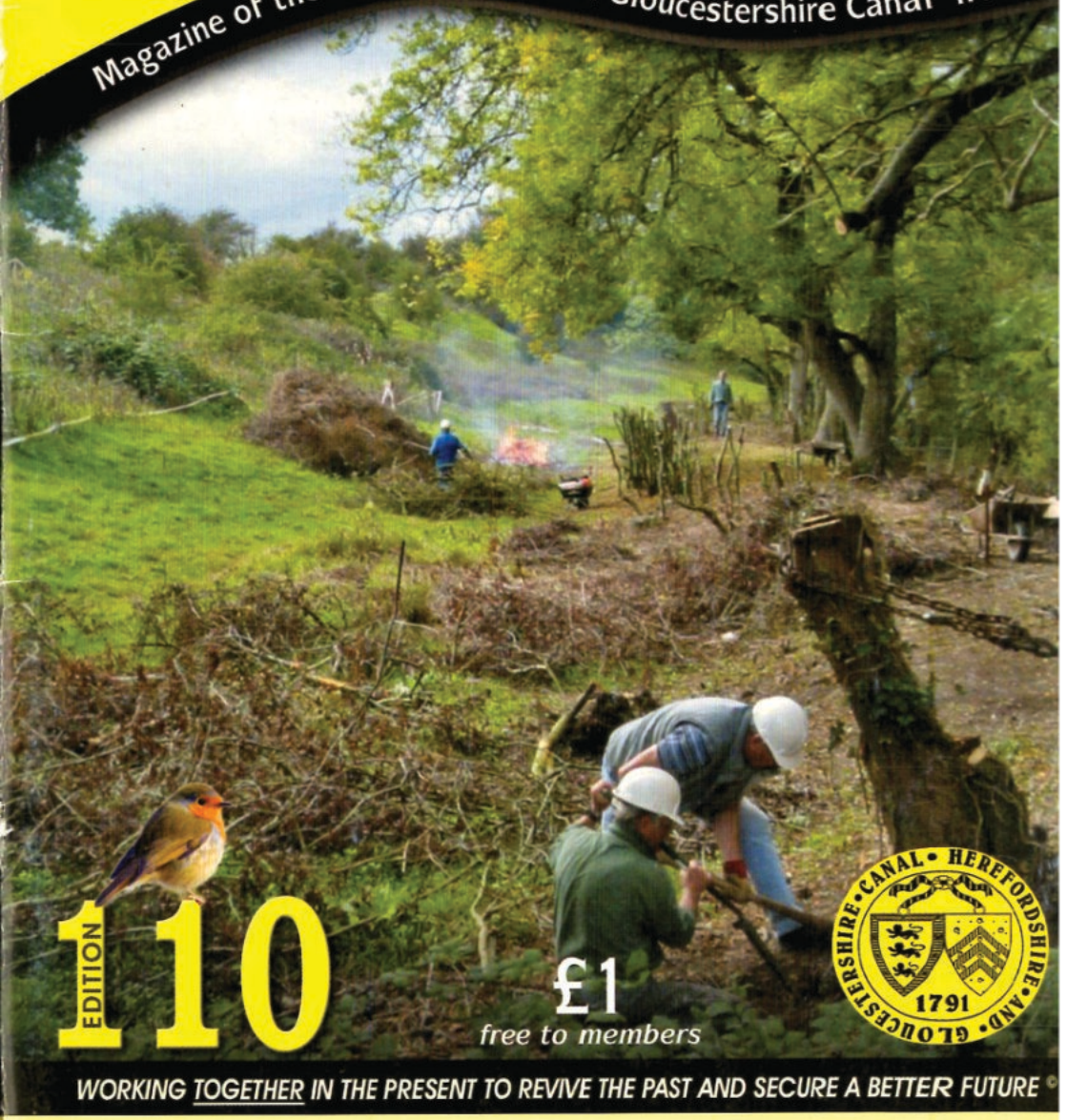
The Wharfinger

Winter 2011 – 12

Magazine of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust



EDITION 110

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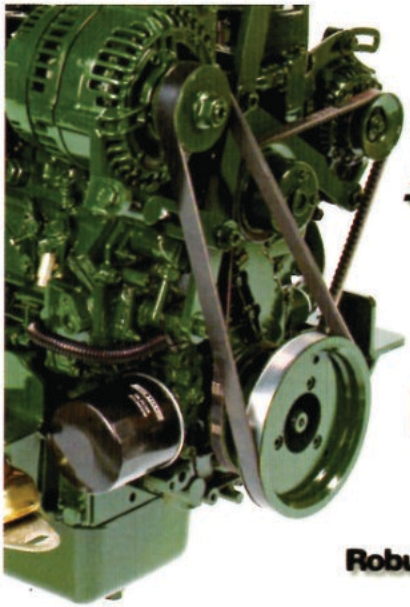
It has been our pleasure in supporting the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for over 17 years, and we will continue *to work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.*

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Chairman's Column from Janet Moult



This is my penultimate Chairman's Column, as I will retire as H&G CT Chairman in February, but I shall still be involved in many other ways; I shall be looking back over the last few years in the next edition of The Wharfinger. When I wrote my second column, in Winter 2006/7, I said that the chairmanship would be a steep learning curve – ***it was, and still is!***



I begin my column with the sad news of the deaths of two stalwart volunteers. Tony Boonham, who was involved at Over for many years, sadly passed away in August and Mike Holmes, who had not been involved for so long but had made a great impact on the Trading Company passed away in September. *Tributes to both are on page 33.*



The Trading Company continue to represent the H&G CT at shows around the country. The (IWA) Waterways Festival was held this year at Burton-on-Trent, the date changed to the end of July and it opened on the Friday at noon. Having to transport the displays and stock, then setting up and staying open until 7pm, made it a very long first day for the volunteers but they rose to the challenge! The Tall Ships were at Gloucester, where we worked closely with the local Gloucestershire and Herefordshire branch of the IWA and we had a very successful presence. Unfortunately for both us and the organisers the Foxton Boat Festival in Leicestershire turned out to be mainly a craft show as water shortages restricted boat movements.



Our band of regular Trading Company volunteers always welcome more helpers – not only will you be helping the H&G CT to 'spread the word' and raise funds but you will also be making new friends. When Brian and I moved to Hereford we knew no one in the area, but we knew there was an active Canal Trust. Having been involved with the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust we offered to help (a little!) – and made some very good and loyal friends. So if you are new to the area please do come and join us; you will be made very welcome.



Just as we were going to press, following a meeting at THE WHARF HOUSE, Richard Graham MP (the Member of Parliament for Gloucester) agreed to support our objectives and become a Vice President – *see page 14.*

We wish all of our readers a happy, healthy Christmas and a prosperous 2012.

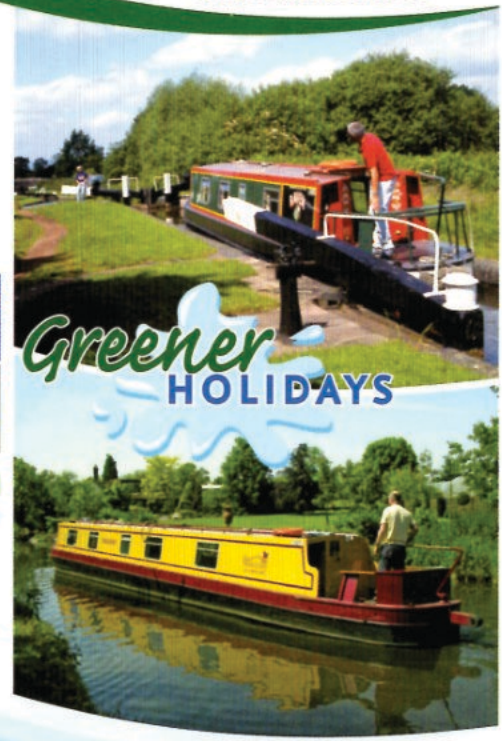
◆ *Janet Moult, Chairman*

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narrow boats... ...wide horizons



Editorial by Cliff Penny

Springing into 2012!

I am writing this Winter issue editorial on one of the first truly gloomy damp and cold(er) days of winter when any thoughts of Spring would normally wait until the editorial for the next edition. However, as I read through one of our internal proofs there is a general feeling of Spring in the air in much of what our volunteers are reporting and achieving ...

