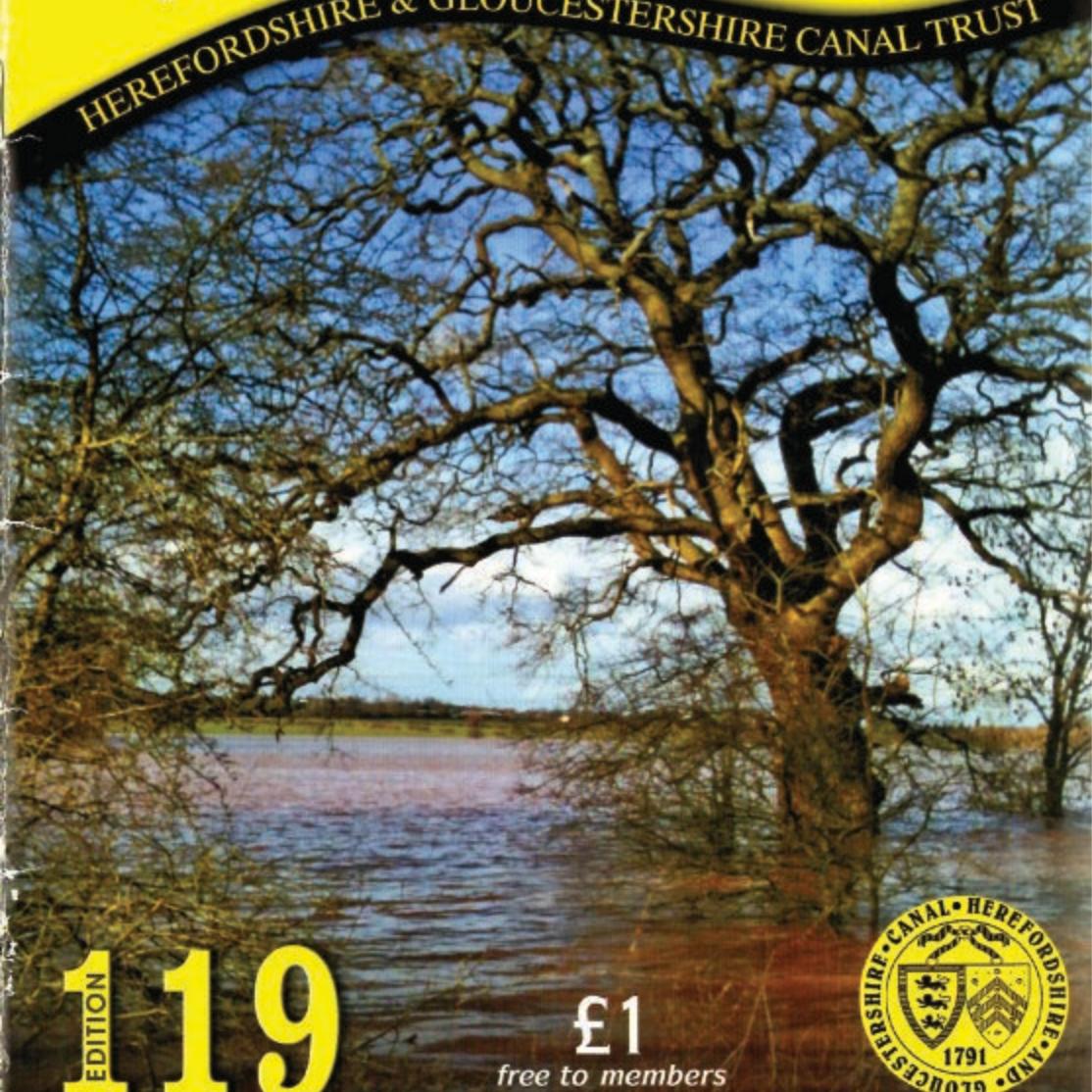


The *wharfinger*

Spring 2014

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST



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Kymin East

Wilf Jones

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Leader: Chris High

Deputy: Paul Hatt

Oxenhall

Leaders: Brian Fox, Geoff Hopper

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Site Leader: Martyn Tilford

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Over

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

Over Committee: Ted Beagles, Chris Byrne,

Maggie Jones, David Penny, Belinda Spragg

Llanthony

Leader: Paul Henshaw

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Legal Services: Rosamund Rutter

Legal & PD Assistant: Stephanie Pike

Planning Liaison: Wally Thrush

Engineering: Thomas Ashworth,

Quantity Surveyor: Tony Kelley

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Ted Beagles



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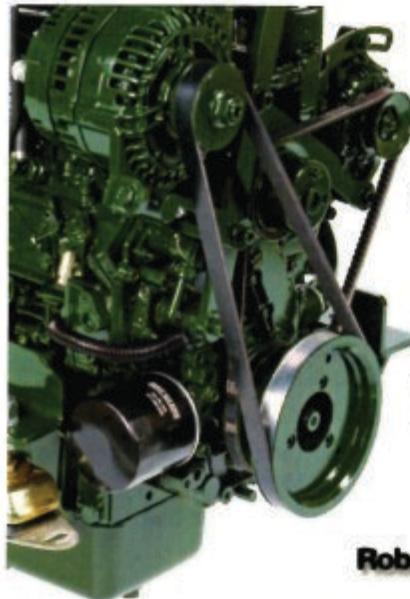
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The Council of Management is acutely aware that our restoration volunteers, members and supporters are anxious to see even more progress quite literally 'on the ground'. There are lots of different ways that we can all work together to help us speed up the process.

There are simple actions that every member can take that in some cases will cost you little or nothing and hardly any time. Whether 'armchair', or the most active restoration or other volunteer member, collectively your actions will assist us to make swifter progress. *As you will see throughout this issue – it all counts!*

We are not just talking money – although, as you will see on pages 9-11 that most certainly counts! The major projects that we all wish to see progressing do require large sums of money and a great deal of volunteer time from people with time and appropriate experience/skills to progress both the technical and related aspects through to major grant aid bids. That doesn't mean that we ignore the considerable voluntary efforts that, year after year, raise the smaller sums that collectively help to keep things going – *it all counts!*

A revised declaration is required for new subscriptions/donors for the Gift Aid scheme (on page 30). We also know that there are some existing members/donors who have not yet 'got round to it'. If you meet the new 'rules' please do send off the form – *it all counts!*

But it is not just money – even though that helps considerably! By expanding membership (both private individuals and Corporate) we have a greater potential pool of volunteers and organisations to call upon for a myriad of interesting (and at times challenging) tasks. As mentioned on page 5 please recruit a new member – you never know but they might just be the person who makes all the difference – *whatever happens it all counts!*

The image that we present externally is important – you literally don't know who might be watching you! In particular on all of our sites (apart from health & safety considerations) we also need to present a smart professional image at all times (see page 37) and let people be in no doubt that it is the H&G CT that is doing the work – *it all counts!*

The list of how you can make a difference is almost endless (to all those volunteers whose specific contribution I do not have room to promote on this occasion my apologies) – I can assure you, we really do appreciate all the varied support that we get – *it all counts!*



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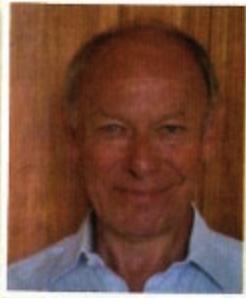
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At the December Council of Management (CoM) meeting Janet Moult accepted a nomination to be Chairman and John Hammond to be Vice Chairman.

CoM has been considering the internal structure of the H&G CT, and in particular how increased and improved communication might help the different sections of our Trust to work together more effectively and in closer harmony. As a part of this initiative Carolyn Pascall, like myself a new member of CoM, and a relatively new member of the Canal Trust, have taken on this task and Carolyn reports on her progress.



“ I am visiting each site with the Site Leader to learn about the site history and to hear their views about the future direction of the H&G CT. I have not met everyone yet but am struck and encouraged by the unending enthusiasm and dedication they have for each site and the affection with which they talk about these areas involving future lengths of the Canal.

In an ideal world, the promotion of the H&G CT to the general public would be significantly enhanced by erecting signage at every footpath and road crossing along the eventual course of the Canal. Whilst a start has been made on this in Hereford, and the CoM have plans to pursue a standard format information sign for each of our restoration sites, the expense for signing every crossing in both counties would be high and a robust design and time-efficient maintenance requires ample consideration. In the meantime the easiest way to promote the H&G CT is that we members remember that we are all ambassadors of the Canal Trust ourselves. If every member persuaded just one new person to join the H&G CT this spring we could involve so many more people in helping to restore the Canal! Raising the profile of the Canal Trust is fundamental to involving all sectors of society and in demonstrating to local people and visitors the many advantages of restoring 34 miles of a fully operational Canal and towpath.

