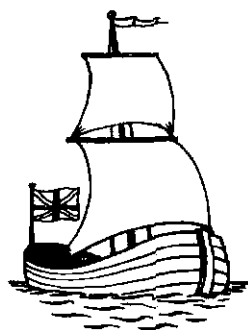


THE TROW



The Official Magazine for members of
the Canal Trust.



*Stroudwater, Thames & Severn
Canal Trust Limited*

10p.

No.15

September 1976



Due to holidays, preparations for this issue are having to be made earlier than usual, and I apologise to any contributors whose articles may have been held over - these will be included in a future issue.

Readers may like to make a note that the next publication date is December 1st 1976, and all items for inclusion should reach me by 10th November at the latest to ensure publication.

Various appeals are made in the following pages for support either in a practical way, or financially at the numerous functions held by the Trust. If, however, you are interested in our aims but feel a little diffident about 'coming forward', why not come along to one of our Noggin & Natter Evenings, where Committee Members are always available to give advice and encouragement. These are held, as far as Stroud Section is concerned, at the Swan Inn, Stroud, on the first Tuesday of each month, and for the Cirencester Section, at various locations as shown in the Cirencester Report elsewhere in this issue. You will be made very welcome, and you may find you have just the talents we are looking for!

Trow Editor:- Mr.R.O.Nott, Lynfield, Frome Park Road, Stroud,
Glos.GL5 3LF Tel: Stroud 3014

PRESENTATION OF 1976 SPONSORED WALK AWARDS

FRIDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 1976

at 7.30 p.m.

AT THE SUBSCRIPTION ROOMS, STROUD

SHORT FILM SHOW

ALL WELCOME

REFRESHMENTS

Any enquiries to: Mrs A Rogerson, Lane Cottage,
Amberley Cottage, Stroud, Glos. Tel:
Amberley 2412

Chairman's Report



If anyone last year had said we would have 20 people working full-time on the canal, we would not have believed it, but fortunately for us the Job Creation Scheme is proving a real blessing, although it is not without its problems. Firstly, and this members could help alleviate, it has stretched our administration to crisis point. We desperately need an assistant treasurer who may assist or relieve Bob Paget with wages and financial entries. If you live in the Stroud area and are qualified please ring any member of the Committee immediately. The second problem is finding sufficient canal to work upon - not difficult, you may say, with 35 miles of derelict canal. What we need, however, is to obtain a buyer/negotiator to purchase or lease the canal not only for the Trust but for the nation as a whole. Some sections are open for negotiation now, but we are without staff to follow it up. Very shortly we will have the report from Freeman, Fox, Braine & Partners, to explain the technicalities and the water supply problems. We have proved that we have the ability to organise the canal's restoration, now what is left is to secure the route.

Although serious problems remain with the rapid expansion of the Trust a great deal of work has been achieved. Bowbridge Lock has been re-bricked, Jubilee Bridge repainted, and Ham Mill Lock brickwork commenced. The boundary dispute at Ham Mill remains, with the depressing fact that we are unable to discover from the County Council what land they really own. I firmly believe, and could be wrong, that the public is about to lose a considerable patch of ground through encroachment of fences. The Trust has already lost water rights through the same token, so regrettably it's back to the law of the jungle - if you want it, take it, bluff out the storm and it's yours. Try it on the M5 shortly! This canal highlights and contrasts personalities from public-spirited generosity to sheer personal greed. Fortunately we have considerably more of the former! On the question of canal ownership I learn that the Severn-Trent Water Authority are interested in taking over the Southern Stratford Canal from the National Trust. Could this be a foot in the door to them becoming a Navigation Authority? If so, the Severn and Avon must surely follow with half the Thames & Severn and the Stroudwater after that. Fine, we may all stay home and watch the telly, but what of all the thousands of hours, and pounds, which have been invested in these canals already, and most important, will those most concerned with those waterways have any say in their future? The Southern Stratford in particular has been rebuilt by blood, sweat and green stamps, and is treasured by the whole of the waterway movement. The Water Authorities may not use such loving care, but only time will tell.

