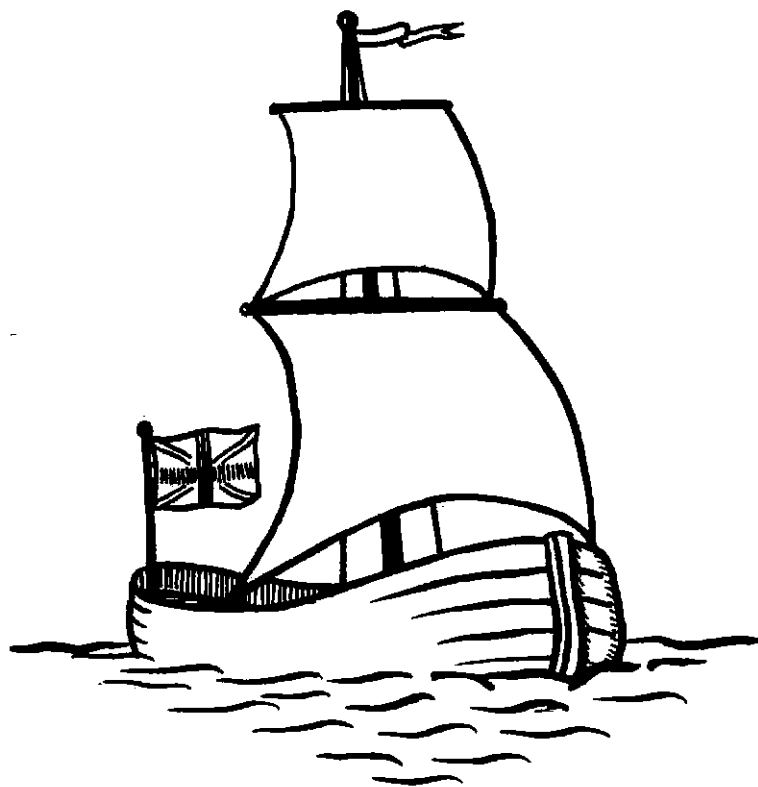

THE TROW

The Official Magazine for members of the Canal Trust



*Stroudwater, Thames & Severn
Canal Trust Limited*

No.13

March 1976

Editorial



As most readers will have noticed, the promised photographs did not appear in our last issue. This was due to printing delays (not, I hasten to add, by the printers of the magazine itself, who look after us very well indeed!), and the photographs are now included with this issue, giving some idea of the work that has been going on over the past year or more.

Readers will see that work has been proceeding steadily during the winter months, and the spring and summer should bring much progress, especially if the hot summer of 1975 is repeated. The biggest problem, it will be noticed, is money. We have plenty of physical and practical help, although we can always do with more, but funds are always the problem. The item from our Appeals Secretary will, I hope, prick a few consciences, and perhaps I could suggest that the price of a pint or a packet of cigarettes (or even a potato!) could be donated to Trust funds, rather than the tax on such items being given to the Government for spending on motorways - or, dare I say, ring roads?

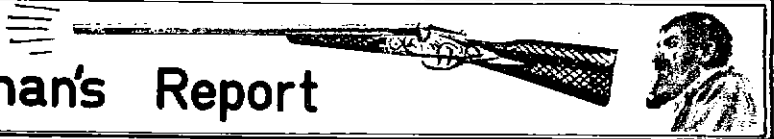
My thanks to the various contributors of articles, poems, etc., which have been coming in a little more frequently of late. The magazine, I feel, is the only contact which the larger proportion of our membership has with what is going on, and I would appeal once again for anyone who has anything of interest to let me have it for publication. There must be a whole fund of stories from older inhabitants of the district who remember the canal in its heyday - and what about the anglers, naturalists, rambblers, etc., from whom we hear very little? Let's hear from you all!

Trow Editor: Mr. R.O. Nott, Lynfield, Frome Park Road, Stroud, Glos.

D O N T **F O R G E T** **M A Y 2ND**
S P O N S O R E D **W A L K**



Chairman's Report



The past quarter has seen a great deal of improvement at Coates, although there is a considerable amount of clearing up left to do. All of the silt has been removed as far as Tarlton Bridge. The silt heap has still to be landscaped and we are preparing to start work on the portal as soon as cash is available. About £4000 is urgently required to ensure completion. This must be raised over the summer months in order that the masons can start before next winter. The Trust will engage professional masons to rebuild this famous eastern portal, hopefully throughout the summer. We must see this portal restored in 1976, and this is possibly the most exciting immediate task facing the Trust. Restoration is at present being delayed for one reason only - MONEY. We estimate a total expenditure of about £4000, little of which is in hand and out of which possibly the first £250 will have to be paid to a landowner elsewhere on the system in settlement of a claim. It is unfortunate, but when there is an indication of any charitable organisation having any funds there is always someone waiting to get their share of as much of it as possible. Our money is hard-earned and wisely spent but not everyone looks at it in this light. Even some semi-commercial organisations make every effort to rook societies, trusts, etc., under the guise of Help. Fortunately, to compensate for this there are many tolerant and co-operative responsible companies only too willing to help in any way they are able.