We would certainly welcome more members becoming volunteers and helping with maintenance and restoration work, with promotional events or with office-based activities. The organisation of the volunteers is moving towards skills-based teams with access to the necessary specialist equipment and associated training, rather than solely site-based teams. This is in order to cater for the variety of specialised skills required in maintenance and development work in the coming years.

Under the leadership of Janet as Chairman, and John as her Deputy, the Canal Trust has a good team to drive forward the projects currently on the Canal's restoration agenda and most importantly to look to grow the Trust for the future. I, for my part, hope to play a crucial role in ensuring the Trust works effectively together, both internally and externally, to expand and reach out into partnerships.

Overflow Weir at

Aylestone Park

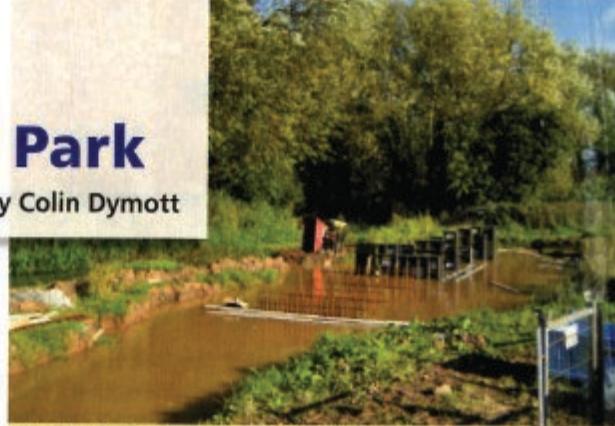
By David Penny, photos by Colin Dymott

In the last edition we showed the initial stages in the construction of this important overflow weir – the contract having been awarded by the H&G CT to Gardiners Construction.

The work has not gone as fast as we would have liked but completion is getting closer. The narrow bank between the excavation and the Canal was breached at one stage due to flooding of the Canal and the contractor has used locally sourced clay to construct a wider bund between the Canal and the excavation in order to permit the work to continue.

H&G CT member Colin Dymott has been maintaining his regular photographic visits which show the work progressing and February saw the concrete pours completed. We expect the concrete sleepers for the bridge deck to be craned in during early March. Further work will be undertaken by our own volunteers to finish the structure including construction of the canal facing 'wharf wall' which will run over the weir alongside the Canal, fencing etc. Sign up to our Email Newsletter to find out when this phase of the weir has finished!

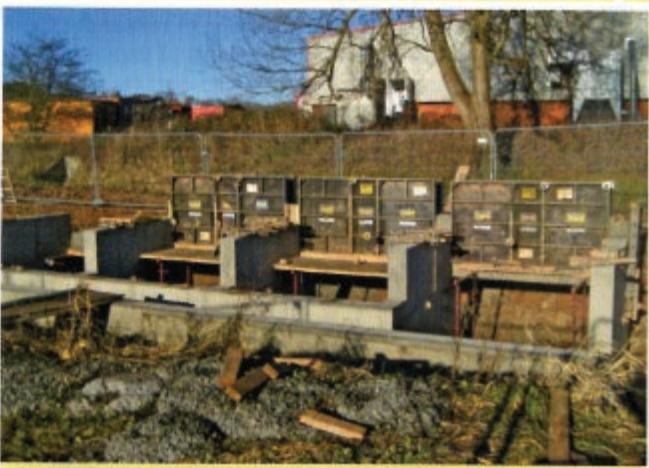
DRP



The flooded work site.



View from other end.



Almost ready for the final concrete pour.



The shoring is impressive



Shoring 'struck' (removed).



Canal-side beam to carry brick facing.



Shoring continues on the Canal face.



Back-filling nears completion.



View from other end.

News from the Legal & Project Development Team at THE WHARF HOUSE

By David Penny

Stephanie Pike has recently joined our Legal & Project Development Team (L&PDT) at The Wharf House on a 6 month internship which is 50% funded by the University of the West of England. She takes the role of the Legal & Project Development Assistant in support of our recently qualified barrister Roz Rutter. Steph introduces herself: –

I graduated with first class honours from the University of the West of England where I studied Law with Criminology LLB and will be going back to University in September to do the Legal Practitioners Course. My long term aim is to train as a solicitor. Although I have only been here for a few weeks, I am looking forward to becoming involved in such an ambitious and challenging project. The L&PDT currently has some exciting developments in the pipeline which will no doubt make a significant impact to the advancement of the H&G CT's aims. Although I appreciate this is a long-term project I hope to make a real difference and be able to return and see the results of the work the L&PDT has facilitated.



Volunteers repair the broken fence panels brought down in recent storms.



The dark purple paint in the lounge and bar is replaced with a lighter, brighter colour.



Unsafe flooring is removed prior to repair of the joists and a new floor

Stop Press!

Much of our time in recent months has been focused on closing out the Dymock project where we hope to be on site shortly.

On Saturday 22 February an 'Open Morning' was held at THE WHARF HOUSE for both CoM and Site Leaders to meet the L&PDT. One of the team's highest priorities has been letting The Travellers Rest PH and this was successfully concluded shortly before the start of the 'Open Morning'. Our new tenants, Jeff and Judith Steers, were able to join us at the start of the meeting and were warmly welcomed.

Details of the grand reopening date for The Travellers Rest will be circulated via our Email Newsletter. To register send a blank email, with 'count me in' in the subject line, to newsletter@h-g-canal.org.uk. A full report will appear in the next edition of **The Wharfinger**.

Thank you to all the Volunteers who have helped in improving The Travellers Rest ready for our new tenants. In mid-February some 22 different people helped on a Wednesday – a fantastic weekday turnout in very bad weather conditions – and work has continued on a number of other days. During early March further work is planned to improve the interior and to construct a concrete disabled access ramp to the front of the property.

DRP

YOU *really* can make a difference!

By David Penny and Carolyn Pascall

IT ALL COUNTS!

There are two crucial funds established within the **Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust (H&G CT)** which donors can choose to support: the **Opportunities Fund** and the **LAND FUND**. We also greatly appreciate donations to the **H&G CT's** general funds.

The **Opportunities Fund** was created following an anonymous £100,000 donation and has a widely drawn remit to support any significant project that may provide a lasting benefit to the H&G CT's ambitions. This might include purchase of the line of the Canal but is not restricted to it.

The **LAND FUND** is longer established. This fund is there to do 'exactly as it says on the tin' and provide the crucial funding to acquire the track of the H&G Canal to permit restoration.

Some recent purchases and received funds indicate the scale of numbers involved. The acquisition of The Travellers Rest pub and restaurant at Newent for £225,000+VAT was only made possible by two further anonymous donations by members: one of £10,000 and the other a short-term interest-free bridging loan of £60,000 pending HMRC's eventual repayment of the VAT paid on the purchase price. The Opportunities Fund and other resources were temporarily invested as well on the basis that the asset could be borrowed against as required in the future and was likely to provide a higher return to the H&G CT. A grant of £20,000 to acquire a much-needed tractor and attachments was secured from the SW Regional Development Agency, Defra and the European Commission, as part of the Rural Development Programme for England. →

Large sums of money continue to be required by our L&PDT principally to secure land for Canal construction and restoration. Short term priorities which require considerable funding include:-

Mill Barn

Reconstruction of Mill Barn at Over to replace the current shipping containers and provide a much improved volunteer mess room, disabled WC facilities, storage and base for the new Canal wide Maintenance Team. The large loft space will provide a crucial meeting/training room, and hugely improved open plan office space for the Legal & Project Development Team.



Dymock

Requires a six figure investment from the H&G CT. This will see the construction of the Canal and also a 3-bedroom detached house for the Trust to let. This, together with index linked annual charges from the other open market properties on the development, will provide long term income for the maintenance and management of the Canal in the area and the H&G CT will receive a share of the open market property sales.

Ayston Weir

A considerable five figure investment by the H&G CT provides a shortly to be completed storm overflow weir of 6.5 cubic metres per second capacity. This is a significant long term investment providing both essential infrastructure for the Canal and support for surface water management in the City of Hereford.

