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Spring 2016

The Wharfinger

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST



EDITION 127

REBUILDING A SUSTAINABLE CANAL BETWEEN HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER

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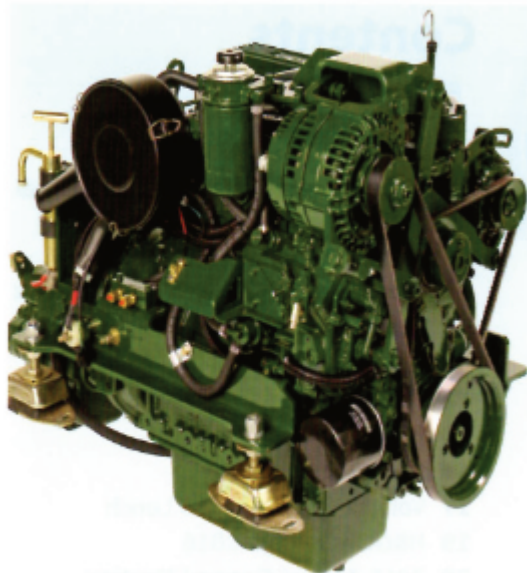
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Cover image:
Waterway Recovery Group Forestry Team in
action at Newent Station site. – Maggie Jones.

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Editorial by Cliff Penny

A successful approach!

Writing in the January edition of *Sou'Wester*, the regional magazine of the **Inland Waterways Association**, Regional Chairman Roger Holmes briefly mentioned Newent Station and said the H&G CT *"always have a surprise with their imaginative ideas"*.

In a recent email to all local IWA members, **IWA Branch** Chairman Martin Turner said the H&G CT was *"one of the most innovative in the UK."* Add a couple of longer-standing quotes: *"Sheer dogged determination and tenacity"* (Jonathan Mosse writing in **The Times Waterways of Britain**) and *"An inspirational Waterways Trust"* (Clive Aslet, Editor at large, **Country Life Magazine** writing in **The Telegraph**) and you will quickly appreciate that, what I frequently refer to on this page as our **"different approach"**, has created the H&G CT quite a reputation both locally and nationally!

So it's good to start the New Year with three H&G CT **"different approach"** successes! Years of complex, and at times seemingly endless negotiations, by our Legal & Project Development Team have resulted in an important short part of the essential diversion route for the Canal being completed close to the heart of Dymock. Our successful partnership with Dymock Parish Council, the Housing Association, landowner Tomack Developments and the longstanding support for H&G CT from Keyway, has produced significant and long lasting benefits for the village and the H&G CT. *See page 8.*

As regular readers will know one of the mainstays of the H&G CT's **"different approach"** is our commitment to do our utmost to ensure that we have sustainable income to manage and maintain various lengths of the H&G Canal as it is restored/reconstructed. Our (increasing) 'bricks and mortar' assets play an important role in this; however, all these valuable assets also require maintenance! At Llanthony the small team of our own volunteers (with occasional specialist assistance) have gone way beyond maintenance and literally transformed the largest part of the Llanthony Cottages. H&G CT has a far more valuable asset with a significant increase in rental income such that all the costs will be recovered within some 15 months. It is one thing putting all this time and effort into extending or maintaining/improving your own home - quite another for volunteers to have done all this for the benefit of the H&G CT. *See page 14.*

In Hereford we reported in 2010 that the redevelopment of the Holmer Trading Estate had been granted planning permission, the key part of which was the reinstatement of the adjacent section of the H&G Canal, but the developer subsequently failed to proceed. This short length will be one of the most difficult and expensive to reinstate as it is buried in a deep cutting infilled with factory wastes requiring specialist disposal. At **Herefordshire Council's** January Planning Committee both the Officers and Councillors very clearly demonstrated their commitment to our **"different approach"**. A new permission was granted accepting the case that, to be economically viable to the developer, the only way to achieve the reinstatement of the Canal through the site was to grant permission on a rare 'exception' basis of 100% 'open market' properties. *See page 6.*

» **CRP**

by John Hammond

All our H&G CT members, individuals, families or corporate, whether 'armchair' or active as a volunteer, collectively form one of the greatest assets for H&G CT. A strong membership gives us high credibility in our relationships with regulatory bodies, influential persons and organisations such as Canal & River Trust, other canal restoration bodies and the media. It is also an important factor in our applications for support from various grant-giving bodies and sponsors, both corporate and individual.

Many of our members are also remarkably generous. This applies particularly to specific causes, of which the most recent is construction of the Mill Barn. The £10,000 anonymous donation made for this purpose by a member in 2013 has now, following the appeal in the last issue, been more than matched with over £14,000 being donated by early February. And these amounts are almost all eligible for gift aid, so will be boosted by 25% from HMRC in due course. These contributions become even more valuable when we apply for grants, as a condition for these is often that we can demonstrate strong community support through matched funding. *We are immensely grateful to these donors.*

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Since taking on the position of Treasurer, I have been analysing payments into the H&G CT's account. Large numbers of these are annual membership renewals, most made by standing order, others in the form of cheques or cash. A welcome number of members routinely add a donation to their subscription – *thank you to each one of you*. If you don't do this but could afford it, please consider following this generous path. As has been said often before, "It All Counts". Whether we like it or not, and however much effort many volunteers make with bucket and spade (or more realistically with excavator, dumper, mower...), promoting H&G CT at shows, or at a desk pursuing all the other essential aspects, canal restoration requires a lot of money, both capital sums and a secure income.

IT ALL
H&G CT
COUNTS

On the subject of volunteers, when you became a member, we asked if you were able to offer us skills or had the time to assist in any way. Our Membership Secretary always follows up all such offers. A substantial number of our members do contribute their time, skills and knowledge in important ways to support our cause and we fully understand that others simply do not have the time, or do not wish to become any more involved. But maybe your circumstances have now changed and you are able to get more involved but haven't got round to it? Please get in touch ideally by sending a brief email, title Volunteer, to volunteer@h-g-canal.org.uk. Include your name and location together with brief details of how you might be able to assist H&G CT. If you don't have

access to email then please send the details by post (clearly marking the envelope "VOLUNTEER") to **The Wharf House**. We look forward to hearing from you.

