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Yarkhill

Leader: Chris High

Deputy: Paul Hatt

Oxenhall

Leaders: Brian Fox, Geoff Hopper

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Moat Farm

Project Chairman: Wilf Jones

Site Leader: Martyn Tilford

Vineyard Hill

Project Chairman: Wilf Jones

Site Leader: Ted Beagles

Over

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

Llanthony

Leader: Paul Henshaw

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Cover: The completed restoration of the overspill weir at Oxenhall.

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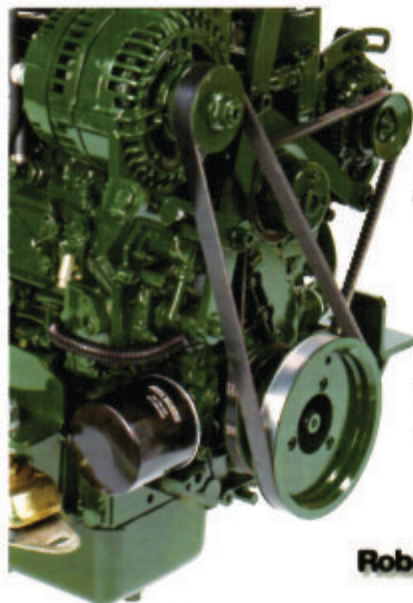
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National recognition and promotion to attract new members

You may have seen that this month's Waterways World included a three-page spread on the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust, acknowledging that rapid progress on the Canal's restoration is being made through 'a combination of business acumen and hard graft'.



It is extremely pleasing that independent journalists in the national waterways press are demonstrating their recognition that our achievements and successes are the result of the vital contribution which volunteers are making in their weekly efforts throughout the year at various sites along the route, together with the wide range of legal, negotiation, planning and project development activities of the Legal & Project Development Team. Regular articles about the Canal Trust such as this feature help promote the Trust to a broader spectrum of interested people and increase its standing nationally as a major restoration project, so do mention this press profile when you are promoting the Canal Trust to your friends, colleagues and relations. Such an endorsement by the national press is a huge support in our attempts to raise the profile of the restoration of our Canal.



The central importance of the combined efforts of volunteers and the L&PDT was also one of the main messages projected at the Canal Trust's Annual General Meeting in July, when members assembled for presentations on the year's finances by Liz Connors, the contribution of the volunteers and progress at major sites, including refurbishment of The Travellers Rest, by Paul Henshaw, and the contribution of The Wharf House to the Trust by David Penny. There was free online membership of IWA on offer for the remainder of the year too. Finally, Maggie Jones rounded off the evening by highlighting ways people can help towards the objectives of the Trust.

While on the subject of promotion, by the time you are reading this there will be just over 100 shopping days left before Christmas. So why not settle for giving everyone the ultimate gift: membership of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust? What could be easier?

'But if that doesn't grab you, please shop online via www.giveasyoulive.com which provides a donation to the Canal Trust at no cost whatsoever to you. See page 28 for further details. Many thanks.

◆ CP



“CoMBINED EFFORTS”

By John Hammond



Even older than our Canal, and with less disruption to its existence, the Three Choirs Festival celebrates its 300th anniversary in late July next year in Hereford. Last year it was in Gloucester, this year in Worcester, both of which are accessible for boaters and provide visitor moorings. We are confident that one day Hereford will offer the same.

The programme book for the Worcester Festival this year contained a prominent page promoting the H&G CT and inviting readers to join. This raised some interest leading to conversations, and a common question, “How does the Trust set about restoring such a long abandoned Canal, and can you really do it?”

The answer to the second point is a confident and resounding “YES”, even though it might take quite a long time. More interesting is how we make progress, and the key to this is combining a wide variety of efforts. “Armchair members are just as welcome as muddy ones ...” – and this includes desk-bound ones as well.



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The Philharmonia Orchestra, Three Choirs Festival Chorus and conductor Peter Nardone perform at this year's festival at Worcester Cathedral.

Everyone recognises the work with spades and wheelbarrows, or nowadays more often with excavators and dumpers, chainsaws and strimmers, and the physical construction of Canal bed and towpath, even of bridges, locks and overflow weirs, is easy to associate with. We already have several sections of completed Canal, and more approaching completion, with much volunteer effort needed to maintain them in a healthy state.

Equally vital is the planning behind the scenes which ensures the reconstructed sections of Canal will eventually fit together, taking into account the requirements of modern road crossings, diversions from the original route to avoid modern developments and other issues which have arisen since the Canal was closed in 1881. Much of this has already been done in sufficient detail so that the route (and the essential diversions) could be protected from adverse development in both counties in the relevant development plans. Such planning cannot just look inward to the concerns of the H&G CT but has to proceed in agreement with, and ideally the support of, numerous official

bodies including local councils, highways and environmental authorities.

As our regular readers already know, as well as all that, we still need to have access to, and indeed eventually to own, the land on which sections of the Canal can be restored or even reconstructed. Negotiations with the more than a hundred landowners of all the connecting parts add up to a formidable demand of both diplomacy and legal agreements.