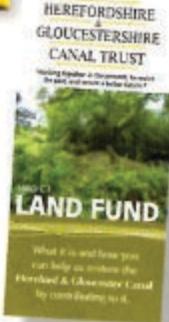


Newent

This will see a six figure investment from the H&G CT in completely restoring the former railway station – with water between the platforms and the Canal stretching back to the current site at Oxenhall.

Land Purchase

This remains the most important aspect by far. Acquiring land for the course of the Canal – in some cases where the route runs diagonally across a field purchase of the whole field may be the best option.



Fulfilling these priorities is dependent upon access to adequate funding in the form of donations, loans, bequests and grants. There are several ways to support the H&G CT now and in the future.

Donations

You might like to consider making a gift to the H&G CT during your lifetime? This can benefit the charity further through an income tax rebate, providing you are a relevant tax payer and meet the simple rules of Gift Aid. Additionally, if you are a higher rate tax payer, you will be eligible to reclaim tax at the higher rate. And such lifetime gifts to a charity do not count as part of your estate should you be unfortunate enough to die within seven years of making the gift, unlike gifts to individuals or non-charitable bodies. Alternatively, you might like to consider donating to the H&G CT a monthly sum paid by standing order. The value of these donations is again enhanced as they can similarly be Gift Aided if you are a relevant tax payer. A revised declaration for GIFT AID has been introduced – please see page 30.

IT ALL COUNTS!

Loans

Do you have funds in the bank earning very little? Could you loan the Trust a minimum of £5,000 (or even £1million!) fully secured against our assets if required for larger sums? A five or ten year interest free loan could potentially cost you very little but gives the H&G CT the cash flow to achieve major progress.



Bequests

Most crucially have you considered remembering the H&G CT in your Will, please, as a lasting legacy to be used towards the restoration of the H&G Canal into a 34 mile working waterway? This will be enjoyed for leisure activities by current and future generations of visitors and in the local communities through which it passes, bringing economic and employment benefits to these areas and to the two counties. The course of the Canal runs through some of the most beautiful English countryside which so many more will enjoy from the restored Canal and clearly defined towpath. And, of course, it will connect with the national network of inland waterways unique to this country and enjoyed by so many.

Reducing Tax Liability. As the H&G CT is a registered charity, your legacy is subtracted from the value of your estate for tax purposes. This reduces the amount of your estate that is chargeable to inheritance tax as well as benefiting the work of the H&G CT. It is recommended that you seek professional advice on your individual circumstances before signing a Will or adding a Codicil to an existing Will in favour of the H&G CT.

More information on bequests and a new legacy guide will be available shortly on the H&G CT website: www.h-g-canal.org.uk.

The H&G CT is most grateful to everyone who has made and is considering a donation, large or small, towards the restoration of the H&G Canal. If you would like to speak to someone in confidence, please contact Liz Connors, 18, St Ethelbert Close, Sutton St Nicholas, Hereford HR1 3BF, 01432 880155, liz@lizconnors.orangehome.co.uk.

Our thanks to H&G CT member Belinda Sprigg and the Legal & Project Development Team for their advice on bequests and taxation.



Restoration Team

Moat Farm

By Martyn Tilford

Two years have elapsed since we commenced restoration activity at Moat Farm and some 65 enjoyable days have been spent here. That does not mean that we don't take our work seriously, as with all of our sites it is important that all work is carried out in a safe manner and it is heartening to record that, through volunteer training, care and vigilance, not a single accident or incident has occurred.

As described in previous editions of **The Wharfinger**, most of the work has been in preparation for final dredging of the existing Canal bed and to enable excavation and reprofiling of the lengths at each end of the site which were buried during construction of the railway. 2013 proved to be a successful year in this respect with most of the trees that it was absolutely essential to lose cut down and scrub cleared, tree stumps removed and a good length of level towpath prepared. We adopt a sensitive approach to vegetation management and carry out tree planting and bio-diverse projects as part of our general site management.



The south end towpath and canal bed taking shape.



Paul takes another load to the receiving area.

Support from other organisations

Early Winter saw another visit by seven volunteers from the Ordnance Survey. Their first visit in November 2012 was a great success so they were keen to visit again and were a great help scrub-bashing, managing bonfires and stacking firewood logs.

IT ALL COUNTS!

South-end earthworks

Late November saw us commence excavation towards the south end of the site. In this area the original line of the Canal was lost beneath the railway trackbed so the method would be more complex than simple dredging of an existing Canal bed. Our resident Kubota excavator is suitable for much of this work but the

problem is the transport and relocation of the spoil arising during the process. The obvious solution was a dumper so we hired a suitable machine for a week.

Whilst the primary objective was digging to create a Canal bed and towpath, the opportunity was also taken to undertake the following:

- The training and certification of several team members in dumper driving. Ted Beagles, as a Waterway Recovery Group approved



Cutting back the railway track bed to create the towpath.



Alan carefully reversing along the track bed with suitable material for our access way.

Markyn Telford/Alan McBride.

instructor, was able to facilitate this and during the first couple of days Paul, Alan and Steve were brought to the standard that enabled a WRG Driver Authorisation to be issued.

- Improving the access-way across the adjacent meadow. During wet weather this low lying access becomes boggy and prevents vehicle access. Several hundred tons of suitable material was deposited and levelled during the course of the week. When conditions allow, the area will be seeded with suitable meadow grasses.
- The removal of the unwanted spoil to a receiving area, away from the Canal bed, in the adjacent railway cutting.
- Full use of the hired dumper for a full seven days with minimal 'down time'. With six authorised dumper drivers, four authorised digger drivers and a carefully put together roster we managed to achieve this.

One of the risks when carrying out this type of work is that rainfall can quickly turn a carefully planned site into a mud bath. The chance of a completely dry week in late November is minimal. Given that the week prior had been dry and the forecast for our chosen week looked good, we decided to proceed. We were indeed fortunate as not a single drop fell and we enjoyed dry and mild conditions for the duration! An estimated 500 tons of material was removed and good progress made in developing this end of the site

Water levels

An interesting feature of the Moat Farm restoration site is the variable water level in the 'cut'. Being an isolated length of Canal the amount of water present is largely determined by the amount of rainfall run off from adjacent fields, the majority of which enters via a land drainage pipe towards the north end of the site. The relatively dry summer and autumn last year saw water levels diminish and by mid October the bed was virtually dry throughout. Contrast this with the conditions that existed by late December! Following a period of prolonged and heavy rain the 'cut' was once again virtually full. The photo of the 'top pound', taken in



Did someone mention lunch? Visiting **Ordnance Survey** volunteers head back to the site hut for a well earned break.

early January, is a good illustration of the volume of water that can enter in a short period of time.

Planned work

Throughout 2014 further excavation and re-profiling will be undertaken together with a good deal of manual work, mowing and strimming to maintain the site. By the year end we hope to be approaching the stage of having a complete and presentable length of the Hereford & Gloucester Canal at Moat Farm.

◆ MT

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

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**



The unfinished but improved access way in January. Note the standing water in the grassy area we normally drive across.



North end in January following heavy rain.

Formal Notice: 2014 Annual General Meeting

**To be held at 7.30pm,
Tues, 15th July, 2014
at the Royal Oak, Much Marcle.**

This is the formal notice of the 2014 AGM in order to give Members the opportunity to make a note in their diary; this year the AGM will be held on Tuesday 15th July. The Agenda and Annual Report will be in the next edition of **The Wharfinger**.

In accordance with the H&G CT's Articles and Memorandum of Association those Members of the Council of Management who are retiring on rotation but offering themselves for re-election do not require to be formally nominated to serve

an additional term. However, new nominations to serve on the Council of Management are welcomed and have to be made in writing, in a prescribed form. Nomination forms are available from Liz Connors [see *Contacts on inside back cover*] to whom they should be returned to arrive not less than 7 days nor more than 28 days prior to the AGM.

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

Thank you.

As reported in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**, the Grand Holiday Draw 2013 was a huge success raising **£3,850**, once again beating our previous record! Let's make this year even better!

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2014

1st Grand Holiday Draw
£1000 money to be returned
by 16th September 2014
sent by post, please!

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE
CANAL TRUST - H&G SALES & PROMOTION

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW 2014

1ST
PRIZE

NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY for FOUR

Donated by Black Prince Holidays
ONE WEEK PRIOR TO 31/5/15 EXCLUDING BANK HOLIDAYS.

2ND
PRIZE

ONE DAY'S BOAT HIRE

To be taken prior to 31/5/15 - EXCLUDING BANK HOLIDAYS.
Donated by Anglo-Welsh.