2015 placed heavy demands on H&G CT finances. We have invested in major ways: extensive refurbishment of the larger Llanthony Lock cottage and of **Malswick House**, construction of the Canal at Dymock and our new house there, and large-scale excavation and restoration at Kymin. At the same time we have not benefited from rent from the larger cottage or profits from **Malswick House**. **Malswick House** is now trading successfully and both cottage and house will be bringing in rent. H&G CT will also receive a percentage from the sale of the five houses at Dymock plus the start of annual payments by these properties. So prospects look far more promising this year.

It is worth adding that we would not have been able to achieve what we have without the very large contribution made by **The Wharf House Co Ltd**. On its own TWH restaurant and rooms business makes a large surplus, which is used to benefit the Trust. In 2014–15 a surplus of some £65,000 was spent in the approximate proportions of £51,000 to pay for all the work and staff costs of the L&PDT, £6,000 to pay for all work at the Over and Vineyard Hill sites and to the boat fleet, and £8,000 to reduce the remaining loans from the construction phase of **The Wharf House** which now amount to less than £24,000.

This is all good news. With your help, it can be even better!

» JH

Count me in!

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Did you know that in addition to this quarterly magazine, H&G CT produces an occasional newsletter, which is distributed by email. To subscribe to this source of information, please complete the **Count Me In** registration form on our website.

www.h-g-canal.org.uk

DEVELOPERS TO RESTORE CANAL by David Penny

A number of times over recent years we have reported the granting on planning permission in 2010 for the redevelopment of the Holmer Trading Estate including the restoration of one of the most difficult sections of the H&G Canal as an integral part of the proposals. Due to market conditions and economic considerations the previous developer did not implement the various approvals.

The H&G Canal runs along the edge of the Holmer Trading Estate in a cutting on the approach to Aylestone Tunnel. The ¼ mile long Tunnel was found to be in remarkably good condition during a specialist full diving survey in 1995. However, the ¼ mile length of deep approach cutting is fully infilled with tipped industrial waste which requires specialist disposal. It will be one of the most expensive short sections of the H&G Canal to restore.

New site owners Codex have been working closely with the H&G Canal Trust to bring forward further revised proposals for the redevelopment of this old trading estate. As with all the previous proposals as an integral part of the development, the Canal will be excavated and fully restored from Aylestone Tunnel right up to our first phase restoration at Aylestone Park. On completion the newly restored length of the Canal, and ¼ mile tunnel, will be transferred to H&G CT. There will also be perpetual (index linked) payments to H&G CT by all of the new properties for the restoration and long-term maintenance and management of the H&G Canal. The adjoining section in Aylestone Park will subsequently be widened by H&G CT to modern day requirements (the new slipway and major storm overflow constructed as part of our first phase works



Artist's impression

having been positioned to accommodate this). Together, these lengths will form a fantastic section of restored H&G Canal within the City.

So why are we far more confident that this developer will proceed?

Because in January the Planning Committee of Herefordshire Council took the exceptional step of approving the development with all the properties being for sale on an 'open market' basis and with the H&G Canal being the major benefactor from the considerable 'planning gain' on this development. The determination to see the H&G Canal restored through this site shown by both Officers and Members was exceptional (in all senses of the word) and has given the developer an approval with the greatest potential for an economically viable scheme.

The clear vision of the Council to see the Canal restored is greatly welcomed and shows fantastic support for the huge voluntary effort along the Canal to date. We also welcome being able to work with developers from the outset of schemes and these proposals will make a huge improvement to the area.

» **DRP**

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FIRST PHASE DYMOCK COMPLETED! by David Penny

The Challenge ...

Dymock Parish Council wanted affordable housing to keep Dymock a vibrant community and ensure the survival of the village school (and other facilities including the community owned public house) plus a new car park to meet a long-standing severe shortfall in the village. The **H&G CT** wanted to start reconstructing the Canal through the village (on a long-identified essential diversion route) and a new play area created to partly replace one on the diversion line elsewhere in the village and a new footpath to the church and pub. *There was no suitable site for an*

economically viable housing development within the village development boundary.

A partnership of H&G CT, Dymock Parish Council, the Housing Association and landowner Tomack Developments succeeded in eventually obtaining planning permission for a 20 house development on an 'exception' basis (solely because it facilitated the reconstruction of the H&G Canal) even though it was outside the normal development boundary. *It was approved thanks to exceedingly strong support from Dymock Parish and Forest of Dean Councillors.*

The Outcome ...

Benefits for Dymock:

- 14 much needed affordable new rental properties run by the Housing Association
- availability of the detached rental property owned and run by H&G CT
- 5 'open market' waterside homes (which are selling fast!)
- a new 20-space car park
- a new pedestrian access to the church and Beauchamp Arms creating better footpath links
- a new play area to replace one partly blocking the route of the Canal.

Benefits for the H&G CT:

- a short length of the Canal completed close to the heart of the village
- the freehold of this short length of the Canal (on an essential diversion route)
- a percentage of the sale price of the 5 'open market' properties
- perpetual (index linked) income from

each of these private properties towards the restoration and long-term maintenance and management of the Canal in the area

- rental income from H&G CT's new detached 3 bedroom waterside property.

Our successful partnership with Dymock Parish Council, the Housing Association and particularly the support of landowner Tomack Developments and the ongoing support from Keyway has produced significant long lasting benefits for the village and the H&G CT. All the time and effort in pursuing our '**different approach**' has brought long-term benefits not just to the H&G Canal but also to the community.

The support and understanding of Dymock Parish Council and many of the residents has been of tremendous assistance throughout. We look forward to a continuing partnership with the Parish Council on subsequent phases to complete the Canal through the village.

» **DRP**

NOW AVAILABLE

Brand New House for Rent in DYMOCK

This attractive canalside detached house is situated in a quiet and secluded end of cul-de-sac location close to the village centre of Dymock on the Herefordshire/Gloucestershire border.

Very high spec throughout, including oak doors, 2 large double bedrooms, one with en-suite; third bedroom/office, luxury fitted kitchen/dining room with French doors to newly landscaped garden. Tiled bathrooms and kitchen; utility room and lounge overlooking Canal. Gas central heating, off road parking for 2 cars. Available for occupation now. £945 pcm. No DSS, no pets and no smokers – Energy rating TBC.

This property is owned by the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust. All profits will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Hereford & Gloucester Canal.