Last but far from least, it all has to be paid for. There are grants, but these pay for only a limited range of our needs, and even in the

world of canal restoration we are but one of over sixty such projects in the UK. We are dependent on all forms of support: member donations, sponsorship, bequests and more. An aspect which makes us notable among similar projects is our focus on revenue generating assets and development partnerships through which we gain sections of Canal plus a continuing source of income to secure the Canal's long term future.

Combining all these elements, making the necessary decisions and communicating what needs to be done is the task for CoM, one that sometimes presents considerable challenges but also many opportunities for celebration.

How many new members and supporters we might gain from the Three Choirs Festival community remains to be seen, but the interest shown has been pleasing. Everyone we have spoken to has been positive about our approach and enthusiastic about our overall objective of restoring the Canal and linking to the third Festival city.

◆ JH

Development Site

Dymock

By David Penny

After some eight years of negotiations we finally signed all the legal agreements for the Dymock site on 9 July 2014.

Most people probably did not believe us whenever we described the mountains of paperwork which Roz and I have been working on for this site. I wish we had taken a photograph of the conference table at the solicitors' with piles of legal documents in ring binders and heaps of all the subsidiary agreements.

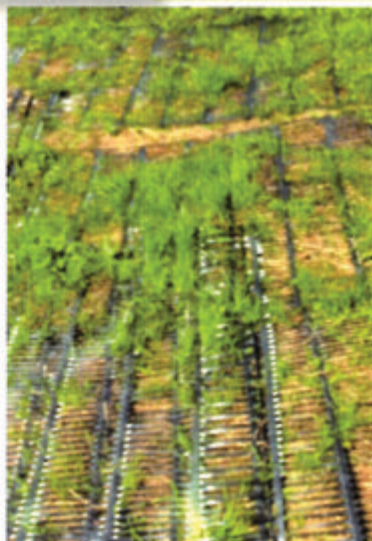
It took six hours at the solicitors' checking manuscript changes to many thousands of pages of legals and then Janet joined us to sign all the agreements at last – that was over 1½ hours of constant signing running into hundreds of signatures. Crazy! Janet has now seen a small aspect of why this scheme has taken so long.



Above and left: Whilst the hot sun beats down, Kat Turner and Lesley Herbert from the Scouting Network rake the dried grass down the embankment before the GeoGrid can be laid.



Below: Heavy rolls of geogrid are brought across the field in preparation.



A close-up of the geogrid.

Maggie Jones/Stephano Pitta



Above: Some of the 1¼ acres of geogrid that was laid over the weekend.

Below: Some of the earth being moved across the field in preparation for the geogrid.



Once the geogrid was laid, the earth placement could begin.

Once we got close to this day we did not hold back. In fact we went into the Dymock site to undertake the preliminary work of installing the 1¼ acres of geogrid on 14-15 June with support from our new partners in the Scouts network. This was a massive task over two days but finished on time and, within a few days, some 10% of the fill was on site. The H&G CT would like to thank the Scouts for their efforts over this weekend. We see this as the start of a good partnership.

For various reasons things then slowed again while we and the contractor awaited 'the right material from the right location', but it was a good start.

As we go to press the housing developer has arrived on site and work is starting, including installing our long term electricity and water supply to the Canal side which will in the short term serve the site compound.

By the end of September the towpath should be starting to take shape as will the housing site. Most importantly the high voltage electricity cable which currently runs above ground across the site will have been moved to a new duct in the towpath to permit construction of the Canal embankment.

◆ DRP

Restoration Team

Over Basin

Incorporating **Vineyard Hill**

By Ted Beagles



At last we have an all weather towpath surface to the far end of Vineyard Hill. In mid June, the local volunteer team, supported by volunteers from Llanthony, Moat Farm and Yarkhill, constructed the full 300m length of the towpath working continuously for seven days. We ordered dry weather, but in the event got much more than we bargained for – a mini heat wave! We would rather it had been a bit cooler, but with sensible precautions and copious amounts of sweat we managed to work through it.

Some preparatory work was needed to raise the clay level of two areas which had subsided a bit since the initial construction in 2011. This was done in advance of the surfacing work, using the front loader bucket of our Kubota tractor to transport the clay.

Starting at the Over Basin end, a layer of terram (a specialist construction material) was placed on the clay to prevent the stone sinking into it and, working in sections of about 6 metres at a time, temporary wooden edging was put in place to set the width and



Top: The completed new surface to the towpath through Vineyard Hill.

Above: The low towpath levels are raised.



The stone arrives.



The furthest part of the towpath is too narrow for large machinery and so it is done manually!



Raking out the stone on a hot day – lucky there are plenty of 'hands on deck'.



Reversing along the towpath takes concentration.