3RD
PRIZE

ONE NIGHT DINNER, BED & BREAKFAST for TWO at THE WHARF HOUSE, Over, Gloucester

Promoter: Mrs E. Connors, 18 St Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF
Prizes to be drawn at the September Social at Royal Oak, Much Marcle, Herefordshire, HR8 2JL
on September 16th 2014. Registered under the Gambling Act 2005.

IT ALL
COUNTS!

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

Once again this year we have some great prizes!

Again this year we have sent you two books of tickets to sell to family and friends. More books can be sent to you if required – please contact Janet Moult – (see below).

This year the prizes are to be drawn at the Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle, on 16th September 2014. Our grateful thanks to Black Prince Holidays, Anglo Welsh and The Wharf House for donating the Holiday prizes – so every pound raised is a pound towards restoration of the Canal.

We appreciate that some recipients are not prepared to buy or sell draw tickets – we apologise but we do not have the resources to be selective in who receives tickets. There is no obligation to return unsold tickets. In order to save costs we have not included

tickets in copies of
The Wharfinger
sent to Councillors,
Local Authorities
etc.

If you wish to support us please contact Janet Moult on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets.

Thank you.

Restoration Team

Over Basin

Incorporating Vineyard Hill

By Ted Beagles

THE WHARF HOUSE car park has seen lots of activity recently.

An electric car charging point has been installed on the centre island. The unit was supplied to us at no cost to the Trust by **Zero Carbon World**; a charitable trust which is establishing a network of electric vehicle charging stations throughout the UK. This installation required a new high capacity cable to be run direct from **THE WHARF HOUSE**. Fortunately we managed to run it in the same ducting as the lighting cable, which saved us a lot of digging through difficult ground. At the same time we installed additional ducting within the car park which will allow the installation of an improved lighting system covering a much wider area. We have also resurfaced large areas to eliminate puddles, provide a more even surface and improve drainage. Finally our building team has rebuilt those sections of the dry stone walling which had fallen into disrepair over the years.

Meanwhile, the Saturday team has worked on pruning and clearing the undergrowth around the banks of the car park.



Ernest and Pat spreading road planings.



Martin & Ivor digging cable ducting trench.



Tim rolling new surface in car park.



Malcolm loading road planings for car park surfacing.

New bench donated

Since the demise of the temporary bench by the winding hole at the end of Vineyard Hill last summer, many visitors to site have asked why we no longer have somewhere for them sit at the end. Well, now those who are brave enough to venture along there in the current winter weather will have a pleasant surprise. Thanks to a kind donation by **Mrs Alice Henshaw** a fine teak bench has been positioned so that you can sit to enjoy the view back along the Canal to Over Basin and Gloucester.

EDF Energy Nuclear Generation

During November we hosted a team of energetic employees from the **Supply Chain Department** of EDF Energy Nuclear Generation, who came along to do a day of voluntary work for us. They did an excellent job clearing the ground and mulching around the saplings which we planted last year. At the end of the day all the tools for the job, which were provided for them by Balfour Beatty Work Place, were kindly donated to the Trust. *Our sincere thanks to both firms for their most welcome support.*

Chris Sam Alex Katie Mark Adam Alan Rosie
Cath from **EDF Energy**, with donated tools. >



Top: New bench donated by Mrs Alice Henshaw.

Left: **EDF Energy** team mulching around saplings.



Christmas Celebration

On the last Wednesday before Christmas we once again teamed up with the volunteers from Llanthony and Moat Farm sites for lunch at the local Toby Carvery.

Numbers increase each year, but it all went without a hitch once again thanks to the fantastic job done by Pat and Belinda in organising the event, and despite the torrential rain on the day a most enjoyable time was had by all.



Volunteers' Christmas Lunch.

On Vineyard Hill

A request by The Vineyard Trust for assistance with some scrub bashing on the hill was met by an enthusiastic "yes please" response from a number of our volunteers, who just don't seem to be able to get enough of it at the moment! Peter, Tim, Andy, Ernest and Pat, along with a number of our neighbour residents, made short work of the task. This included clearing hawthorn and brambles from the banks of the moat, which surrounds the ancient monument site on top of the hill, and the areas of dense brambles around the stable building by the access road at the bottom of the hill.

General Maintenance

Autumn has also seen us doing a lot of routine garden and general site maintenance. The gravel around the wharf wall and THE WHARF HOUSE gardens have been weeded, shrubs and trees pruned, hedging cut and the fence around the lock excavation repaired. Mike Bowden, with a bit of help from others, has planted around 1,500 native daffodil bulbs along the side of the Vineyard Hill towpath; we can look forward to fine display in the Spring!

◆ TB



Flood water racing across lower area of site.

Want to get involved at Over
then please ring:-

Ted Beagles 01452 522 648
Maggie Jones 01452 618 010



Peter clearing brambles on
Vineyard Hill.



Resident Tony Peters
clearing brambles on
Vineyard Hill.



Mike planting Daffodils along Vineyard Hill.



Graham and Roxy weeding wharf wall gravel.



Bob, Graham and Ivor repair storm damage
fencing around the lock site.

Ivor Beagles

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Joint Social Evenings

for the **IWA, H&G CT** and the **CCT**

Report by Janet Moult

Roger Holmes, Chairman of the Gloucestershire & Herefordshire branch of the Inland Waterways Association, arranged two recent talks on the major canal restoration schemes within the IWA Branch area.

Whilst we have always enjoyed excellent relations with our colleagues at the Cotswold Canals Trust the IWA hoped that the joint meetings will strengthen the existing links between the respective organisations to mutual benefit.

These joint meetings were both well attended with some 70 members of the IWA, H&G CT and the Cotswold Canals Trust at each meeting.

The first was at Fromebridge Mill at Whitminster in November when one of our former Chairmen, Dick Skeet, gave a talk on the H&G Canal in his own inimitable style.

At the second talk, in January at the Royal Oak at Much Marcle, Martin Turner shone the spotlight on the Cotswold Canals. It was very pleasing to see such good support here as the weather was not kind to us.

Both talks gave members an update on the exciting projects proceeding on both canals. The CCT is now working in partnership with 17 organisations and has work in progress at a number of locations. As many of our readers will know, recent work in the Stroud area is where the District Council have led a particularly impressive multi-million pound project largely financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Our friends at the Cotswold Canals Trust have been established ten years longer than the H&G CT and are without doubt the largest inland waterways restoration group in the country. Despite the difference in size of the two Trusts we have much in common



Sue Holmes

IT ALL COUNTS!



Roger Holmes, Chairman of the Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch of the IWA hands cheques to our Chairman, Janet Moult (above) and Jack Telling Chairman of CCT (below).



– both have generous donors, boundless enthusiasm and new Chairmen - and it was good to see both of them at both talks!

Roger presented each Trust with a cheque for £375 which was the IWA Branch profit from the Tall Ships event in Gloucester last year. This donation was much appreciated by Cotswold Canals Trust's new Chairman Jack Telling and myself.

◆ JM

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!**

Social Evenings at the Royal Oak

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

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.

20 May

*Dick King
The Basingstoke Canal*

The chance to hear about another canal in the south of England which has had its ups and downs before and after restoration.

17 June

*Tony Conder
Going up the country –*

last year Tony talked about Gloucester Docks – this time we travel inland up the Severn.

15 July

*Annual General Meeting
See page 14 for further details.*

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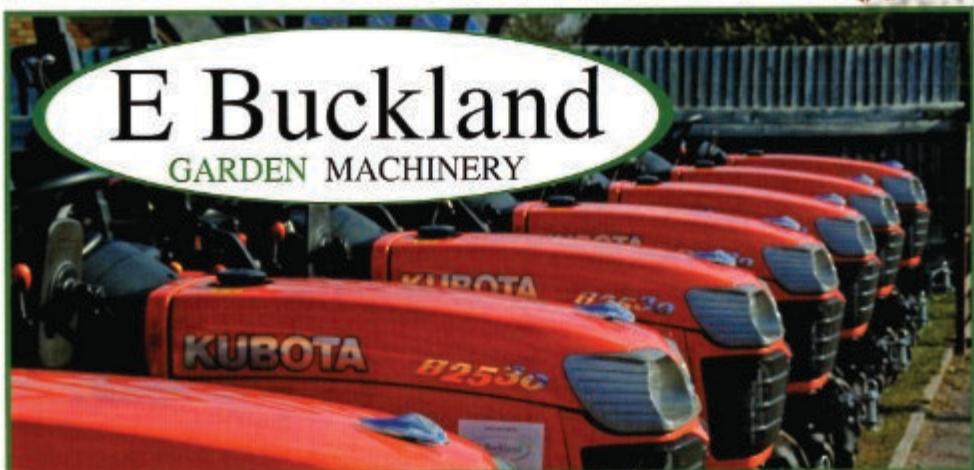
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All profits from The Wharf House will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Hereford & Gloucester Canal.

