

The

Wharfinger

Winter 2013-14

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Over

Site Leaders: Ted Beagles (Wed) Maggie Jones (Sat)

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Llanthony

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The Wharfinger

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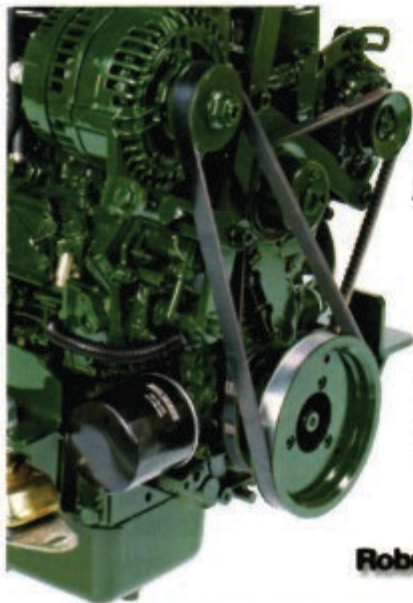
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An Essential Policy



*In 1992, when the former Canal Society became the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, the then regional waterways manager of British Waterways wrote congratulating us and warning that restoring the Canal would not be our biggest challenge – **constantly having to find funds to maintain it would.***

The Council of Management decided that it was not sufficient 'just' to secure funding to restore the Canal and its various structures; unlike earlier successful inland waterways restoration schemes the H&G CT had to adopt a different strategy and take a much wider view. From the outset it had to include ways of generating a sustainable income for the future maintenance and management of the whole 34 miles of the Canal.



Over Canal Basin was the first project to see this approach fully in action. Apart from the complex agreements (following many years of negotiations) that led to the highly successful reconstruction of Over Canal Basin by our own and Waterway Recovery Group volunteers, and the construction of ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE, every property on the development is legally committed to pay a sum annually in perpetuity (with the sum increasing to reflect inflation) towards the maintenance and management of the Canal in the vicinity. Income from ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE will enable maintenance and management of more rural sections to continue into the future.



This policy of securing long-term sources of income has successfully continued in both counties at Mortimer/Burcott Road (Hereford), at Oxenhall Lock Cottage, the acquisition of Llanthony Lock and Cottages, the ongoing proposals at Dymock – plus other sites where the re-development has yet to take place (such as the Holmer Industrial Estate). Photovoltaic panels, hydro-generation and other proposals are also part of the sustainable income policy. In many cases it has been a question of grasping opportunities with the timescale influenced by the actions of third parties – *the H&G CT has had to react swiftly in order to achieve the best possible outcome for the H&G Canal both in the short and long term.*



The auction of **The Travellers Rest PH** and Restaurant presented possibly a 'once in lifetime' opportunity to obtain the freehold of this important property situated alongside the B4215 near Newent. None of the other parties involved had realised that the premises will lie immediately adjacent to the towpath of the restored Canal at what will certainly be a 'honeypot' site attracting both

local and tourist visitors. The CoM were confident that this was an opportunity not to be missed ensuring that significant benefits to trade arising from the restoration of the Canal at this prominent location help pay for the long-term upkeep of the Canal rather than going to a third party owner. *More details are on page 6.*

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GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2013 *Results*

Thank you to everyone who helped, in any way, to make this yet another **Grand Holiday Draw** record breaking year raising **£3,850** for the H&G CT. As always especial thanks to our 'star sellers' and to the prize donors. The draw was once again made at the September Social Evening at Much Marcle, on Tuesday 17th September. The draw was made by the speaker, Jeremy Picton-Turbervill.

1st Prize

Narrow Boat Holiday for FOUR –
Donated by **Black Prince Holidays**.

Ticket no 01554.

Mr Chris Jarvis of Whitfield, Hereford.

2nd Prize

One Day's Boat Hire on the Mon and Brec
Canal – donated by **Beacon Park Boats**.

Ticket no 07946.

Mrs Anne Moore, Beaufort, Ebbw Vale.

3rd Prize

One night Dinner, Bed & Breakfast for
two at **The Wharf House**.

Ticket no 10682.

Mr Gary Barnes, Gloucester.

Our grateful thanks to **Black Prince Holidays**, **Beacon Park Boats** and **THE WHARF HOUSE** for donating the Holiday prizes that help to make our annual holiday draw such a success.

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2013 Grand Holiday Draw in any way.

WANTED: Would your firm be prepared to sponsor the print costs of the tickets for the **2014 Grand Holiday Draw** to ensure that every single pound raised continues to come to the H&G CT? For £200 the company name appears on thousands of tickets and is fully acknowledged, along with those of our holiday prize donors, in **The Wharfinger**. Janet Moulton would be very pleased to hear from you (01432 264 366). *Thank you.*



A Year in ...

*I look back on my year as Chairman.
Some very interesting times.*

Some great successes including the start of the Kymin site. It is a real pleasure walking along this newest part of the Canal. People can see it coming together, my neighbours often comment on the great work that the H&G Canal Trust has done. The official highway signage around Hereford identifying the H&G Canal as it goes under bridges and by the retail park near Pizza Hut. Meeting with other canal trusts at the Southern Canals meeting enabled me to meet with other canal trust chairmen to discuss how their trusts are operating and other common interests such as links to the Inland Waterways Association and the Canal and River Trust. Our new style AGM (of which the response was overall positive) and, yes, we are getting a new projector to improve the social evenings, presentations to external bodies and to the next AGM. Our sincere thanks to the anonymous Member who donated £500 towards the cost of a new projector to replace our 'time expired' old one.

I hope you feel the that communication is improving, electronic newsletters, improvements to the web site and of course **The Wharfinger** is always being commented on as an excellent magazine for the H&G CT. Great work the team do in pulling this together every 3 months. I often look at what other trusts are doing, Apps for phones, enews, Facebook and Twitter accounts to name a few. All that I use almost daily and would be very interested in people's views - should we be pushing these further? Of course we need to be focused on the overall objective of the Trust to develop the Canal and use these as a media to gain more involvement in the overall aim to reinstate

the Canal. Is there anyone with appropriate skills and experience who is interested in helping to develop our overall communication tools strategy, and how best to use these and other technologies available to us in this modern world?