The September Canal Festival weekend at Over Canal Basin included a highly successful recruitment drive producing over 20 new volunteers to join our hard working existing team at Over on the new Vineyard Hill restoration site. The initial work on that site is progressing very well and is currently ahead of programme – *make a date in your diary for the opening ceremony next September!* Yet more awards for THE WHARF HOUSE team, and we explain how the building is such a valuable asset to the H&G CT - apart from 'just' the Visitor Centre, Rooms and Restaurant. Increasingly it is the venue for important negotiations and meetings regarding the H&G Canal and we now have our own small legal/land team working there too!

We've found more of the lock!

At Yarkhill the team have been undertaking almost an archaeological dig searching for the location and any remains of Barrs Lock. At first it was thought that nothing remained. However, record numbers of visitors to the Open Day/Walks in August were able to see part of the intact lock base that has recently been revealed.

International recognition

The United States head office of multinational meat producer Cargill has decided to double the grant awarded to the H&G CT by their UK colleagues earlier in the year; a much appreciated contribution towards our funds. Talking of fundraising last year proceeds from our annual **Grand Holiday Draw** were down for the first time for many years; this year a fresh determination by our team resulted in all previous records being broken – *by a considerable margin!* The launch of the **Land Fund** has got off to a good steady start – *thank you to those who have contributed so far.* We are fortunate to have a good number of excellent photographers in our midst and some of their efforts have enabled our first ever calendar to be produced. Together with the start of a range of H&G CT Christmas Cards this will help to raise funds and promote the Canal.

At Llanthony Lock our volunteers continue to expand their range of building maintenance skills (is there no limit to what they can achieve?) on top of their steady progress on site. Not to be outdone, at Oxenhall the team have demonstrated how another man's (or – less likely in this case – woman's) dumped rubbish – a decrepit site office to be exact – has been put back into service. *A true H&G CT example of waste not ...*

'Stop press' news about Dymock, and further details on all of the above *(and much more)* follows ...

CRP

New Site: Dymock

By David Penny

Planning Application submitted ...

In mid November the Canal Trust submitted the Planning Application for the Dymock Partnership Project. This followed nearly 5 years of working closely with Dymock Parish Council to secure a project on the site that would meet the long term needs of the community.

The Partnership, led by the Canal Trust with Two Rivers Housing Association and the Landowner and supported by the Parish Council, has carefully formulated a scheme which strives to meet the requirements of all parties.

Dymock has always been one of the most go ahead villages *(when faced with a pub closing they bought it!)* and they really believe in partnership and action to make things happen. One of their clear wishes, for many years, has been to see the Canal back as soon as possible. Four years ago I was guest speaker at their AGM explaining how we could all work ***together*** to make the dream a reality. Since then we have had two public presentations in the Village Hall to develop the scheme with the community, where considerable interest has been expressed, indeed one resident cannot even wait for the Canal and already has a narrowboat in his back garden!

The Application makes provision for a 20 space car park to meet the severe shortfall in the village that can be seen whenever there is an event. It also provides a new play area to replace the one that is on the line of the Canal, as well as a supply of affordable housing to keep Dymock a vibrant community and ensure the survival of the Village School and other facilities. *A vision was formed between the Parish and Canal Trust that all this could come about with the Canal as the axis upon which it all hinged.*

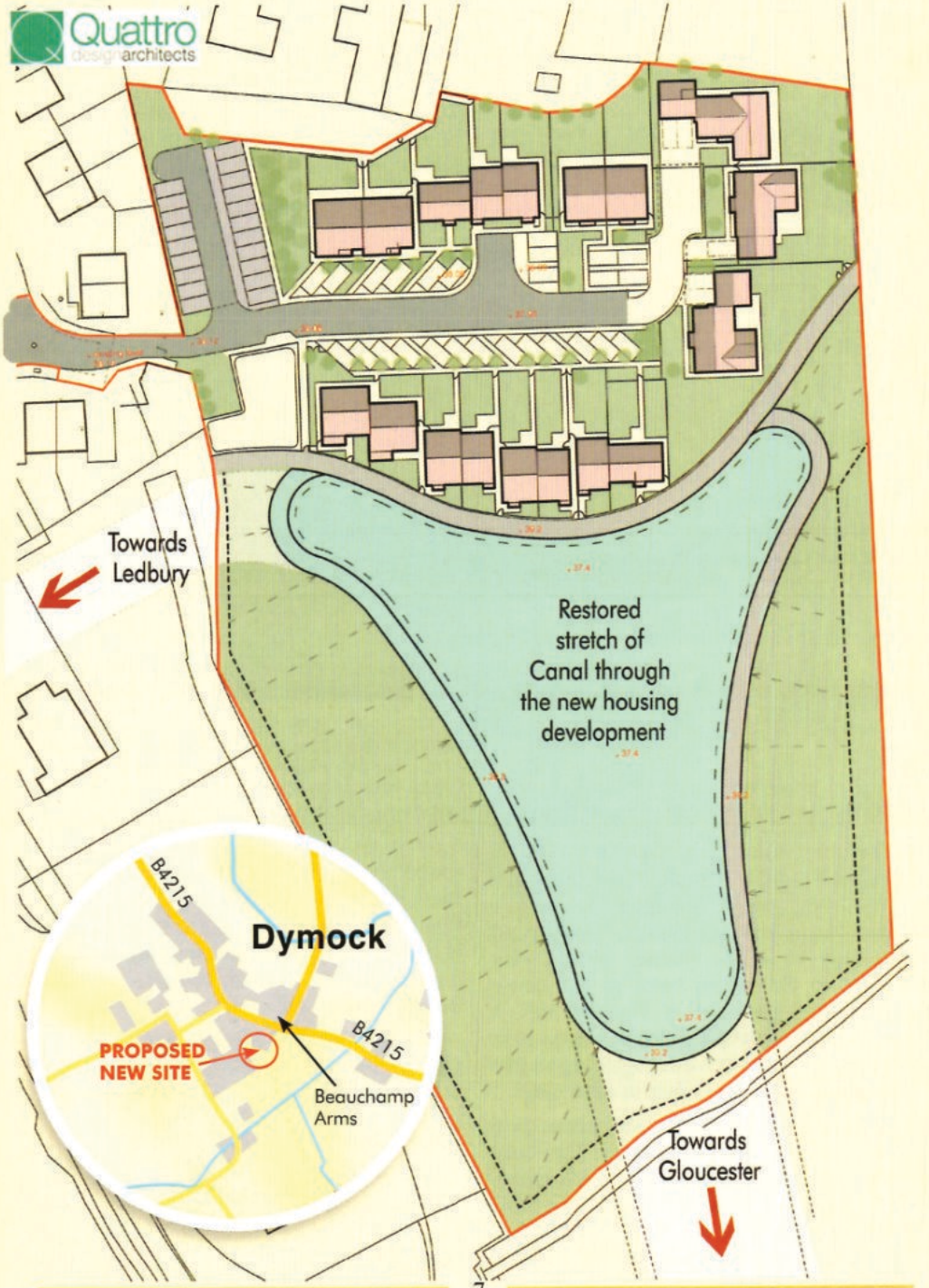
After several years negotiations 'behind the scenes' the drawing from **Quattro Design Architects**, alongside, represents part of that vision in partnership with local developer and landowner **Tomack**.

Subject to Planning Consent the Canal and community benefits will be facilitated by the development of 5 'Open Market' houses as well as the provision of 15 Affordable dwellings for the local community.

All of the land comprising the green area around the Canal, and the Canal itself, will be transferred to the Canal Trust with the landowner undergrounding the existing overhead electricity cable for us. As is now well established on such sites, the development will make annual contributions towards the restoration, maintenance and management of the Canal, and in addition the Canal Trust will secure a small percentage of the end value of the open market properties to assist with the delivery of the Canal elsewhere in the village.

The Canal Trust has always promoted the concept of working *together*, in partnership, to deliver wider benefits to the community from a restored H&G Canal whilst providing the necessary opportunities to restore/ reconstruct the Canal. This is just the first of a number of projects that the team at THE WHARF HOUSE, and other volunteers, are currently negotiating.

◆ *DRP*


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Canal Festival

Report by Maggie Jones



Gypsy Queen pulls Alder towards Vineyard Hill.

This year's second Festival Weekend at Over was again lucky with the dry weather.

The new attractions for the weekend included some very beautiful birds of prey and a boat horse called Gypsy Queen who was a firm favourite with the visitors. Trips around the Basin in Mister Maysey proved very popular as did guided tours to our newly aquired restoration site at Vineyard Hill. A good number of people, eager to see the next length of the canal in water, signed up to join the volunteers on site or help in other ways.