So whilst we are on the question of money, firstly, this year there will be two sponsored walks, one on the old route, possibly for the last time, and the second at Cirencester. It is vital you make every effort to take part in both of these walks. We need the money and you need the exercise! Unless they are well patronised the work programmed for next year will have to be drastically curtailed. So don't leave it just to the kids, everybody must make the effort. We can do the work if you can raise the money. Secondly, we are pleased to gain access to the tip at Thrupp for dumping spoil from the Ham Mill pound. This will be placed on the site of Lister's new factory where those fabulous new Tiger diesels will be produced. I am also pleased our friend Mr. James has taken a site next to the canal at Brimscombe. Remarkable how we are getting friends in a lot of industries along our site. I hope we can encourage this further.

It is Trust policy to encourage local industry as much as possible. We buy, hire, weld and print locally and even our comparatively small amount must help. Certainly a far cry from one prominent figure's warning to the County Council that mass unemployment and closure of factories would surely follow the digging of our first spadeful, if we were allowed to proceed. Ever heard of boat building as an industry? Ever heard of tourism as an industry? We could expand all these and many more, and are slowly doing so.

Very shortly we intend to re-shape the Committee by having one even distribution of officers from each end. This, hopefully, will mean a more efficient use of personnel. Also, it is time a new Chairman and Secretary

were appointed, as after four years one has the tendency to become stale and divert widely from the path we are supposed to be treading. It also means someone else has the chance to inject fresh ideas to keep the scheme going.

The Severn-Trent Authority have extended the River Frome improvement under the motorway and what a lovely job has been done clearing and improving the channel, but let's hope the work does not stop with the engineering, and that the file gets sent to the Amenity Services Department. Remember all the old publicity work the Water Authority gave us? Water for amenity use as well as everything else. Well, here we are, boys, let's see what can be done here!

We are pleased to see that our friends on the Basingstoke Canal have succeeded in getting the County Council to purchase the whole of the canal in both Surrey and Hampshire. Remembering at one time Gloucestershire County Council owned the whole of the Thames & Severn and small sections of the Stroudwater - don't ask questions! The position of Britain's waterway ownership is a mess nationally and various Transport Acts have failed to sort it out. This is brought about by the navigation authority, British Waterways Board, only being responsible for part of the system, the Water Authorities not knowing if they want to get involved in navigable waters, and the remainder owned privately or by Trusts and others. We were promised when the Regional Water Authorities were set up that water usage would be planned, multi-functional, drinkable, navigable, etc. Well, fine, but communications are a problem. We haven't heard much from that quarter since. I believe, and this is only my opinion, that a super B.W.B. should be established to be responsible for ALL waterways including water transfer, irrigation, flood control and drainage, but most important, navigation, with all authorities concerned with running commercial shipping and pleasure craft having similar powers to the "divine wind" highway lobby. Had such an authority been in establishment at the time the R.W.A.'s were set up I am certain BACAT would be operating to Sheffield, and the famous firm of John Harker Ltd would be expanding instead of packing up commercial shipping altogether.

Steady progress is being made at Griffins Mill on the silt mountain, all of which has to be dug out by hand. The bottom sill has now been revealed and serious thought must be given to lifting and repairing the two bottom gates at Wallbridge Upper kindly given to the Trust by the County Surveyor's Department. The brickwork on the railway side of the lock is proceeding rapidly and as soon as this is complete much of the hideous scaffolding may be removed. Working parties have been hampered through plant defects of every kind. Dumpers, the most abused items of plant, have had clutch trouble and on one weekend the pump which clears the lock of water failed, losing us the best part of that weekend.

Unfortunately the Trust is losing Robin Finn's organisation on working parties. Robin is starting to build a new house and he cannot achieve this and complete the Thames & Severn as well. Robin has done a marvellous

job all the time he has been on the canal and does an awful lot behind the scenes. His public relations have to be seen to be believed, and I know we all wish him and his wife a successful and speedy completion to his new home. No, Robin, not balance beams on doors! Anyone who feels capable of filling this post should telephone us immediately.

MIKE AYLAND

PERSON TO PERSON NEWS

Barry the Balderstone has slipped off for hospital treatment (new paddle gear) and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

Darrel Foxwell is getting married on 13th March (no, it's not a Friday), and our best wishes go to him and his wife-to-be Pat.

URGENTLY WANTED

Permanent accommodation for weekends for approximately 30 people, male and female, with cooking washing and toilet facilities, at reasonable cost in Stroud area. Telephone Saul 385.

'NAVVIERS'

is published by the Waterways Recovery Group and for 35p a year anyone interested in promoting restoration and development of every navigable waterway by voluntary work, can find out what's happening.

Write to:

Graham Palmer,
Waterway Recovery Group,
4 Wentworth Court,
Wentworth Avenue, Finchley,
LONDON N3 1YP



Publicity

Our venture into producing our own Trust Calendar for 1976 proved very successful, although as yet we have not been able to establish just how much money the venture has brought in. Sales of the Calendar went well and indeed there are only a few left. Sales have covered a wide area with orders from as far afield as Perth in Australia and California, U.S.A. We acknowledge the use of three photographs in the Calendar from the camera of Mr.P.J.James. To clear our remaining stocks of the Calendar we are now offering them for 35p (plus 15p postage). This makes very good value for money, even if you only cut the photographs out for your album, thus acquiring twelve superb photos for only 50p. This is your last chance.

CANAL HISTORY BOOKLET. We have for a long time talked of producing our own descriptive booklet about the canal's history and we have been delayed so many times that one wonders what will change next. The problem now is one of cost. To have the book printed properly now would involve us in more expense than we wish to incur. As a stand-by venture, therefore, we are offering this booklet in duplicated A-4 size, and the cost per copy will be 35p plus 15p postage. Remittances should be sent to Mr.R.Nott, Lynfield, Frome Park Road, Stroud, GL5 3LF, and orders will be sent out with the next (June) issue of "The Trow".