I cannot close this report without a word about the recent purchase along the Canal of **The Travellers Rest**. This is an investment for the future; both short, mid and long term. Short term a tenant will be installed. Mid-term we will be working to develop visiting opportunities for people around the area to enjoy a walk and have a pint. Long term the pub and restaurant will give the Canal another income stream to cover some of the on-going maintenance costs of the Canal that will not be covered by traditional income sources such as boat and angling licences etc. More information on this important investment is on page 6.

♦ RB

See announcement on p39.

Email Newsletter

Our occasional newsletter ensures that readers are aware of significant H&G Canal news as soon as possible. If you have not yet registered please send a blank email, with 'count me in' as the subject, to newsletter@h-g-canal.org.uk. You will receive an automatic acknowledgement that you have been added to our specialist emailing software and you can easily remove yourself at any time. *Your details will not be passed on to any third party.* More detailed reports will always follow in **The Wharfinger**.

NEW Acquisition: **The Travellers Rest**

Public House at Malswick

By John Hammond

As those who receive the newsletter will know, ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE acquired the freehold of this pub and restaurant by auction on behalf of the H&G CT on 4 September, with the purchase completed on 25 September.

The previous pub chain had been owners there for eight years and the tenant only ceased trading in late August. Notice of the auction was very short, and was only noticed within just over a week of the auction date, so our Legal & Project Development Team and the Council of Management had to work very quickly to reach the decision to bid and get all the necessary legal and financial arrangements in place. The guide price was £245,000; our successful bid £225,000.

The Travellers Rest is at Malswick, about a mile east of Newent on the B4215 Gloucester to Newent road, with excellent visibility from



the road to attract passing trade and easy access for cars with substantial parking space. As well as the bar there are two indoor dining areas, a marquee and gardens, in all just under half an acre. In addition to the kitchen and storage spaces to service the pub and restaurant, there is living accommodation with two bedrooms upstairs.

Immediate plans

The immediate plans are for a tenant to take on running the business, providing income to the H&G CT. Once a tenancy contract is in place this will permit borrowing against the premises when required so the H&G CT funds used for the purchase will be restored and available to fund future purchases of land for restoration etc.



The Travellers Rest at Malswick

Gloucester Citizen

So why has the H&G CT bought the pub and restaurant?

The compelling reason for doing so is that it will be the only established waterside pub on the restored Canal in Gloucestershire. Ownership will ensure this exceedingly well located site is used to promote the Canal from the outset. In the long term it will bring visitors to the Canal and form a high profile point of public access. In the short term it will provide the focus for an important stretch of Canal restoration with displays and information about our objective of complete restoration, with the potential to attract new members and increased support. The CoM is confident it will prove to be a sound investment giving a continuing net income to the H&G CT with the potential to increase substantially as the Canal is restored.

The development and ownership of appropriate Canalside properties is part of the overall strategy of the H&G CT, and represents one of our solutions to the many challenges in achieving our objective of restoring the Canal and ensuring its maintenance indefinitely.

The most obvious and visible of the restoration challenges is the task of clearing undergrowth and debris and excavating sections of the Canal, constructing the towpath and ensuring the Canal bed is watertight and robust. We are all familiar with this aspect of restoration, with past and continuing work by volunteers at many sites: Llanthony, Over Basin and Vineyard Hill, Moat Farm, Newent and Oxenhall, Dymock, Yarkhill and Kymin East, Aylestone Park etc.

Less visible, but equally vital, is the task of

project planning. Before work on any new section can start, the design and engineering aspects must be resolved. It is necessary to plan for bridges, locks and overflow weirs and channels. Developments since the Canal closed such as buildings, pipelines and particularly roads mean that alternative routes, revised positions of locks and water levels have had to be found at some locations in order to avoid

these obstacles. Modern day requirements for emergency and other access, car parking and the like also have to be provided for and incorporated in land purchases or agreements. Appropriate water levels must be worked out in relation to the needs for clearance at points such as road crossings and for continuity with adjacent sections, whether existing or projected. Sources of water must be planned to maintain water levels. These

problems were, of course, solved by Henshall and Ballard when the Canal was originally surveyed, but their route, water levels and sources cannot be reproduced everywhere.

Even when all the detailed design and engineering work has been done, none of the physical restoration work on any section of the Canal can start until either the land is purchased by the H&G CT or creation of the section of Canal is agreed with the landowners and suitably secured through legal agreements. In some places, such as at Dymock, collaborative developments with landowners can be a beneficial approach. In all such cases careful negotiation with respect for confidentiality is required with landowners, developers and other relevant parties. Before



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work can start very extensive liaison is also necessary with planning authorities, environment and conservation bodies and so on as, dependant on the work to be undertaken, various consents and permissions may be required in order to comply with complex legislation.

The final challenge...

is to ensure a continuing secure source of income for the H&G CT. Apart from the substantial capital costs of land purchase and Canal construction, which need funds from grants, legacies, donations and fund-raising activities, each new section of Canal (or structure created) then requires maintenance. As more Canal is completed, the maintenance demands and costs increase and the income must necessarily increase to keep pace. After the Canal is completed the income must continue indefinitely at a sufficient level to meet both routine and exceptional maintenance demands; licence fees from boaters and other Canal users will be nowhere near sufficient. An important source of such income is for the

H&G CT to own and develop appropriate Canalside properties to secure an income stream well into the future and ensure people are both attracted to and have good access to the Canal.

This complements other sources of income such as annual charges from owners of other Canalside and nearby properties, and revenue from proposals such as the combined Llanthony lock and weir scheme with its associated hydro-electricity generation. It is only through careful coordination of all these differing elements, always with an eye to the overall objective in the long term, that lasting success will be achieved.