The towpath is repaired adjacent to the ramp down to the floodplain.

depth. Stone was delivered by hired dumpers which then had to reverse all the way back; after raking level it was finally rolled with a vibrating single drum roller to consolidate the material. It was then simply a case of moving the edging to the next section and doing it all again. After repeating this about 50 times the job was done – well almost! The last 40m of path around the winding hole is too narrow for dumper access, so the stone was dropped off nearby and wheelbarrowed into place to complete the full length. Finally, starting from the far end we dressed the top with road planings to provide a comfortable surface for walking until next year when the final top surfacing will be completed.

Site maintenance

Of course spring is always a very busy time on site, and this year has been no exception. There has been much mowing across the entire site, pruning back shrubs, cutting the hedging, weeding and tidying up the gardens and towpath, and spraying weed killer in those areas difficult to weed – such as the block paving.

The view of the river Severn from THE WHARF HOUSE terrace has become obscured over time by new growth of the willows on the bank which we coppiced several years ago. We have cut these right back again, so as to give a clear view and start a new cycle of growth.



The ramp down to the floodplain is improved.

Ted Beagles



The hull of the reed cutting boat being repaired.



John at work.

Work on the Heritage Boats

All work on Mister Maysey, our trip boat, is now completed and she is ready for service. A rudder extension has been fitted to the outboard motor and the low speed handling has improved immensely, also the electrical system re-wiring is now finished

Work on the Heritage boats has continued with the fitting of permanent bilge pumps to all boats and the fit out of Bosley's cabin continues. Recently an



Improvements to Mister Maysey are tested.

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Ivor and Bob relay the paving by the Visitor Centre doors.



The completed paving.

Ted Beagles

ominous noise has been heard coming from the hydraulic drive motor on Bosley, which Andy has now removed for investigation. With the drier warmer weather we have been able to paint the inside faces of the repaired hull of the reed cutting boat and have made a start on rebuilding it.

Relaying the paths

Bob and Ivor have finally finished relaying the uneven areas of the block paving around ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE, with the completion of the complicated section underneath the balcony. Amazingly they have managed to do this with minimal lifting of blocks, and no significant access restrictions into the building.

◆ TB

*Want to get involved at Over
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Overflow Weir at

Aylestone Park

By Wilf Jones

As reported in the last issue, work has commenced on the final stages of the overflow weir. The scaffolding required to allow the brickwork on the face of the weir to be built was a challenge!

The materials required are now in place and we are working on the brick face in what should be the better weather, and hope to have it completed by the time you are reading this update. We are also procuring the hand rail, weir blade and stop plank ironworks for delivery and erection on site.

We will then remove the temporary dam from the canal, which was the solution to the

The magnificent galleon that makes the centrepiece for the children's new playground near the slipway in the park.

bank overtopping during the winter rains, and complete the landscaping around the structure. The final piece of the project will be to place the towpath finishing material on top of the sleepers, which we hope will be done over the winter.

◀ WJ



Construction of the new brickwork facing to the spill weir has begun.

Brian Fox

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Restoration Team

Moat Farm

By Martyn Tilford

Throughout the summer our fortnightly visits to Moat Farm have enabled further restoration progress.

South-end earthworks

As reported in the last issue our successful 'dumper week' back in April produced a major breakthrough in the excavation and re-profiling of the canal bed at the south end of the site. A number of follow up tasks have been undertaken and a further week with an additional excavator is currently being planned.

Back in the 1880s, during construction of the railway, a length of the offside bank was removed to allow the canal bed to drain into a pipe that had been laid across the adjacent meadow to a nearby watercourse. This length of offside bank

Above: South end excavation progress with the new towpath on the left and reinstated offside bank on the right.

Below left: Length of reinstated offside bank with the drainage pit visible.

Below right: Temporary drainage pit in the meadow under construction.





Trial excavation in the exposed canal bed investigating the puddle clay.

has now been reinstated and a temporary access pit to the pipe drain created. We are still able to manage the water levels in the canal bed using this drain but it will become redundant when a permanent and more suitable alternative is constructed.



Freshwater mussel shells. Will they help us establish the position of the puddle clay?

Puddle clay lining

As the unwanted railway embankment material is removed and we approach the original bed of the canal the excavation process has to proceed cautiously in order to protect the original puddle clay lining. There are a few challenges with this as there is little definitive information on the actual depth of the clay puddle. Additionally, little is known about

its thickness or quality and it will probably have been disturbed where several large willows were growing in the canal bed. A number of trial excavations are under way and some core samples have been taken to build a picture of the position of the puddle clay.

Fortunately we are assisted by Mother Nature in this respect in the form of freshwater mussels. These would have lived in the silt on the bed of the canal and over the decades a veneer of mussel shells accumulates and this gives an indication of the position of the puddle clay. During our initial investigations we found evidence of

freshwater mussel shells and this should prove to be helpful.