For more information email dymock@thewharfhouse.co.uk, or if email is not available, by post, envelope marked clearly 'DYMOCK' to **The Wharf House**, Over, Gloucester, GL2 8DB.

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 By Carolyn Pascall

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Next time, before you shop online, please first register with **Give as you Live**. It's just one quick and efficient process. Type in <http://goo.gl/12c9xl> to your browser (it's a shortcut to www.giveasyoulive.com/join/handgcanaltrust) to register then, and in future, every time you shop online please remember to go to www.giveasyoulive.com, log on, choose your retailer from over 4,000 (or search for a product) and shop as usual.

Every purchase you make through the site will then automatically generate a donation to H&G CT from the specific retailer you use and when you log on the balance you have raised is shown. Each time you log on you will see how much has been raised.

Thank you » CP

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and restoration of the Hereford & Gloucester Canal.

Mill Barn

APPEAL



Our sincere thanks to everyone who responded to the Mill Barn Appeal (launched in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**) getting us off to an excellent start. By early February the Mill Barn fund (which already had a most welcome £10,000 anonymous donation from 2013 in it) stood at over **£24,000 and rising**.

That's just the start!

We have a long way to go in order to construct this much-needed building that will provide the desperately needed support resource for the H&G CT. Proper office accommodation for the L&PDT, a meeting/training room and kitchen, toilet and other facilities for our volunteers and the other groups who regularly use Over Canal Basin, plus long-awaited equipment maintenance and storage facilities. Not only will the attractive building bring huge benefits for all concerned it will also enable the removal of the portacabins

and containers which have been necessary on the site for so many years – a significant further step in the history of Over Canal Basin.

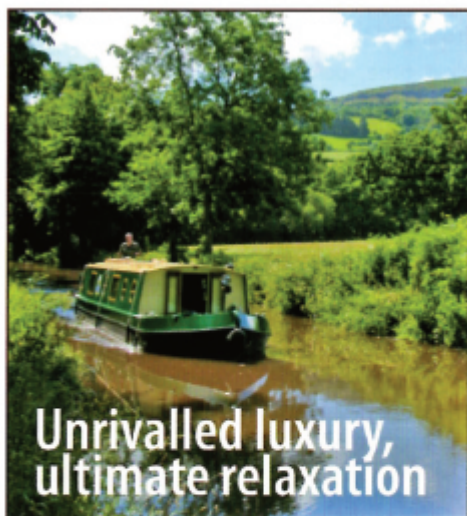
Donations and sponsorships, large and small, from enabling the purchase of a couple of engineering bricks at £5 each (or a couple of hundred or more!) to sponsoring the disabled lift at £10,000 – with much else in between – will be greatly appreciated.

IT ALL
H&G CT
COUNTS

For further details please see the Mill Barn Appeal leaflet (a copy was enclosed in the last edition of **The Wharfinger**) or you can read all about it on the H&G CT website and download a copy of the leaflet. Copies are also available at **The Wharf House, Malswick House**, or any H&G CT event or meeting. *Thank you* » **CRP**



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As reported in the last edition of *The Wharfinger*, the Grand Holiday Draw 2015 was a huge success raising **£2,291**.
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H&G CT Grand Holiday Draw 2016

(Stubs and money to be returned to Promoter by 1st September 2016)
(10 coins = 10 tickets)

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Prizes to be drawn at the September Social at Royal Oak, Much Marcle on September 20th 2016. Registered under the Gambling Act 2005.

TICKETS £1 each

Once again this year we have some great prizes!

This year again 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 Moul (see below).

The prizes will be drawn at the Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle, on 20 September 2016. Our thanks to **Black Prince Holidays, Beacon Park Boats** 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 whom 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 and businesses.

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

IT ALL
H&G CT
COUNTS

Please Note: All completed ticket stubs and money from their sale should be returned to the promoter, **Janet Moul**. See inside back cover or tickets for details.

Llanthony Lock House

By Paul Henshaw

**WE'VE
FINISHED IT!**

After many months of concerted volunteer effort, the refurbishment of the house has been completed and it is ready for rental.

Externally, the refit has involved repairs to the roof and chimney flashing to ensure the building is watertight.

As has been reported in previous editions of **The Wharfinger**, internally the property has benefited from the installation of a new kitchen and bathroom. Special attention has been given to the upgrade of the insulation and a set of new storage heaters has been provided. Much of the electrics and plumbing has been replaced and the house has been decorated and carpeted throughout.

Wherever possible the old features have been retained, for example, the very attractive cast fireplaces have been restored to their former glory. In the downstairs lounge, the removal of a faulty back boiler revealed the location of an inglenook fireplace (sadly long since gone) but we were able to make an interesting feature out of the former alcove.

In the summer months, with the better weather, we will carry out some further improvements to the exterior, but this will not impinge upon the H&G CT's ability to rent out the property. » PH



The kitchen before renovation.



The downstairs lounge.

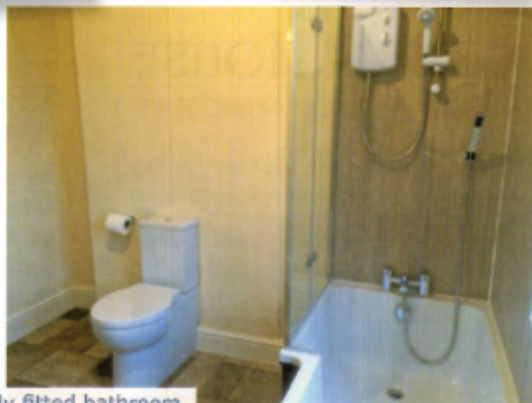
At the January Council of Management Meeting thanks were expressed to all the volunteers who have spent many hours helping transform the cottage into a very valuable asset for the H&G CT. Particular thanks were expressed to Paul for so successfully leading the team and for organising and managing contractors where required. – Ed.



Bedroom No 2 with the newly exposed fireplace.



Jane painting the Sun lounge floor.



The newly fitted bathroom.

Maggie Jones

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For more information and to register your interest please email

llanthony@thewharfhouse.co.uk

or if email is not available, by post, envelope marked clearly 'Llanthony' to **The Wharf House**, Over, Gloucester, GL2 8DB.



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

MALSWICK HOUSE'S New Fire Screen



As we have reported previously the widely complimented decorative railings on the entrance to **Malswick House** were the work of our much appreciated Much Marcle volunteer blacksmith team of Henry Clarke and Andy Smith.