The word the Trust is not currently mentioning is WATER - remember it? The stuff which used to flow through the canals of England. Well, this precious commodity is still flowing out of the tunnel in small quantities but it is high time greater use was made of the upper reaches of the canal for storage so that the lower reaches such as Ryeford may be kept full and Stanley Downton sewage works given a plentiful supply, so if there is a water authority

somewhere out there come and talk to us - canals can, and do, store water and transport it from one area to another.

Finally, two items of interest. Early in August we saw 30 members of the Waterway Recovery Group Summer Work Camp working very expertly at Coates. And negotiations have taken place with great satisfaction with Gloucestershire County Councils over the future of Walk Bridge, Whitminster, Pike Bridge, Eastington, and Bowbridge. More details in the next issue of the "Trow".

MIKE AYLAND.

Situations Vacant

ASSISTANT TREASURER. Preparing wages and records, keeping accounts and general book-keeping. Must live in Stroud/Cains-cross area.

WORKING PARTY ORGANISER AT BOWBRIDGE. To replace Robin Finn and to organise labour rotas and materials, as well as away working parties.

LANDOWNER-RELATIONS OFFICER. To maintain goodwill with all landowners and negotiate land purchase and leasing.

EXTRA FUND RAISERS. To raise cash by any means legal (or a few illegal!)

LOCKGATE MANUFACTURERS. To work under John Bond in preparing and working a lock-gate factory to mass-produce gates in either steel or timber.

LECTURERS. To visit W.I.'s, Schools, etc., giving illustrated lectures on the Trust.

TECHNICAL ILLUSTRATOR. To prepare a large decorated map of the Stroudwater, Thames & Severn for commercial sale, as well as to illustrate pamphlets, etc.

All persons must generate their own "Empire's", and work under the Trust Council's instruction, but must be able to act under their own initiative without continual reference to the Committee.

* * * * *

Please remember CAR BATTERIES are very collectable. Take the one off your car now and give it to Dave Elliott or Howard Rogerson. The Trust collects batteries for funds.

* * * * *

Interesting 2-page article and photographs describing the Trust's activities in "The Chronicle", including a rare photograph of our Press Officer and Ventriloquist, Reg Geagley, complete with Gottle of Geer! Copies still available from the Sales Stand at Coates.

ONE of everything!

Your Editor requests an article, and this I gladly do, but what to write? I feel I know little about the historical or technical aspects of canals, except a love sufficient to make me give up everything and live permanently on them. But after months of continuous cruising I have reached the end of the line so far as "What it's like to live on a canal boat," both the National magazines and the B.B.C. having done us proud.

To write about Jazz, which is the only thing on which I'm a world authority, and which I know your Editor also likes.... well, not really, this is a Canal magazine.

To write about the poor way most hiring companies hand over their boats? I keep a short list of wonderful yards, those that take their hirers through one, two or even three locks to make sure they know what to do; that stress the importance of saving water; that point out the results of excessive speed; that warn of the terrifying dangers of leaving lock keys on paddles, or switching off before being properly secured. But the list is short, very short. On the other hand the list of yards which start the week off with a conversation on the lines of "Ever had a boat before, sir? Oh well, you can't go wrong, you'll soon sort it all out," is getting longer and longer. And how do you sort it out when the wife has jumped off the nose but forgotten the rope, and you've switched off, jumped off the stern and missed the bank, and the boat is being blown over towards moored boats the other side. Which I saw, two weeks running, on the same stretch of Oxford Canal....and both on boats from the same yard. In each case the hirers told me they received NO INSTRUCTIONS OF ANY SORT.

To write about the Stroudwater, Thames & Severn? Again, no, for members of the Trust must know a lot more than I do. Wherever I go I'm amazed at the Societies springing up, needing help, desperately keen to get their scheme off the ground...or into water. And I must confess that at times I wonder whether they are all good ideas.

To write then perhaps about the completion of Links, or Rings, or the making possible of "round trips." Well, when you've seen the general behaviour of hirers desperately anxious to complete "The Round Trip," at whatever cost to themselves, their boat, other people's boats and the canal banks, you'll wonder whether, instead of completing links, we shouldn't be thinking of putting up more "Worcester Bars" to make such trips impossible. Are we going to see hirers attempting to do the Severn, the Stratford, the Grand Union, the Thames, and the Stroudwater, in two weeks? Don't think they won't! Two friends (?) of ours did the whole of the Thames in one week - TWICE - yes, TWICE. Work it out... but they did!! And in any event what's wrong with a return journey? The vista is entirely different, and add to this our two-to-three-day weather cycle, and the variation between morning and afternoon sunshine, and stopping off at those tiny places you missed first time, and you've got a double holiday for the same cost. I am reaching the stage when I think boatyards should charge an additional premium for all boats completing a "round trip." Goodness knows, we're short enough of water already.