Site hut

Our site hut has been the subject of a minor makeover with the provision of a log retaining wall adjacent to the front door. The ground here slopes away to the towpath making the positioning of chairs somewhat hazardous. We now have a small level veranda which enables our meal breaks to be enjoyed with a greater degree of comfort. You may ask why the log tops appear to have been cut off at random lengths? There is no real answer to this other than there was much discussion amongst all of the volunteers on this matter and we ended up with a form of castellation. Bizarre!

♦♦ MT



Log retaining wall in front of the site hut. Surely those logs should have been cut off level?

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

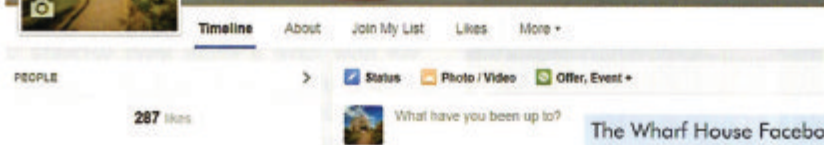
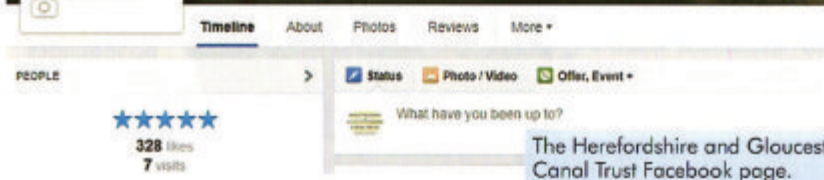


"like" us on

Facebook

Both the H&G CT and The Wharf House Facebook pages are growing nicely –

By Stephanie Pike



In July we ran a competition in conjunction with SoGlos where anyone who liked ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE page would be entered into a prize draw to win a meal for two at ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE. This increased traffic to the page dramatically and I would like to thank James at SoGlos for his help with this.

The H&G CT page provides the public with instant updates to the Canal project as it happens with the added bonus of regular photos.

Recent examples include the beginning stages of work on the Dymock site and the new towpath at Vineyard Hill along with news of upcoming events such as Over Festival.

If you would like to be involved with the Canal restoration as it happens, 'like' the H&G CT Facebook page. Please also help us to reach 300 'likes' on ^{THE} WHARF HOUSE Facebook page!

◆ SP

The Travellers Rest

By Stephanie Pike

The Travellers Rest has been up and running now for almost six months. It is now rated consistently in the top three on Trip Advisor out of the restaurants in Newent. Having only been open for such a short time, this is quite an achievement!

There has been a positive response to the food served, with every effort being made to source ingredients locally, and the pub provides great value for money. Whilst the burgers are a firm favourite with the customers, the alternative menu and the Sunday roasts are also proving to be very popular and the homemade puddings are on another level!



The winner of the pub's recent "Name The Mystery Ale" competition was revealed on Sunday 24 August, along with the attractive new beer pump badge. Well done to Nigel Hamer for his winning idea for the very original name "The Malswick Cuckoo Pint".

Live music has now become a regular fixture at the pub, with performances taking place on most Sunday afternoons. It is great to be able to see and support so much local talent.

Planning for the Christmas festivities at The Travellers Rest is now fully under way. The marquee has had a freshen up and is now available for Christmas party bookings.

To stay up to date with news, offers and events from The Travellers Rest, please 'like' the Facebook page.

◆ SP



The winning pump badge for the 'Name the Mystery Ale' competition.

One of the bars within the refurbished Travellers Rest.



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Roger Beck

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21 October

Clive Matthews

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18 November

Paul Barnett

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The weather has not been kind to our very small band of volunteers who have been promoting the H&G Canal and the work of the H&G CT around the country.

Towards the end of May the three day show at Crick, in Northamptonshire, was covered by Ray & Barbara Moses, Steve Bence and Becca Moulton with lunch cover from Steve and Cheryl Kirby. The hail came down and the mud came up but the crowds (c 26,000) turned up!

In early June the weather was no better for the Hellens Garden Festival, but copious amounts of straw kept the water away from our stand. Bad weather does not deter the Herefordshire crowds and there was great interest in the H&G Canal's progress.

At the end of June Braunston improved by the Sunday when I was able to join Penny and Becca to receive a most welcome cheque for £200 from Braunston Marina – Ray, Barbara and Penny Shetliffe having endured more rain on the Saturday.

Back in Herefordshire again in July for the Sutton St Nicholas Fete which was hot and sunny. The Lucky Dip did a roaring trade and requests were made for the restoration of the Canal in Sutton!

We hope to attend a few more shows this year, but as you can see from the above we need more volunteers.

◆ JM

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 either later this year or during 2015. The remaining event in our 2014 calendar is the H&G CT Winter Bazaar in Ledbury on 8 November (see opposite page).



From the Top:

Janet and Penny receive a cheque from Braunston Marina.

Steve Bence talks to the visitors at Crick.

Straw is laid to cover the mud.

A very muddy Crick!

