



*Stroudwater, Thames & Severn
Canal Trust Limited*

THE TROW

*The Official Magazine for Members and Friends
working to restore the Cotswold Canals.*

Number 42

Summer 1983



20p



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FRONT COVER: Family Group on Newtown Accommodation Bridge,
May Sponsored Walk

INSIDE FRONT COVER: Walker striding out towards Eastington,
May Sponsored Walk

BACK COVER: Bath Y.M.C.A. working on Blunder Lock
during Sponsored Walk

EDITORIAL

This issue of THE TROW has been prepared by an Editorial Panel consisting of Harry Anderson, Barry Balderstone, Clifford Smith and Deryck Watkinson. The order is alphabetical. We started with some reservations because of the dangerous resemblance of a panel to a committee, which, as everyone knows, delivers a camel when asked to produce a horse.

In the end, we think we have got our act together, and hope that the results will give pleasure and satisfaction to our readers. If not, perhaps you will let us know, preferably politely. We are also open to suggestions for items or features which might further raise the interest level of THE TROW.

The various reports tell the story of a rising level of activity, on the ground, in the mud, or in some cases at home, but the basis of our success must always be people prepared to give their time. MSC Schemes and the like are fine, and we are delighted to have them, but one does not merely fill in the appropriate form and await results. As the Trust Secretary points out elsewhere, a great deal of preparation is needed before officially sponsored help can even be contemplated.

This can only be done by us, the members, and there is a snowball effect in these matters. The message is plain, SPREAD THE WORD. A mere 30 miles of waterway need restoring to complete a 250 mile ring. We know about the impossible bits. The more people who help the less longer it will take!

SECRETARY/MANAGER'S REPORT

Employment of a part-time Secretary/Manager

Following local and national advertising, the Trust received 15 applications for the position of Secretary/Manager, of which only two were members of the Trust. Your Council interviewed a total of six candidates over two days, and after considerable deliberations, offered the post to the writer. I sincerely hope, now this decision has been made, that we can all settle down and pull together to achieve our objectives - the restoration of the inland Severn/Thames Waterway Link.

This project, to which we all must work, is probably the largest voluntary amenity project in the Waterways Movement. An honest appraisal of the situation would indicate that we should aim for a restored Stroudwater Navigation in ten years, together with a Thames to the Water Park Waterway, and a completed waterway in approximately 20 years.

To achieve these targets will involve a high motivation, not only from the Trust Council and Officers, but also from you, the membership. We have an experienced cadre, especially on the Stroudwater, but we must both plan and achieve targets of fund raising and on the ground results.

Remember, **money means restoration - restoration means money** - a catch phrase we must all learn and actively promote.

--oOo--

London Fund Raising Reception

The Trust were honoured on 17th March 1983 to hold a fundraising Reception at The Institution of Civil Engineers, Westminster, with the President of the Institution, John Bartlett, as host.

After the introduction by Mr. Bartlett, the invited audience, representing national Trusts and Companies, viewed the Anthony Burton Appeal and a Trust-produced video of our activities. John Humphries OBE, in his usual inimitable style, then outlined the history, present activities and future hopes of the Trust. Over refreshments Vice-Presidents John Humphries and Sir John Knill, together with Trust Council Members and ably assisted by staff members of Freeman Fox and Freeman Fox Braine & Partners, informally answered questions from the guests, aided by a large display of photographs and printed matter.

The publicity and reception, organised by the Trust Fundraiser E. Hereward Phillips, has to date raised £6,000 towards restoration, with further Companies and Trusts still considering our case for funding.

--oOo--

Lock Gates

Since our last edition, lock gates have appeared in numbers on the canal side at strategic points, a complete set of top and bottom gates have been procured from the Lower Avon Navigation for adaption to fit Cerney Wick Lock by the Thames End Branch, and the Upper Avon Trust have donated a total of TEN, yes TEN ex-Thames Navigation Lock Gates for adaption to fit both Newtown and Blunder Lock on the Stroudwater.

Your Secretary/Manager has been dragged from his bed at unearthly hours in the morning by his bemused wife, at the behest of the sadistic Eric Vick, to travel to remote rural locksides, and organise the lifting of up to four and a half tons of lock gate on to 40 ft. trailers and bring them back, often under Police escort, to our sites, and then unload the damned things in gravel pits and over hedges to the requirements of the Working Party Organisers.

Support has been provided by Doug Blake, Mick Day, Nicholas Melchior, Deryck Watkinson and Jon Willis from the Trust, and we are indebted to Eric Vick Transport and Cheltenham Crane Hire for their expertise and co-operation. There are a host of incidents to relate, anyone who volunteers to adapt these gates to fit our canals will hear them - that's your inducement to help.