During the winter many people have appreciated the roaring log fire at Malswick House and Henry and Andy have recently produced a very fine purpose-made fire screen to sit in front of it. Our thanks to them and to **Gary Gittings** of Hereford firm **Mettech** who, without charge, (to use their words) "did the fancy stuff".

»» CRP

Spotlight on ...

MALSWICK HOUSE BEER!

H&G CT's **Malswick House** is a 'free house' with a good range of traditional beer. We have received excellent support from **Marstons Brewery** and apart from one of their draught beers usually being on tap (it's their EPA at the moment) the other pumps feature a range of changing guest beers from smaller brewers. At the time of writing these included the very popular **Hobgoblin** and, from the Forest of Dean, **The Kings Shilling**!

VOLUNTEERS' CHRISTMAS LUNCH

By Ted Beagles

Our annual Christmas lunch this year broke with the tradition of a meal at the local Toby Carvery, and was held in the marquee of H&G CT's pub, **Malswick House**, near Newent.

As more of our volunteers are now working across multiple sites the event was extended to all volunteers, and a record 65 people attended. The food was excellent, if rather unusual for Christmas lunch, comprising an extensive buffet with a Christmas theme, and a good time was had by all.



H&G CT Restoration Chairman, Wilf Jones, made a short speech at the end thanking all volunteers for their help and dedication throughout the year.

Thanks to Pat for organising the event again (with help from Maddy), and to all the Malswick House staff for putting on the feast and looking after us so well on the day.

»» **TB**





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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.

We would like to attend more local events but in order to do so we need to know about them and have more volunteers to help – information please? » **JM/MJ**

The Sales and Promotion teams are expecting to attend the following events in 2016.

April 30	Droitwich Boat Festival, Worcestershire
May 25	Learning Disability Big Health Check Open Day
May 28–30	Crick Boat Show, Northamptonshire
June 11	Ledbury Community Day
June 11–12	Hellens Garden Festival, Herefordshire
June 25–26	Historic Narrowboat Rally, Braunston, Northamptonshire
August 20–21	Over Festival, Over Canal Basin, Gloucester
September 10	Oxenhall and Newent Open Day
November 12	H&G CT Winter Bazaar, Ledbury

Canal Walks



30p
each

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

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

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



Dudley Greenslade

We have learnt the sad news of the death of volunteer, Dudley Greenslade. Dudley was very active with the Cotswold Canals Trust, as well as a good friend of **H&G CT**. He volunteered with us on a number of projects, including the fit out of **The Wharf House** along with his late wife, Annette. *Our thoughts are with his friends and family.*

» **JM**

FORMAL NOTICE

THE HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST

2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on Tuesday 19 July 2016 at 7.30pm
at **Malswick House**, Newent GL18 1HE

This is the formal notice of the 2016 AGM to give Members the opportunity to make a note in their diary. 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 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. New nominations to serve on Council of Management are welcome and should be made by email from the member making the nomination to Carolyn

Pascall (*contact details below*), copied to the nominee, or by using a form available, preferably by email from Carolyn or from her using **The Wharf House** address. Nominations should be submitted, preferably by email, *in the period between 28 days and 7 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 AGM. Proxy forms are available from Carolyn and should be completed, signed and returned to her, preferably by email, *to arrive at least 48 hours before the start of the AGM*.

Carolyn Pascall: cdpascall@aol.com or, if email isn't available, by post clearly marked **AGM Nomination** or **AGM Proxy**, for the attention of **Carolyn Pascall at The Wharf House**.



Gift Membership of the H&G Canal Trust

Looking for something different to give a friend or family member? How about a year's subscription to H&G CT including four editions of **The Wharfinger**. Subscriptions start from **£7.50**.

A membership form is available online or from **The Wharf House**.

H&G CT UK Membership Rates

	Annual	Life
Individual	£10	£200
Joint/Family	£15	£300
Senior Citizen	£7.50	£115
Joint Senior Citizen	£10	£150
Corporate	£25	£500

PLEASE NOTE: All subscriptions and donations are treated as being made under the Gift Aid scheme unless you state that you do not wish us to do this. Payment made by Standing Order greatly assists us and payment remains under your control. All payments to: H&G CT, 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

Social Evenings

at The Royal Oak

**The third Tuesday of every month (except December)
at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle, HR8 2ND
7.30 for 8pm start.**

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!**

15 March

From Amsterdam to Budapest

– Penny Platts

A journey along the waterways of Europe on the Rhine, Main and Danube. Come and hear about a wonderful trip.



19 April

Leominster Canal – an update on our local Herefordshire canal. – Martin Hudson

The Friends of Leominster Canal have been working away, recording and promoting their Canal in the last few years since we heard from them.



17 May

Railways around Monmouth

– Martin Connop Price

We welcome back Martin with his latest presentation on railways in the area.



21 June

Keeping sane with stained glass

– Ralph Barber

An occasional change from canal-related topics, another past Chairman gives us an insight into his hobby.





RESTORATION UPDATE

News of our work on the Hereford & Gloucester Canal

Want to get involved at any of our restoration sites? – You will be most welcome – all the contact details are on page 31.

Aylestone Park & Kymin East

Wilf Jones

In November, at Aylestone Park (adjacent to the weir) and along the towpath hedge line at Kymin East some new trees and lengths of hedging were planted.

» WJ



Above: Jan Alston and her husband, Tony, who helped with the planting adjacent to the new weir at Aylestone Park.

Left: Gap-filling hedging plants at Kymin East.

Yarkhill

Chris High

The rain held off long enough for us to complete the remaining tidying up of the canal bed. Our efforts were then transferred to clearing around the ditch bank hedge saplings planted several years ago.

The Team then had two 'away days'. The first saw a contingent of eight visit a very wet and muddy Dymock and complete the tree planting on the embankment. This was followed three weeks later when nine members



Above and right top: Heavy rainfall sees the Canal filling up at Yarkhill.



Chris High

represented the Yarkhill Team at **Malswick House** for the volunteer's Christmas get-together.

Surprisingly it was not until just before Christmas that any water was to be seen in the canal but by early January rainfall provided some two to two and a half foot depth of water along the whole stretch.

» CH

Dymock

David Penny

In driving rain over two days in mid-November some twenty Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust volunteers were joined by local residents to plant hundreds of trees along our new Canal at Dymock.