SUMMER SHOWS. Our Publicity Section has had an offer of help with Show Stands from Mr & Mrs Martin Andrews. We would be grateful for the help of anybody else who feels that he/she could help. We would like to know from members or show organisers of any shows being held during the Summer. The information required is place and type of show, date of show and if possible names and addresses of organisers.

JOHN STEPHENS.



All members of the Trust will be aware of the Appeal which we launched towards the end of last year in the form of a leaflet which will have reached you with the December "Trow" and possibly other waterways literature with which it was distributed.

Firstly, I would like to thank those Trust members who have been willing to contribute an extra few pounds to help the cause; your continued support is greatly appreciated. However, I must now sound a disappointing note. To say that there were 10 members who sent donations in response to the leaflet is probably an exaggeration. When one considers the fact that our membership is moving towards 1000, this means that our restoration hopes will be very slow in coming to fruition. If one allows for those who are able to spend hours working continuously for the Trust (and it is some of these people who have also sent donations), only £1 from every other member would see us with enough to recover another mile or two of canal.

If you still have your December "Trow" (and I hope you have), find the leaflet, fill it in and send it to me with as much as you can spare, remembering what just £1 from each of you could do. If you do not have the leaflet, just send your cheque, postal order or cash to me - TODAY. We shall all thank YOU.

NEIL RUMBOL
Appeal Secretary

14 Chestnut Avenue,
BUCKHURST HILL,
Essex.
IG9 6EW Tel: 01-504 4830

Record Review

A new LP record of canal songs and stories will shortly be available to all canal enthusiasts, both in this country and in Europe and America.

Recorded by the folk duo "PUMPKIN PIE" who collect, write and sing canal songs, the record is due for release in late May of this year. Norma King and John Mills, who together make up "PUMPKIN PIE" are appearing at the National Rally of the Inland Waterways Association in Peterborough next August. As well as singing at the Rally, they will be helping the promotion of their record which will be on sale during the weekend on the I.W.A. sales stand.

Before August the duo will be singing at quite a few more venues. In May they are running a canal workshop of song at the folk festival in Lacock, Wiltshire. June sees them singing at the Rally in Bath which celebrates the completion and opening of the Widcombe Flight, and again in July at the Wiltshire Inland Navigators Rally at Semington.

Readers of "The Trow" will be interested to hear that a poem written by Ann Penny of the Cirencester Branch, which appeared in the December issue, has been set to music by "PUMPKIN PIE" and may be included on the LP.

On the release of the record, details of where it can be purchased will be made known to all who are interested, and the making of this record can only be another constructive step towards promoting interest in the canals and their eventual restoration.

Working Party Report



The fact that no report appeared in the last "Trow" in no way inferred that all effort had ceased on the canalside; in fact a small party led by Julian Osborne had, from the latter part of the summer, been working almost continuously on the repair of Stantons Bridge. For many years half the parapet had been missing on the west side and some of the coping stones lay at the bottom of the canal. There was a considerable amount of head-scratching going on in an attempt to match as accurately as possible the original graceful compound curve. This was not made any easier by the fact that modern bricks of slightly thicker dimensions were having to be mated with courses of the original handmade bricks. The "topping out" ceremony came on 7th December when the last of the great coping stones, some weighing between 3 and 4cwt, were heaved into position.

Now that the repair work to Stantons Bridge is finished the bricklaying gang are waging war on the remaining wall of Griffins Lock, and have already covered a considerable length of it. Since November considerable effort has been put into the clearance of silt from this lock. Now that we have the use of the dragline and bucket this process has been speeded up a good deal culminating in a magnificent effort one weekend when 25 tons of silt were removed and the complete sill for the lower gates uncovered. On first inspection the sill and planking appear to be in good condition. Having got our feet on the bottom, and if this rate of progress can be maintained, then it shouldn't be very many months before the lock invert is uncovered. Much of this work has only been possible with the assistance of visiting groups, such as the Bristol University Canals Club and local school and scout groups.

In addition to all this work much else goes on behind the scenes. Peter Penny, of the Cirencester branch, is refurbishing the gate gear that was removed from Eysey Lock by a WRG party last year, and he has also made up new sets of support brackets for the walkways. These items will be used for the large gates at Griffins Lock. John Willis has turned his attention to the removal of the old sills for the short gates, no mean task when you consider that they are pinned by wrought-iron nails an inch and a half square and nearly two feet long! A set of patterns for the ground paddle gear are nearing completion, and shortly we hope to have under way two new sets of paddles and frames for Griffins Lock. John Bond continues to make good progress with the second short gate. Not to be forgotten are Chris Rowlands and Mike Reynolds, our long-suffering maintenance side, who have been injecting new life into our dumpers after last years work at Coates. These dumpers will be heavily used during the coming year.

A word or two about some future work. In order to aid the removal of silt from the Griffins pound and Ham Mill Lock some effort will be put into drying these out. This will involve clearing the overflow weir at Ham

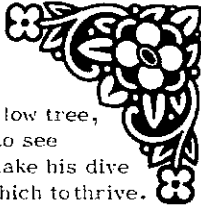
Mill Lock and inserting a pipe from the weir into the River Frome. Some work has already been done by the Bristol University Canals Club who will now be taking over the responsibility for this project. They will be providing a working party every fortnight and work the weekend. We have been most fortunate in obtaining permission to dump spoil on an adjacent tip, and as our second excavator is already on site we should soon see the commencement of the clearance of this lock.

