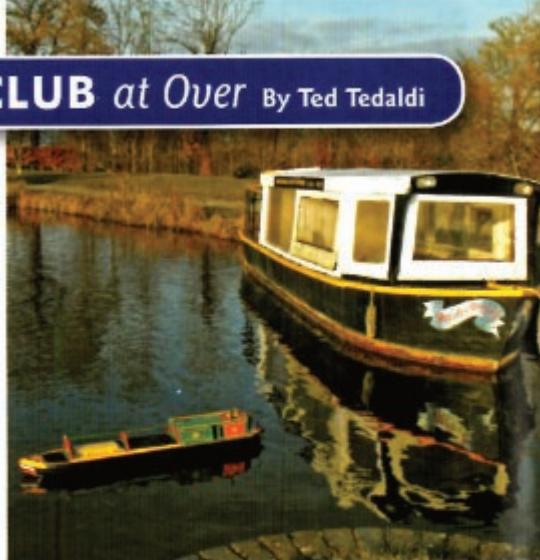
By Ted Tedaldi

*The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club has had some excellent sailing with the recent sunny days. This makes up for our lost time last year!*

The club in build this winter has been "canal narrowboats". This has allowed a wonderful freedom of expression as members have walked canal banks, marina's and boat yards for ideas.

The narrowboats hulls are fibreglass mouldings which are based on a scale of one twelfth. This gives a hull of around sixty inches long and seven inches wide. Fibre glass hulls could be classed as cheating. However, it saves about three months work and gives you time to work on the superstructure which you can see. Bob's hull is shortened to go across the car's back seat and so is about fifty two inches long. Bob's narrowboat is a working boat carrying coal, barrels and sacks. The cabin as well as being fitted with a coal stove producing smoke even has a dummy Bolinder engine fitted!

The traditional style modern residential narrowboat is a



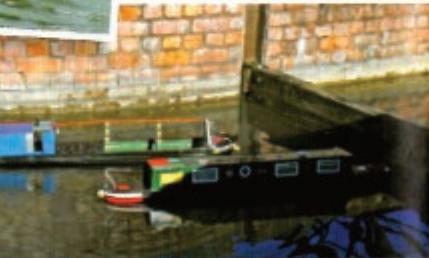
Above: Little and large!

Below:

- Bob's working boat against the wall.
- Steve's working boat in a hurry.
- Barbara and Peter's narrowboat.



joint effort by club secretary Peter and Barbara. Electric motor drive, fitted with a coal stove and smoke. The super-structure lifts off the hull to reveal Barbara's fitted out rooms. The furniture was purchased from "Hobbies" and modified to suit! Unfortunately the 1/12<sup>th</sup> furniture would not fit, so 1/24<sup>th</sup> was used. The interior and exterior lights also work.



Waiting to lock out into the Severn!



Moored at Over



Photo: Ted Tedford



Barbara's kitchen and bathroom.

Steve has made a working boat as would have transported coal, and timber from the saw mills. Steve's is a much larger craft, sixty inches long and ten inches wide – again with smoke!

◆ TT



## Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch

Gloucester Yacht Club, 7.30pm

The new season of monthly talks starts on the first Thursday of October members and visitors welcome.

Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011  
The Cotswold Canals  
from the air

return of Rick Kelsey

Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011

Subject to be confirmed

For further details of any of the above:

**Roger Holmes 01594 840316**

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## OUR HERITAGE BOATS

By Caroline Jones

*As reported in edition 106 (page 23) we have a further addition to our small heritage fleet of former British Waterways workboats – although this one is considerably younger than Alder and Renton!*

Bosley is a diminutive little push tug only 22ft long, built in 1986 by BW, and has a Deutz engine and hydraulic drive. It is equipped with a large winch at the bows and was used on the River Weaver and Trent & Mersey Canal for pushing hoppers about.

Bosley was collected by one of our Corporate Members, **Midwinter Transport**, from the BW Northwich yard in Cheshire and offloaded onto the bank at Over Canal Basin. Whilst the lorry was on site the hoist was used to also lift trip boat Mr Maysey onto the bank. This enabled both boats to be inspected below the waterline, running gear to be checked, and for both hulls to be de-rusted and painted by our Saturday team at Over, who have taken over the challenge of getting the boats looking smart. Bosley is now lifted back into the Basin where other work will continue. Mister Maysey will join Bosley as soon as the fit-out has been completed.