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

Restoration Team

Oxenhall

By Brian Fox

What would we do without our trusty tractor? It was purchased about 15 years ago for about £1,800 and has been used for most of that time at Oxenhall, ferrying large stones for the lock and aqueduct, large bags of sand and gravel and of course the cement which sticks it all together. Also in straining to keep trees from falling in the wrong place, as reported in the last edition, and, in winter, ferrying logs from various parts of the site to be collected by the log man.

Moving the gate post!

Now we have found a new use for it, after much deliberation and planning as to how the job should be tackled. Readers will recall that we had to get a few lorry loads of ready mixed concrete onto site several months back and it was clear that the lorries were having great difficulty in getting through the gateway at the back of our compound to the delivery site by the aqueduct – one large lorry had to return to base while we waited



The widened gateway leading to the towpath.



The completed spillweir.

for a smaller one. It has recently been decided that the Bailey bridge will be moved by lifting with a large crane mounted on a lorry which will definitely not go through the gateway, so it had to be widened. This meant pulling out one gate post and moving it back to a wider position and then finding another gate to make up the difference. There just happened to be a spare gate lying around in the yard and it was a simple matter to bolt it onto the side of the existing concrete fence post and hang the new gate, no problem. But getting the old post out proved to be our first challenge – 2ft into the ground and held by concrete. Some clearing with a pick axe around the top was clearly getting us nowhere, so roll forward our tractor. A few bumps and tugs with a strap and there was sign of earth movement, so fix the strap to the bottom of the post and lift with the hydraulics. After a few more bumps and

tugs, out came the post, concrete and all, and the remaining hole was quickly filled in, concrete smashed off with a hammer, and all we had to do was dig a new hole for the post and drop it in!

What we hadn't realised was that the position of the new hole was right on the line of

Headless, armless man
or volunteer part
way down a hole?



the old railway track which used to run through here. The track bed consists of smaller stones at the top which hold the sleepers and larger stones underneath giving a firm foundation, but not much fun when you are trying to dig a small hole 2ft deep. Unfortunately the tractor couldn't help us on this one so it was down to some elderly navvies to have a go, but by the end of the day we had to give up and put up a temporary fence until the next Tuesday. It then transpired that we had done the donkey work the week before so there were no more stones to pull out of the hole, only pure soil for the remaining 9". So now the post fitted snugly into the hole and the tractor could hold up the gate in the correct position while the hinge pins were bolted to the post. All that now remained was to pour some concrete around the post while it was held in position and bob's your uncle - job done.

Completing the spillweir!

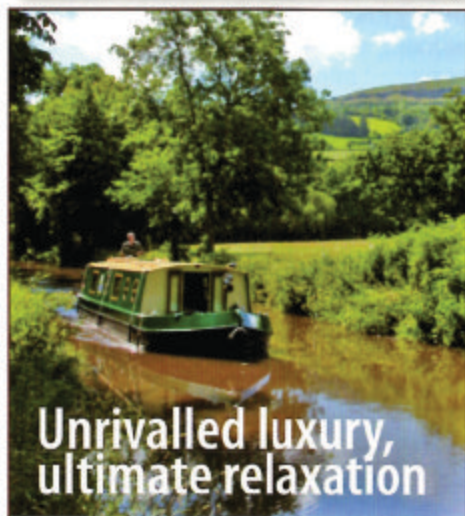
I can now report that the rebuilding of the spillweir is complete (*see cover image*), thanks to Ian and Geoff, and by the time you read this the water will once again be running over it and down through the culvert under the cottage. Tidying the yard has uncovered several more large stones which have been added to our new reserve pile and the remaining smaller material has been used to fill the hole over the aqueduct. The usual grass mowing and strimming are keeping us busy every week this summer with its being so mild and wet on and off and no doubt that routine will continue, but who knows what else will turn up in the meantime? Watch this space.

Removing the Bailey bridge

Last but not least, as mentioned above, the Bailey bridge is soon to be moved. We are very pleased that the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers have agreed to take on the task of removing the Bailey bridge, to be completed in early September. The Royal Engineers will be treating this activity as a training exercise and will be taking off the deck of the Bailey bridge, preparing the crane platform and lifting the bridge to a new level platform on our compound. The area around the present position of the bridge will be fenced off resulting in a minor diversion to the footpath which will be well signposted. This will be effective until at least the end of the year while repair work is undertaken on the surface above the aqueduct and the footpath is restored.

◀ **BF**

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Oxenhall? Please call **Brian Fox**
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Restoration Team

Llanthony

By Paul Henshaw

The spring gales and floods caused considerable damage to the boundary fencing at the rear of the cottages. The interwoven fence panels which were originally installed provided too much resistance against the incoming water flows and this, coupled with the spring gales, led to a complete section of fencing being flattened.

It was decided to replace the entire fence (22 metres) using vertical palings which offer less resistance to flood incursions.

The old fencing was removed and the undergrowth cut back to provide a decent working area. New heavy duty posts were concreted into position and horizontal rails were screwed into place ready for the



Martyn digging out the post holes.