We will shortly be turning our attention to the removal of the lower gates at Wallbridge, for these will be used at Griffins Lock. In fact, last summer a preliminary inspection was carried out to determine their condition, and from the waterline and above they seem fairly sound, though of course they will have to be re-sheeted.

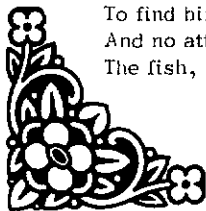
Finally, I much regret that by the end of March I shall be unable to continue as working party organiser, due to a building project of my own which will be taking almost all of my spare time. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all those people who have assisted me over the past few months. Until a new organiser can be found the responsibility will be shared by a small group of people, and major decisions will be those of the Committee.

ROBIN FINN.

"CANAL WALK"

- 
1. On looking back to childhood days,
I still remember golden rays
Of sunlight dancing 'mong the trees
And rushes swaying in the breeze.
And listening to Mum and Dad
Say "Look, there, on that lily-pad"
A tiny bird is sitting there,
So free to live without a care.
 2. Once, sitting by a willow tree,
I was so very proud to see
My first kingfisher make his dive
To snatch a fish on which to thrive.
This old canal, the work of man,
Was where so many lives began,
But due to man's uncouth assault
To a dismal end these lives were
brought.
 3. Our old canal, which man had built,
Was so neglected, filled with silt,
And man came armed with J.C.B's
To smash the bridge and uproot trees.
My kingfisher had gone, had flown
To find himself another home,
And no attempt was made to save
The fish, who now lived in their grave.
 4. Now no canal, but in its place
The ugly shops stand face to face.
An ugly fountain in the square,
A mockery of what once was there.
I see these people rushing by
And wonder if inside they cry,
And wish, like me, they could
bring back
The beauty spot our town now lacks.

ANN PENNY
Cirencester Section



CELEBRATION 1775-1975

**THE RED ARROWS AEROBATIC TEAM
GIVE BOWBRIDGE A FLY PAST ON
MAY 30th, 1975**





THE NEW GATE ARRIVES AT GRIFFIN
MILL LOCK IN MAY 1975. MADE BY
JOHN BOND (SECOND FROM LEFT)
ROBIN FINN IN LOCK CHAMBER



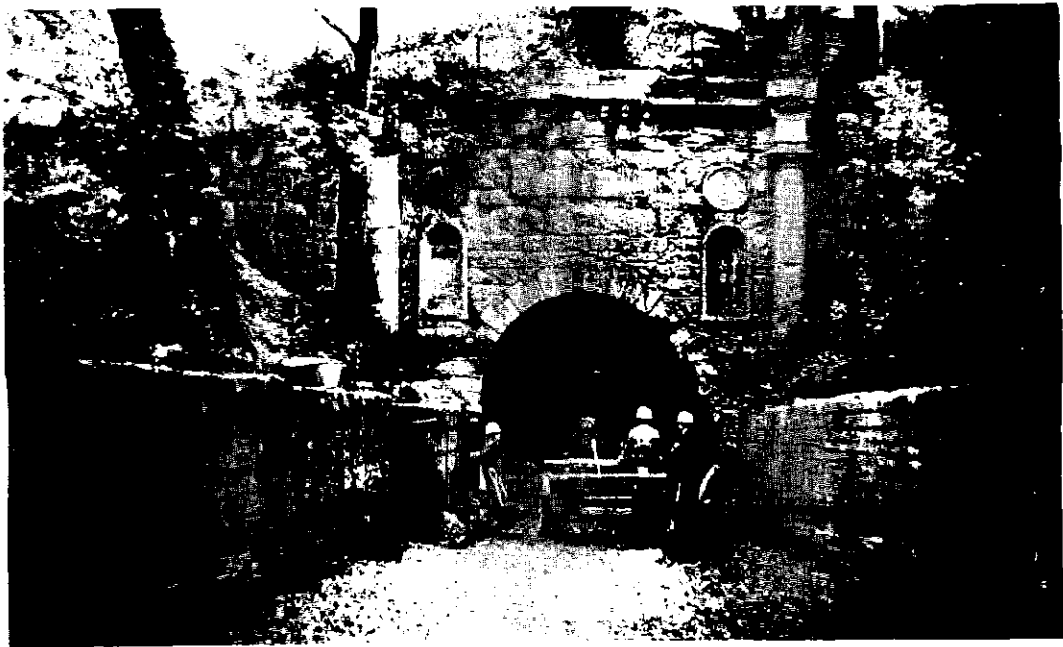
THE BOWBRIDGE POUND IN WATER
DURING THE BLISTERING HEATWAVE
OF AUGUST



THE CIRENCESTER CANAL WHARF
AGENTS' HOUSE & WAREHOUSE.
DEMOLISHED IN OCTOBER 1975



PART OF THE CONCRETED KINGS
REACH AT COATES, SEPTEMBER 6th.,
BEFORE CLEARANCE WORK BEGAN



TOP PICTURE SHOWS THE CLEARED CANAL BED IN NOVEMBER. LOWER PICTURE IS OF FIRST WORKING PARTY STARTING IN SEPTEMBER.