To write instead about the disgusting state of our canals, both near towns large and small, and in more rural surroundings? Having spent eighteen months on the canals I believe the worst aspect to be not lack of water, nor shortage of mooring sites, nor too many disused canals, nor bad behaviour by hirers, nor rudeness from those glove-bedecked Sunday afternoon floating gin palaces. The worst aspect is that the canals themselves, the towpath one side and the land belonging mostly to private owners on the other side, are simply full of rubbish....and MOST OF US DO NOTHING ABOUT IT AT ALL.

I don't know how many of us are on the canals at any one time, but it must be a few thousand. Multiply the number of boatyards by a dozen or so boats each, and then multiply that by an average of five to a boat, and multiply that by perhaps twenty weeks, add the number of owners, and include those that are "housebound" (because that's what those permanently-moored ones really are!) and you have a very large number. And if each one took out ONE bit of rubbish each day...or one bit of plastic plus one bit of wood, plus one old beer can....it would make a terrific difference to our scene. Oh, I know it's the Board's job, but does that matter?

And if everybody wrote just ONE letter to just ONE factory that's allowing rubbish to get into the canal! And if we all wrote just one letter each year to one local Council that wasn't doing its job of keeping the towpath clear and tidy, or stopping one of its industrialists chucking something into the canal, just think what might happen. Don't say it can't be done, because there is someone doing it already. ME! I never stop at a lock without removing at least one bit of rubbish. I've got to wait for the thing to fill up anyway. And if the gate's a bit wobbly I give the wedge a bang with the end of my lock-key. And if one of the ratchets is in danger of slipping because the bolt is coming out I give that a wallop too! And if the paddle-gear squeaks like heck I've been known to give it a shot with my grease-gun, and I've also been known to straighten out a gate rail. But except for the rare instance of someone removing rubbish when they can't open or shut the gate properly I'VE NEVER EVER SEEN ANYONE ELSE DO ANYTHING, except for the occasional more-than-usually keen lock-keeper.

I don't know the total of boaters, but as far as the vandals are concerned I'm convinced there are more of us than them. I've only seen two deliberate acts of vandalism in 5,500 hours of boating, but I've seen a lot of boaters. So we COULD beat 'em! And when I see a couple of lads hanging around the lock I ask them to give me a hand with the gates, then with a bit of rubbish, then we have a talk, and usually finish up by giving them a short trip to the next lock and inviting them on board for lemonade and a slice of cake. And when they leave I know they're determined to tell their friends how to look after the canals.

I believe that in most continental countries there is no word for "spring-cleaning." It's an English invention because we're so darned untidy, yet in 25 years of farming I never once had to have a "clear-up." That business of picking up ONE bit of scrap, or ONE bag, or ONE broken tree branch, kept it impeccable. And what's more my workers, my children and my friends found themselves doing the same. You see, it spreads.

So let's all follow that policy of ONE bit of rubbish, ONE complaining letter, ONE thank-you letter, ONE tiny bit of maintenance, ONE helpful chat with a youngster, ONE bit of advice to a first-time hirer. Then the mess that I've just ploughed myself through going into and out of Birmingham might be diminished more than somewhat!

OWEN BRYCE
Narrow Boat "Bix"

~~XX~~

Readers' Letters

Dear Mr Nott,

What a delight to draw the June "Trow" from its envelope and instantly recognise a childhood scene - 'Zackie' (Isaac) Whiting's wharf at Pike Bridge, Eastington, from which the photograph was taken.

It appears to be early autumn and Zackie's longboat NELLIE has just brought the first of the winter stock of Staffordshire house-coal, later to be delivered in ton lots by horse and cart to our homes. Note the hand-barrows upside down on the right; always a pair - one filling and one tipping, keeping the pot boiling.

The NELLIE was the only longboat I remember as horse-drawn. All others had a couple of mokes (donkeys). Books will tell you they were called 'animals' but on the Stroudwater they were always 'mokes.' Likewise, one never heard of 'Narrow-boats' in this area.