Lively music from a fairground organ gave the whole event a relaxed air. The busy refreshment stand was bursting with home-made cakes and sandwiches, whilst a BBQ provided some great hot dogs. At THE WHARF HOUSE there were a good number of local beers and ciders as well as the ever popular *'Tapas on the Terrace'*.

In the marquees a wide range of crafts and produce were on sale. The IWA Branch ran a book stall and tombola in support of our funds. The model boat club provided further entertainment with their demonstrations and displays and the Saturday saw an attendance from the fire brigade.

Although the Saturday was not as busy as the Spring Open weekend, the visitor numbers picked up on the Sunday and record sales of Grand Holiday Draw tickets were achieved.

Altogether a lot of people came together and put a great effort into making the weekend a success – ***a big thank you to all involved!***

MJ

Trip boat Mister Maysey gives visitors a conducted tour of the Basin.





Above: Just one of the birds of prey that were so popular.
Right: some of the items and produce on sale.



Gypsy Queen relaxes with owner Rick ....



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HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST



The Trust's marquee and 'volunteer recruiting centre'.

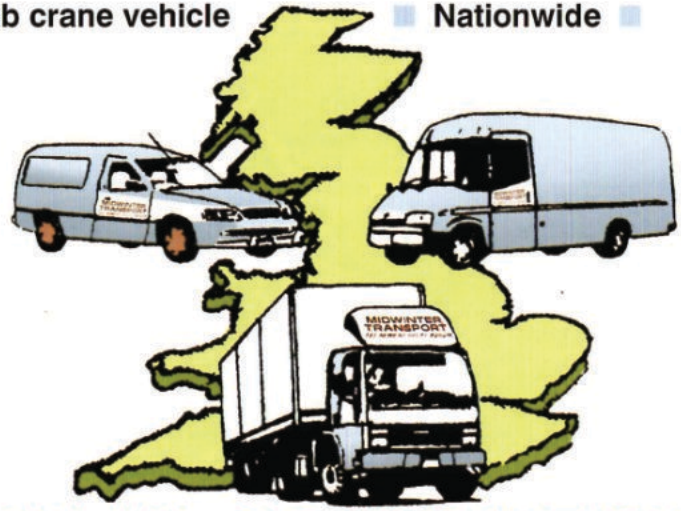
Photos: Ted Beagles, Chris Byrne, Emma Byrne and Maggie Jones

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VINEYARD HILL *Over*

By Ted Beagles

In the last edition David Penny reported on our three new land acquisitions, two in Herefordshire and one in Gloucestershire. The work in Gloucestershire, for the extension of the canal from Over Basin, has Wilf Jones as Project Chairman and Ted Beagles as Site Leader. Ted reports on the start of restoration ...

We have waited 11 years since the opening of the basin at Over, but now we no longer stand on the dam at the end of the site and dream about going on into the "next field" – ***it is happening now!***

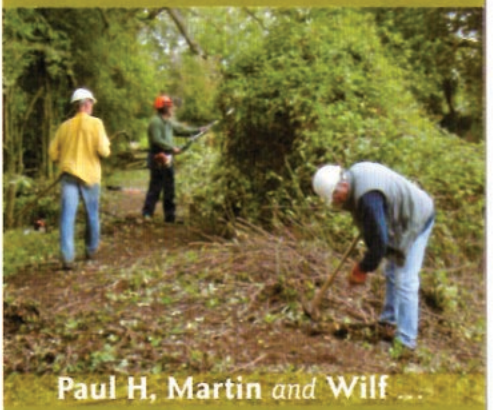
The Vineyard Hill project is charged with restoring the canal, mostly along the historic line for approximately 300m from the end of the Over Basin site to the far end of the Vineyard Hill field. After about 240m the restored canal will divert to the north of the historic route, which is now under a 20th century rubbish dump, and at this point a winding hole will be constructed to facilitate the turning of craft of up to 70ft length. *The programme is to have it completed and in water by 31 August 2012.*

We always aim to minimise the disturbance to the local wildlife and to enhance the future habitat. We are already in discussions with **Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust** and the **Vincent Trust** (who look after the interests of the horseshoe bats that occupy the 'bat bungalow' on the Over Basin housing development) for advice in this area.

Following a brief opening ceremony by Ted and Wilf to cut the wire fence into the field work stared on site on Saturday 3rd September. Excellent progress is being made to date. By early October the regular midweek and weekend working parties will have cleared and burned the very dense bramble and hawthorn scrub from the remains of the original towpath bank, which runs for about half the length of the field. All the thistles etc. in the grassy area of the field have been cut down by brush cutter.



Ted *and* **Wilf** *open the site ...*



Paul H, Martin *and* **Wilf** *...*

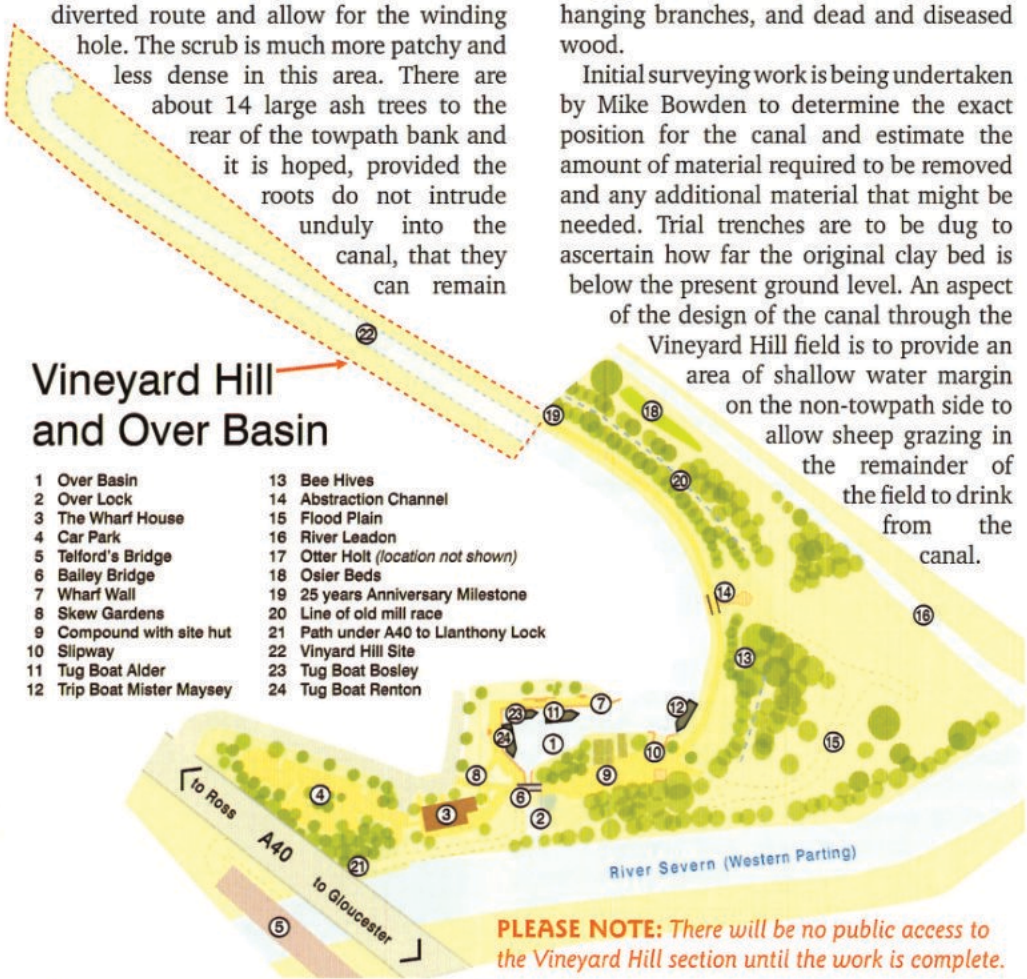


Alan *starts on the thistles ...*



The bank for the remainder of the field was removed at some time in the past since the canal was closed. In this area a new bank will be reconstructed to follow the diverted route and allow for the winding hole. The scrub is much more patchy and less dense in this area. There are about 14 large ash trees to the rear of the towpath bank and it is hoped, provided the roots do not intrude unduly into the canal, that they can remain in place. Following examination for wildlife habitats and preserving, wherever possible, the current nesting holes etc., careful tree surgery will be carried out to remove low hanging branches, and dead and diseased wood.