Cirencester Group News



WORKING PARTIES. Work has continued at Coates, clearing the bed of the canal from tunnel portal to Tarlton Bridge, using a Smalley excavator, two dumpers and of course, volunteers. We were visited by a large party from Bristol University one weekend, but normally numbers vary between 5 and 20.

In December the Bathurst Estate foresters started felling the timber on the North-East side of the cutting as part of their normal forestry management. This felling has caused some comment in the press and in Tunnel House, so a word now may be in order. Many of the trees were over-mature and suffering from extensive beech bark disease, and planning permission for felling was sought by the Estate. The trees were inspected by local and county council officers and permission was granted reluctantly, provided that the Estate replant with equivalent trees, beech and oak. Consultations were also held with members of the Trust Committee.

The Estate indicated that one stand of trees at each end of the drive would be left, and the trees on the other side of the cutting would preserve the skyline. Concern has been raised about despoiling the beauty of the cutting, but it is better to preserve the beauty for the next fifty years rather than be responsible for lifting limbs out of the cut and off cars and have dangerous trees for the next five.

Work in the cutting has been halted since the end of December when the Smalley was returned to W.R.G., the tree felling got under way and the water level rose in the channel. Since then one dumper has been repaired by Chris Rowlands and Mike Reynolds, who replaced a differential unit and half-shafts. This 'behind the scenes' work is very important to the smooth running of plant and working parties, and unsung heroes should be praised more often. Thanks, Chris and Mike.

The Committee has decided to stop Cirencester working parties until 21st March, while trees are still being felled and the canal is full of water. Meanwhile Griffins Mill Lock is being cleared, and the Committee will be busy contacting landowners along the canal about clearing public rights of way.

Our working parties re-start then on the 21st March at Tunnel House where there will be some timber to clear. Anyone with a chain-saw? Work will then be every weekend as before. The last 100 yards of silt must be cleared and we have permission to continue under the bridge to the unsilted section. The wide section walling needs rebuilding and pointing. The ramp requires attention, and we may be helping masons repairing the portal if funds are available to engage them. Along with this work there will be Sundays spent clearing the rights of way along the towpath between Cirencester and Cricklade. This Spring we will be helped by TOC H, Blue School, Wells, and the Ramblers Association, and in the summer we are hosts to a W.R.G. two-week work camp.

SPONSORED WALK. We hope to run a walk in September, complementary to the walk from Stroud to Sapperton in May. The route is along the towpath between Watermoor, Cirencester and the old main road near Cricklade Wharf, and certain sections of this public right of way need clearing. Help is also required in organising the walk and we want to form a separate sub-committee to look after this; please contact me if you can help.

SOCIAL EVENTS. Our first new-location Natter & Noggin at The Greyhound, Siddington, was very successful, with a full room despite the weather, and we will be back there in April. On 4th February Heleñ Andrews organised a skittles match where an Eastern Team took on a Western team and won the coveted "painted bottle" trophy. Prizes were also won for best scores and for a knock-out competition. It was held at Cirencester Social & Services Club, who were very pleased to be our hosts. We look forward to the return match.

On 4th March a film show will be held in the Tunnel House annexe starting at 8.00 p.m. Our last one was very interesting with slides from John Stephens and sound films from Bob Paget. This time we will have more films from Bob and slides from me, showing our progress at Coates in 1975 and also some views of other canals - derelict, working and being restored.

COMMITTEE. We are still short of members, mainly fund raising and social; if you would like to help with 'backstage' work or contribute ideas please contact me or come to our next meeting at Alan Neighbour's, 39 Alexander Drive, Cirencester, on Thursday 26th February at 8 p.m.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday 26th February	Committee Meeting
Thursday 4th March	Film Show, Tunnel House Annexe, 8 pm.
Tuesday 16th March	N & N, Vale Hotel, Cricklade, 8 pm.
Sunday 21st March	Working Party, Tunnel House, 10 am, and every weekend from then on.
Tuesday 20th April	N & N, The Greyhound, Siddington, 8 pm.
Saturday 8th May	TOC H Working Party, Tunnel House, 10 am.
Tuesday 18th May	N & N, The Crown, Cerney Wick, 8 pm.

GREEN SHIELD STAMPS. Thank you for the Green Shield Stamps! Please keep them coming in - we take Green Shield, Co-op, Pink - in fact, the lot! Send them to: Mrs Jackie Andrews, 6 The Masons, Purton, Swindon, Wilts, SN5 9DJ. Or bring them to any Cirencester Noggin and Natter Evening.

CIRENCESTER SALES STALL. There will be a sales stall at the following events in 1976:- The Amberley Horse Show & Fayre on 26th, 27th & 28th March.
The Canal Fayre at Bath (Kennet & Avon) on 4th, 5th & 6th June on the occasion of the re-opening of the Bath flight of locks.
At summer working parties.
At the sponsored walks.

If you are in the area at the time, why not pop in to any of the above and give us your support?

PETE BOYCE.
MARTIN ANDREWS.

STOP PRESS! The Trust and the W.R.G. will have stands at the I.W.A. Rally of Boats on the Oxford Canal on 19th & 20th June next. Volunteers are needed to man these stands over both days. Please contact Martin Andrews if you can help.