**Stop Press:** BW terminated the leases for all three boats early and we have bought them for £1 each!

◆ CJ

Our grateful thanks to everyone at British Waterways who has assisted us, and The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club for their donation of £50 towards the ongoing work on Bosley.

Thank you!

### Bosley



Top: Cleared of barnacles and rust and then the hull was painted. Bottom: Bosley lowered into Over Basin.



**A&D Marine Services Ltd**

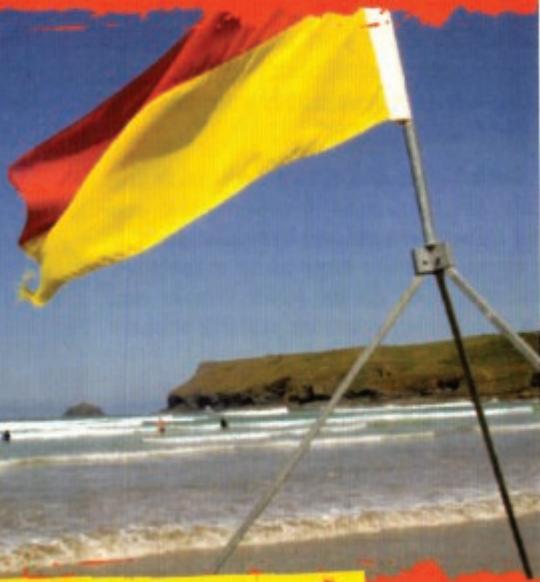
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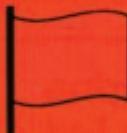
### Red and yellow flags

Lifeguarded area: safest place to swim, bodyboard and use inflatables.



### Black and white flags

For surfboards, kayaks and other non-powered craft. Never swim or bodyboard here.



### Red flag

Danger! Never go in the water when the red flag is up, under any circumstances.



### Orange windsock

Orange windsock indicates strong winds. Never use inflatables when the windsock is flying.

For help in finding a lifeguarded beach, visit [rnli.org.uk/beachsafety](http://rnli.org.uk/beachsafety)

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John Chappell continues his much appreciated series with details of yet another interesting plant that is to be seen at our Oxenhall restoration site. Not only is it attractive but it might also be of use to you should you be unlucky enough to suffer from toothache or nosebleeds – or even if you are troubled by mosquitoes. However, should you decide to try it as a mosquito repellent note the caution that it might also repel your friends!

This lovely little hedge-bank plant has the charming name of *Geranium robertianum*, commonly known as Herb Robert, pictured here near our picnic table at the Oxenhall site.

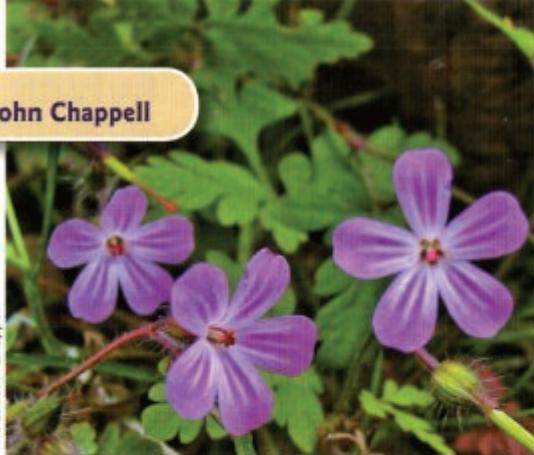
Herb Robert is a member of the Cranesbill family (Geraniaceae) so called because the seed pod resembles a crane's beak, or bill. The leaves form rosettes and small, pink flowers, supported on red stems, are produced from April until the autumn, perfect miniatures of the geraniums that we grow for our greenhouses and summer bedding. The red stems and seed pods have soft bristles and contrast well with bright-green, lacy foliage making an attractive plant. A dry, sunny spot suits it well making the red stems quite vibrant, whilst in a damp, shady location the show is more subdued. At the end of the year, especially in a cold spell, or when grown 'hard', the foliage turns bright red.

The poet Cicely M Barker summed it up with a few simple lines –

*Little Herb Robert, bright and small  
Peeps from the bank or the old stone wall*

The gardeners old saying 'A weed is only a plant in the wrong place' might have been written especially for Herb Robert as despite the fact that it relishes growing in undisturbed

Photo: John Chappell



corners and distributes its seeds very freely and explosively, it could never be regarded as a weed in the true sense of the word. It has very little root structure and can easily be scuffed out if you wish, but why not just enjoy it?