Ray checking the posts for alignment.

palings to be secured. Alan has dusted off his patented "FenceApp" (page 27 of Edition 113) which will be used to calculate the precise distances between palings.

At the time of writing (mid July) we are in the midst of the mowing and strimming season, and that will be our main preoccupation during the coming months.

A big thank you to all our volunteers for all your help. *It is much appreciated.* ♦ PH



Alan's "FenceApp"



Above: The old boundary fence.

Right: The new fence line concreted into position.



Ted Boscawen, Alan M. Bickel

Would you like to join our team at Llanthony? Please call Paul Henshaw on 01684 293930

Restoration Team **Yarkhill**

By Chris High



Warm and wet weather has led to the continuing task of vegetation control such that we can keep access for visitors a pleasant experience.

Strimming and mowing were the main occupations but in some places hand cutting with slashers and grass hooks was a requirement to reinstate the circular walk of the site. Growth around our tree planting is now undergoing its second cut back of the season.



Chris High

Fire site and lock area had a tidy up.

The Team has replaced the benches by the milestone with brick and plank structures on considerably more substantial foundations, the latter resulting from the efforts of a very enthusiastic member of the Team.

◀ CH

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



Looking south down the off side.



The hard working mower needed some maintenance as well.

MILESTONES on the H&G Canal

Milestones on the H&G Canal are now few and far between. So what happened to them as they were originally placed along the Canal at half mile intervals – there must have been about 60 over the 34 mile length?

The Ordnance Survey maps of around 1882 were made just as the Canal was closing and did not show the half mile stones, and several of the mile stones are not shown either. This is probably more the lack of diligence of the surveyor as there would



All that is still visible of milestone 19.

only be about a foot or so of stone showing and, with it being on the offside bank, it could soon become overgrown. Three new ones were erected by the H&G CT in 2008 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Canal Society and there was only one other known (20½) which is still in its original position. There are two more which have been removed from their original position and now sit either side of a path leading up to the resident's front door.

David Bick, in his history of the Canal, considers milestones on the H&G Canal to be simple and "reflected the poverty of the company" but I would dispute that. They were expertly crafted from Forest of Dean stone, which was not cheap, with each one having a cast iron metal plate inserted into a recess at the top denoting the mileage from the river Severn at Gloucester. If you want to see a cheap and simple mile post then go to our Llanthony Lock site where, almost hidden in the grass outside the cottages, there is one giving the mileage to Worcester consisting of just a small metal plate.

Most of the Canal from Ledbury to Gloucester was obliterated by the new railway, built around 1883, and much of the stone recovered from the milestones and locks would have been used for construction of the new bridges, but the whole length from Ledbury to Hereford was untouched. It is significant that the three known milestones come from this stretch and perhaps there could be others waiting to be found. The stones themselves are extremely heavy as we discovered when carving those we did for the anniversary so there is a good chance that they have not been removed and some are still extant.

Indeed, it came to the notice of the H&G CT a while ago that two of the original metal plates showing the mileages had been discovered, and they are now in the possession of one of our members. Apparently they were removed from the stones some 30 years ago, with the permission of the landowner at the time, for "safe keeping".

The plates show mileages of 19 and 19½. It would be reasonable to assume that if the plate was removed only 30 years ago then there was a good chance that the stone was still there now. A reference to the old OS map indicated that the 19 milestone stood alongside the Canal about 2 miles north of Ledbury.

It just so happens that the length of Canal in question is still full of water with a towpath which is mown regularly and looking just as a Canal should look. It is about 600 yards long and is owned by Mrs Morris who maintains it, with the help of her brother, for the use of the occasional fisherman. It is stocked with coarse fish including carp, bream and tench, and is full of water, despite the dry weather, thanks to local springs and run off from surrounding fields. When Mrs Morris bought it 19 years ago the fields were grazed by

cattle but that all changed about 10 years ago when the strawberry growers moved in. It has now become a green oasis surrounded by acres of white plastic polytunnels which fortunately are virtually invisible from the towpath in the summer.



Mrs Morris kindly allowed me to walk her length of Canal and what a joy it turned out to be. Ducks pairing off for the mating season, large ripples on the surface indicating the movement of the fish beneath and a seat conveniently placed to take it all in. At the far end, where the milestone was shown on the map, I paced out the distance and within a minute it was found. A few leaves and brambles covered it but the distinctive curved shape of the top was clearly recognisable and about 1ft of the stone was soon revealed clearly showing the hole where the metal plate had been wrenched from it.

There hasn't been enough time to look for the 19½ stone but there is a good chance it is still there and what about the others? Should we now reunite the plate with the milestone or is it best to leave it where it is – in safe keeping? What do you think? **BF**



Brian Fox

he neatly mown stretch of privately owned Canal.

PLEASE NOTE: Please remember that much of the route of the HGQ Canal lies on private land (including, as Brian has explained, the length in the article above). Unless indicated it should not be assumed that Rights of Way exist. Please help us to maintain our good relations with landowners and their neighbours. Thank you. Ed.