IT'S JUST A MATTER OF LICENSING

As our authorities grow in size and the office-blocks grow higher, the simple job of restoring a canal becomes even more onerous. We dedicate this article to all our friends in authority who truthfully do their best to help in the most complex of legislation. The scene is the Environmental Research and District Licensing Executive office (ERDLE) which is one of the erdlies that has to be overcome before restoring a canal. We sent our Mr. Dyke to explain the restoration scene. The following is a report of the ensuing conversation (L.E. = Licensing Executive. M.D. = Mr. Dyke) :-

L.E. "Good morning, Mr.D. I read in the press that you aim to restore a local canal, but from my map we have no local canals.

M.D. That's because it's derelict and you map makers only show the roads and railways.

L.E. Ah, I remember. Letraset don't have a symbol for canals so we decided not to have any on our map.

M.D. But when restored, the Frome-Trent canal will cross the country.

L.E. That will be a change of user - you will need a License to do that.

M.D. Well, we only want to re-dig it out.

L.E. What's in it?

M.D. Silt, old motorbikes, marsh gas and muck.

L.E. Silt's O.K, but old motor bikes are minerals - you'll need a License to extract minerals. Marsh gas needs a License under the Safety in Mines Act and muck needs a License to discharge effluent.

M.D. But we only want to dragline the canal.

L.E. Dragline! ! That needs a plant operators License and of course a drivers License unless you take it across the road when you will need a Road Fund License.

M.D. We won't do that, Sir, we will just dump it on the bank.

L.E. Good - then all you need will be a Tipping License.

M.D. It will look lovely restored and full of water.

L.E. Not unless you have a License to impound water it won't. and where, Mr. Dyke, will you get your water from?

M.D. Oh, where it has come from for 200 years. From the rivers, the brooks and the heavens.

L.E. River supply needs an Extraction License and rainfall needs a License to restrain the natural flow of water.

M.D. But we are only holding it back for a while. It reaches the level of the lock and then flows over the weir.

L.E. Ah! Discharge of water needs a License too, but that clears the matter up. The canal will work again.

M.D. Good. We will have people flocking there in their thousands to fish...

L.E. Thousands, did you say? The Public Access Act says you need a License for over 200 people. Fish - what fish?

M.D. Oh, yes, we would want to encourage a few tiddlers for the kids.

- L.E. I'm sorry, but you need a License to stock with fish, and another to take them out. What we in the trade call an Angler's License.
- M.D There won't be many anglers, Sir, because of the boats.
- L.E. What boats? All boats have to be licensed on our waters unless they carry passengers, then they need a Board of Trade License as well as one for the bar on board. That is, until they tie up, then they need a Mooring License.
- M.D That's fine. We will apply for all these straight away, then we can start digging.
- L.E. Glad to be of help. I like to think of all your volunteers enjoying themselves every weekend digging, girls and boys from all walks of life together.....by the way, Mr.Dykes, are any of your members thinking of getting married, because if so they will need a



Paddle Steamer Prints

We have obtained a number of excellent prints of original drawings of the Clyde Paddle Steamers DUCHESS OF HAMILTON and DUCHESS OF ROTHESAY, * and hope by the time this appears in print to have prints of WAVERLEY, which is of course the last of such vessels still afloat and working. The steamers are depicted in their original company liveries, and are size 15" x 8". They will no doubt be collector's items and are suitable for framing. The price is 60p each, including postage and packing, and for each print sold 10p will be donated to Trust funds, so here is a chance for steam enthusiasts (and others) to obtain fine prints and benefit our funds at the same time. Please send orders and remittances, giving a second choice if possible, to Mr.R. Nott, Trow Editor, address as shown inside front cover.

* STOP PRESS! GLEN SANNOX, KENILWORTH and CALEDONIA now available.
WAVERLEY temporarily out of stock.

Trow Group



Some correspondence has been received from interested parties following the paragraph in the December "Trow", but the situation with regard to preserving a Trow is not too hopeful. A small party spent an interesting morning recently examining the various hulks lying at Purton, near Sharpness, and although there are one or two possibles, the cost of getting them off the mud and removing to a safe place for future restoration would be prohibitive. It is obvious that Trust funds cannot be diverted from the main aim of canal restoration, and in the absence of any financial assistance from bodies such as the Maritime Trust, we can only hope that some kind benefactor might bequeath or donate a few thousand pounds for this specific purpose, in order that at least one trow can be preserved before it is too late. Several offers of practical help have been given with regard to repairing, re-rigging and so on, if we once had a hulk to work on. We have not entirely abandoned the project, and should a miracle happen (and they still do sometimes!) I will of course be in touch with all those who have been kind enough to contact me. While this article is being prepared for printing I have in fact heard that another trow may be available for sale, and I will report on any developments in the next issue.

On a slightly different note, I have had some correspondence with the Society for Spritsail Research, who are of course primarily concerned with Thames sailing barges. They have recently, however, decided to extend their scope and carry out research into all U.K. coastal and inland sailing craft, which includes Severn trows. They have kindly agreed to publicise our own Trust activities in their journal, TOPSAIL, and I am happy to reciprocate and bring their activities to the notice of our members. Anyone interested in obtaining further information should write to Eric Watt, 39 Beaumont Drive, Rosherville, Gravesend, Kent. DA11 9NN. The editor of TOPSAIL, Mr. Peter Ferguson, tells me that he hails from the West Country originally and is thus very sympathetic to our aims, and I feel a mutual exchange of correspondence, ideas, etc., will be beneficial to all.

I have also received some interesting information from a correspondent in Cambridge (Cambridgeshire, not Gloucestershire!), where a Fenland barge has been raised and placed in the Cambridge Museum of Technology after lying submerged for many years. A photograph of the vessel has been lent to me, and if possible we will reproduce this in a later issue of "The Trow", to show what can be done.