The photograph shows the NELLIE as a typical working longboat of the time - little or none of the extraordinary elaborate ornamentation now said to be 'traditional.' That only came when trade began to fall off and men had time on their hands. Note the cabin top, no elaborately-painted water can by the stove-pipe. True, many carried a plain galvanised bucket or can there, but all too frequently the source of water was the canal itself. I would never have accepted a cup of tea on a longboat, having seen the lady simply dip the kettle over the side - quite near where the 'bucket' had just been emptied! But they worked on the theory that any water is safe if you boil it. What would more usually be found on the cabin top, in addition to the coiled-down stern line, was a couple of tin nose bowls for the mokes - and of course, the mop, not infrequently used to shove a returning drunken husband into the drink to sober him up.

Well, there is Zackie with his white beard, but I cannot identify 'Captain' Chandler of my day. Perhaps the picture slightly pre-dates my memory, which begins around 1912. I wonder if the photographer is known? Could it possibly have been Walter Lewis, the village postman, photographer, musician, etc? But what a treasure of a photograph - to me at any rate.

Yours sincerely,

FRED ROWBOTHAM
Stonehouse, Glos.

Cirencester Group News

WORKING PARTIES. The licence to renovate the canal at Coates has now been extended through to the skew bridge (the Cheltenham & Great Western Railway bridge), past Coates roundhouse. If you want to see a boat-trip running on this section next summer, you can help in the following ways:-

COME ALONG ANY SUNDAY to work; easy work like brick-work repair; hard work like silt clearing and wall rebuilding. Jobs for everyone!

PRAY for rain this winter!!!

SAPPERTON TUNNEL PORTAL RESTORATION FUND. You may now be aware that Coates portal is being repaired! Bruce Russell, a specialist in natural stone-masonry, is using traditional materials and techniques to restore the portal to its original magnificent condition. This task is now well in hand, but funds are still needed and you can help here.

VISIT the site, then tell your friends and colleagues about it.

SEND a donation to Bob Paget.

BUY from the Sales Section.

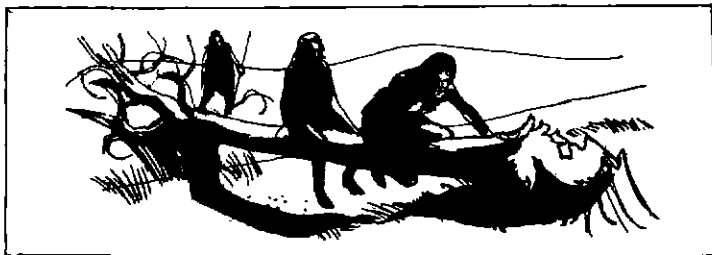
SUPPORT the Sales Caravan raffles.

WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP. The WRG summer camp at Coates has been a great success. Many of the more difficult jobs have been done, lumps of concrete broken up, breaches repaired, brick and stone work repaired and walls re-built. Our heartfelt thanks go to all WRG workers - young and not-so-young, newcomers and old hands alike.

CIRENCESTER NOGGIN AND NATTER EVENINGS. These will be held at the following venues, all on Tuesdays at 8 p.m.:-

21.9.76	The Vale, Cricklade
19.10.76	The Greyhound, Siddington
16.11.76	The Crown, Cerney Wick
14.12.76	The Vale, Cricklade (N.B. Early for Christmas)
18.1.77	The Greyhound, Siddington
15.2.77	The Crown, Cerney Wick.

MARTIN C. ANDREWS
6 The Masons, Purton,
Swindon, Wilts.



A recent action-shot of one of the Cirencester working-parties!