So we expect the local community, as well as passing travellers, will enjoy a pint and a meal in **The Travellers Rest** and will discover the existence of the Canal and learn that one day this will again be a canalside pub and restaurant with a garden by the towpath! *With this added opportunity to promote the H&G CT in such a prominent location we have no doubt that support for the restoration of the H&G Canal will continue to grow.*

◆ JH

CANAL HEROES **WW's ideal cruise companions**

By Maggie Jones

I was sitting waiting for an appointment and noticed the September edition of the national inland waterways magazine **Waterways World** lying on a table. I was immediately drawn to one of the cover items – “Canal Heroes, WW’s ideal cruise companions”. The four page feature included contributions from the **Waterways World** editorial team in answer to the question “Which waterways personality, past or present, would you most like to accompany you on a boat trip?”

I glanced at the ten contributors’ choices which included many famous ‘canal names’ such as James Brindley, Tom Rolt, Sir John Knill, David Hutchings, and, hang on a minute – Cliff and David Penny ...

Jonathan Mosse, well known waterways writer and respected researcher of the **Nicholson’s Guides to the Inland Waterways** was the only contributor who had chosen a living person (or, more correctly in this case, persons) associated with the restoration of inland waterways. He highlighted our “opportunistic” approach to restoration and particularly the strategy of the H&G CT of trying to ensure that future income was secured alongside restoration of the Canal. He also suggested that “any boat trip in their company be of limited duration, as the list of tasks they’d charm you into would grow exponentially!” Readers you have been warned, and well done David and Cliff for being included!

◆ MJ



Overflow Weir at Aylestone Park

Photos by Colin Dymott

*Details and drawings of the propose major overflow weir at Aylestone Park were published in the spring edition of **The Wharfinger** (pages 6 & 7 of Edition 115).*

The H&G Canal Trust has now negotiated a new contract with Gardiners Construction to construct the weir on our behalf and, as Colin Dymott's photographs show, work is progressing well although sadly hampered by the storm in late October. Our own volunteers will be on site later in November to tidy the general Canal area prior to the opening of the adjoining play area. *There will be more photos in the next edition.* ♦ **CRP**



Hardcore placed on the base.



Perimeter shuttering in place for the reinforced base slab.



The base slab reinforcement.



The base concrete is pumped into the foundations.



Pouring the concrete continues.



Placing 'blinding' concrete.



The 'blinding' concrete gives a good base to work on.



(Notice the line of the Canal on the right.)



Reinforcement for the walls proceeds.



Ready mix lorry and concrete pump.

Over Canal FESTIVAL

Report by Maggie Jones

Once again the sun shone brightly for us during the weekend and plenty of visitors came to enjoy the canal side fun. Many of the regular attractions were there plus a few new ones.

The great work put in by the volunteers to get Mister Maysey afloat once more fully paid off. Dave and his crew were kept very busy taking passengers along to the end of Vineyard Hill.

Lots of fun on the water ...



Tug boats



Rescue boats



Trip boats



To see an excellent video of the event, made by James Fyrne from **Soglos**, go to our website: www.h-g-canal.org.uk

Gypsy Queen joined us on the towpath.



Ted Boagles, Chris Byrne, Dove Human



Music played whilst the beer tent did a roaring trade. Home-made cakes and other refreshments were enjoyed by the slipway. The large marquee displayed high quality crafts and produce.



Guess the Name of the Tortoise

proved to be so popular that we had a winner for each of the days. The lovely South African tortoise, who lives nearby, is a female by the name of AMY.



Pedal boats!



Katakanus



Model sailing boats



Rowing boats and Steam boats



Leisurely strolls and boat trips down Vineyard Hill.

A big
THANK YOU
to all who made
this possible!

Restoration Team

Over Basin

Incorporating **Vineyard Hill**

By Ted Beagles



Mr Maysey returns to the water.

Friday 9 August was a tense day for us. After several months on dry land for major hull repairs our trip boat, Mr Maysey, was returned to the water. With the help of Hedley Midwinter's 'Hiab crane' lorry (many thanks once again), and volunteers Bob and Andy in attendance, she was lowered gently back into the water to float proudly amongst the waves once more. PHEWW! No leaks.



Little and large!

In part this was due to leak testing we had done some two weeks earlier. We actually filled the inside with water, only to find water pouring out through a bolt hole that had become filled with debris, and a minor weld leak in an awkward corner, both of which were easily fixed. It was then a matter of all hands to the task of reconstructing the decking and cabin internals and refitting the engine and controls ready for the Over Festival weekend at the end of that month. (Maggie Jones reports on page 12.)



Patched area of Mr Maysey's hull.

It had been a long hard slog, but a true team effort, with all of the regular site volunteers contributing, as well as other H&G CT members with specialist skills. She made a fine sight running non stop during the two day event, providing trips along the full length of the Canal at Over. *Thank you to everybody who helped in any way.*

Visitors to Over Canal Basin recently may

have noticed that we now have a fine looking pontoon fixed to the gabion wall side of the Basin, with one of our heritage narrowboats moored alongside.

This belongs to Peter Bisson and Eric Causon, members of the **Sailing4Disabled** group who use our Basin to provide water experiences for less able bodied people every Tuesday. For the rest of the time it is an excellent place to moor our heritage boats, making access both more convenient and safer.

The made up ground around **THE WHARF HOUSE** continues to sink, to the extent that the brick block paving by the doors was some 80-100mm low making access for wheelchairs extremely difficult. Bring along our two resident block paving experts, Bob and Ivor, and in no time at all the problem was sorted. Somehow they managed to raise



Our new tractor clearing riverbank parking area.



Mike working on The Wharf House gardens.



Belinda, Margaret & Pat painting the car park height restriction barrier.



Bob & Ivor putting final touches to the block paving.



Alder moored by pontoon.

the local area around the main restaurant door and interlock it into the rest of the blocks with no discontinuity in the herring bone pattern. "Fantastic job" says David "when are you going to do the other entrances"...?