RON NOTT.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Details of work to widen the river and make improvements to Castle Mill Lock, which is part of a £500,000 scheme to open the river to boats from Bedford to King's Lynn, have been approved by the Anglian Water Authority's recreation and fisheries committee. About half of the money has already been spent on improvements to Great Barford and Willington Locks, both of which are expected to be open for navigation in the spring.

When the latest phase of the scheme was approved recently, Mr. Dennis Bullard, of Norfolk, said he looked enviously at the work being done in the Great Ouse area, bearing in mind there was a great need for work in The Broads. He wondered why the go-ahead had been given for schemes in the Great Ouse area. Committee chairman Mr. Leslie Bowles said the water authority had received great help from North Beds District Council, which was very anxious that the scheme went ahead, and the Great Ouse Restoration Society. "It is a long-standing commitment to do the work," he said.

The North Beds District Council was contributing £100,000 towards the cost of restoring navigation, and the Great Ouse Restoration Society was giving £5000 towards each of the three new locks. The estimated cost of the whole scheme was £436,000. A good deal of the work being done was essential from a land drainage point of view, such as widening the river in places, and the water authority was doing the work to combine the necessity for land drainage with the general benefit to be obtained by all river users.

(From a report in The Bedfordshire Times & Standard, January 1976).



ECHOES FROM THE PAST

A clipping from the "Gloucester Citizen" dated October 1954 was recently brought to our notice, and may be of interest to members. The article is concerned with the production of chemicals in Gloucestershire, but various references are made to the late Mr. James Smart, of Chalford, who owned the trows "GEM" and "TEMPERANCE". Mr. Smart, who died in 1924, apparently ran a number of boats both on the canals and as coasters.

The article goes on to say that one of his boats, before 1900, picked up a cargo of borax from a factory at Woodchester and took it via the Thames & Severn Canal to Belvedere in Kent. After discharge, the boat would pick up a cargo for the Potteries and take on a load of coal there for Chalford, the whole trip taking 6 to 8 weeks. An interesting fact is that Mr. Smart paid 8 shillings a ton for deep mined coal and 3s.6d a ton for slack!

A thought occurs to us - how could a boat pick up a cargo at Woodchester? Surely neither the Thames & Severn or the Stroudwater had a branch line to there? No doubt one of our readers will enlighten us in due course!



Social Section

SKITTLES EVENING. On 4th February there was an East versus West skittles match at the Social and Services Club, Cirencester. A very good crowd watched the Cirencester Branch win by a comfortable margin. Individual and knock-out competitions were also held and prizes presented. We are most grateful to Helen Andrews for providing the buffet and for organising a very pleasant evening.

SKITTLES RETURN MATCH - 2nd APRIL 1976 A return East-West Skittles Match has been arranged for Friday 2nd April. This will be held at 8 p.m. at the Chalford Hill Sports and Social Club. We hope that all the skittles players will come to form strong teams, but other events will be held as before so that everyone can have a go, whether expert or novice.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - 26th JUNE 1976 There will be a trip to the Kennet & Avon Canal at Kintbury on 26th June. From there we have booked a horse-drawn narrow-boat to take the party to Crofton, where the pumps will be working! For further details see the next "Trow" or telephone Tony Bradford on Brimscombe 3786 or Helen Andrews on Highworth 762328.

TONY BRADFORD.

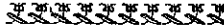
Fund Raising

Two important events have taken place recently. On 29th November the Annual Exhibition & Sale of Crafts was held at Minchinhampton Youth Centre and was well supported, both by exhibitors and customers. On 17th January a Rummage Sale was held at Nailsworth Town Hall, resulting in a welcome addition to our funds of over £70. Our thanks to all who gave their help in any way to both these events.

The main event of this year will be, of course, the Annual Sponsored Walk on Sunday 2nd May. We hope to include booklets with this issue of "The Trow" if they are ready in time, but if not, they will be available from Howard and Audrey Rogerson, Lane Cottage, Amberley, telephone Amberley 2412. It is realised that some people may be unable to physically attend the walk, or they may not know of

anyone to sponsor. In this case, it is suggested that they contact Howard Rogerson in order that their sponsorship may be included in the list of any walker who may be short of sponsors.

Further events are being planned for later in the year, but members are urged in the meantime to patronise our sales department as often as possible, items being available from Graham Pegler as shown inside the cover of this magazine, or come along to any of the Noggin and Natters, where there are usually some interesting and tempting items on offer. Every sale, however small, helps our funds!



SAPPERTON TUNNEL.

With the prospect of restoration starting soon on this famous tunnel, we are re-printing extracts from a paper read at the Meeting of the Cotteswold Club, on 18th May 1870, at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, by John H. Taunton, Mem.Inst.C.E. Further extracts will be published from time to time in future issues of "The Trow."

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

In connection with the localities which we have been visiting today, it may be thought a legitimate variation of our usual investigations, if we turn for the occasion from the oft discussed pit dwellings and superficial burrows of our pre-historic ancestors to the more extensive burrows executed within historic times - during later periods - and by our immediate forefathers.

The general introduction of the Canal system in this country dates but about a century ago, for the first boat-load of coals sailed over the Barton Aqueduct of the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal to Manchester in July 1761; and the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal of James Brindley was the pioneer to Canals in this Country, just as the Stockton & Darlington Railway of George Stephenson has been the pioneer to Railways: yet as Tramways preceded Railways, so the the knowledge of Canals was well understood, but had not been applied until Brindley's time.