Forthcoming Events

To assist members, other readers, and the ladies and gentlemen of the Press, we list below the various Trust and other events taking place over the next few months. It is hoped, space permitting, to make this a regular feature.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Saturday 4th September }
Sunday 5th September } | Trust Sales Stand will be at Stroud
Vintage Car & Steam Engine Rally,
Eastington. |
| Friday 17th September | Sponsored Walk Awards, Subscription
Rooms, Stroud. 7.30 p.m. |
| Saturday 25th September | Slide Show, Tunnel House, Coates, 7.30 |
| Sunday 10th October | Cirencester Branch Sponsored Walk |
| * Friday 15th October | Film Show, Tunnel House, Coates, 8 p.m.
Presented by Mike Lovesey of B.W.B.
Free House. Bar Snacks Available. |
| * Sunday 31st October | Coach & Boat Trip to Dudley Tunnel.
Pick-up at main centres throughout
County. £1.60 Adults, 90p Children. |
| * Wednesday 18th November | I.W.A. Members Slide Evening, Tunnel
House, Coates. 8 p.m. Free House.
Bar Snacks Available. |
| Saturday 27th November | Exhibition & Sale of Art & Crafts,
Minchinhampton Youth Centre. |
| * Wednesday 15th December | Xmas Get-together. Venue to be arranged.
Punch & Buffet. Entertainment. |

Items marked * are organised by I.W.A. (Gloucestershire Branch) and further details can be obtained by sending s.a.e. to Nigel Overton, 285 Gloucester Road, Cheltenham, Glos., Tel: Cheltenham 22209.

SITUATIONS VACANT.

A vacancy exists for a Conservation Officer to serve the area covered by the Gloucestershire Branch of the I.W.A.

The successful applicant would need to be a member of the I.W.A., live in the County, and ideally have a keen interest in canal and historical architecture. The position is full-time without remuneration. Leave of absence will however be given to allow the successful applicant to attend his normal place of employment.

Owing to the large amount of canal and ancillary architecture throughout this Branch's area there would undoubtedly be the need for overtime working at greatly reduced rates of pay, but assistant's would also be sought.

Apply in writing to Reg Beagley, 68 Fairview Street, Cheltenham.
 (Telephone: Cheltenham 33837)

EXHIBITION & SALE OF
ART & CRAFTS

27th NOVEMBER 1976

at Minchinhampton Youth Centre, Tobacconist
Lane, Minchinhampton.

2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Adults 10p
 Accompanied Children Free

7 p.m. - 10.30
 p.m. Entrance Fee 25p
 including refreshments
 BAR facilities available

POTTERY; SOFT TOYS; CORN DOLLIES; WOODWARE;
ENGRAVED GLASS; JEWELLERY; HOME PRODUCE STALL;
ETC., ETC.

This year, to help boost our profits, we intend having our own crafts and home produce stalls. If you would like to contribute an item for inclusion on these stalls please contact:-

Mrs. Audrey Rogerson, Lane Cottage,
Amberley (Tel: Amberley 2412)

not later than early November. Articles such as soft toys, or whatever particular handicraft you excel at, cakes, buns, tarts, jam, etc., would be most acceptable.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

PLEASE GIVE SOMETHING.

If any member is interested in exhibiting his or her own particular handicraft at the Exhibition; application forms are available from Mrs. Rogerson.

WORKING PARTIES. Various reports appear elsewhere in this issue of the various activities going on in and around the Cut, but little has so far been said about the youngsters who are working for us under the Job Creation Scheme.

The Trow took the opportunity recently of meeting the supervisor of the "chain-gang" himself, Mr. McAllister, and his colleague Mr. Wilkie, and we gather that after a brief settling-down period the boys are developing into a cohesive and extremely useful workforce, and their efforts are visibly bearing fruit, as a walk along the towpath will prove. There have been few catastrophes, apart from setting the canal on fire in the early stages!

Several of the boys are developing certain skills, one of them, Garry Drew, has already been offered an apprenticeship by the stone-mason and another lad is becoming a fair signwriter. Mention should also be made of Nick Townsend, who has built a very creditable stonework wall around the Bowbridge "flower garden" originally created by some of the Trust ladies. All this is very encouraging and we are sure there is a great potential for further successes, which we hope to report in later issues. Well done, lads!

Membership

CANALFOLK EVENING AT CAMBRIDGE

After a cloudy start to the day, the sun broke through and the warm dry weather helped to make the evening of the 24th July into a very successful and enjoyable time for the 150 people who attended. The highlight of the evening was the folk singing by artists who had travelled from Oxford and Newbury to entertain us. Their songs were greatly enjoyed by the audience, who were sitting on straw bales and rugs, some eating hot-dogs or fresh cream gateaux, almost all holding a glass of beer, wine or cider, but still managing to join in the singing of a chorus when asked to do so!