The 500 trees comprise a variety of native trees including oak, beech, bird cherry, field maple, spindle, sweet chestnut, birch, hazel and alder. The banks to the new Canal are steep and the roots will give good support once the trees have become established. As well as providing invaluable habitats for birds and insects the rich variety of colours will add interest to the area, particularly in the autumn.

» DP



Above: John plants an oak around the top of the perimeter path.

Right: Megan fits rabbit guards to the saplings.



Maggie Jones

Volunteers planting hundreds of saplings around the banks of the Canal.

After the very successful Open Day in September our thoughts turned to vegetation and what there was to do before the start of nesting in March.

The mild weather meant that grass cutting continued until the beginning of December and as I write in early January it could do with another cut already! It's not just the grass that keeps growing but the daffodils are well up and the birds will be confused into thinking about building nests soon if we don't get a cold spell. Our main effort has been on the old Willows nursery where we have cut, strimmed and burned most of the brambles which have occupied the site since H&G CT bought it 12 years ago. We found that the most efficient way of clearing was to cut and leave where they were and then come in with the tractor and bulldoze everything into a pile for the bonfires. The area is now clear for a detailed survey to take place of the design and exact position of the embankment on which the canal will run.

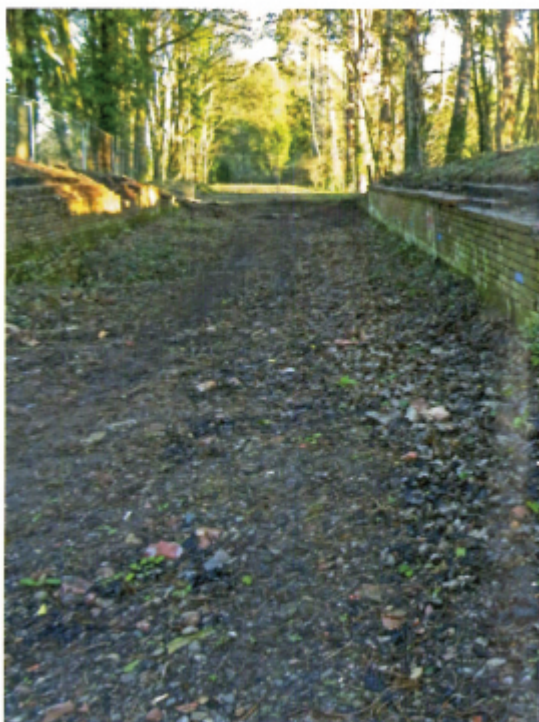
Attention has now shifted to continuing with the pollarding of willow trees which we didn't have time to complete last winter. Six very large branches all growing from the same stump are now being tackled and will probably take a week for each one so that will just about take us up to the end of the season. Each trunk is chainsawed off and then pulled up onto the bank with the tractor so that it can be logged and trimmed – plenty of willow logs now available! The only problem might be the extremely wet ground which prevents the tractor moving about without chewing up the soil and making a mud bath. The members of the public who enjoy walking the path would, understandably, not be happy so the work

is 'on hold'. Give us a few hard frosts and no problems.

An inspection of the footbridge over the lock revealed several of the cross timbers were rotten and these were replaced as a matter of urgency. A full inspection will be done when the weather is warmer and the timbers have had a chance to dry out. It was built in 2004 and has been treated a couple of times but clearly not enough – another job to go on the list.

The tractor service was completed by Geoff and Ian thus saving H&G CT a few pounds but the cost of new parts and oil required still came to over £300. This is money well spent as we would struggle to get things done efficiently without our tractor. Bulldozing brambles and nettles was a new usage but moving heavy stones and logs, as we are now doing, plus the pallets of used bricks from the station platforms is the bread and butter work.

» BF



Permissive Path

The permissive path that we have been creating from the public footpath by the aqueduct down through the Willows and on to the former railway station is now complete. It was necessary to build some steps up from the Ell Brook to the station so unfortunately it is not wheelchair friendly. Eventually it will be possible for the less able to reach the former station along the canal towpath on the proposed embankment which will then merge with the existing railway embankment with no locks in between. Signs and information boards at strategic points are planned to guide you along and to explain why it has to be done this way. From the station it is a short walk into Newent for a cup of tea.

The tops of the former railway platforms are cleared revealing no coping stone



The steps built into the bank leading up from Ell Brook form part of the permissive path.

The Old Platforms

I have previously reported on our work to clear away the rubbish between the platforms of the old station and we have now transported all the remaining building materials which were still in the way – some useful building materials have been sold, some sold for scrap or recycling; as little as possible has gone to the tip.

A start has now been made by the Saturday volunteer group working alternate weekends on clearing a strip about 2-3ft wide along the top of both platforms revealing what is still left. We have already discovered that every single coping stone which finished off the platform edges has been taken(well over 1000) and we will necessarily have to replace them if we are to do the job properly.



Our tractor moving large stones which are blocking access to the platform.



Gabriel and Chas clear the earth and undergrowth to reveal the top of the platforms.

Bringing in the Experts!

Some experts from the **Waterway Recovery Group** specialist **Forestry Team** paid us another welcome visit one day in December to do essential work on the large fir trees by the station embankment. We believe they were planted soon after the railway was built so they are about 125 years old and about 100ft high. Two years ago one fell and it is essential that we inspect them regularly and carry out essential safety management otherwise others will fall. This involves clearing much of the ivy from the trunks and trimming dead branches as necessary and, as a last resort, it may mean felling a small number. The trees have a Tree Preservation Order on them and before any pruning or other work can be done H&G CT has to obtain authorisation from Forest of Dean Council. WRG Forestry will be back to complete the work in February.

» **BF**



Maggie Jones

Waterway Recovery Group Forestry Team clear the dead wood from the tall Corsican Pines along the station site.

Fresh Air and Exercise by the Spadeful!


The new weekend group is looking for volunteers to help with this huge task as well as other new sites along the Canal. We hope that a weekend slot will encourage people who work or study through the week, perhaps in an indoor environment, and would relish the opportunity of getting out into the countryside. If you don't like digging there is much else to do. If this appeals to you, or you know someone please contact **Wilf Jones 01452 413 888.**

Thank you




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Martyn Tilford

Moat Farm

Martyn Tilford

Surveying the scene on a freezing January morning.