It is difficult to come to any definite conclusion as to which 'Robert' gave the plant its specific name; some say it was the Christian saint, Robert of Molesme, on whose feast day, April 29<sup>th</sup>, the plant is said to come into flower. Others hold that the 8th century St. Rupert (Rudbert) of Saizberg – who had the power to heal bleeding wounds – was the origin of the name. Given that the plant was traditionally used as a remedy for nosebleeds and toothache (is there no end to the ills we can cure at Oxenhall?), the latter theory holds more water but the less romantic among us might suggest it is simply a play on the Latin 'ruber' meaning red!

A white form has arisen from seed which gardeners have named 'Celtic White', a dwarf, compact albino with even brighter green leaves. Referring to leaves reminds me to mention that, when bruised or rubbed together, the plant exudes oils which some have called evil smelling but others appreciate as it is said to repel mosquitoes!

Whether or not you allow this little plant into your garden is up to you, but I for one hope it will always brighten our lunchtimes at Oxenhall.

JC

# H&G Summer/Autumn Diary 2011

## June 2011

Sat-Sun **11-12<sup>th</sup>** *Garden Festival, Hellens, Much Marcle*  
Tuesday **21<sup>st</sup>** *7.30 pm, H&G CT Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle  
- all welcome, see page 18 for details*  
Sat-Sun **25-26<sup>th</sup>** *Braunston Boat Gathering, Northamptonshire*

## July 2011

Saturday **9<sup>th</sup>** *Sutton St Nicholas Fete*  
Tuesday **19<sup>th</sup>** *7.30 pm prompt, H&G CT Annual General Meeting at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle - all welcome, see page 19 for details*  
Fri-Sun **29-31<sup>st</sup>** *IWA National Waterways Festival, Burton-on-Trent*

## August 2011

Sunday **7<sup>th</sup>** *Herefordshire Country Fair, Whitfield Estate, Wormbridge*  
Sunday **14<sup>th</sup>** *Yarkhill Canal Walks - all welcome, see page 9 for details*  
Tuesday **16<sup>th</sup>** *7.30 pm, H&G CT Informal Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle - all welcome.*  
Fri-Sun **26-27<sup>th</sup>** *Tall Ships, Gloucester Docks - revised date*

## September 2011

Saturday **3<sup>rd</sup>** *Alfrick village show*  
Sat-Sun **3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup>** *Over Open Days and Beer Festival - see next edition for details*  
Tuesday **20<sup>th</sup>** *7.30 pm, H&G CT Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle  
- all welcome, see page 18 for details*

## October 2011

Tuesday **18<sup>th</sup>** *7.30 pm, H&G CT Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle  
- all welcome, see page 18 for details*

## November 2011

Saturday **12<sup>th</sup>** *Winter Bazaar, Ledbury - all welcome, see next edition for details*  
Tuesday **15<sup>th</sup>** *7.30 pm, H&G CT Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle  
- all welcome, see next edition for details*



# Not quite THE LAST PAGE

## Situation Vacant

### Database Administrator Required

We are seeking a volunteer who has computing skills to assist the H&G CT in maintaining a new Microsoft Access based database containing some 500 address details used to mail copies of **The Wharfinger** to influential non-members and major waterways related organisations.

The records have just been transferred from another database and there initially will be some work in checking that the records are complete and in correcting a proportion of the records.

The subsequent work will involve updating the records some 4 times a year with changes of address details, deletion of some records and the addition of new entries based on information supplied by e-mail by our mailing team. *This work can largely be undertaken to suit the volunteer and typically would only require 2 or 3 hours of work each quarter.*

If the volunteer has access to a suitable printer then the brief would be extended to include printing the labels 4 times a year – but this can be undertaken by others if necessary. *Essential expenditure reimbursed if requested – subject to compliance with H&G Policy.*

Interested? Please contact Cliff Penny (01432 820866) to discuss the role. Please do get in touch by telephone as soon as possible – if you get the answering machine please leave your contact details (and the best time to get in touch) and your 'phone call will be returned as soon as possible.

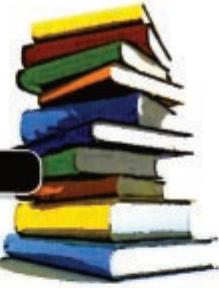
◆ CRP

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COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

**MONDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2011**

**The Wharfinger**



## Book Sales

I have just spent some time going through my records of the sales of canal-related books over the past few years. We have sold around 200 books at a profit of £750. This does not include the sales of paperbacks of general interest.