It was reported in the last edition of **The Wharfinger** that the H&G CT had successfully obtained a grant to purchase a new Kubota mini tractor, complete with flail attachment, to become part of a mobile grounds maintenance team to cover routine ground maintenance for several sites. It is currently located at Over until the mobile team is fully set up. It has been extremely useful in keeping all of the vigorous growth along the banks of the Canal and towpath in check, and in particular the heavily overgrown area of river bank by the A40 bridge. This area is used for Festival weekend parking and had not been mown since last year.

The boat painting team of Pat and Belinda are now back from their summer of cruising around the waterways. Along with new volunteer Marg they have taken on a shore based task and painted ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE car park gate entrance posts in H&G colours with black and yellow bands, which makes them much easier for drivers to see in low light conditions.

◆ TB

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

Gift ideas from ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE



Gift Vouchers for the Restaurant

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Food and Drink

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Our own H&G CT Christmas Cards.

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- **Bulrushes in the snow at Over**
- **Snowdrops at Oxenhall.**

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Every member should have a copy of David Bick's book **'The Hereford and Gloucester Canal'** – it makes the ideal Christmas present – as do our wide range of books (not all are of them are about canals!)

£8.95

Why not come and see us soon – we have many other gift ideas so why not do your Christmas shopping in the Visitor Centre then join us for a meal – a far more relaxed way of working through your gift list!

THE WHARF HOUSE

Winter Opening times:-

Tuesday to Saturday inclusive from 10am and most evenings (bookings very strongly recommended).

On **Mondays** we are open for tea rooms only 10-3pm.

Over **Christmas** and the **New Year** we are closed from Monday 23rd December reopening on Friday 3rd January.

We will be open for booked tables only on Sunday 22nd December and would suggest that bookings are made well ahead for this popular day.

It is always advisable to book as we can get very busy. We only accept a certain number tables at any time in the diary, so do not be offended if you are turned away even if we do not look full! We normally request **48 hours notice for bookings for the Tasting Menu**. The restaurant is available to be booked for private functions 7 days a week.

Christmas Menus: www.thewharfhouse.co.uk

Canal Walks

The H&G CT Canal Walk leaflets are proving popular with members and supporters who would like an interesting guided walk that includes part of the route of our Canal.

- CANAL WALK NO. 1 **STAPLOW**
- CANAL WALK NO. 2 **WITHINGTON**
- CANAL WALK NO. 3 **DYMOCK**
- CANAL WALK NO. 4 **LLANTHONY**
- CANAL WALK NO. 5 **OXENHALL**



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.

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



Restoration Team Oxenhall

By Brian Fox



Brian Fox

Progress on the reconstruction of the spillweir has been slow. Holidays, sickness, bad weather and not forgetting our annual outing, this time on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal from Saul Junction.



Restoration of the spillweir progresses.

We hired a boat owned and crewed by volunteers from the Cotswold Canals Trust so no steering, just an opportunity to sit back and relax in the company of family and friends. First stop was at a canal-side pub in Slimbridge where everyone enjoyed a good lunch and then on to Purton to view the boat graveyard. We had hoped to get as far as Sharpness but not enough time as the boat was due back at Saul by 4pm – it all made a very pleasant day.

Another Tuesday was taken up as we all attended the funeral of Dave Mordaunt who passed away in August (see tribute on page 31). We could do with a few more like Dave so anyone out there who is getting towards 70, or even 75, just think again before you put your feet up – there will no doubt be a job somewhere on site that will suit you and a little gentle exercise never did anyone any harm!

The sump in front of the weir wall now has a reinforced concrete base and the wall itself has been completely rebuilt just in front of the original curved wall which was clearly not watertight. This has not only given us a new wall but enabled us to make the top level so that the water, when back to normal, will flow over the whole of the weir. Measurements confirmed that the far wall surrounding the

weir had settled by about 3 inches more than the nearside wall over the years (probably due to the lack of foundations!) and although attempts had been made to level off the top of the weir they had not been entirely successful. We have just the concrete and bricks on the slope of the weir to do now, and fingers crossed that it all goes to plan and we can finish before the cold weather is upon us.

Readers will recall plans are in hand to remove the Bailey bridge over the aqueduct so that strengthening of the rest of the arch can be completed and it will then be capable of supporting the restored canal. It was hoped that removal would take place this year but unfortunately the army, who have provisionally agreed to dismantle it, could not fit it into their schedule this year. So watch this space!

◀ BF

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

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!*

The third Tuesday of every month

(except December) at

The Royal Oak, Much Marcle

7.30 for 8pm start.

SEPTEMBER SOCIAL REPORT

The Hereford Bull

by Ralph Barber

September's Social Evening had a talk on the Hereford Bull. But this talk was not about the 5ft high statue of the Hereford breed of cattle (which is one of the UK's oldest dating back to the mid 1700s) that stands in High Town, Hereford, but was about a boat.

The Wye Trow was a common sight hauling goods on the river during the 18th and 19th centuries. The interesting talk, by Jeremy Picton-Turbervill, was about a replica of the trow built to represent the county in the Thames Pageant to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This faithful replica weighed in at four tons and is 36ft long - appropriately named the Hereford Bull.

◀ RB



December

No meeting held in December

21 January

Martin Turner

On the Cotswold Canals

This is the second of two meetings about local Canal Trusts held jointly with the local IWA Branch (see page. 35)

18 February

Paul Barnett

Sharpness Scuppered Ships -

We have heard about the Purton & Lydney Hulks; this brings the story up to date.

18 March

Tim Coghlan

Audrey, Evelyn and Anne - some Idle Women

Tim recently visited Tasmania to hear 91 years old Audrey's story of her exploits.

15 April

Martin Connop Price

The Hereford, Ross and Gloucester Railway

Our railway talk this year moves nearer home on the 50th anniversary of the withdrawal of passenger services on this line.

Two very contrasting events to report on this time – large and small, wet and dry!