Initial surveying work is being undertaken by Mike Bowden to determine the exact position for the canal and estimate the amount of material required to be removed and any additional material that might be needed. Trial trenches are to be dug to ascertain how far the original clay bed is below the present ground level. An aspect of the design of the canal through the Vineyard Hill field is to provide an area of shallow water margin on the non-towpath side to allow sheep grazing in the remainder of the field to drink from the canal.



PLEASE NOTE: *There will be no public access to the Vineyard Hill section until the work is complete.*

Diagram: Maggie Jones



Mike B. *and* Luke



Ivor



Tom



... and keeping tools tidy, Neil!

The current plan is to have all scrub clearance and tree surgery work completed before the nesting season starts in March, ready for the main excavation work to be completed in spring/ early summer, and filling the new section and the final landscaping and planting ready for the grand opening that is being planned on 1st September 2012.

I have been amazed by the enthusiasm shown by the volunteers, new and old, who have come to do battle with the hawthorn and brambles; since starting work we have had some 26 different people having a go, 10 of whom are entirely new to us. All have returned for lunch, or at the end of the day, with broad smiling faces and sweat pouring down them (can you still remember the unusually hot weather at the beginning of October?), and oblivious to any minor scratches. Then each week coming back for more! *Thank you all for your remarkable efforts.* ◆ ***TB***

Do you want to get involved?
Please contact ***Ted Beagles***
on 01452 522 648



Towpath clearance in early September



Early November – very good progress is being made

Photos: Ted Beagles, Chris Byrne and Malcolm Caxton

Welcome to another new Vice President



Richard Graham

Richard Graham is the MP for Gloucester and the Parliamentary Private Secretary to Lord Howell of Guildford, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister of State.

He lives in the centre of Gloucester and wants to see a vibrant canal and River Severn, and an accessible and well signed nature reserve in Alney Island.

Richard also believes that good environmental management of all the waterways adjoining Gloucester is a key attraction for residents in the city.

For both reasons he is delighted to become a Vice President of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

THE WHARF HOUSE
... continued success



THE WHARF HOUSE has again been awarded the AA's esteemed Red Rosette for culinary excellence; it is the only restaurant in Gloucester to receive this award.

A second award, that THE WHARF HOUSE has proudly received recently, is the Green Tourism Business Award (Silver). The green plaque will sit along side the other awards in the Visitor Centre.



Staff at THE WHARF HOUSE are passionate about retaining and building on this and are also looking forward to the Christmas period.

As normal the festive menu combines the best of relaxed fine dining and quality wines without the frivolous frills of the festive season – a refreshing change for the discerning diner! As is traditional at THE WHARF HOUSE, turkey has once again been banned from the menu and replaced with an imaginative alternative seasonal menu which includes something for everyone to sit back and enjoy. All taking place in a beautiful setting, enough to brighten the grey days of winter! Don't forget you can now make the most of your evening and settle in at THE WHARF HOUSE by taking advantage of the AA awarded 4* rooms with the knowledge that you will be supporting our voluntary work on the H&G Canal.

The Christmas season began at THE WHARF HOUSE at the beginning of November; but for those who could not make it before the Christmas break, the special festive menus will continue until the end of January for groups of 8 or more when pre booked.

Christmas Opening Times

As in previous years, THE WHARF HOUSE, will close after lunch on Christmas Eve ***(Saturday 24th December)*** and re-open on **Tuesday 3rd January.**

What does THE WHARF HOUSE do for the Trust ... ?

Although a primary objective over the next couple of years is repaying the limited debt we have, as well as continuing to invest in the business, there is a constant focus on delivering the Trust's wider objectives.

THE WHARF HOUSE is not just about the visitor centre, restaurant and rooms... indeed it is as much about what it can deliver for the Trust's overall objectives ...

THE WHARF HOUSE is now home to the Canal Trust Planning, Legal, and Project Development Team, and meets all the administration costs of those functions. It acts as our Headquarters and prestigious location for meetings with potential partners.

Multiple land acquisitions for the Trust are currently being handled by the Team as well as partnerships with landowners and developers. November sees the Canal Trust become a formal partner of Herefordshire Council to deliver the Canal with THE WHARF HOUSE computer systems having full access to all the mapping and other digital data required for us to work together as full partners.

A key part of this is Roz Rutter working alongside David Penny full time in the office to form our Legal Services/Project Development Team to take these projects forward. This has the support of a number of volunteers with the requisite skills in both Legal and Civil/Structural Engineering as well as other matters required to bring projects together.

In addition all the costs of the Over site, Vineyard Hill Project and our Historic Boat Collection are now also met by THE WHARF HOUSE as well as administering matters such as Advertising in **The Wharfinger.**

The hidden work of THE WHARF HOUSE will be increasingly seen over the coming months as more projects are brought forward ... Watch this space and, if you want the latest updates, please make sure that you register for the email newsletter *(see page 38)* so that you are amongst the first to hear exciting news in between editions of **The Wharfinger**. ◆ *DRP*

Introducing **Rosamund Rutter**



Prior to taking up the position on the legal services team here at THE WHARF HOUSE, I studied English Law and French Law at the University of Exeter spending my final year in France immersed in the tomes of European Law. The areas of particular interest to me are contract law and land law but I am quickly becoming accustomed to the fascinating field of planning law.

I have been involved with the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust throughout my degree which enabled me to get to grips with the numerous legal files and issues that I can now turn my hand to full time.

I am extremely passionate about seeing this project reach fruition but I have learnt that this is not going to be achieved overnight and the importance of being flexible and accommodating new or unforeseen obstacles is paramount and makes life more interesting!

This is an intensely exciting time for the Canal Trust as we are currently in negotiations with a number of landowners and developers along various sections of the 34 mile stretch of canal and I hope to make a significant impact on their conclusion. It is an honour to be a member of an effective team "working together in the present to revive the past and secure a better future". ◆ *RR*

OVER *Update*

By Ted Beagles and Chris Byrne

The majority of our work throughout the summer has been concentrated on getting Mister Maysey back into the canal in time for the September Open Weekend.



Mister Maysey is craned back into the basin at Over.

It is surprising how many small things suddenly crop up when you think you are almost finished, however we finally managed it with a day to spare! She ran perfectly for the two days and looked resplendent with the new paint job complete, with the name sign painted by Maggie Jones, the newly finished super-structure and new plastic rubbing strake. The only major job left to do for next year is to replace the roof.

Trips on the canal were very popular and the crew were kept fully occupied for the two days. However it was a big disappointment for us to find the despite a lot of effort, we had failed to completely fix the leak in the hull, but the newly installed automatic bilge pump seems to be keeping things under control until we can get the boat out of the water again.

Of course all the routine jobs like site maintenance and equipment repairs did not go away, but somehow we managed to keep everything going, but now seem to have a bit of a backlog of lower priority things like tidying up the inside of the containers and weeding in some areas. Also, since September, we have been enjoying ourselves by spending quite a bit of time 'scrub bashing' on Vineyard Hill (which is reported on page 11).

TB



Dave works on the fit-out of Mister Maysey.



Mike screws in the panelling.



The new rubbing strake is held in place.



Neil paints a yellow stripe around the hull.



Renton, on a trailer, dwarfs the landscape as it is reversed over the bridge at Over.

The Wharf House fit-out

We have been continuing the fit out of our 7th and final bedroom, Aylestone. Work has been progressing very quickly recently so we are aiming to open the room ready for the New Year. The tiling, electrics and plumbing have been completed ready for the resin flooring to be laid in the bathroom, after which we can install the fixtures and fittings to complete the room.

In the bedroom area, a couple of amendments to the electrics and lighting points have been made, as well as prepping all of the walls and ceiling ready for painting, before the resin flooring is laid. The furniture has been designed and chosen ready for installation as soon as the flooring has been completed.

During a couple of quiet periods several of our other bedrooms have been closed individually to enable us to give them a fresh coat of paint to keep the bedrooms looking excellent and maintain our high standards.



Belinda and Pat prepare Renton for painting.

The Heritage Fleet

Our Saturday volunteers have also been working on restoring our heritage fleet of boats that we have here at Over Canal Basin, including a 'new' addition at Over, Renton. Renton had previously been moored in Gloucester Docks and joined us the day before the September Open Weekend taking advantage of using the same crane that was used to put Mister Maysey back into the Basin after being refurbished.