In that part of Gloucestershire which we have been visiting today, there were neither Canals nor, I believe, any Tramways in the year 1770, and the two main roads between Stroud and Cirencester, the one (as I see in the old maps) by Bisley, and the other by Minchinhampton, carried the main Traffic of these parts a century ago. The condition of the district even so late as 1784-85, as to convenience of locomotion is exhibited to some extent by the circumstance that, (as I find from the old correspondence), in August 1784, the contractor to the Tunnel was kept in confinement at Bisley for four weeks, and again in January 1785, for many days at Minchinhampton, in both cases for debt, previous to his being sent to Gloucester Gaol. The first reference to the Canal Tunnel, which I find is in the preliminary report of Robert Whitworth, the Engineer, applied to by the promoters of the Navigable communication proposed to unite the River Thames and Severn, dated 22nd December 1782, which was after the formation of the Stroudwater Navigation, a work that was carried out after much previous opposition and difficulty, under an act obtained in 1775. This was early in the period of the Canal mania, which appears to have culminated in the years 1790 to 1794, during which four years not fewer than 81 Canal and Navigation Acts were obtained.

(To be continued)

Sales Section

THE THAMES & SEVERN CANAL by Humphrey Household.....	£4. 50
SAUL ADAM by John Poole.....	£3. 00
NARROWBOAT VENTURE by John Poole.....	£1. 00
OUR CANAL POPULATION by George Smith.....	£3. 00
CHELTENHAM'S ORNAMENTAL IRONWORK by Amina Chatwin.....	£1. 50
A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NARROWBOAT by Tom Chaplin.....	£0. 50
CANAL BARGES AND NARROWBOATS by P.L. Smith.....	£0. 45
THE THAMES & SEVERN CANAL by David Viner (photographs).....	£1. 20
DISCOVERING CANALS by Leon Metcalfe & John Vince.....	£0. 40
DISCOVERING LOST CANALS by Ronald Russell.....	£0. 40
WILTS & BERKS CANAL by Dalby.....	£1. 05

Other Sales Items

Glass Tankards, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint capacity in clear glass, engraved with the Trust emblem of the Trow. £2.50 each.

Thames & Severn Canal Maps: These are very useful maps giving details of water levels, locks and routes. Copied from an Original Survey map. Excellent for display mounting. 60p. each.

Medallions: Pottery copies in a variety of colours of the original canal tokens of 1795. Complete with leather neck band. 35p. each.

Greeting Cards: In sets of eight pictures in the form of folded cards for birthday or Christmas greetings. 25p per set.

Corinium Museum Guides: A leaflet giving a brief guide to the canal around Cirencester, produced by David Viner. 10p. each.

Ball Point Pens: Marked 'Link Thames/Severn Canal'. 5p. each

Car Window Emblems: The Trust Emblem produced in blue and white, 4" dia. 15p.

Canal Toilet Keys: B.W.B. toilet keys for use on Waterway Sanitary Stations. For sale to current licence holders only. 25p. each.

Lapel Badges: 7p. each, plus s.a.e. 6½p.

Car Stickers: 15p. each plus s.a.e. 6½p.

Gents. Ties: Navy blue, with Trow motif. £1. 90.

Peter Powell Aerobatic Kites: £3. 99 each.

Trust Calendars for 1976: These fine calendars are produced A.4 size in blue and black depicting twelve views of restoration work on the Canal since 1972. 75p. each

Please add postage at 20p per order for any value under £5.
Orders over £5 post free. Please make P.O./Cheque payable to:
'Stroudwater, Thames & Severn Canal Trust Ltd.'

Send your orders to:- Mr. G. Pegler, Bourne Nurseries,
Churchill Road, Brimscombe, Stroud, Glas. Tel. Brimscombe 2397.

Sapperton Tunnel Portal Restoration Scheme.

Many of you will know that a report on the state of the two canals will soon be produced by a leading Civil Engineering Company. Some of you will also know that the Trust has a licence with the Lord Bathurst to carry out repair work on the Coates Portal of the Famous Sapperton Tunnel. To carry out this grand task will require considerable sums of money. To this end we are setting up a special scheme which we shall call the "Portal Restoration Scheme". We invite members and the public to make donations to this scheme. Donations should be sent to our Treasurer, Mr. R. Paget, 2 Kantara, Bridge Street, Cainscross, Stroud, Gloucestershire. (With s.a.e. for receipt if required)

SOME DETAILS REGARDING THE SAPPERTON TUNNEL

Length 3817 yards. Width at water level 15'0"
Water level to roof 12'0". Depth of water 4'6"
Level of water at the summit 362'6" a.s.l.
Construction of the Tunnel began in October 1783
Completion of the Tunnel was July 1789
Last boat passed through the Tunnel May 1911
Western Portal at Sapperton is in the Gothic
Style
Eastern Portal at Coates is in the Classical
Style

From the Sapperton end the line of the Tunnel passes through 580 yards of fullers earth and is lined with brick and stone. The next 930 yards are left in bare rock of the inferior oolite. A geological fault lies below Hailey Wood and Cassey Well, where the Tunnel again passes into fullers earth. Here it is again brick lined and is known as "The Long Arching", being 1,190 yards. The remaining 1,120 yards passes through the Greater oolite and emerges at the Coates Portal.