Ralph and I took a small display and sales stand to **Sutton St Nicholas Village Fete**. This was held in the gardens of Court Farm on one of the hottest days of the year – it was well attended and very close to the line of the Canal. Adults were interested in the Canal and the children in cuddly toys and the Lucky Dip. Our Chairman now knows why we spend hours wrapping fiddly little parcels!

A few weeks later we were at **Hampton Court Castle** for the **Herefordshire Country Fair**. This is always a large event with two show rings and very many stands. Once we had found our pitch (the organisers very helpfully had decided to put different numbers on the ground from those sent to us – and no sign of a steward!) Derek and I set up the gazebo and sales stand. Then the heavens opened and it did not stop raining all day – the stock was kept dry (but we weren't) and everyone decided to pack up about 4pm. We loaded the car and managed to slither off – a by now – very muddy site.

I suppose we really should not complain as it was the only wet event this year!

◆ JM

(The Gloucester Sales & Promotion Team report on Over Festival – see pages 16–17).



Top: On the neighbouring stand.
Above: The Lucky Dip keeps the children happy.

**Want to get involved in our outings? Please call:
Janet Moul on 01432 264366 or Maggie Jones on 01452 618010**

Promote our Canal Restoration in your area!

A colourful A4 poster depicting Oxenhall Lock has been produced to advertise the restoration work of the H&G CT. We hope this will reach local people in the two counties who still have not heard of our Canal Restoration. Do you have some local places where this could be displayed? Local supermarkets, village halls, doctor or dentist waiting rooms, workplace notice boards are all possible places where we can reach a wider audience. Please collect a few copies of this poster either from ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE or from any Social Evening.

Thank you. ◆ MJ



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Restoration Team Yarkhill

By Chris High

The Team are now relatively happy having managed to complete the puddling of the culvert hole. The final stages were less arduous as with the area becoming larger it was possible to use our excavator, Sam, in place of manpower! A little later the culvert shuttering and the sandbag dam across the Canal were removed.

Vegetation clearance by the whole Team around the trees planted last November was completed in a day and enabled us to confirm that a very high percentage are growing well. We then moved on to a major onslaught

Excavator, 'Sam', helps with the puddling of the culvert.



Chris High

on the rampant vegetation on the offside. Loppers, grass hooks, trimmer and mower all played their part along with some considerable physical exertion as well. The popular circular walk of the Yarkhill site is now reinstated.

An evening walk was given to some twenty plus farming associated residents from the Pencombe Group of Parishes. The route taken was from Kymin through to the field parking area at Yarkhill with a pleasant evening culminating in good food and drink and a lot of chat.

A limb of an oak tree by the field parking area has subsequently fallen – just where the walkers had their picnic! Brush was removed and the branch logged up. Imagine our surprise to find a further branch in the same state the following week. *This one is still work in progress.*

General site tidying has also taken place with a number of accumulated piles of roots and brush being transferred to the lock fire site.

◆ CH



Picnicking after their evening walk through Kymin and Yarkhill.



limb of the oak tree fallen where the picnickers had been!

*Anyone interested in lending a hand? Please contact
Chris High 01568 615 575*

Restoration Team

Moat Farm

By Martyn Tilford

At Moat Farm not everything involves hard work! On a pleasant day in mid August we replaced our normal packed lunches with a fine BBQ, hosted by Moat Farm owners Paul and Hilary. After last year's success word must have got out that this is an event worth attending as sixteen volunteers and guests thoroughly enjoyed Paul and Hilary's hospitality!



Volunteers and guests enjoying another excellent BBQ.

'Top Pound' Clearance

Not strictly the 'top pound' as the site is effectively the same pound throughout, but the northernmost section is separated by a dam and normally has a good depth of water. Our lovely summer has resulted in the water level dropping allowing access, for the first time, to clear this length of canal bed. A couple of large willows were felled and the stumps excavated. The rest of the fallen trees were removed and cut into useful firewood logs. A large oak, which had toppled many years ago, provided some good material to create a standing 'dead tree'. The top sections were saved and whilst appeared rotten were found to be rock hard and structurally sound.



'Top pound' before clearance ...

... and after ➤



PLEASE NOTE: Public access to the Moat Farm site is unavailable at present but the Trust is working on proposals to develop this.



Wilf and Martyn prepare the 'planting hole'.



'All hands' to raise the dead oak.



Standing dead oak with Penny, Ralph, Martyn, Wilf and Steve.

Standing Dead Oak

To continue with our theme of creating a bio-diverse environment at Moat Farm the dead oak, salvaged from the 'top pound', was re-erected away from the bed of the canal and towpath. In preparation a planting hole was excavated with our excavator and by hand. Teamwork, involving 'all hands', was required to move the heavy oak and raise it into position. A buzzard and a woodpecker soon visited and it is hoped to add to this feature when more suitable material becomes available.

Site Accommodation

Our Marley modular garage/site hut has been completed and we are now in residence – that is on every other Tuesday. The roof was successfully fashioned from recycled steel barn cladding. Paul and Ted were able to sort out the fiddly bits including roof trims, guttering and the up'n'over front door. Alan is working on solar power lighting, and charging facilities, which should be up and running by late autumn.

South-end Earthworks

Our excavator has been busy at the south end of the site carrying out preparatory earthworks to enable the canal bed and

towpath to be restored. Several hundred cubic metres of fill and spoil will be moved and re-profiled including the construction of a sluice to control final water levels.

Volunteers at Moat Farm

We have now been at Moat Farm for a little over 18 months and our alternate Tuesdays are well attended in all seasons. We are approaching 350 volunteer 'person days'. *Many thanks to all who have helped and a warm welcome awaits anyone thinking of joining us.*

◀ MT

Would you like to be involved?

*You will be made most welcome, please contact either **Martyn Tilford** on **01452 790 358** or **Wilf Jones** on **01452 413 888***



Wilf discusses south end preliminary earthworks with Alan.