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CALLING ALL ONLINE SHOPPERS!!

By Stephanie Pike

There is a new easy way to raise money for the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust that does not involve parting with extra cash.

I have signed the Canal Trust up to a site called Give as you Live. Give as you Live is a shopping platform which enables you to raise money for the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust without any effort or extra cost on your part.

I was sceptical of Give as you Live when I first heard about it as it seemed too good to be true and I thought it would be a bit of a hassle to sign up. However, now I have personally used Give as you Live whilst shopping online and know how easy and effortless it can be to raise extra money for the Canal Trust, I would really recommend you all to do the same.

When you shop online through Give as you Live, a percentage of what you spend is donated directly to us at no extra cost to you. It is completely free to sign up and could

potentially raise us a lot of money. There are over 3,500 shops to choose from on the site such as Tesco, Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, ASOS, Experian to name a few. You can install a Give as you Live toolbar too which will automatically show you which sites will donate when you search for something on Google.

So how does this 'free money' offer work? Online retailers are usually willing to pay commission to websites which direct customer traffic to their own websites. The retailers pay this commission to Give as you Live who then pass it on to the charity of your choice. Give as you Live has raised almost £5 million for good causes so far and we think the Canal Trust deserves a piece of the action!

Give as you Live is 100% secure and also acts as a comparison website enabling you to find the best price for whatever product you are looking for, therefore saving you money whilst at the same time donating to the Canal Trust. A win-win for everyone!

Give as you Live is a brilliant way to involve

ALL members and provides the opportunity for everyone to feel they are making a worthwhile contribution to the Canal Trust and to assist the Charity in achieving its aims.

Please can I urge you all to sign up and do your internet shopping through Give as you Live from now on. It will generate another income source for the Canal Trust and help us on our way with restoring the Canal! Use this link to sign up and follow the instructions: www.giveasyoulive.com/join/handgcanaltrust. Alternatively there is a link to Give as you Live on our website.

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If you have any questions about Give as you Live or require any assistance whilst signing up please do not hesitate to contact Steph from the L&PDT. Steph will be giving a short presentation on Give as you Live at the social evening at The Royal Oak on 16 September if anyone is interested to learn more.

◆ SP

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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!



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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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Model Boat Club

By Ted Tedaldi

The Spring quarter has seen The Gloucester and District Model Boat Club enjoy some very varied weather conditions. Attendance has not been affected. Although some wonderful winter builds have appeared, the highlight must be the resident Heron. We even have a code of practice when taking our boats for a sail to the winding hole: keep observant and keep voices low. Mid May we had an excellent viewing of it from about 30yds.



Above and below: At last – a tall ship – The Golden Hind comes to Over Basin!



Now to boating. The repeated highlight was the Whitsun Monday fun day. Some forty six members and families turned out on a pleasant warm spring day. Various competitions were organised for sailors and power boat enthusiasts. To keep the interest going throughout the day, teams are paired with first and last from the morning's competitions. This gives the teams a level playing field for the afternoon competitions. A buffet lunch comes as a good interlude. Tea and cake are available throughout the day.

Our first model is that of the Golden Hind in which Francis Drake discovered America or THE WHARF HOUSE. The model some thirty



Top left: A gathering of lifeboats.

Below: The Whitsun Model Boat Fun Day.



Ted and Sandra Tedaldi

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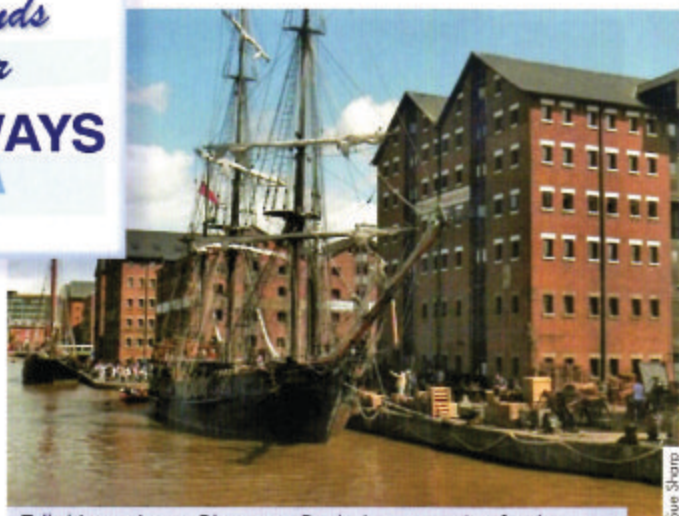
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*News from the friends
of Gloucester*
**W WATERWAYS
M MUSEUM**

By Chris Witts

I begin this report with sad news of the death of Ken Dunn, a past chairman of the Friends and one of the Museum's most hard working volunteers. Those who knew Ken will remember him for his passion for all things steam, especially 'his' beloved steam dredger, SND No4. Many of his friends, along with his family, recently attended Ken's funeral; he will be missed by the numerous organisations which he belonged to.