Our regular volunteer team enjoyed a quiet winter period by Moat Farm standards. On-going site maintenance tasks were carried out including regular grass-mowing and light vegetation management.

A further length of the centre section of the canal bed was prepared for dredging and profiling using the excavator. However a long dull and wet period ensued meaning that ground conditions became far from ideal for further heavy machine work.

It was decided to take our resident excavator out of service over the mid-winter period and get a local engineering

firm to carry out extensive refurbishment of the pins and bushes on the boom, dipper arm and associated hydraulic rams. This involved dismantling and machining several components and took several weeks. The work was carried out to a high standard and the machine was returned in mid January.

As the water levels were high following heavy rain in late December and early January only some light excavator work was possible in the drier areas of the site. The planned dredging of the remaining centre section will have to wait until the water levels reduce.

» **MT**

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Heritage Boats

All the boats continue to be run and maintained regularly, and routinely sail along the full length of canal to ensure they remain in a serviceable condition, and continue to keep navigation past the landslip area along Vineyard Hill section clear. The motor problem on Bosley has now been resolved and permanent modifications made. The cabin exterior is being refurbished by Pat when weather conditions permit.

The work on Renton's front hold cover is proceeding well; the design is based upon the restored narrowboat "Northwich", one of the floating exhibits at Gloucester Waterways Museum. Several visits were made and photographs taken and sketches made of main structures comprising of several "A" frames and upright supports with a broad "walking board" across the top. All the main components have now been fabricated and assembly is about to begin. This has been done in a pressure treated timber, as the cost would have been prohibitive in oak. A successful trial fit has been carried out in advance of the final erection. Once it is completed it will be painted black. Northwich has a traditional three part cover over the hold:



Pat refurbishes the exterior of Bosley.

along each side are two narrow covers which are secured and sealed to the hull of the boat at the base; they are then joined together and tensioned by ropes passing over the walking board. A very much larger third section is then placed over the board, overlapping the lower covers by about 450mm, and secured to the edge of the boat to prevent wind driven rain entering the hold. We are currently researching the most cost-effective method to procure such a cover. In the meantime after completion of the frame a temporary cover will be put in place to keep rain out.

Once all the woodwork has been completed and painted we are intending to paint the end panels with a traditional Roses and Castles design, and would welcome advice and suggestions for the design and offers to undertake the painting. My contact details are inside the back cover.



The work on Renton's front hold is progressing well.

Ted Beagles

The Great Wall

Work on the great wall continues, with more than half of the reinforced concrete work completed. Shuttering is now in place for the penultimate pours. These vertical sections have been very labour intensive due to the more complex supports required to support the shuttering under the high loading arising during concrete pouring. Work was interrupted briefly in November when a family of swans passed by 'in formation' on the river Severn!

Following completion of concrete work, which is imminent, we shall move on to cladding the whole structure with reclaimed bricks, and finally constructing the bicycle 'cave'!

Pump Rescued

The level of the river Severn has been very high recently, and although (so far!) the site has not actually been flooded we decided to move the Stuart pump (used for topping up the canal from the river Leaden) to the higher ground of the main site for safety. This was accomplished on one of the rare sunny days in the last week of December with the help of the volunteers from

The River Leaden bursts its banks where the pump had been standing.



Bob, Graham, Andy, and Peter in the rain during one of the concrete pours for the 'great wall'. (Lorry driver in background)

Llanthony site. This proved to be a more difficult task than originally envisaged! The ground around the pump was very soft and muddy and the towing vehicle immediately went into a four wheel spin and could not move. Luckily we had a second four wheel drive vehicle on site at the time, so we positioned this on the hard surfaced road, and attached a long tow rope between the two cars, and gradually the pump was hauled away from the river bank, and towed to the safety of the main site area. On a high tide three weeks later the flood plain was completely flooded so all our work was not in vain.

» TB



Ted Beagles

Llanthony

Paul Henshaw



See Llanthony Cottage Refurbishment article on P.14

Would you like to be involved?

You will be made most welcome on any of our sites, please contact:

Aylestone and Kymin

Wilf Jones on 01452 413 888
wilfredjones506@gmail.com

Yarkhill

Chris High on 01568 615 575
chris@chrishigh.plus.com

Oxenhall

Brian Fox on 01432 358 628
briandfox74@gmail.com

Newent Station – Saturdays

Wilf Jones on 01452 413 888
wilfredjones506@gmail.com

Moat Farm

Martyn Tilford on 01452 790 358
martyn@tilford.free-online.co.uk

Over Basin/Vineyard Hill

Ted Beagles on 01452 522 648
tedbeagles@blueyonder.co.uk

Llanthony

Paul Henshaw on 01684 293 930
paulhenshawuk@yahoo.co.uk

Saturday Roving Team

Maggie Jones on 01452 618 010
maggiejones@blueyonder.co.uk

Corporate Members & Sponsors

By Cliff Penny

The continuing support given to the H&G CT by businesses, both local and national, is very important to us and is not taken for granted. *Thank you to all concerned.*

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www.h-g-canal.org.uk and complete and return the membership form.

Thank you » CRP



100

EDITIONS OF



We would like to congratulate Cliff Penny on 100 successful editions of **The Wharfinger**!

The Wharfinger newsletter, as it was then, started in the summer of 1983 as a couple of A4 sheets stapled together in black and white. Mike Potts took over the helm for a number of years and increased the number of pages. Websites and email were in their infancy, so the newsletter was a valuable and vital asset to update our membership.

It was 1991 when Cliff Penny began to work on **The Wharfinger**. There is no second best for Cliff, it has to be correct in every

detail and it has paid off. He has been able to grow the magazine as the H&G CT grows. It reaches a wide readership, not only our Members but also local authorities and other organisations. Waterway bodies around the country all know and respect **The Wharfinger**. Well done Cliff!

This article will perhaps surprise Cliff; he didn't know it was coming, despite it being very hard to slip anything past his scrutiny, but hopefully this will reach the presses without his prior knowledge to give him our
HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS FOR 25 YEARS OF EDITING!

»» MJ

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It has been our pleasure in supporting the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for over 20 years, and we will continue *to work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.* © H&GCT

Simon Hayward: 01452 700384, Fax 01452 700740
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WINTER BAZAAR

by Pat Skeet

For this Bazaar, we had a unique problem: having to turn stallholders away as we were fully booked! It made a good start for the day.