Restoration Team

Llanthony

By Paul Henshaw

At Llanthony, we have experienced an increasing incidence of ragwort growing on the site. Under the Ragwort Control Act of 2003, Defra produced "A Code of Practice on How to Prevent the spread of Ragwort". The Code of Practice does not set out to eradicate the plant but gives guidance to landowners on its control where the risk to animals is deemed to be high.

Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) is a poisonous plant which can have a devastating impact on horses as well as cattle and other grazing animals. Ingestion of the plant either in its green or dried form, can cause serious liver damage which in certain circumstances can prove fatal to animals. By contrast, in suitable areas, the plant can contribute to the bio-diversity of the flora and fauna in the countryside. *Getting a balance is the key.*

The site at Llanthony lies adjacent to areas on Alney island where cattle are frequently grazed. The prevailing winds and, more importantly, the footpaths passing through the site increase the possibility of seeds being spread onto our neighbour's land. So, during the summer, we initiated a program to substantially remove the plant from the site by levering, pulling and burning in situ before seeding takes place.

This action is a classic example of the H&G CT seeking to strike a balance between being good neighbours but also recognising the positives of bio-diversity in our environment.

Approximately 4 years ago we planted a number of Alder trees around the site to infill the large areas which were exposed



Digging out ragwort plants prior to disposal.

Left: close-up of the ragwort flower.



Clearance of undergrowth in 2009 prior to the planting of alder trees.



The trees 4 years later.



Tidying up our "useful materials" store.

after brambles and undergrowth were removed. The before and after photographs show how well the saplings have prospered even after some challenging seasons – harsh winters and dry springs.

And of course no winter edition of **The Wharfinger** would be complete without a mention of the many hours involved in mowing and strimming over the past year. *Thank you to all concerned.*

◀ PH

Sailing4Disabled at Over Basin

The club now meets every Tuesday between 11am and 2pm at Over Canal Basin and it is open to anyone – whether they have a disability or not.



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

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How to contribute to the LAND FUND

Please send a one off donation to our Treasurer, Liz Connors (see **Contacts**, inside back cover) and please advise if you are able to **Gift Aid** the donation. Please provide your full name address and contact details – requests for anonymity will be strictly observed. **Regular monthly donations** (even small ones!) are welcomed – please contact Liz for a form (or if you have any queries).

Thank you

STAMPS = ££££'s

Our stamps appeal is moving along nicely with a steady flow of donations coming in over the summer, the highlight of which was an anonymous donation of a sizeable collection mentioned in an earlier edition of **The Wharfinger**.

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Thank you

Please keep collecting your stamps!

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Chris High

The mill site had been use as a rubbish dump for years and become almost hidden by trees and undergrowth. Recent clearance work by the farmer's contractor went on to reveal the extent of the mill foundations along with the canal wall, towpath surface and stop plank slots in stonework at the bridge.

◆ CH

The photos show some the work by Chris and his friends so far – with more to come in a future edition – *including how the Canal Company upset the miller.*

Above: Multiple digging in progress.

Left: Tail race find of a stoneware bottle probably late 19th early 20th century. Probably contained blacking for fireplaces and shoes?

Below: Mill internal brick floor – grindstone mid left – blocked doorway top right.



Top: North wall of mill emerging from the undergrowth.

Above: East looking view of site.

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David Mordaunt

By Brian Fox

Dave joined us at Oxenhall in 1998 at the ripe old age of 78. We were rebuilding the tunnel portal and he quickly became a respected member of the team getting involved in erecting scaffolding, bricklaying and mixing concrete.



He enjoyed his involvement and was quite happy to travel to work at Over, Yarkhill and Aylestone where he met other volunteers. Everyone was impressed by his work rate and he was always the first to get up after a break making us all feel guilty for prolonging the chit chat. He was as strong as an ox and continued his rate of work as we moved from the tunnel down to the lock to start restoration where we all had to learn how to move very large stones about without doing ourselves an injury.

By the time we moved on to the aqueduct he was happier to be involved in the maintenance side of things, cutting the grass and hedges and particularly having a good bonfire! We all celebrated his 90th birthday in 2009 by sharing a large cake but soon after that he decided to call it a day. He passed away peacefully in a nursing home in August.  **BF**


Pat Skelton

By Maggie Jones

It is with deep sadness that I report the death of volunteer and friend, Pat Skelton. Pat came from an army background where he played in the band, toured the Far East and met his wife, Brenda.



In 2004 Pat came to Over hoping for a relaxing afternoon at an Open Day – only to find it was the previous week. I showed him around the shell of ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE; it was very much a building project with few of the interior walls started, yet alone finished. He rolled up his sleeves and got stuck in! Every Saturday he worked on the fit-out, turning his hand to any challenge, always patient, jolly and encouraging to the team. Pat also helped with the Social Evenings and ran the raffle for a number of years. He had a great love of running and ran the London Marathon in 2006.

In 2011 he retired from his job in Malvern and, together with Brenda, moved back to his Isle of Wight home. Sadly a few months later Brenda died. Pat stayed on the island coming to Over occasionally when visiting his three children. Our condolences go to his family. His great contribution to ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE and the restoration of our Canal is not forgotten.  **MJ**



Model Boat Club

By Ted Tedaldi

The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club has enjoyed more good sailing at Over Canal Basin.

August Bank Holiday Monday saw 36 club members enjoy a competition day and a picnic in good sunny weather at Over. 12 sailors and 20 motor boats, with two competitions for each class, kept members well occupied. Lunchtime saw a wonderful



Our stand at the Over Festival.



HMS Hood

model of HMS Hood sail past. A scale of 1to196, roughly 4foot in length, scratch built with a scale crew that were hardly noticeable! What she looked like in real life must have been awesome. Ian sailed his much used J class yacht, whilst another Ian, with his miniscule clinker built open boat, competed in the competitions and sailed the basin from end to end.