Like our other Over and Llanthony volunteer colleagues we have also been working on our new Vineyard Hill site 'scrub bashing'!

CB

Want to get involved at Over then please ring:–
Ted Beagles 01452 522 648
Maggie Jones 01452 618 010

Photos: Ted Beagles Chris Byrne and Maggie Jones



Renton is craned into the basin at Over.

LLANTHONY LOCK By Paul Henshaw

During September, by way of a change, the Llanthony team have been helping out at the new Vineyard Hill site. Our work entailed the removal and burning of scrub and undergrowth, felling of unwanted trees and generally providing support to the Over group of volunteers.

Meanwhile back 'home' at Llanthony, work is progressing with the boxing in of the water pipe across the lock to provide protection from the elements (particularly during winter). A brick cabinet has been built to house the stop cocks and pipe junctions. The new flooring in one of the cottages has been completed and replacement skirting and architraves have been fitted. Sections of the walls have been re-plastered and filled ready for redecoration.

Our thanks go to Nikki and Rich Hale who very kindly donated a shed and 2 workbenches to the Canal Trust. The new acquisitions





Top: The boxing in of the water supply and the cabinet nearing completion.
Right: Building the stop cock cabinet.
Below: Replacing the downstairs flooring in one of the cottages.



Photos: Alan Mcbride



Erecting the new shed.



Shed fully erected.



New workbench.

will provide valuable workshop facilities which will help with our maintenance activities on the site.

Alan Mcbride has successfully harvested the first crop of willow reed from the osier plantation and of course no report would be complete without mentioning the hard work which goes into maintaining the site and the gardens! ◆◆ *PH*



Right: The first crop of willow reeds.



Wendy maintaining the gardens.

Would you like to join our team at Llanthony ?
Please call ***Paul Henshaw*** *on* ***01684 292997***



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!*

REPORT FROM OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING

LLANTHONY LOCK
with Paul Henshaw

The autumn season of meetings started with an excellent attendance to hear one of our own site leaders, Paul Henshaw, give a very thorough account of the site at Llanthony Lock near Gloucester Docks.

Paul's account not only covered the extensive work of the volunteers at Llanthony in maintaining the site and the pair of lock keeper's cottages. He also explained the reasons for the Trust purchasing the site in 2005, their perseverance with tackling Japanese Knotweed and the history of the lock cottages, their former occupants and their way of life at that time.

The talk was very well received and there were a number of searching questions that followed.

The evening concluded with the drawing of the Grand Holiday Draw by Tim Parker, one of our new Vice-Presidents and former MD of Black Prince Holidays. *(Results can be found on page 27.)*

MJ

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

December

No meeting in December.

January 17th

Robin Smithett

A photographer on the Canals

– Enjoy sunny views of the canals on a dark January evening

February 21st

Chris High

The H & G Canal featuring Yarkhill

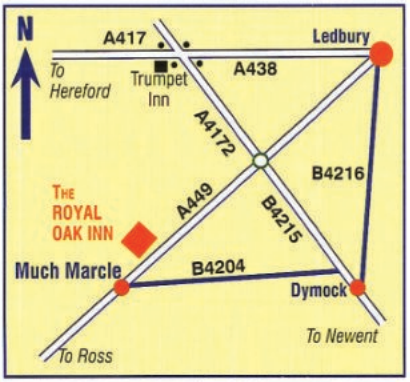
– A closer look at another of our restoration sites

March 20th

Chris Witts

Disasters on the Severn

– We welcome Chris back to tell us of another aspect of the mighty River Severn.









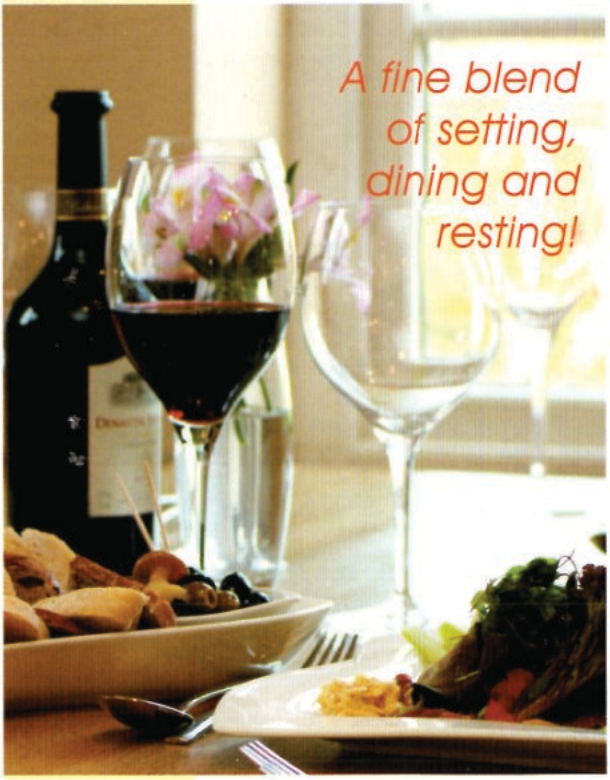






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Christmas Opening Times

As in previous years, The Wharf House will close after lunch on Christmas Eve (**Saturday 24th December**) and re-open on **Tuesday 3rd January.**

AA ★★★★ Guest Accommodation

Restaurant

All profits from The Wharf House will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal.

Work at YARKHILL

By Chris High

Recent work at Yarkhill told in photos.



Strimmed, raked and mown canal bed.

Detail of the offside edge and brick base of the lock chamber.



Viewing platform ready for our Open Day.



First skim on the stretch up to the site hut.



The team at lunch.

Photos: Alison High and Chris High

Would you like to help us achieve even more? – then please contact :

Chris High 01568 615 575



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YARKHILL OPEN DAY & CANAL WALKS

Another very successful Open Day enjoyed good weather and brought record numbers to Yarkhill. There was great interest in the Canal, and the work of the H&G CT, with many guided walks throughout the day.



Chris (wearing hat) explains the latest lock features to be unearthed



The first of many walks is led down to the canal.



A walk reaches the canal at the milestone.



One of the guided walks progresses across the fields.



Mary ready for the off on the sales stand.



Anne makes an early purchase from Emma.



Stella and helpers ensured that there was plenty of tea and cakes always to hand.



Photos: Chris High

Prior to the crowds ... just part of our H&G CT display at Yarkhill Village Hall.

Philately will get you anywhere!

By Steve Bence

Do you have a stamp collection hiding in your attic or wardrobe? We can turn all unwanted stamps into cash for the **H&G CT's Land Fund**.

We can raise money from both British and overseas stamps. It doesn't matter if they have already been used, or if they are everyday first or second class stamps - we can collect enough of them to raise money for the H&G CT! Please cut the envelope leaving approximately 1cm of envelope bordering each stamp.

We can raise more money from overseas stamps, first day covers, presentation packs and stamp albums.

You can: –

Pass them to Janet Moult at a Social Evening or other H&G CT event,

Or hand them in to THE WHARF HOUSE at Gloucester,

Or send them direct to:-

H and G Stamps,
c/o Steve Bence,
35 Lime Road,
SOUTHAM,
Warwickshire CV47 1EQ

All donations will be gratefully received.

I hope to be reporting on the success of this venture in a future edition of **The Wharfinger.**

SB





Cargill

United States HQ doubles grant.

By Liz Connors

In edition 104 of **The Wharfinger** *Jackie Bremner reported that the H&G CT were to receive a £3,000 grant towards the costs of restoring a section of the Canal in the Withington Marsh area (in respect of which negotiations continue). That donation was awarded by* **Cargill Meats Europe** *through the business unit based in Hereford.*

We were made aware that there was an opportunity to double this grant by applying to the **Cargill Global Partnership Fund** programme which is administered from the Cargill HQ in the United States. This Fund provides corporate funds to match contributions made by Cargill business units that fall within the company's philanthropic focus. Our application was considered under the Environment topic. Through this Cargill supports projects that provide environmental conservation, preservation & education. It is a lengthy application process but it was worth persevering as we have now received £3,000 from Cargill in the United States to match the £3,000 already received from the company in the UK. *Our sincere thanks to all concerned.*

LC

Record Breaking . . .
GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2011



Photo: Robin Smithett

The Grand Holiday Draw 2011 was a huge success raising ***£2,746****, some £500 in excess of our previous GHD record!*

As always our sincere thanks to those who donated the prizes, **Black Prince Holidays**, **Mrs A Wood** and **The Wharf House**. Our thanks also to **Bulmers** for, once again, sponsoring the printing. So as in previous years every single pound raised has gone straight into our H&G CT restoration funds. Thank you also to everyone who bought and sold tickets – *we couldn't achieve such excellent results without your continued support.* Of particular note is the magnificent £504 of GHD tickets that were sold by our volunteers at The Tall Ships event in Gloucester Docks and at the Over Canal, Beer, Cider and Perry Festival.