There were nine raffle prizes and several booby prizes, all donated by friends and members of the Trust, and this raised £17.50. The total profit made on the evening was £65, and this will go into Trust funds. Our Sales Stand report a very profitable evening too - selling nearly £60-worth of goods.

I would like to thank all the very many people who helped to make the Canalfolk Evening possible - the tent erectors, the ones who tidied up "Acre Mead" before the event, the electrician, sign-writer, gate and car-park attendants, M.C., barmen, cooks, waitresses and special thanks to the onion-peelers!

Finally, I must mention all those who came back on Sunday to tidy up outside and wash up inside! I do hope that everyone who came enjoyed themselves.

PAT CLUTTERBUCK.

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The "Trow" has received a letter from a lady - who wishes to remain anonymous - stating that while on the Annual Sponsored Walk recently a £5 note inadvertently fell from her pocket while in the Chalford area. Within moments, two ladies from Ross on Wye found the note and returned it to its owner, and our correspondent has asked us to make public her appreciation. May we add how nice it is to find that there are still some honest people about - we are sure they must have been Trust Members!



"Smashing barbecue - but I knew I should have kept off that cider!"

WYE VALLEY BOAT TRIPS

We have received details of trips by passenger launch along the River Wye from Chepstow to Tintern, which may be of interest to members.

The boat is a 36ft long vessel built in 1926, and which was previously operating on the Erewash Canal, and was brought down by lorry from Shrewsbury to Lydney - what a pity its native element could not be used!

An interesting descriptive leaflet is available, from which we reproduce the accompanying drawing of Chepstow Castle, and anyone who is interested should contact Wye Valley Boat Trips, The Haven, Brierley, Drybrook, Glos., telephone Lydbrook 688.



*
* STROUDWATER, THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL TRUST LTD. *
* presents *
* A SLIDE SHOW *
* of *
* THE STROUDWATER, THAMES & SEVERN CANALS *
* - PAST AND PRESENT - *
* - DERELICTION AND RESTORATION - *
* FROM THE COLLECTION OF CHARLES R.GORDON STUART *
* SATURDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 1976 - 7.30 p.m.PROMPT *
* at *
* TUNNEL HOUSE, COATES, NEAR CIRENCESTER *
*

CIRENCESTER GROUP SPONSORED WALK - 1976

It has at last been decided that the long-awaited walk at the Eastern end of the 'Cut' will now take place on Sunday 10th October. The route will not be a long one - merely from Daneway Basin via Coates to Thames Head Spring, with starting places at Daneway and Coates Tunnel House. It's only 13 kilometres there and back so it should not prove too taxing an effort for most of us - but the wide variety of scenery passed through will alone make the effort worthwhile.

This is our biggest opportunity so far to show that we really care about OUR TUNNEL - all the proceeds will be going to the Portal Fund - so how about coming along to join us and make it a really big turn-out for the Trust.

Sponsor Forms are included with this issue and additional copies or more information are available from the organiser:-

Dave Pillinger, 78 Bevisland,
Eldene, Swindon, Wilts.
Tel: Swindon 830091

Remember - we would like to see ALL of you on 10th October!

Book Review

STUDIES IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF CIRENCESTER
edited by A.D.McWhirr

Published as No.30 in the series of British Archaeological Reports of Oxford, this volume contains 14 essays commissioned from archaeologists and historians actively engaged in the study of Cirencester's past.

The various chapters cover the history and archaeology of Cirencester from Roman and Anglo-Saxon times to the 20th Century, and include several contributions from local people. Of interest to "Trow" readers will be the section written by Trust Member David Viner on the Thames & Severn Canal. Mr.Viner, who is Curator of the Corinium Museum, is well-known to most of our members for his publication "The Thames & Severn Canal", which is one of the best-sellers on our Sales Stand. This latest essay describes in great detail the history of the Canal Branch to Cirencester and its effect on the town and surrounding country, and includes several photographs and fine drawings.

The complete book, which has been limited to 50 copies, and will therefore become a rarity is priced at £3.90, plus 65p post and packing, and can be obtained from the Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester, Glos GL7 2BX (Tel: Cirencester 5611). Mr Viner has, however, made a number of photocopies of his essay available to the Trust, and these are available from the Trow Editor (address inside front cover) at a price of 75p per copy, including postage.