Ray Moses draws a ticket for the Christmas Hamper.

Our crafts covered bags, jewellery, chocolate, home-sewn goods, National Trust, Phoenix, glassware, jams and preserves, books and prints, candles, felt kits and lacy scarves. As well as this array of goods, there was a magnificent Christmas Hamper raffled, a tombola stall and our own H&G stand selling goods with all the profit going straight to the H&G CT.

The weather was mild, allowing us to have the central doors open all day but unfortunately there was quite a lot of rain, which impacted on our number of visitors. The atmosphere inside was warm and friendly, home-made cakes and soup were much enjoyed and despite the amount of shoppers being "quiet", most stallholders were satisfied with their takings and are wanting to come again next year.

Dick Skeet

It is good to have this opportunity to raise awareness about the H&G Canal in Ledbury each year as well as contributing to H&G CT funds. *Thank you to all those who supported us.*

PS – Please make a note on the calendar or in your diary now, before you forget, the **H&G CT Winter Bazaar** will again be in St Katherine's Hall, Ledbury, on **Saturday 12 November**. We look forward to seeing you there. If you want to reserve a stand then please contact Pat Skeet, 01432 850 788, as soon as possible - spaces are in high demand - don't leave it too late!

» **PS**



Some of the many stalls at this year's event.

Norman Mitchell

In November 2015 the Museum closed for the refit. A team of enthusiastic volunteers attended to started to decant all the collection display items to a safe place of storage away from the two floors being refitted.

The works progressed smoothly and were completed well within the time period allowed with the new position of each item being recorded. Considerable amounts of display material not part of the collections were moved and some of it consigned to be recycled. Some items of more interest to our sister museum in Ellesmere Port were despatched to them.

The contractors employed by the project team to restore the floors moved on site before Christmas and are busy, as I write, dealing with any areas needing attention. Once repairs are complete fire-proofing will be applied and then the refit can commence.

Friends and volunteers have a number of tasks to get on with during the shutdown; the railway turntables need some work and also the timber trolleys plus all the artefacts moved need cleaning, photographing and recording. There will shortly be a conservation plan for both the Museum's steam powered displays which, we hope, will detail the works we can undertake to put them both, the crane and the dredger, back into demonstration-running condition to attract more visitors.

Overlooking Tommy Nielsen's dry dock at Gloucester Docks.



**Gloucestershire & Herefordshire
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Social Meetings and Events**

Non members are welcome.

The Warehouse, Parliament Street, GL1 1HY
Free parking at the Docks, Southgate St from 6pm

Thursday 3 March 7.30pm

**The ships and coasters from
Gloucester to the world**
Pete Evans

Thursday 7 April 7.30pm

**CCT and the latest developments
on the HLF Bid**
Liz Payne

**There will be a Summer Break
until September.**

Further details contact: **Martin Turner**
email: martin.turner40@btinternet.com
01452 312 228

The Museum is anticipated to re-open in the summer with a whole new display concept for the public to enjoy. Further details will be in a future edition of **The Wharfinger** and on our website:

www.friendsofgwm.co.uk.

» NM



Margie Jones

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'Beans on Toast Sunday' proved as popular as ever.

The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club has sailed this autumn in possibly the most varied weather conditions ever. The final clearance of weed in October contributed to uninterrupted sailing. In early November the fishermen had a bevy of wonderful catches. They thanked us for driving the fish in their direction!

The Friday Micro Magic racing is still the most popular event. We have had eighteen sailors turn up for some meetings. One of our sailors, now retired, has presented two shields for the winter and a summer ladies competition; normally five ladies compete.

Our annual 'Beans on Toast Sunday' proved as popular as ever, around thirty members and family turned out, quite a task for the two chefs! The weather was again good to us squeezed in between two violent days. Unfortunately the sailors had a frustrating day with no wind.

The tranquil walk along the canal bank to the winding hole is as popular as ever. The beginning of December saw the canal open



up with high water levels. Three vessels shown together at the winding hole are:

David's paddle steamer Glasgow is one of his early models, electric motor driven, built from a kit with many extra's including independent paddlewheels. He is now a converted steam buff. Phil's model of an American PT boat is totally scratch built from balsa wood. This type of craft was used in the World War Two conflict between the U.S.A. and Japan. Bryan's MTB 49 was launched in 1941 but was not successful. Her top speed of 26knots was nowhere near that of her counterparts. The model's hull is a fibreglass moulding, the super-structure and fittings are from plasticard.

Gloucester & District Model Boat Club

sails at Over Basin on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday afternoons (*weather permitting*). You should find somebody sailing between 1pm and 4pm. The Club members will only be too pleased to talk to you about their models and the Club. The members have models of all descriptions including amphibious craft. Yachts are also very popular.

Chairman. Edward Tedaldi.



Ted's splendid yacht is from a free plan in a model magazine. The hull is constructed from plywood, the deck is pine planked and the superstructure from plasticard. She is shown in a good breeze just outside the basin refreshment cabin. » TT



Sailing4Disabled

Pete Bisson

Well we've had a good year in 2015 with a group joining us from our past sailing days. This year we are going to be joined by another past group. Neither of these groups need specific disabled accommodation but this cannot be said of all of the old groups (clients).

In December we enjoyed a group Christmas meal and even had a visit from the big man himself, Father Christmas, who gave out "secret Santa" presents – he even managed to give a "modeller" a wooden model airplane! Two days later Father Christmas crash landed just north of Over Basin the same day as we had two children waiting to see him. As you can see they were over the moon!

Back to the water, I'm pleased to report that the Wheelyboat is now proudly owned by S4D and hope that it will serve us well and a lot more clients get as much enjoyment from it as we do. It is going to be updated to modern spec and a recently donated "Torqeedo Cruise 2" electric motor is to be fitted. So do please phone first if you are coming down to see us (*details below*) to check the Wheelyboat is back at Over.

» PB



Father Christmas visits Over Basin!

Pete Bisson

Sailing4Disabled meets
every Tuesday at **Over Canal Basin** from 11.00 to 14.00.

It is open to everyone – whether they have a disability or not.

Pete (Long Gone Silver) Bisson:
07913 015018

peterwb49@hotmail.com
www.sailing4disabled.org.uk



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) are 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!**



Wot No Otters?