The winning tickets were drawn at the September Social Evening by one of our Vice Presidents, Tim Parker. The winners were:-

1st Ticket No 01941
One week narrowboat holiday for four, *donated by* **Black Prince Holidays.**
Mr A Wallace Brockworth, Gloucester.

2nd Ticket No 06931
One week self-catering holiday in Herefordshire, *donated by* **Mrs A Wood.**
Mr G Ross Cheltenham.

3rd Ticket No 07523
One night B&B for two, *donated by* **The Wharf House**, Over Basin, Gloucester.
Mr M Crosier, Hereford.

We hope the winners all enjoy their prizes and our repeated thanks to everyone who helped us achieve, in any way, our record breaking total.

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Restoration at **OXENHALL** By Brian Fox

Our primary task at the moment is rebuilding the hole in the top of the aqueduct arch which, ideally, we hope to complete before winter sets in and the water levels in the Ell Brook start to rise.



The hole in the top of the aqueduct. The spade in it indicates the large size of the hole.

After all the loose stone was removed the hole finally turned out to be some 5ft in diameter! Several cubic feet of soil were necessarily removed in order to get a clear view of the damage. More was removed than originally intended when rain dislodged some of the remaining soil and it collapsed into the cavity whilst we were off site. The stones have now been cleaned up and are neatly stacked before being returned to the hole with a fresh bedding of mortar to hold it all together. There is only sufficient space in the hole for one man to work with assistance from another to mix mortar and assemble stones as required so this means that the rest of us have to find work elsewhere.

Readers may recall that we recently acquired an old builders site hut when it was dumped outside the old station some months ago. We moved this to our yard at Horsefair Lane. Nobody has come forward to claim it so it was a case of 'finders keepers' and we had to decide what to do with it. At



Photos: Brian Fox

A jungle of Himalayan balsam to be cleared.

first it seemed sensible to sell it to a scrap dealer for a few pounds but on second thoughts it has proved to be very useful. We also have in our yard a caravan (that was formerly used as a mobile dental surgery going around rural Herefordshire) which we purchased many years ago. It was the original site hut when we started work down at Over and then it was moved to Aylestone Park when work commenced there but it has been lying idle ever since the slipway was completed. As it is highly likely that a site hut will be required on a new site soon a lot



The old builder's site hut that had been dumped – now a useful store.

of time has been spent on cleaning it up and preparing it for the road. The towing hitch has been repaired by Ian, and Geoff did a good job in getting all the accumulated dirt off so it now looks white again. This is where our newly acquired site hut comes into the equation. The dental caravan has been used for storing "stuff" which now needs to be cleared out before it can resume its role as a site hut and where else to put the contents but into the latest acquisition. You may be saying – why not take the builders hut to the new site – but its condition is not exactly a good advertisement for the H&G CT apart from the fact that you need a ladder to climb up as the door is 2ft off the ground. *So thank you whoever it was dumped the old hut by the station – it has been put to good use.*

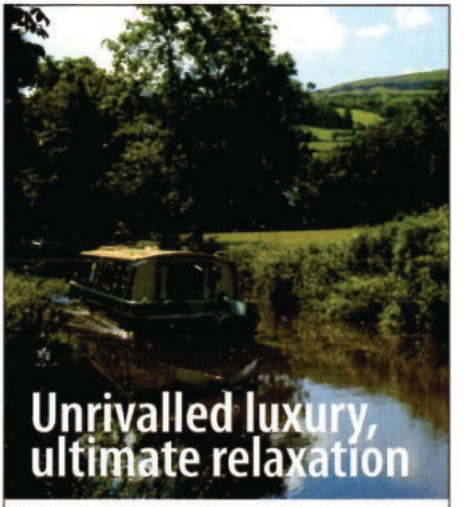
The ongoing programme of clearing up the yard has revealed several items for which we have no use. 2 dozen old wall capping bricks were sold to a reclamation yard, a trailer load of scrap has now been sold and the worst of 2 old ride on mowers has been sold on e-bay. My budget should now stretch to a new strimmer as the old one has just packed up.

Now that summer is over our thoughts are moving towards a winter maintenance programme on the vegetation along our stretch of the canal. Work has started on a large willow adjacent to the aqueduct which has looked in a sorry state since shedding a large branch a couple of years ago. Several of the lower branches have now been cut off and by the time you read this the top growth should be removed with the pollarded stump remaining. The work we did last winter down towards the old station has opened up the area and encouraged the growth of Himalayan balsam which is to be found adjacent to water over much of Britain. It is not a problem at the moment but further spread will need to be monitored and controlled. A neighbour down the Lane is delighted with the stuff as he keeps a few bees and they love it – it makes good honey. So what seemed like unwanted items, or even scrap, will help pay for a new strimmer.

BF



The old dental caravan to be used as a site hut.



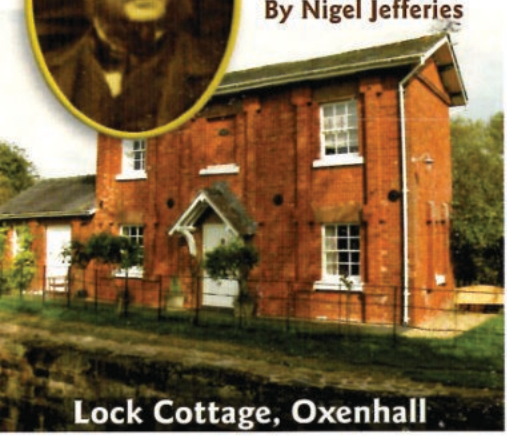
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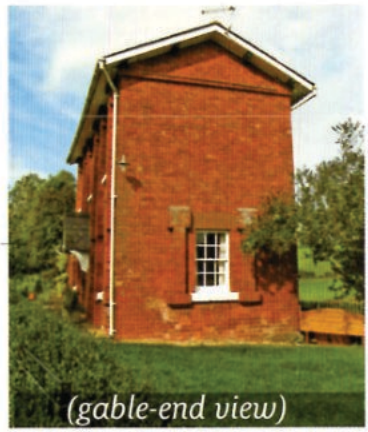


STEPHEN BALLARD – Architect

By Nigel Jefferies



Lock Cottage, Oxenhall



(gable-end view)



W

Photos: Brian Fox and Nigel Jefferies

During his early career, after he had been appointed as Clerk to the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Navigation Company in 1827, it seems to me that (just like Thomas Telford) Stephen aspired to be an architect.

Inigo Jones is often called the first English architect and he became involved in designing buildings after visiting the continent, during the early years of the seventeenth century, where he studied and drew classical buildings. The Banqueting House in Whitehall and the Queen's House at Greenwich, are his most famous buildings. As the Enlightenment gathered pace following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, other gentlemen took what is now referred to as The Grand Tour, and upon return designed buildings; James Gibbs, who was the architect of St. Mary le Stand, London and the Radcliffe Camera, Oxford, is an example.

After the second decade of the eighteenth century, if you were unable to afford a Grand Tour, another possibility was to study the pattern books which were published by people who had visited the continent. In 1715 the first volume of Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* was published and in 1720 the first translation of Andrea Palladio's *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* appeared. In 1738 Isaac Ware published a more scholarly translation of Palladio's book. It was probably by reference to these books, possibly belonging to his patron William Pulteney, that Telford's interest in architecture developed.