--oCo--

Social Events

We have a busy social weekend on the 3rd, 4th and 5th June 1983, starting on Friday evening with a "Chicken Knees Up" organised by John Barlow at The Yew Tree Inn at Chaceley Stock near Tewkesbury. Chicken in the basket and entertainment for an all-in cost of £2.50 per head! For details, see advertisement or contact me. All profits to the Trust.

On Saturday and Sunday, 4th and 5th June - LECHLADE '83. Again, see separate advertisement for further details.

DAVID H BOAKES

SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT - OR IS IT?

Cotswold Ephemera Bazaars, together with the Ephemera Society are holding a Book and Ephemera Fair at

THE BEAR HOTEL, RODBOROUGH
SUNDAY 19th JUNE 1983
10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

BOOKS - NEW, SECONDHAND
ANTIQUARIAN

MAPS, POSTCARDS, STAMPS
COINS, etc.

PLUS: The one and only RON NOTT
with the Trust Sales Stand

Admission: 30p Refreshments
available

Enquiries to Stroud 3014

TEWKESBURY BRANCH
presents:

'A CHICKEN KNEES UP'

at

THE YEW TREE INN
CHACELEY STOCK
NR. TEWKESBURY

on

FRIDAY 3rd JUNE at 8.00 p.m.

TICKETS: £2.50 each

(to include food and entertainment)

From: JOHN BARLOW
The Yew Tree Inn,
Chaceley Stock
Tel: TIRLEY 333

IN AID OF TRUST FUNDS

PERSONALITY SPOT

Alan Jones, Acting Chairman of the Trust, was born near Rochdale. After schooling he had a very useful year of practical engineering before taking a sandwich course at Loughborough University, where he graduated in Mechanical Engineering in 1972. His first job after graduating was with Plessey Hydraulics, Swindon, and for the past seven years he has been with Lucas Bryce in Gloucester as a Development Engineer.

His coming to these parts has proved fortuitous for the Canal Trust. Although he often walked along the Lancashire canals as a boy it was not until he met Dave Elliott that he began to develop a real interest in canals. Dave cajoled him into helping in working parties. This was not too difficult as Alan is always keen to do practical things, at the same time contributing to improvement of the environment.

For that is Alan's long term vision, the development of all sorts of amenities and facilities from walks along the canal banks to boating, fishing and the creation of marinas.

But Alan's feet are firmly on the ground - if that is an appropriate metaphor. He describes this as a critical time for the Trust. An important step has been taken by the appointment of a Trust Secretary. This appointment, Alan feels, was essential and although described as part-time, will require a full time commitment to visiting sites and negotiating with Councils, landowners and Water Boards, amongst others.

Alan sees the Chairman's job as putting the Trust image on a better foundation and, in doing that, assisting the Secretary to promote the aims of the Trust.

This is a critical time and there is a great need for a very positive approach in negotiations, planning, recruiting, publicity and public relations. This will involve consolidating personal contacts with those who have been on sponsored walks or work parties, and getting through to a much wider public outside the Trust.

Real inroads must be made over the next few years if the public imagination is to be fired.

Alan confesses to being happier in his practical role of Plant Engineer than as Acting Chairman, but his total dedication - he sees canals not as a hobby but as a way of life - makes him a first-class ambassador for the Trust.

THAMES END WORKING PARTY REPORT

After the pre-Christmas travail leading to the completion of the towpath bridge, there was a lull in our efforts during the weeks of slightly worse weather known loosely as Winter. We are now getting back into our stride again, all two or three of us, and the lock wall at Cerney Wick is progressing.

For weekday parties, the vital activity is the alteration and repair of four lock gates, currently on the land of Roger Constant, to whom we are very grateful. More to the point, we have said that we will finish the job by the Autumn, or sooner.

DERYCK WATKINSON



ALAN JONES
Acting Council Chairman



"Onward Sponsored Soldiers"



Refreshments at Eastington. Rose Horsman serving the walkers at the turning point.



Where have you been? Acting Council Chairman Alan Jones greets his wife Trisha and son Benjamin, the youngest 'walker', at Bonds Mill

STROUDWATER WORKING PARTY AND PLANT REPORT

Progress has been steady, if not exactly spectacular on the Stroudwater, with the main effort being put in on the tipping site at Ryeford. An unloading bay has been created with the deepening of the Canal and the removal of several old willow trees. Also, the monorail system has been laid out to help with the distribution of the spoil.

The notable acquisition in the last month is of ten second hand ex Thames Lock gates from Stratford on Avon. These gates need modifying and repairing, so anyone interested in this aspect of restoration please contact the undersigned.