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by Janet Moult and Maggie Jones

We hope to be able to attend the following interesting events during 2014 – some of which are new venues for us.

Why not have a good day out with the H&G CT? We welcome additional volunteers; no experience necessary – just come and be part of our team – we will do our best to put you at ease and to find a task that you will enjoy. Your admission to the event will be free and we always try to ensure that you have some time to look around.

Please contact either of us (see **Contacts** inside back cover) if you can help or know of any local events which we could attend with our display and sales stand.

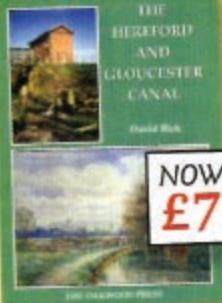
◆ JM/MJ

March 1	Gloucester Green Fair, Gloucester
March 22–23	Oxenhall Daffodil Weekend
May 3–5	St Richard's Festival, Droitwich, Worcestershire
May 24–26	Crick Boat Show, Northamptonshire
June 7–8	Hellens Garden Festival, Herefordshire
Jun 28–29	Braunston Historic Boat Rally, Northamptonshire
July 5–6	Stratford on Avon Water Festival, Warwickshire
July 12	Sutton St Nicholas Fete, Herefordshire
August 30–31	Over Canal Festival
September 6	Alfrick Fete, Worcestershire
November 8	H&G CT Winter Bazaar, Ledbury

Want to get involved in our outings? Please call:

Janet Moult on 01432 264366 or Maggie Jones on 01452 618010

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Llanthony

By Paul Henshaw

During the autumn we have been engaged in a number of activities designed to improve the site at Llanthony.

The lattice girder footbridge which crosses the Severn used to have a weather vane mounted on the central cross member. It was removed when the contractor Costain, working for the Government

Pipeline Agency, carried out the strengthening work on the bridge (that was reported in edition 115 of **The Wharfinger**).

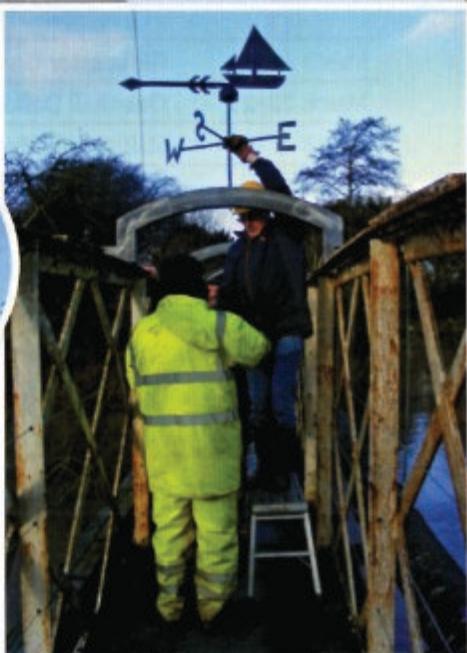
The weather vane had become badly corroded. Thanks to sterling work by Dave Hurran and volunteers from Over, it has been completely restored and remounted on the bridge. Thank you Dave.

As we reported in edition 104 of **The Wharfinger** the original footbridge, which was used to cross the lock, was removed in 2010 with the assistance of Waterway Recovery Group volunteers because it had become unsafe. In order to preserve the bridge as a feature it was decided to mount it on raising blocks alongside the lock. Getting it off the ground would help prevent any further deterioration of the structure. When we cleared the site in 2009/2010 we found four large coping stones each weighing 2 to 3 tons. These blocks were originally part of the lock and were discarded in 1947 when the Oil Pipeline



The weather vane against the winter sky.

The Severn at Llanthony in flood.



The weather vane being remounted on the bridge cross members.

was constructed to run through the site. Using a trolley and an assortment of levers, we were able to reclaim two of the blocks and ease them into position to form the base for the bridge. We plan to mount the swivel plate (found buried nearby) on these blocks once it has been restored, and fitted with new rollers. There will be more to follow in subsequent editions as we proceed with the project.



Moving the coping stones into position.

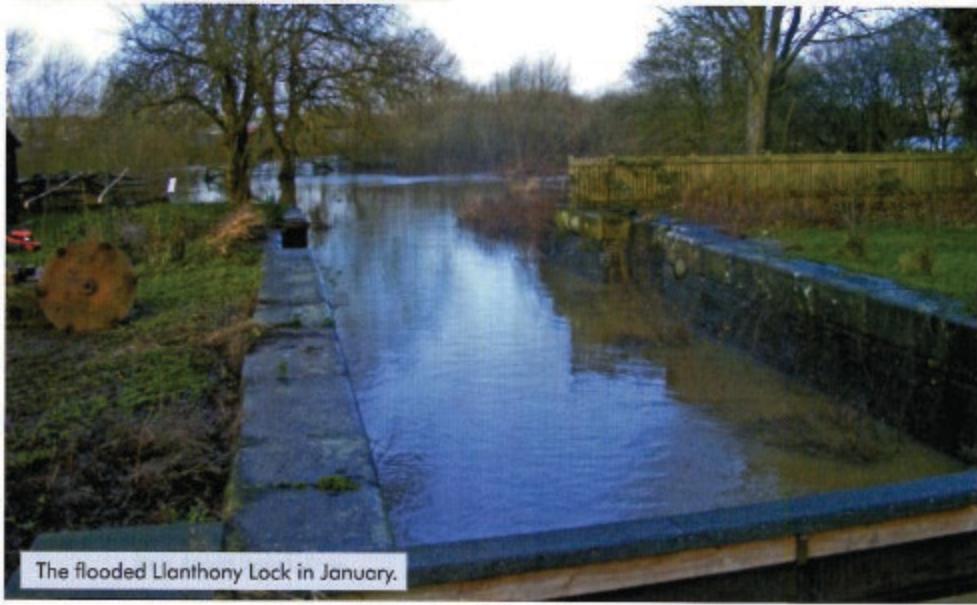


2 blocks in position – the bridge is in the background, the swivel plate is leaning against the blocks.

Some tree work has also been carried out to remove limbs which had blown down during the recent gales and tree stumps have been dug out (by hand).

The first week in January saw a prolonged period of heavy rain coupled with storm surges hitting the south west coast. This brought river levels about a metre below that of the July 2007 floods and interrupted our work to some extent. However, much more rain and gales were to come ...

◆ PH



The flooded Llanthony Lock in January.

Alan McEwan

Restoration Team

Oxenhall

By Brian Fox

This time of year our work on a Tuesday is determined by the state of the ground, the weather and the number of volunteers who turn up.

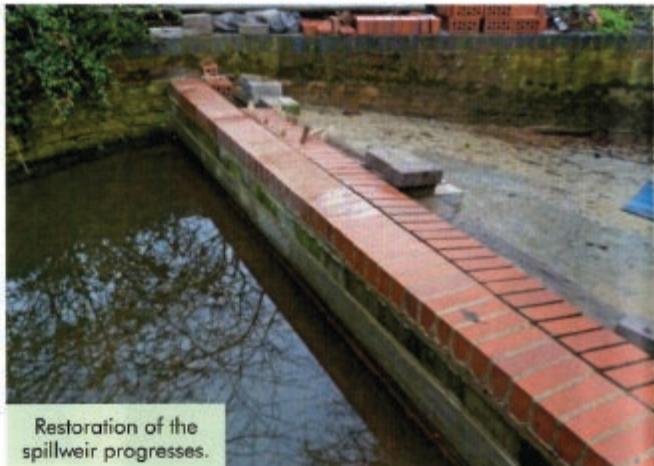
So far no really cold weather but the ground is sodden and impossible for the tractor to move around without chewing up the footpath and understandably alienating the locals who like to take the dog for a walk. The level of the Ell Brook is up and down like a yoyo but so far nothing to bother us and the caravan dwellers next door have not yet been forced to move to higher ground as they were last year.

Geoff and Ian are painstakingly restoring the spillweir brickwork and getting the levels and slope correct is a challenge. Another skill to be added to the cv! Not quite the magnitude of the new weir at Aylestone but precise and arguably more pleasing to the eye.