REPORT ON THE A.G.M.

A very brief First Annual General Meeting of the Trust was held on Saturday 31st July at Tunnel House, Coates. The Chairman told how the Stroudwater Feasibility Committee was formed into the Stroudwater Canal Society, and then in April 1975 became the Stroudwater, Thames & Severn Canal Trust Ltd. He also told how the Trust now employs 20 full-time workers under the Job Creation Scheme. This was causing a lot of extra work for the Committee, and he asked that members become more involved in order that the work could be shared. There are many areas in which members could get involved, e.g. Fund Raising, Social, Working Parties or the main Committee.

The Trust is at present working two main sites, Bowbridge to Ham Mill, and Coates to the Round House, as well as many other minor jobs on other sections. There is still a threat to the Canal at Walbridge, Stroud, with the East-West Bypass, which is still on the plans although at present no money will be available for the road until 1985.

The Chairman spoke briefly about the new Navigation Authority proposed in the latest Government Green Paper on Waterways. He said that in principle it was an excellent idea, with one body controlling all navigations and remainder waterways in the country, but that the Authority which is given control of these waterways must be one with a "bit between their teeth". One most important thing must be the return of a Right of Navigation on Britain's waterways.

The election of Committee Members to the Trust was then carried out, and also the appointment of Auditors.

The evening was concluded by a very interesting show of cine films, presented by Messrs.Tyler, Paget and Boyce.

B.AYLAND
Secretary.

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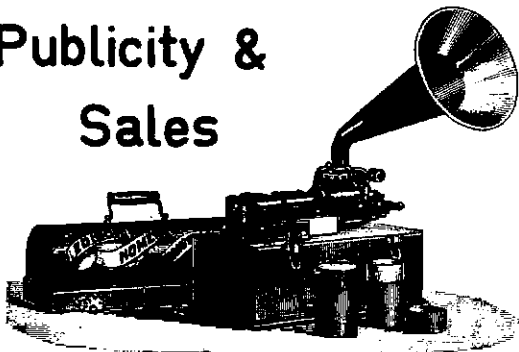
CONGRATULATIONS to Mr.William Joy, who is now an accredited Canal Boatman and has a Licence to prove it! We show below his first boat, which will be available for hire from Bowbridge shortly. The picture is rather small, but Bill can be seen in the stern, together with his distinctive hat!



Our Sales Stand is open at Tunnel House, Coates, on most week-ends, ably manned (or womanned) by Martin and/or Jacquie Andrews - two of the best spielers in the business! They have been known to sell sand to Arabs, fridges to

Eskimos, and motorway shares to canal enthusiasts. In fact, if you leave your car parked for more than 10 minutes you can guarantee it will be advertised as first prize in a raffle by the time you get back to it! Seriously, folks, do support them where possible - every sale helps and we need the money!

Publicity & Sales



The Caravan went to the K. & A. "shindig" on the 4th, 5th & 6th June to mark the occasion of the re-opening of the Widcombe flight of locks. This proved a very successful event and I should like to thank all the helpers I had.

Our next "away" visit was to the Stroud Show on 17th July. Again, thank you helpers. This was another success (even if one Purton lady refused to talk to us as we'd cut all the trees down at Coates!) and sales again went well.

Forthcoming "aways" include:-

4th & 5th Sept. Stroud Vintage Car/Engine Rally

RAFFLE. Winners in the raffle drawn on the 31st May were:-

Mr. Hatchman, Swindon. Mr. Thomas, London.
Mrs. Stanger, Coventry.

Special children's prizes were sent to:-

Master M. Davis, Braydon.
Master R. J. Stroud, Gloucester.
Miss M. Etheridge, Bicester.

I would mention that we now have a selection of cards suitable for use as Christmas cards. May I also remind you that I am still collecting Green Shield stamps and oddments of wool.

Lastly, "Aero-Bat" kites are now available from the Sales Stand, price £4.00, or by post from Graham Pegler.

JACQUIE ANDREWS
6 The Masons, Purton,
Swindon, Wilts.

CANALS IN BRITAIN WEEKENDS.