I have received a number of collections of books plus individual copies – so a big thank you to all those who have cleared out their bookshelves!

If you would like a list of those available or you have some to donate please contact Janet Moulton. *Thank you.*

◆ JM

## Our Corporate Members

Our Corporate Members have always been very important to us – both in showing support for the objectives of the H&G CT by their Membership and, in a number of instances, by their business assisting our voluntary endeavours in various ways. *Thank you – the support is not taken for granted.*

*Thank you also to our advertisers in **The Wharfinger** for their support and to the other firms and businesses that assist the H&G CT in various ways.*

*Thank you!*

## Held Over ...

Due to pressure on space a number of items have been held over to the next edition. Our sincere thanks to all the contributors who have submitted the articles and photographs that have filled this edition to bursting point!

Ed.

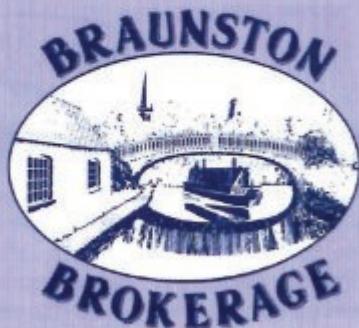
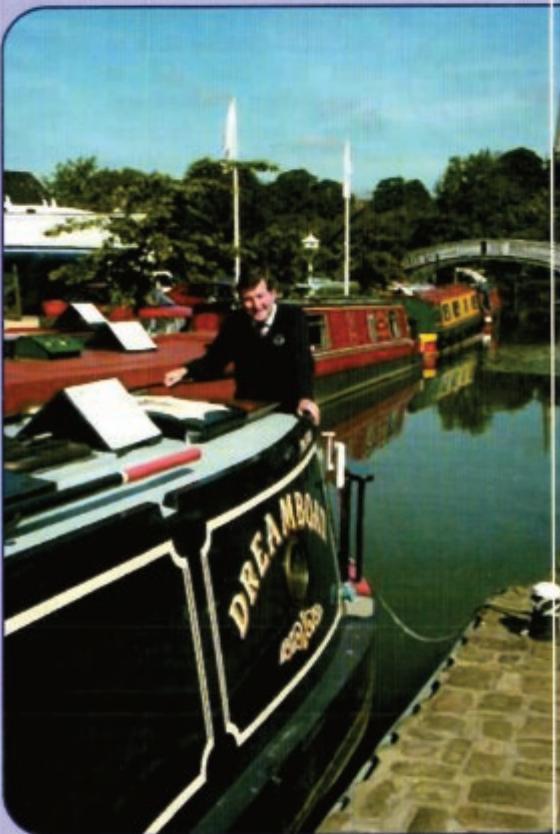
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## Want to help?

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

## Contacts Contact any of these names TODAY!

### Janet Moulton

18, Coningsby Court,  
Coningsby Street,  
HEREFORD, HR1 2DF  
Tel: (01432) 264 366  
jmoulton@tiscali.co.uk

### Liz Connors

18, St Ethelbert Close,  
Sutton St. Nicholas,  
Hereford, HR1 3BF  
Tel: (01432) 880 155  
liz@lizconnors.orangehome.co.uk

### Cliff Penny

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Hereford, HR1 3QS  
Tel: (01432) 820 866  
cliff@penny-ep.co.uk

### David Penny

Tel: (01452) 332 900  
david@thewharthouse.co.uk

### Nigel Jefferies

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### Brian Fox

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### Martin Danks

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### Maggie Jones

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### Chris High

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### Paul Henshaw

Tel: (01684) 292 997  
paulhenshawuk@yahoo.co.uk

### Ted Beagles

Tel: (01452) 522 648  
tedbeagles@blueyonder.co.uk

### Peter Moore

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### Margaret Holmes

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### Wally Thrush

Tel: (01989) 750 235  
wallythrush@btinternet.com

### Judith Jacobs

judyjacobs@tiscali.net

### Robin Smithett

Tel: (01981) 540 334  
robin@smithett.co.uk

### Peter Lawrence

Tel: (01684) 564 075  
peter.molly2@waltrose.com

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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 & 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 in 1992 became the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership of some 1,300 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. We have major restoration sites in each county, which together extend to some 4 miles.



= restoration sites suitable for public access.