The Friends have been forced to move venue once again for their winter evening talks. On Tuesday 23 September at 7:30pm we shall be meeting at the Fountain Inn, off Westgate Street. The speaker is Graham Hobbs on the construction of Sapperton Tunnel. All are welcome and there is no charge for entry.



Tall ships arrive at Gloucester Docks in preparation for the filming of *Through the Looking Glass*.

Sue Sharp

Hopefully it should not be too long before we are able to return to the Museum for our talks. Wetherspoons have signed a contract to lease the old Coots restaurant complex. Obviously there will be disruption whilst they rebuild that building but by this time next year they should be established and drawing in crowds to the Museum.

A nervous next few months for the Museum whilst we wait for news of our Lottery bid. Soon it will be submitted then a few months' wait for the result.

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

◆ CW



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Waterways
Association

Gloucestershire & Herefordshire IWA Branch Social Meetings

The start of the Autumn/Winter programme:

Held at the Yacht Club, Gloucester Docks 7.30pm

Thurs. 4th September – CARRYING FROM SHARPNESS TO BIRMINGHAM by Tony Condor

Thurs. 2nd October – GLASS EELS by Andrew Kerr

Thurs. 6th November – LEOMINSTER CANAL

Thurs. 4th December – CHRISTMAS SOCIAL – with food and entertainment

Further details contact: **Martin Turner 01452 312228**



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Working with Nature

The Cherry Tree

By John Chappell



John Chappell

Cherry trees are, justifiably, one of the favourite spring flowering trees for the garden. Although many different forms have been cultivated over the years, our own native wild cherry found in woodlands takes some beating with its pure white blossom in Spring. Cherries belong to the Rosaceae, or rose family, as do apples, pears, and plums. The similarity in the flower is easy to see.

The wild cherry has the Latin name *Prunus avium*; its common name Gean – pronounced with a hard G – is perhaps the one most frequently used but it is also referred to as the Bird Cherry from the Latin *avis*, a bird.

We are fortunate at Oxenhall to have a well established tree by Lock Cottage, planted when the house and lock restoration was completed around 2002. The photograph here was taken on a blue-sky day in May 2013, a wonderful sight. Another example, this time a maturing self-sown, four year old, can be found in the bank just below the dam. Whilst clearing the scrub we have carefully avoided it and it has already delighted us with its flowers. When the canal is restored it will have to go – it is now too big to move – in the meantime we will enjoy it.

Cherry Tree in blossom as Oxenhall Lock Cottage

Recently three other small cherry trees were planted in the hedgerow alongside the towpath and they flowered for the first time this year. The three were once four but one became the victim of a passing vandal.

Cherry trees are deciduous and can grow up to 60ft, a bit large for today's gardens, but the spring blossom and horizontally peeling bark plus colourful autumn leaves make the cherry a highly ornamental tree throughout the year.

The fruit of all cherries is readily eaten by numerous birds and mammals who digest the flesh and disperse the seeds in their droppings. The fruit ripens in late June or July and is known botanically as a drupe: a fruit that has flesh surrounding a stone with a seed or kernel inside. Cherry stones are sometimes cracked open by birds, notably the Hawfinch, to eat the kernel inside. Nobody bothers with gathering the fruit of the wild cherry but it is perfectly edible if a little small and sharp. Many of today's commercial varieties have been developed from it.

♦ JC

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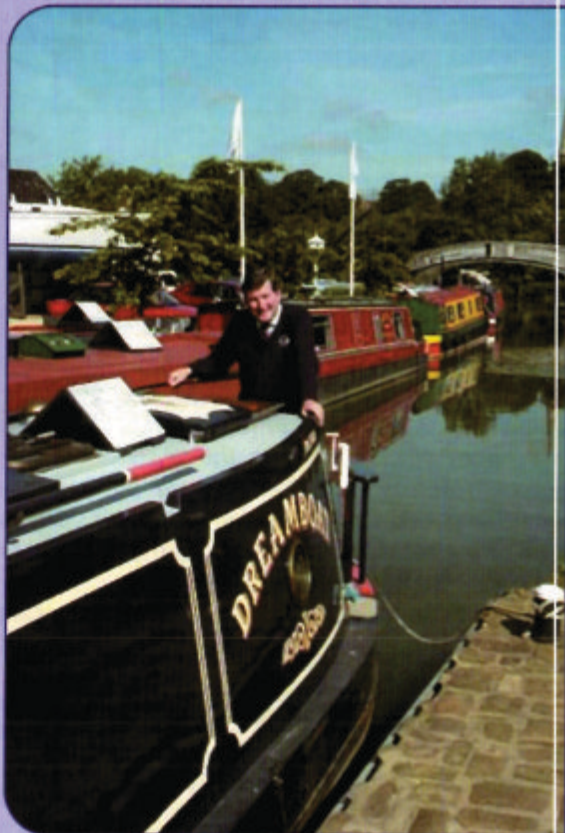
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Want to help?

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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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.