John Chappell

This what we found early in February and shows what happens to willow if you don't pollard it. Split in two and one branch right across the towpath. We planned to start cutting it in February but nature just beat us!



Restoration of the spillweir progresses.

The rest of the team are engaged on the normal maintenance type work which always occupies the autumn/winter months. The grass was still being cut in November but mostly it has been the work required on trees and bushes along the canal corridor which continues. Some willows which have been pollarded before are due a second trim – others have never been touched and are in danger of shedding branches at random. Fortunately most are on the non towpath side and no danger to pedestrians but still a hazard if they fall and break fences or block ditches and watercourses. One large tree has been cut to the ground as it had grown almost horizontally across the course of the Brook and caused a serious blockage every time the water level rose.

◆ BF

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

Come and visit our
H&G Canal Trust Stand at
Oxenhall
Daffodil Weekend

Saturday 22 – Sunday, 23 March
12:00pm – 5:00pm

Walks, Wildlife Talks and delightful teas at Oxenhall Parish Hall.

Restoration Team **Yarkhill**

By Chris High

The usual work of site maintenance and stump digging has continued – until the rains set in. Not surprisingly, we even have a Canal full of water now!

December saw us celebrate the completion of eight years of work at Yarkhill with twelve team members making a tour of the Gloucestershire sites including the latest H&G CT acquisition of **The Travellers Rest**.

None of our planned work days were missed as the weather was kind to us. *Mind you there were some early afternoon evacuations!* Submerged stump digging has not been attempted and our work has changed to water management which has included somewhat muddy leak repairs to the offside bank. ♦ CH

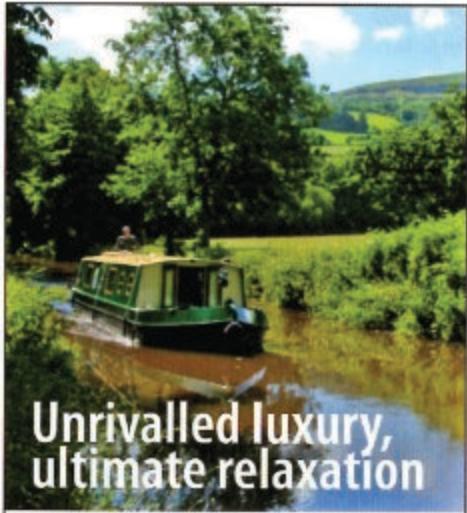


The tree stumps are getting bigger!

Anyone interested in lending a hand?

Please contact

Chris High 01568 615 575



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Tree stump removal delayed by water in the canal.



Following the H&G CT's purchase of The Travellers Rest at one of their auctions we extend a very warm welcome to our new Corporate Member **Sidney Phillips Auctioneers**. Based in Herefordshire, they specialise in pub and other licensed property sales, valuations and allied services with six regional offices offering premises for sale throughout England and Wales.

The continuing support given to the H&G CT by businesses, both local and national, is very important to us – thank you to:-

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Our sincere thanks to all of the above – and to our regular advertisers listed on page 37. We ask all of our members to support these businesses whenever they can.

Your business would be made very welcome as a Corporate Member of the H&G CT. Just £25 per annum (or *life* Corporate Membership is secured for a single payment of £500). Please complete the application form on our website www.h-g-canal.org.uk.

◆ CRP

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tickets next year. As all of the prizes are sponsored this would mean that all the money raised goes towards restoration of the H&G Canal. For £200 your company/business name would appear on some 12,000 tickets (which are on sale for over 6 months) and be fully acknowledged in **The Wharfinger**.

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Thank you to those who have already made the necessary declaration – last year Gift Aid added over £5135 to H&G CT funds.

HMRC have changed the wording of the Gift Aid declaration. All *new* subscribers/donors should complete the new declaration,

below, please. Existing 'Gift Aiders' should please read the declaration and ensure that you remain eligible (and that we have your correct address).

If you have any doubt as to whether or not you are already supporting us via Gift Aid, or have any questions, our voluntary Treasurer, Liz Connors, will be pleased to help.

liz@lizconnors.orangehome.co.uk
01432 880 155

(or send a note of your query together with the completed declaration by post to the address below – we will only proceed if appropriate).

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Liz Connors, 18, St Ethelbert Close, Sutton St Nicholas, HEREFORD, HR1 3BF

Report by Pat Skeet

Every pound counts! Whilst the larger donations make the headlines the H&G CT still has willing volunteers raising funds on a smaller scale. Our annual Winter Bazaar is a good example, both promoting our work on the H&G Canal and demonstrating that we will explore all avenues to raise the more modest amounts that collectively do make a difference.

November 9th in Ledbury dawned cold, showery and windy and continued that way until lunchtime. We were able to use the adverse conditions to entice customers into the hall with a "Come in, warm up and dry off. It's free." This worked well enough to keep a constant trickle of customers coming in. I hadn't realised how well until one lady, on

leaving, said to me, "I was really fed up and depressed when I went in, but I feel much more cheerful now. It's lovely and warm and friendly inside there." The warm and friendly spirit characterised the whole day, with many of the stallholders commenting on the atmosphere.

We had to work especially hard to sell draw tickets for our hamper, even taking it outside in the afternoon! It made us a very creditable profit, thanks to Judy Street's hard work.

The refreshments were much enjoyed all day, warming people inside, and made a bumper profit!

There were definite signs that the economic climate affected takings this year. However, with only one exception all of the stall-holders said with fervour that they'd definitely come again next year. *Our thanks go to them for their support.*

The 'warm, friendly atmosphere' which pervaded the day was created by our many helpers, who worked tirelessly throughout the day. Enormous thanks are due to each of them and also the very willing donors of our superb home-made refreshments. Each one made his/her own contribution to a very happy day which culminated in a wonderful profit of £620 being raised for the H&G CT, along with a raised awareness of our progress towards restoration.

PS

IT ALL
COUNTS!



Hyde Mill

By Chris High

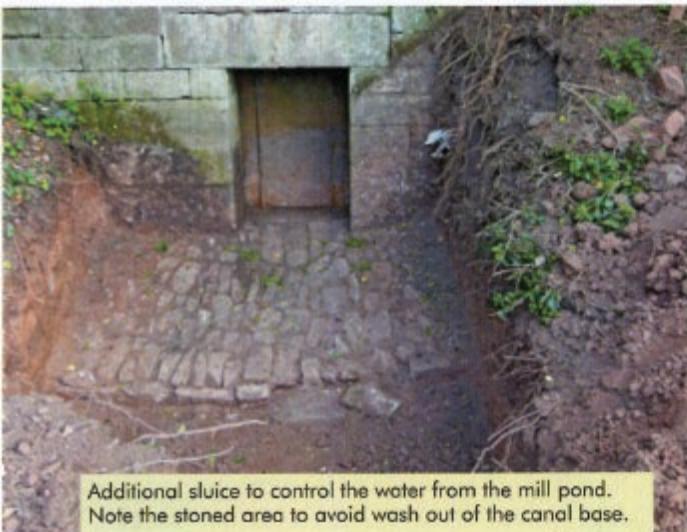
In the last edition we reported that Chris High and friends had commenced work carrying out an archaeological dig at the site of Hyde Mill by kind invitation of the landowner Malcolm Davies. They have made some interesting finds

Mills undergo considerable change over their period of use – when this section of the H&G Canal was built in 1843 it cut the mill leat feed at the mill from the mill pond; *no doubt a worrying time for the miller!* Water management is of major importance for mills as it is for canals and the Canal Company had to introduce a further sluice to enable water from the mill pond to be released into the Canal to allow water to be drawn off the Canal to operate the mill.

Having uncovered about a third of the water wheel left behind in the tail race it has been possible to estimate its diameter as 11 feet. The use of heavy cast iron rims and metal spokes suggests it could well have been changed at the time the Canal was built. Other finds have been a second grinding stone – the companion to the first? Also a driven device to agitate the corn from



Below: Excavation of Canal at bridge. The wall is in good condition, 'rescued' displaced parapet stones are in the background.



Additional sluice to control the water from the mill pond. Note the stoned area to avoid wash out of the canal base.





Above: Wheel and gear pit following considerable excavation.



A find of recent origin!