By Ted Beagles

The River Leadon at Over has become more prone to silting since the discharge into the Severn became a tidal creek after the Environment Agency cut off the flap valves.

So Mike Bowden (our Otter expert) thought we should check that the entrances to the artificial otter holt, which we constructed some years ago were clear. Safely harnessed to a tree and with the rope controlled by Andy Fowler, he descended the muddy bank in search of the two entrance pipes, only to discover that they were nowhere to be found. 'Plan B' was duly put into operation, which was to dig back from the holt to locate them. This involved uncovering the roof to reveal the correct location to start; but on removing the slab over the inspection hole in the roof the whole chamber was found to be full of silt! So now we are about to

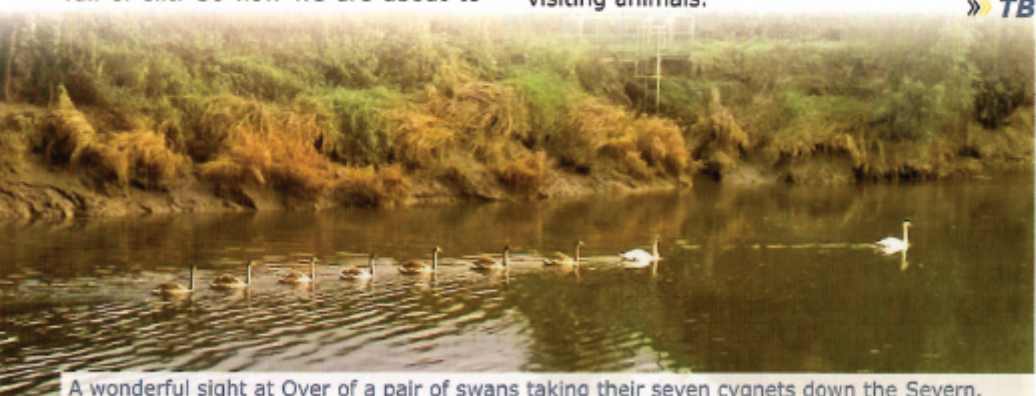


Top: Andy manages the rope for Mike's investigation.

Above: Mike looking for otter holt entrances on the banks of the River Leadon.

dig out the area to attempt to re-establish the holt. It seems that the signs of otter activity seen around the site must be from visiting animals.

» **TB**



A wonderful sight at Over of a pair of swans taking their seven cygnets down the Severn.

Ted Beagles

Not quite
... the last page!

Stamps

Following the appeal in the last edition of The Wharfinger Steve Bence reports that he has received several nice philatelic donations – our thanks to all concerned. Following some sales over recent weeks we've passed the £2,000 target and working towards £2,500!

Stamps can be taken to a Social Evening or other H&G CT event – or to **The Wharf House** or **Malswick House**. Or send them direct to: – **H&G Stamps**, c/o Steve Bence, 35 Lime Road, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 1EQ. Please keep those stamps coming. **Thank you.** » **SB**

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The Next Generation

Our sincere thanks to Martin Turner, Chairman of the **Inland Waterways Association Gloucestershire & Herefordshire Branch** for donating a 3.4kw generator to the H&G CT.



It will be extremely useful for operation of electrical equipment and power tools in areas where mains power

is not available such as remote sites, and in areas of sites such as Over where extension cables are not practicable. » **TB**

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Contact Carolyn Pascall

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Thank You IWA

IT ALL
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H&G CT would like to thank the local branch of IWA for their £100 donation following of our combined January Social at Much Marcle. **Thank you.** » **MJ**



DIARY DATES

OVER FESTIVAL

on the canal 2016

Saturday, 20 and Sunday, 21 August

Newent & Oxenhall Open Day

Saturday, 10 September

Copy deadline for the next issue
MONDAY, 4 APRIL

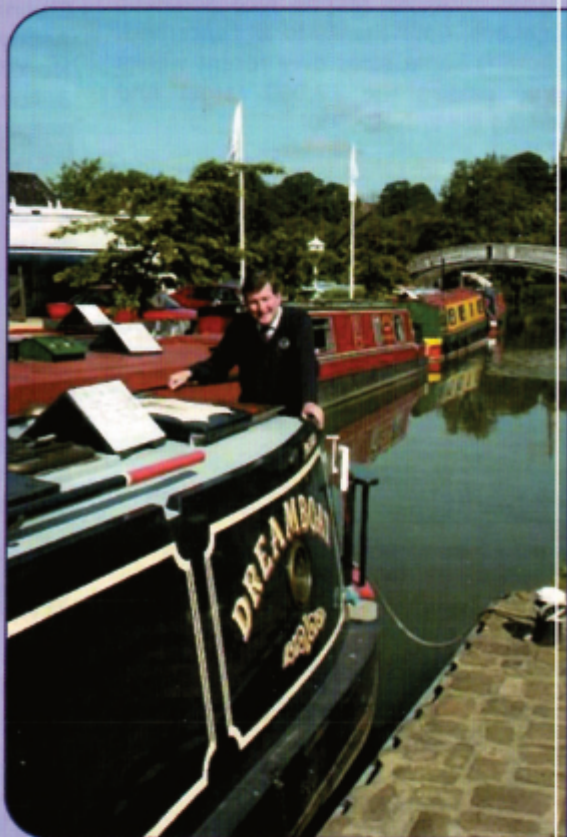
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Want to help?

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. The H&G CT also welcomes offers of gifts of good quality used tools and machinery from those who no longer need or cannot use it.

Contacts

Contact any of these names TODAY!

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"Who does what ..."

is inside the front cover.

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Hereford

Our objective is to rebuild the 34 mile Canal linking the centre of Hereford to Gloucester and its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterway network. We have major restoration sites in each county, together extending to some 4 miles. The intention is to provide a financially sustainable independent Canal which does not require public money for its future operation and maintenance.

The H&G Canal Trust

The Canal Society, formed in 1983, became the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity, in 1992. It has an ordinary and corporate membership approaching 1,400, here and abroad.

The original Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal

Work started in 1792 reaching Ledbury from Gloucester by 1798. In 1827 Steven Ballard was appointed to oversee the Canal's completion, which reached Hereford in 1845; this was one of the last major canal routes completed in Britain. The Canal stretched from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to Hereford, using 22 locks and 3 tunnels. It was closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury-Gloucester railway which in turn closed in 1964.