Preparations for the H&G CT's Over Canal Festival the following weekend included



Ian's day boat.

erecting the gazebo and laying out the tables. Our ladies also cleaned the cabin ready for their early shift on the refreshment stall. Following Saturday's stint they relaxed with an hour's sailing. We had twenty-nine boats on the stand with some of these sailing throughout the day. The sun was shining with plenty of people asking questions about models, their construction and the Club. Adrian sailed his schooner for most of the day and Bob his amphibious vehicles. The sailing was good mixing with Mr Maysey, narrowboats and canoes – just like the old days at Gloucester Docks.

On Sunday we had another good day, similar to Saturday, with forty-five boats on show. The churned weed had disappeared and sailing was uninterrupted all day. Two

naval craft, HMS Hood and Tirpitz, attracted much interest. Den's African Queen proved to be the star with the sun shining on the brass flywheel, cylinder and boiler with all the varnished inside planking and the white painted exterior attracting many eyes.

Three days for us to remember! ♦ TT



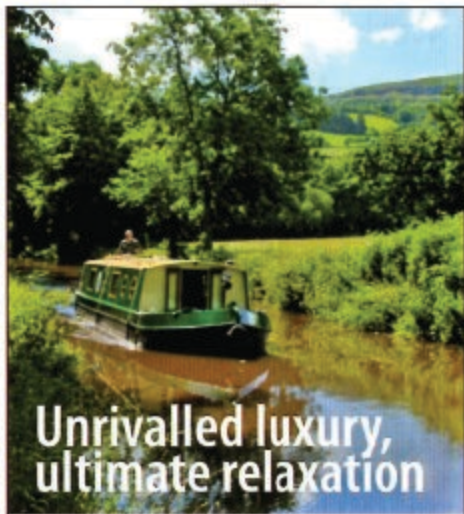
The picnic gathering

Ted and Sandra Tedaldi

Right:
J class
yacht.



Below:
View from
our display.



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Working with Nature

Dead Nettle

By John Chappell

The Dead Nettle, contrary to its common name, is very much alive and living at Oxenhall; despite bearing a close resemblance to the common stinging nettle it does not sting, hence the epithet 'Dead'.

Botanically, *Lamium album*, the plant is an herbaceous perennial growing in a wide variety of habitats, generally on moist fertile soil. It has square stems with coarsely textured pairs of leaves of a triangular shape with a rounded base. The flowers, arranged in a whorl around the stem, are usually white but red forms occur when it is known, unsurprisingly, as the Red or Purple Dead Nettle! The red form does not occur at Oxenhall.

Bees, especially bumble bees, are attracted to the flowers which appear in early spring and continue throughout the year. They are a good source of early pollen, sustaining the bees as they build their nests and providing nectar throughout the year. Flowers are hooded with a protruding lower lip but only insects with long 'tongues' are able to reach the nectar at the bottom of the long tube attached to the hood.

Considered a weed in the garden it increases by both seed and shallow roots running just below ground level. It can easily be got rid of



John Chappell

by simply pulling or hoeing out. It does have its uses, however, as the leaves can be used in salads or cooked as a vegetable. A distillation of the flowers is reputed "to make the heart merry, to make a good colour in the face, and to make the vital spirits more fresh and lively." Another natural ingredient for our medicine chest to keep volunteers happy and healthy at Oxenhall!

Water Plantain Alert!

As a postscript to my article on Water Plantain, in the last edition, I have to add that my efforts in keeping this prolific seeder under control have failed and it is appearing all along the bank. I would advise other sites to get rid of it as soon as it appears – before it takes over!

◆ JC



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News from the friends of Gloucester WATERWAYS MUSEUM

By Chris Witts

The Gloucester Waterways Museum now moves into the quiet part of the year following a successful summer and before thinking too seriously about the Christmas festivities.

Having made that bold statement you then think of behind the scenes activities, with staff and volunteers working hard to make sure the museum remains in working order at all times.

Some are busy sat in front of PCs planning events for the forthcoming months, whilst others get their hands dirty maintaining exhibits.

I have just been looking at the Museum's web site which is hosted in conjunction with the Canal & River Trust. A page caught my eye which says, "Fun for Families" and lists a whole host of attractions for all family members including designing your own canal boat, taking boats through locks as well as dressing up as canal children. There is a picture on the page showing our ladies and their rag rugs. They run a couple of courses

during the year, well worth booking one of them and then have the satisfaction of making your own rug. My wife did just that last year and soon made a colourful rug that had pride of place in our lounge.

The Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum has an interesting and varied programme of talks between now and next spring. For more details please visit their web site at www.friendsofgwm.co.uk



Chris Witts

Ladies from the Friends of Waterways Museum demonstrating traditional canal crafts at our Over Festival.

◀ CW

IWA The Inland
Waterways
Association

Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch

Further details contact:
Roger Holmes
01594 840316

All meetings (except January) at Gloucester Yacht Club, 7.30pm.

Thurs. 5th December - CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - Food and Entertainment

NOTE: There will be no usual meeting at the Yacht Club on January 2nd.

Tues. 21st January, The Royal Oak, Much Marcle 7.30pm. Martin Turner -
On the Cotswold Canals This is the second of two meetings about local
Canal Trusts held jointly with the local IWA Branch (see page 20).

Thursday, 6th February: Speaker to be arranged

Thursday, 6th March: AGM with speaker from the Canals & Rivers Trust

Thursday, 5th April: Somersetshire Coal Canal Roger Halse

H&G CT

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SUPPORT OUR SUPPORTERS**

Thank you IWA

During the Tall Ships Festival, held in Gloucester Docks in May, the IWA Gloucester and Hereford Branch held a boat gathering and also (like the H&G CT) had a promotional and sales display as part of the Festival. The IWA Branch have donated half of the income from moorings and sales stand to the Cotswold Canals Trust and the other half to the **H&G CT LAND FUND**. The £375 donation is greatly appreciated.



Request for Assistance

Approximately 10 years ago, Martin Hudson gave a talk on the Leominster Canal to the H&G CT. At the end an elderly gentleman produced a document saying "have you ever seen one of these before?". Seemingly it was an original share certificate for the Leominster Canal or, possibly, a share payment invoice. Unfortunately he left before we could seek permission to photograph the document. To date, with this possible exception, no Leominster Canal share certificate has ever been seen or located. A share payment invoice was sold at a Shropshire auction 3 years ago, but the purchaser remains unknown.