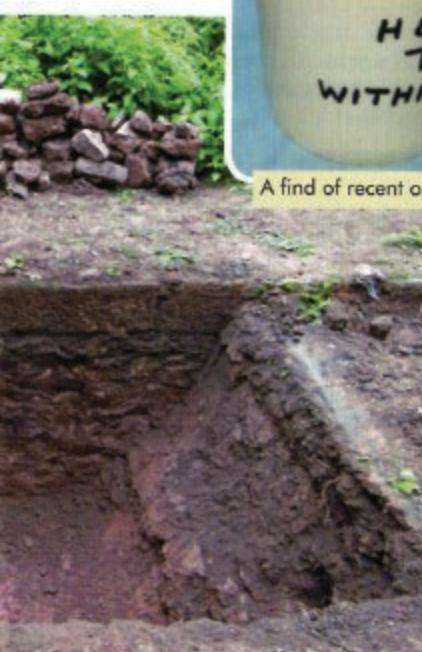
Yard area adjacent to mill showing bake oven and copper at far end.

the hopper into the grindstone. This was a very noisy device – the task was originally carried out by a young girl – hence the name chattering damsel!

Further work has exposed a yard area adjacent to the mill with bake oven and copper at the far end, the canal wall in good condition and the stone missing from the bridge parapet, also the Canal line to the west with Monksbury Court bridge in the distance.

The life span of the mill has yet to be established. Some of the stonework suggests a pre 1500 (medieval) origin with an 1877 map already showing it as disused. Our 'archaeological dig' on the site continues.

CH



A millstone in excellent condition.



Chris High



Model Boat Club

By Ted Tedaldi

The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club has enjoyed another year's sailing at Over Basin. Club membership is now at a record level with 115 members.

Attendance has been at record levels with well over the twenties on Wednesdays with up to five members from Hereford. Many of this year's new members who are retired are keen to go boating. Also this year we have had a number of members join who are wheelchair bound, joining Rob who has built and sailed for years. Some of our new members have never built a model boat. Members have been kept busy guiding them. Very often the following week they have turned up for the next stage. One member Dave who is in this category set sail in October. The joy on his face was worth all the effort and has given enthusiasm to others. Unfortunately our treasurer Bob, an experienced modeller who specialises in one off amphibious vehicles may well soon join the above. Bob is determined to be back at Over.

Our annual 'Beans on Toast Sunday' saw two dozen members enjoy another fine day; unfortunately through lack of wind the sailors stood around all day looking rather forlorn.

The motor boat boys lent their models to the sailors to cheer them up (or to rib them?). The competitions

were very well patronised.

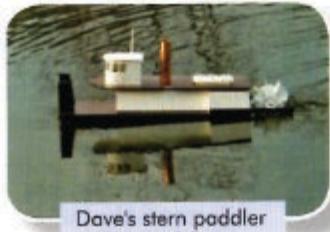
Our fortnightly Micro Magic yacht competition sometimes sees fourteen yachts taking part. The rules are simple, first over the line wins. The ladies show no mercy for the men.

The photo above shows how a good wind makes exciting sailing.

Dave our new webmaster has just completed this stern paddler making its debut adventure.

Ross's Clyde Puffer sedately sails the canal. The model is about three feet long and powered by an electric motor. A skipper on the bridge, crew on the deck preparing to off load a cargo of stone.

As I write this article it has been raining for nearly two weeks. All boats are 'tied up' and our wives are becoming frustrated with men under their feet!



Dave's stern paddler makes its debut.



Well wrapped-up, the model boaters enjoy sailing at Over Basin.



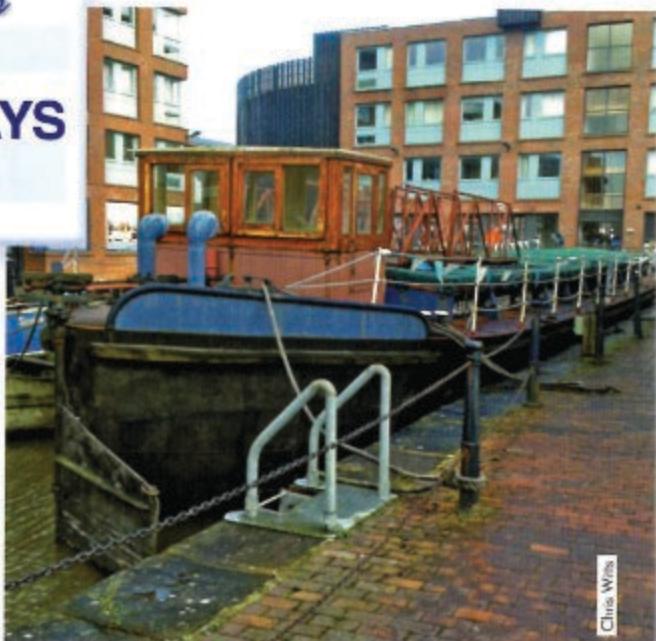
A good wind leads to exciting sailing.

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

By Chris Witts

Staff, Volunteers and Friends are all working hard to succeed in the £1M Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Gloucester Waterways Museum. As we all know it isn't simply a case of filling in a form and sending it off in the post! We are scrutinised from the minute we submit our intention to submit the bid. A detailed plan has to be agreed upon together with costings, etc. Last year for Stage 1 of the project, we thankfully were successful.

Stage 2 submission is made in more detail with a dedicated Canal & River Trust Officer working hard to seek match funding from other sources. Indeed the Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum has pledged £5,000 towards the bid with most of the money to be spent on *Sabrina 5*.



Sabrina 5 on her mooring at the Gloucester Waterways Museum.

Towards the end of January *Sabrina 5* was moved into dry dock at Tommi Nielson's yard to have a full inspection of the hull. This classic dumb barge is a focal point of the HLF bid and if successful will be used as an educational venue at the Museum.

For more details please visit the website at www.friendsofgwm.co.uk

◆ CW



Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch

Further details contact:

Roger Holmes
01594 840316

roger.holmes@waterways.org.uk

Meetings will be in Gloucester Yacht Club
Gloucester Docks starting at 7.30pm.
Everybody is welcome and admission is free.

6th March – Branch AGM

Followed by Ed Helps, South Wales and Severn Waterways Partnership (CRT) and MD ABC Leisure – the largest hire fleet in UK
Also a presentation to Hugh Conway-Jones

3rd April – Somersetshire Coal Canal by Roger Halse

Summer Break till September

Dog's Mercury

By John Chappell

Known botanically as *Mercurialis perennis*, this plant is a poisonous weed. Although it doesn't have much going for it I include it in this series as it grows prolifically at Oxenhall!

Dog's Mercury is an herbaceous, downy perennial with 12"-15" tall erect, unbranched stems bearing simple, toothed, opposite leaves. Flowers are borne on separate male and female plants (i.e. the plant is dioecious). Male plants bear catkin-like flowers in spikes, 1" to 1½" long which appear from the base of the leaves, not unlike stinging nettles; the flowers bear many stamens of a creamy yellow colour making the male plant more conspicuous than the female. Un-opened flower buds on male plants can be easily mis-identified as seeds which, of course, are borne on female plants and are simple structures composed of 3 tepals (the term used when petals and sepals are the same or indistinguishable).

Seeds are quite large, 3 – 4 mm in diameter, but are almost secondary to propagation because the plant has questing, underground rhizomes enabling it to form extensive carpets in woodlands and under dense hedgerows. In the open the plant is never successful.

Dog's Mercury is one of the first herbaceous flowering plants of the year with flowers usually appearing in mid February, often earlier. The name arises from the legend that medicinal virtues were revealed by the god Mercury. Some dog owners report that their dogs are attracted to the plant and vomit after eating its leaves, believing that this is how the prefix 'Dog' came about. However a more likely explanation points out that this common name is often given to wild flowers with no scent – as for instance, Dog Violet, Dog Rose, etc. An alternative explanation is that it refers to it being false or bad.



Dog's Mercury – male flowers



Dog's Mercury – female flowers

John Chappell

The leaves when crushed have a foetid smell but despite this, instances of poisoning in humans have been recorded, especially when Dog's Mercury is mistaken for similar plants such as the edible, semi-aquatic brooklime - or even spinach! Symptoms appear quickly and can include vomiting, gastric pain and kidney inflammation. It can be fatal to children.

Needless to say, if you find it in your garden get rid of it - and dog walkers should be aware that the plant exists at Oxenhall.

JC

CACTUS RAISES FUNDS



Malcolm Braine toasts Cactus.

Advertising in The Wharfinger

Show the support of your business by advertising in *The Wharfinger*. Rates from £39 per issue and we will gladly design your advertisement free of charge.