Caroline Jones' research and series of articles based on the diaries, notebooks and autobiography of Stephen Ballard (**The Wharfinger** *editions 100 – 107*) and David Bick, in his book about the Hereford and Gloucester canal, describe how Stephen first began working in horticulture. When he realised that that was not to his liking, he worked for a time for a Cheltenham builder, Henry Lucy, where he would have seen many houses built in the classical idiom. Following the Duke of Wellington's visit to Cheltenham in 1817, building increased exponentially; therefore it is surprising that Lucy's business failed. It could well have been during this time that Stephen had the opportunity to study these pattern books. He may also have seen the drawings (if not the actual bridge-keeper's houses) with their classical Doric porticos, that Robert Mylne constructed on the Gloucester and Berkeley(now referred to as the Gloucester and Sharpness) Canal. Stephen undoubtedly liked a challenge and



harfinger's House, Staplow



Terrace at Withington Wharf

the opportunity to prove his ability and knowledge. Skew Bridge at Monkhide appears to have been built to prove his technical expertise, following his tour of 1829, when he saw Stephenson grappling with the construction of three skew bridges on the line of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

The former lock-keepers house beside Over Lock was the first dwelling he constructed for the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Company, apparently in 1831. Subsequently extended to form the porter's lodge for Over Hospital it had been altered considerably and when inspected prior to demolition it was impossible to see if he had included any architectural features.

Lock Cottage, Oxenhall, built in 1838, is his first essay illustrating his aspiration. If we ignore the kitchen extension, the façade is symmetrical reflecting the leitmotif of the classical style. The blind window over the door is an acknowledgement of the window tax, first introduced in 1695, but revived by Prime Minister Pitt in 1784 (and amended in 1793) to raise revenue to finance the war against Revolutionary France. The flat, shallow, vertical columns or pilasters, are surely a reflection of Andrea Palladio's Villa Thiene, built during the Renaissance. Stephen was clearly sound in deciding that pro-style columns would be inappropriate on a building of this size. However, the proportion of the feature each side of the window on the southern gable-end, is less successful and reflects the heavier Baroque style of Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor.

The Wharfinger's House, at Staplow, is another building with a largely symmetrical façade, however, being later it reflects that Stephen was aware of more recent developments. The recessed brickwork panelling is surely an acknowledgement of Sir John Soane's Dulwich Art Gallery,



Dulwich Art Gallery

completed in 1814. If you are tempted to consider my attribution to be fanciful, then prior to his appointment in 1827 as clerk to the Canal Company, Stephen spent time working at Lea and Kennedy's Nurseries in Hammersmith. Soane was a man ahead of his time and when his gallery was finished, it received much comment in the newspapers and magazines of the time. Furthermore, Dulwich is only about six miles from Hammersmith. Stephen was a great walker and it is not unreasonable to suggest he could have walked to see Soane's building. Perhaps A W N Pugin's greatest contribution to architecture was that, as his career progressed, he began to focus on the fitness for purpose or convenience of domestic dwellings. As Rosemary Hill records (in her book *God's Architect*) he only put windows where he wanted to emit light or required a view. The curved window on the south-western corner, which conveniently affords views along the canal to the west and of wagons arriving and leaving the wharf, is Puginian in concept.

The Terrace at Withington Wharf, which was probably built to house canal lengthsmen, is another building with a symmetrical façade. The inclusion of the projecting course of brickwork at the ground floor and first floor division, sometimes referred to as a string course, is intended to emphasise the length of the terrace and can be seen incorporated in many terraces built in the classical style. The carefully cut brickwork, or 'gauging', above the fenestration at ground floor level is an indication of quality construction. Two additional features are that, on the first floor, the ceilings were plastered to the underside of the ridge of the roof (exposing the roof trusses) and ogee shaping was cut on the ends of the purlins – which can be seen at the gable ends.

As construction of the canal progressed he was aware that expenditure was exceeding his estimate for completion from Ledbury to Hereford and I suggest he was conscious of the need to avoid conspicuous excess. This would explain why some of the other buildings Stephen constructed along the line of the canal have been described as ordinary little brick houses and do not include any particular architectural features. ◆ *NJ*

Footnote

If my article tempts you to explore Stephen Ballard's buildings please remember they are now private dwellings and respect the privacy of the occupants.

Sources

The Hereford & Gloucester Canal by David BICK ISBN 0 906885 00 0
Thomas Telford by L T C ROLT 0 1402 2064 X
Inigo by Michael LEAPMAN 0 7553 1003 9
Palladio by James S. ACKERMAN 0 1402 0845 3
Architecture in Britain 1530-1830 by John SUMMERSON 0 300 058 86 1
Georgian Architecture by James Stevens CURL 0 7153 9851 2
God's Architect by Rosemary HILL 978 0 140 28099 9





Tony Boonham

We were saddened to hear of the death of Tony Boonham, in August, following a long battle against cancer. He had been one of the regular volunteers with the Wednesday group at Over Basin since 2001.

Following a career in engineering in the Royal Air Force, where he reached the rank of Flight Sergeant, he became the proprietor of a motor engineering business in a village near Hull in Yorkshire; thus when he came to us he was soon organising the "engineering" side of things at Over. This he did with great relish, turning one of the containers into our mechanical engineering workshop. It was not long before we had a place for everything including a fine robust workbench with metal cladding and an enormous vice, capable of taking large heavy items, and withstanding our severest efforts swinging a hammer. The goings on in the workshop were revealed to the world at large through Tony's occasional *"Tales from the Toolstore"* articles in **The Wharfinger**.

One of his earlier notable achievements was to design and make a bench, and the tools, for cleaning the bitumen from the backs of the old Over Hospital wooden parquet floor blocks which were recycled and proudly used throughout the ground floor of THE WHARF HOUSE. Tony also assumed the role of our social secretary for many years, arranging trips, organising "Christmas Do's" at the pub, running the tea fund and somehow managing to keep us continually supplied with Battenberg cake! During the breaks for tea and lunch Tony often entertained us with his anecdotes and humorous stories of his life in the RAF, the garage business and his exploits in the beekeeping world.

These achievements are all the more remarkable as, following a major stroke in 1997, he lost the use of his right arm.

Suffice to say he will be sadly missed by all his friends at Over.

TB/WJ

Mike Holmes

Mike Holmes, who passed away in September, had not been involved for so long as Tony but had made a great impact on the Trading Company.



Mike and his wife Margaret became involved when he offered to drive the hired van to the National – as a retired bus driver and mini-bus driver for many charities around Ledbury he was an ideal person to take this role over from Derek Weaver. Mike also designed and made the H&G rug and produced a kit for other nimble fingered members of the Trust to make their own.

JM

We send our condolences to both Dorothy and Margaret.

MODEL BOAT CLUB *at Over* By Ted Tedaldi



The Gloucester and District Model Boat Club is both a user and maintainer of the H&G Canal at Over. We keep the basin at Gloucester to the slipway and beyond, towards the dam, as free of offending weed as possible.

The weed clearance task is manual and is achieved by the use of eight one metre double edged saw blades coupled in line which are pulled like a chain saw across the canal! The weed is cut off at root level and then floats away on the wind. The original Canadian pond weed now seems to be replaced with a much more aggressive fern tree-like weed. We enjoy this weeding as our contribution to the upkeep of the canal and it enables us to enjoy our hobby. It also looks pleasant to the visitors to see a tidy canal basin with activity.

We have enjoyed the summer sailing. The numbers are such that when the new extension of the Canal at Over opens some of our members will be able to go for a long walk with their boats.

Graupner have produced a splendid small yacht called Micro Magic, 21ins long and with a sail height of 30ins. It fits into the car boot easily and handles in all winds very well. The club now has twenty in its fleet with a regular twelve in action. The good weather of recent weeks has seen some excellent sailing. We are now starting a sailing competition for these.



Frozen off last year was our Christmas Hamper Sailing Day (with a beans on toast lunch!). We have brought this forward to late November to try and avoid last years frozen waters ...

TT



Model yachts at Over



Some of the boat club members enjoying the sailing at Over Basin

Photos: Ted Tedaldi

News from the friends of Gloucester WATERWAYS MUSEUM



Visitors flocked to Gloucester Docks for the Tall Ships Festival.

By Chris Witts

The past few months have been very busy for all at the Gloucester Waterways Museum. It began with the very successful Tall Ships Festival which saw a record number of visitors to the Museum.

There followed a day of sea songs and shanties performed in and around the Museum with a special event during the evening. "Where the Working Boats Went", the story of the history of the canals and waterways in drama and song was performed by Graeme Meek and Barry Goodman. Finally, the International Guild of Knot Tyers spent two days at the Museum with demonstrations and talks about, of course, knots and lines.

The Ladies Crafts Group, (which does include the men as well!), took full advantage of these events and were busy at work demonstrating their skill in rag rug making, whilst the men were busy with their rope making machine. The children love this as it their opportunity to wind the handles on the machine thus producing their own skipping rope.