Trustees of the Friends of the Leominster Canal would be extremely grateful for any information that may be known about the above share certificate, the person at the meeting or the share payment invoice. The person was not thought to be the late David Bick, who also had a profound interest in the Leominster Canal and a sizeable collection.

Life membership of the FOLC would be awarded to anybody providing information leading to the discovery of an original share certificate. We would welcome information on this or other relevant material/documents relating to the Leominster Canal.

David Slater, Trustee FOLC,

23 Redmires Rd,
SHEFFIELD,
S10 4LA 01142 303122
David.Slater@sth.nhs.uk



ABC Leisure Group

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*Not quite
... the last page!*

Ralph Barber

We report, with regret, the resignation of our Chairman on 3 November. Ralph deserves considerable praise for the manner in which he has circulated key issues, ensured that they were addressed, reformed the structure of the AGM and, in particular, brought the Council of Management to the unanimous decision to acquire the freehold of **The Travellers Rest** against pressing deadlines. The Council of Management will now review future ways of working within the H&G CT and seek a new Chairman to play a part in this process.

CoM Minutes/Administration

Our sincere thanks to Carolyn Pascall for volunteering to undertake the CoM role that nobody wants yet is so important to the smooth and efficient running of any organisation – minute taking and the administration of the CoM.

H&G CT Website

Anyone visiting www.h-g-canal.org.uk recently will have noticed significant improvements to our presence on the web. The hard work of all involved, especially Maggie Jones and Nick Dymott, is greatly appreciated. Some sections are still 'work in progress' and if you should encounter any problems please use the 'enquiries' facility to tell us so that we can continue to improve the site.

Thank you.

Congratulations Rosamund

Congratulations to our Legal & Project Development Team member Rosamund Rutter who has passed her Bar Professional Training Course final examinations and been called to the Bar as a Barrister.

Lloyds Bank Community Challenge

Thank you to everyone who voted for the H&G CT – the results of the vote were due a few days after we went to press.



Thank You!

Our thanks to a number of people have assisted the H&G CT in our successful purchase of The Travellers Rest:-

An H&G CT Member (who wishes to remain anonymous), who had made a £10,000 donation towards the costs of building the **Mill Barn** at Over Canal Basin for kindly agreeing that the money could be utilised to assist in the initial purchase of the premises pending other funds being made available.

AIMS Accountants for Business, THE WHARF HOUSE. Accountants, for swiftly obtaining advice from their VAT specialist contacts regarding recovery of the VAT that was payable on the whole cost of the premises.

An anonymous Member who made a £60,000 interest free bridging loan available pending the eventual repayment by HMRC of the VAT payment on the purchase price.

Royal Bank of Scotland (Business and Commercial Banking) **Worcester** and the **Royal Bank of Scotland** (Retail Branch) **Hereford** for their considerable assistance in meeting very restricted auction timescales.

Our own **Legal and Project Development Team** at THE WHARF HOUSE for burning even more midnight oil than usual.

Thank you.

*We wish all of our readers
a Happy, Healthy
Christmas and a
Prosperous 2014.*



COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

MONDAY, 15 JANUARY

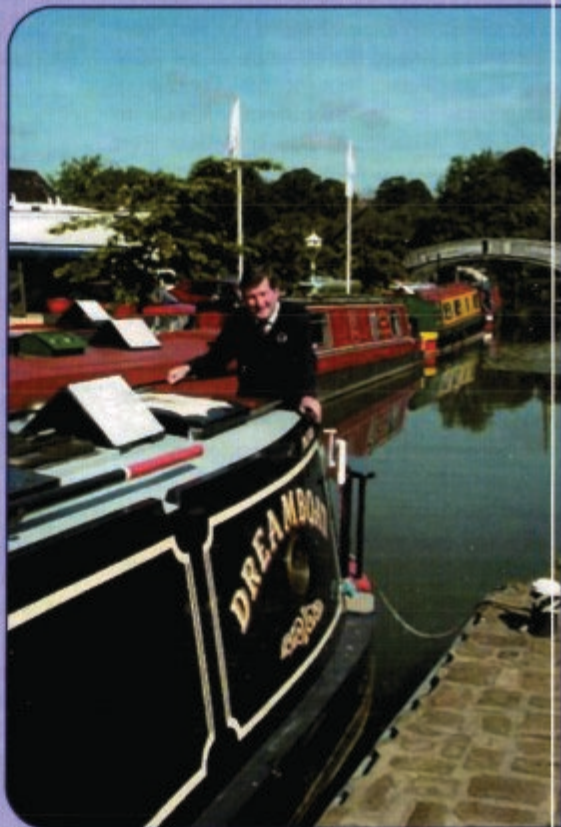
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Want to help?

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, pen or laptop.

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*Contact any
of these names
TODAY!*

Want to join?

Please support our
voluntary work by
becoming a Member of
the H&G CT.

A membership form is
available online or from
THE WHARF HOUSE.

H&G CT UK Membership Rates

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Individual	£10	£200
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Joint Senior Citizen	£10	£150
Corporate	£25	£500

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Visit our websites:

H&G Canal Trust
www.h-g-canal.org.uk

THE WHARF HOUSE
www.thewharfhouse.co.uk

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We try to ensure details of talks/events are correct – please verify with the relevant organiser if travelling long distances.

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The Wharfinger

The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal

Work started in 1792 and reached Ledbury from Gloucester by 1798. In 1827 Steven Ballard was appointed to oversee completion of the canal, eventually reaching Hereford in 1845, making this one of the last major canal routes completed in Britain. The canal stretched for 34 miles from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the city of Hereford, with some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. It was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway which in its turn was closed in 1964.



The H&G 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.



= Canal Walk leaflet available.



= restoration sites suitable for public access.

Gloucester Quays

Pleased to support the H&G Canal

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