Contact Carolyn Pascall

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**Please support our advertisers –
SUPPORT OUR SUPPORTERS**

One of our long-standing very supportive members, and friend, is the well known and highly respected former Norton Canes boatbuilder Malcolm Braine.

Although retired from boatbuilding for some years Malcolm still undertakes work as a boat surveyor and takes great pride in a number of historic boats including the former Fellows, Morton & Clayton motor boat 'Cactus'. This he has brought back to immaculate original 'carrying' condition.

Towards the end of last year over 100 friends and fellow enthusiasts gathered at Malcolm's home at Weston Wharf, on the Trent and Mersey Canal in Staffordshire, to celebrate 50 years of his ownership of 'Cactus'.

During the event a collection was made which Malcolm has kindly divided equally between two charities - one of which is the H&G CT - adding a most welcome £175 to our funds. *Thank you, Malcolm, it is greatly appreciated.*

◆ CRP

Look H&G smart – be safe

On all of our sites (apart from health & safety considerations) we really do need to present a smart professional image at all times – you literally don't know who might be watching you!



Yellow H&G hard hats and hi-viz badged waistcoats (now in two sizes) PPE is readily available free of charge to all of our regular volunteers to take and keep for their personal use on all of our sites. Let people be in no doubt that it is the H&G CT that is doing the work – **look smart and be safe – it all counts!**



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Not quite ... the last page!

Postage Stamps = **EEE**

Our member Steve Bence has the contacts and expertise to ensure that used postage stamps are turned into the maximum amount of cash for the H&G CT. Please bring them to any H&G CT Social Evening, other H&G CT event, or hand them in at ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE. If you have albums, or a large quantity and cannot deliver them, then please contact Janet Moulton for details of how to proceed.

This is a fund-raising initiative where everyone can please participate (and perhaps you know a business near you who would collect stamps for **IT ALL COUNTS!** you to pass on?).

High and Dry!

Whenever the River Severn is in severe flood frequent traffic reports on local radio report the A417 closed at Maisemore close to Over roundabout - which inevitably results in numerous calls to ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE "are you flooded?". With the ground floor deliberately set well above the highest recorded flood the building (and access) thankfully remain high and dry!

Despite the floods and appalling weather conditions Valentine's Day evening proved to be an outstanding success with intrepid diners all but filling the restaurant in each of two sittings - *not a single cancellation* - love conquers the floods!

Museum Display

Thanks to CoM member Nigel Jefferies a display case in Hereford Museum (above the public library) was made available to us during December and January. This followed on from a display about the H&G CT in the entrance to the library during a week in September. The information about the history of the H&G Canal and details of the **IT ALL COUNTS!** work of the H&G Canal Trust attracted a lot of interest.

Lloyds Bank Community Challenge

Thank you to everyone who voted for the H&G CT last autumn and to the Lloyds Bank Community Fund for the £300 'runner up' prize.

Just 270 more votes would have gained us £3,000 instead of £300. A very good example of how, with minimum effort, every member and supporter **IT ALL COUNTS!** could have made a worthwhile difference ...

500 Editions ...

Congratulations to our volunteer colleagues who produce the 'Fifty Eight' magazine for our close neighbour the Worcester-Birmingham & Droitwich Canals Society on reaching the 500th edition of their monthly magazine. Well done to all concerned and our best wishes for the future.

Recycling bins banned!

Before you mount a campaign to lock up your editor let me clarify! Whilst we know many of you keep **The Wharfinger** for future reference others will eventually put it in the recycling bin. Please don't! Recycle it by passing it on to a neighbour, work colleague or (with permission) leave it in a waiting room somewhere for a wider audience to read it. You will help us to spread awareness of the H&G Canal and of the H&G CT - and may **IT ALL COUNTS!** attract a new member.

and finally ...

Please do something, before you forget, that will make a difference and benefit the H&G CT in some way - no matter how small (although big is good!) let's ensure that *it all counts!*

Thank you.

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MONDAY, 14 APRIL

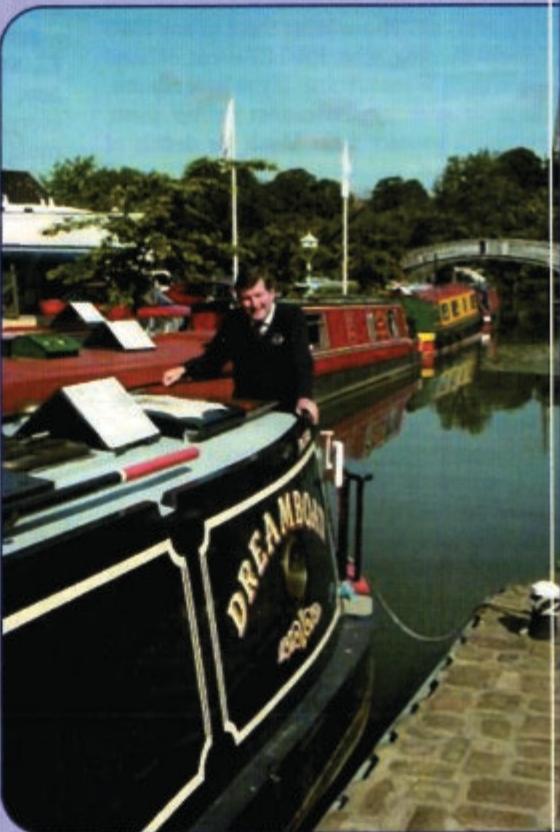
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Want to help?

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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of these names
TODAY!

Want to join?

Please support our
voluntary work by
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the H&G CT.
A membership form is
available online or from
THE WHARF HOUSE.

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Visit our website:

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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!

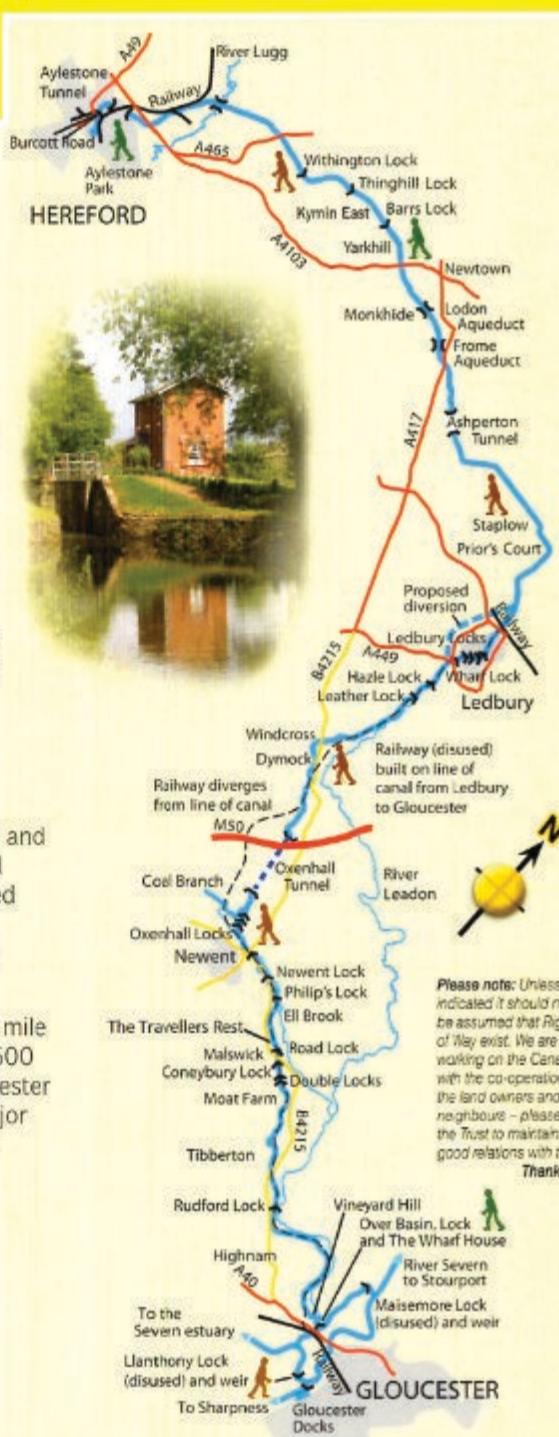
Our objective is to fully restore the 34 mile Canal, from its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterway network at Gloucester to the centre of Hereford. We have major restoration sites in each county, which together extend to some 4 miles.

 - Canal Walk leaflet available.

 - restoration sites suitable for public access


Gloucester Quays

Please to support the H&G Canal



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