Canal & River Trust

As of next April British Waterways will be rebranded and become the Canal & River Trust. Their new logo incorporates a bridge and swan which you either loathe or like. The current Waterways Trust which oversees the running of the three Museums, the National Waterways Museum, the Gloucester Waterways Museum and the Canal Museum, will be merged into the new Canal & River Trust.

Please visit our 'Friends' new web site at **www.friends-of-gloucester-waterways-Museum.com**

CW

The Inland Waterways Association

Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch

Sunday December 11th, 11am
Boaters Carol Service, Mariners Chapel

SOCIAL MEETINGS
at Gloucester Yacht Club, 7.30pm

Thursday December 1st
Christmas Social

Thursday January 5th
Paul Barnett - 'Lydney's Lost Fleet'

Thursday February 2nd
Dick Skeet - 'How Green was Brindley's Stinking Ditch?'

Thursday March 1st
Branch AGM + Canals & Rivers Trust Talk

Further details of any of the above:
Roger Holmes 01594 840316

Work at YARKHILL

By Chris High

Recent work at Yarkhill told in photos.



Strimmed, raked and mown canal bed.

Detail of the offside edge and brick base of the lock chamber.



Viewing platform ready for our Open Day.



First skim on the stretch up to the site hut.



The team at lunch.

Photos: Alison High and Chris High

Would you like to help us achieve even more? – then please contact :

Chris High 01568 615 575

Working with Nature

By John Chappell

Yarrow is the common English name of the plant seen here growing in the stone pile at Oxenhall. Often found in disturbed soil yarrow is drought tolerant, thriving in well drained situations with few nutrients; the detritus of the stone pile suits it perfectly.

The plants Latin name *Achillea* commemorates Achilles the Greek hero, who reportedly carried it into battle to treat his army's wounds. The specific name, *millefolium*, (million leaves) describes the many fine, feathery, slightly hairy leaves which are arranged spirally around the stem; these leaves contain cineol – a natural antiseptic and a substance that hastens clotting of the blood.

The flowers of *Achillea millefolium* form a flat topped cluster of small individual white, flowers, though blooms various shades of pink can also be found. Yarrow belongs to the family Asteraceae and flowers in May and June, if found in lawns constant mowing seems to benefit its spread! Eagle eyed botanists and nurserymen have bred and selected exciting colour variations with names such as 'Paprika', 'Cerise Beauty', and 'Salmon Queen', all a valuable addition to the autumn garden. Unfortunately these garden varieties have a relatively short life and should be divided every other year.

Colour variations used in the ornamental garden are not suitable for medicinal purposes but the ordinary white flowered yarrow is. Common names given to yarrow, such as soldier's woundwort, nosebleed and staunch weed, describe not only why it was invaluable to Achilles but also why today's modern herbalists value the plant. The mild disinfecting and soothing qualities of yarrow are used for general rashes and skin irritations as well as for wounds, cuts and abrasions.

A simple recipe for an ointment or balm would be to make an infusion by packing a good quantity of fresh or dried leaves in a jar with olive oil, ensuring the leaves are well covered. A small quantity of alcohol added to the mix will prevent mould. Leave for two to three weeks then use 10 gms of the resulting infusion with 30gms of olive oil and 10gms of beeswax. Mix well.

Despite our medicine chest at Oxenhall overflowing with herbal remedies we should definitely add this one because, working as hard as we do, minor scrapes and irritations are always cropping up!

JC



Photo: John Chappell

Yarrow (*Achillea Millefolium*)

Email Newsletter

The launch of the new occasional H&G CT email newsletter *(page 13 of the last edition)* saw a large number of people registering – despite our small error in missing out 'UK' from the end of the email address! For those who wish to register, and have not yet done so, please send a blank email with '**count me in**' in the subject line to **newsletter@h-g-canal.org.uk**. *You will receive an automatic acknowledgement that you have been successfully added to our specialist emailing software. Your details will not be released to any third party and each message that you receive will include details of how to unsubscribe.*

The email newsletter is intended to ensure that readers are made aware of significant items of H&G CT 'breaking news' as soon as possible – we stress that it will not be circulated on a regular basis so have no fear that we will be cluttering up your inbox! More detailed reports on all such news will always follow in the next edition of **The Wharfinger** so readers who do not have access to email (or who do not wish to subscribe to the email newsletter) most certainly will not lose out.

Volunteer Newsletter

For the last couple of years most of our regular volunteers have received an occasional Volunteer Newsletter from our Chairman. If you are a regular volunteer (on our restoration sites, at THE WHARF HOUSE, on the boats, as part of the Trading Company or in any other role) and have not seen this *then please ensure that* ***your site or team leader*** *has your e-mail address*. For those without access to e-mail then please ensure that your site or team leader has your postal address.

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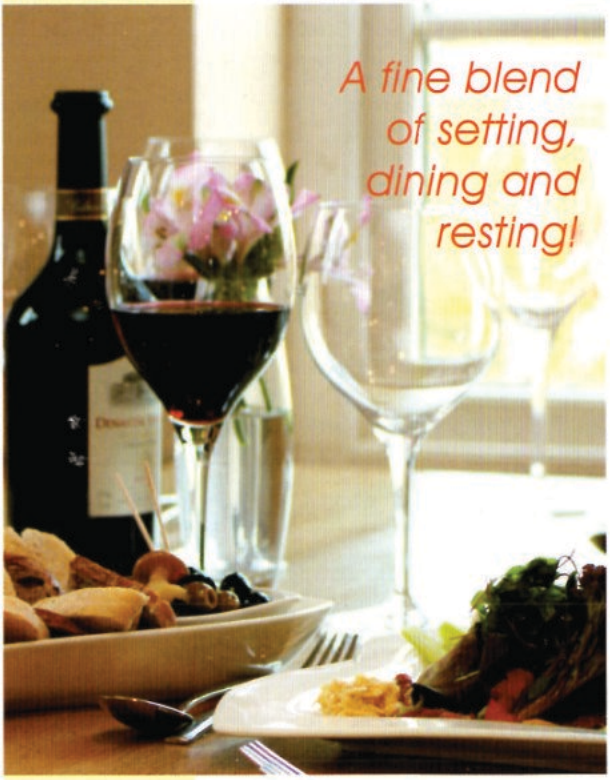






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Christmas Opening Times

As in previous years, The Wharf House will close after lunch on Christmas Eve (**Saturday 24th December**) and re-open on **Tuesday 3rd January.**

AA ★★★★ Guest Accommodation

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All profits from The Wharf House will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal.

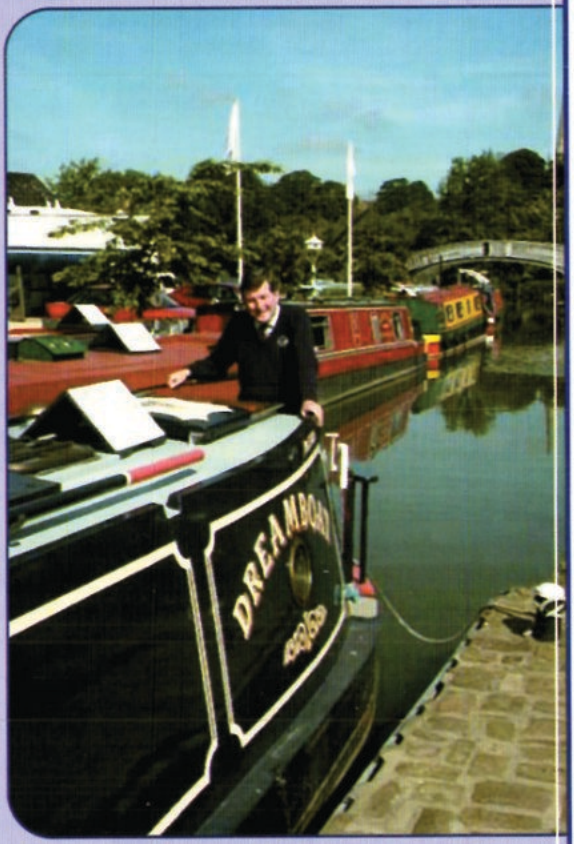
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Want to help?

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!

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(details in first column)

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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.

Please note: *Unless indicated it should not be assumed that Rights of Way exist. We are working on the Canal with the co-operation of the land owners and their neighbours – please help the Trust to maintain its good relations with them.*

Thank you.

Map based on original by Martin Ludgate. Canal Boat Magazine.