Ind Coope Hotels are currently planning a series of "Canals in Britain Weekends" as part of their 1976/77 Leisure Learning Programme, commencing in October 1976. These weekends are being organised with the assistance of Philip Daniell, Research Development Officer of the British Waterways Board. The weekends will be based at Hatfield (Tring and Regents Canal), Bromsgrove (Stratford and Birmingham Canal Navigations), Bingley (Leeds & Liverpool), Crewe and Doncaster.

Canals also play a major role in the Pottery and Industrial Archaeology Weekends already taking place this year. Still available at the time of going to press are the following:-

Industrial Archaeology Weekend in and around Ironbridge 15-17 October. Includes visit to Shropshire Union at Norbury and Stretton Aqueduct.

History & Tradition of Pottery 8-10 October. Includes trip on a traditional narrow boat.

Steam Railways of Britain 17-19 September and 8-10 October Includes visits to B.R. Workshops, Derby, Crich Tramway Museum and Main Line Steam Trust (1st weekend) and Welshpool & Llanfair Railway and Severn Valley Railway (2nd Weekend).

There is also a Fine Wine Weekend on 17-19 September, which includes Harvey's at Bristol, but unfortunately no trip up the Stroudwater or Thames & Severn is arranged (or even the Avon!) but perhaps another year?!

My wife and I hope to attend one of the above weekends, and will in due course provide a report on our experiences in the next issue of "The Trow". In the meantime, full details of all the above can be obtained from Ind Coope Hotels, 107 Station Street, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs, DE14 1BZ. Prices are very reasonable and normally cover accommodation for two nights plus all meals from dinner on Friday to lunch on Sunday.

RON NOTT.



STROUDWATER NAVIGATION COMPANY.

THE Bearer has permission to pass along
the Towing Path of the Stroudwater
Canal.

Wallbridge, Stroud.
Murch, 1912.

W. J. SNAPE,
Clerk & Surveyor.

SAPPERTON TUNNEL

A further extract 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.

At the time Whitworth reported to the Promoters of the Canal (in December, 1782) two schemes for connecting the Severn with the Thames were examined by him, the one from Tewkesbury, via Cheltenham, tunnelling under Sandywell Park, into the Valley of the Colne, which it traversed, and joined the Thames at Lechlade; the other, which was the less expensive, but involved the longest tunnelling, was by the Stroud Valley, and in communication with the Stroudwater Navigation, being the route adopted.

It will be seen that Whitworth speaks of the proposed Tunnel as being much longer, and if formed to allow the passage of Thames boats, (which are 12 feet wide; ordinary canal boats being but 7ft, and Severn barges 15ft wide) wider than anything that had yet been done, although in his opinion quite practicable. It was a bold work, therefore, to undertake in 1782. However, the Promoters went to Parliament for powers, which they obtained the following year, and were incorporated as the Company of Proprietors of the Thames and Severn Canal Navigation. On the 7th October 1783 the Committee of Management met and received tenders, at the George Inn, Stroud, when they came to an arrangement with one Charles Jones, mason and miner, of Manchester, to execute the excavations for a Tunnel 15ft high by 15ft wide, for the low sum of seven guineas per yard forward. This was to include the sinking of the shafts, but not the gins or winding tackle (which the Company were to supply) or bricks, &c.

The original tender of C.Jones is as under, £8 8 0 per yard, but this was modified on its acceptance.

A preposal to make the Tunnel Through Sapperton hill and Hailey Wood 15 feet wide and 16 feet high at £8-8-0 per yard - and the undertaker to Sink all the Shafts as may be wanted in the whole Tunnel - the Co to find Timber and Carpenter's work for making Gins Senters as maney as may be wanted to Complete the Tunnel in the Time as may be fixed by the Committees Engineer and the Co to finde all Barrowes and planks and Ropes and Bricks and Basketts to Complete all the works Through Hill

Stroude October 7th 1783

C.JONES

This was made the subject of an agreement between Jones and the Company, which was executed on the following day, viz., 8th October 1783, under which agreement the Tunnel should have been completed on the 1st January 1788. Jones, however, did not get on well with the work, and the usual difficulties with the contractor ensued. He did not complete altogether 100 yards of the work at the Sapperton end, where 'Marle Rubble and Loose Rock' were encountered, and the shafts were deep, but he ultimately completed about 1400 yards at the Coates end, where the work was easier.

(To be continued)

Sales Section

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