Over the weekend of the Sponsored Walk we were fortunate in having the Francis Turner Group visit us, as on the Saturday they did valuable work in laying a temporary footpath through a very muddy stretch of the Walk route, ready for the Sunday. Then, with their help, we were able to work on four separate sites along the route of the Walk, so giving walkers a good idea of the type of work we do.

The dam wall at Newtown Lock has been slotted so that the pound above can be flooded to a lower level, thereby not affecting the landslip at Bonds Mill.

Repairs to Newtown Bridge have been continued, with bricklaying taking place on the downstream wing wall.

JON WILLIS and ALAN JONES

NOTES FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, DAVID JORDAN

It gives us great pleasure to welcome the following new Members:-

Mr. S. J. Mills	Eastington	Gloucestershire
Mr. R. E. Kilsby	Guildford	Surrey
Mr. P. C. Burt	St. Leonards on Sea	East Sussex
Mr. T. Cruttenden	Westbury-on-Tryme	Bristol
Mr. D. Waddleton	Cheltenham	Gloucestershire
Mr. T. D. Webb	Ebley	Gloucestershire
Mr. A. J. Cooper	Roath	Cardiff
Mr. A. Jakeman	Thatcham	Newbury
Mr. L. J. Boughy	Wallasey	Merseyside

We would like to convey our Thanks to the Oakridge Society, for their donation to the Trust following a lecture given by Mr. Jack Poole about Canals, and the Stroudwater and Thames & Severn Canals in particular.

We would also like to hear from any member/s who would be willing to help the Trust by dealing with Deeds of Covenant for us. These raise very useful funds, courtesy of the Inland Revenue, at the cost of only a little time and organisation. Some experience is a help, but not vital, and the job can be done from home.

TEWKESBURY BRANCH

John Barlow, formerly of Fairford, has recently taken over the Yew Tree Inn at Chaceley Stock, right on the River Severn, and is eager to set up the new Tewkesbury/Cheltenham Branch to cater for both new and existing members in the North of Gloucestershire.

John has already started to recruit members and is now organising his first fund-raising event - a "Chicken Knees-Up", on Friday 3rd June. Tickets are available from him at £2.50 each, to include food and entertainment. Barry Balderstone will be taking the 'Gloster Packet' there for evening boat trips, and if the weather is fine there is plenty of room on the pub lawns for everyone.

Please try to come and help the evening go with a swing. The beer's good, the company excellent, and the cause worthwhile.

Contact John Barlow on Tisbury 333 to book your tickets NOW!

THAMES END ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Thames End Branch took place at 8.00 p.m. on Tuesday 10th May 1983 at The Crown, Cerney Wick, with 15 people in attendance and 3 apologies received.

The Chairman, Ken Burgin, reported a reasonable amount of activity during the year. On the restoration side several major jobs had been completed and new tasks begun. By Summer 1982 the dredging of Cerney Wick Lock had been completed and close inspection of the wall on the towpath side indicated a need for a rebuild from the normal water level to the towpath level. This work was now well advanced and should be completed this year.

The towpath was cleared from Cerney Wick to Latton Junction for the first time in perhaps decades, thus extending the walkable towpath by almost a mile, which enabled $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of towpath to be used as part of the Branch's Sponsored Walk.

During the Winter months a reinforced concrete bridge/weir was constructed in the towpath near the Spine Road, provoking favourable comment from the Local Authorities, Ramblers' Association and many individuals who use the towpath regularly.

The Branch organised several fund-raising and social events during the year; worthy of special mention was 'Lechlade '82', a combined venture between the Branch and Oxford and S. Bucks. Branch of IWA, during which 30 light craft completed the journey from Cricklade to Lechlade, emphasising the fact that the right of navigation on the Thames extends this far.

The second successful event was the Sponsored Walk, held in October, which raised over £600, more than was expected for the number of walkers.

Nicholas Melchior, Treasurer, reported a credit balance of £538; however bills were still outstanding for materials used on the footbridge.

Norman Townsend was elected Chairman for the forthcoming year, with Deryck Watkinson Secretary. Nicholas Melchior will remain in office as Treasurer for a further year, and will also take on the role of Working Party Organiser.

BACK TO EDEN

As a young lad I was always fascinated by water and could regularly be seen sailing my elder brother's model yacht on the canal; it was war-time and I could not have one of my own. On special occasions a family friend, whilst on leave, would hire a boat and a lock handle and off we would go paddling happily along the waterways and operating the somewhat terrifying locks. The fields and woods we passed by I imagine now are all housing estates, individually designed or otherwise.

Growing older I somehow lost contact doing the 'important' things of life, until Bang!.... here I am at Chalford living on the River Frome with our own mill leat and the Thames-Severn canal passing close by. As members of the Canal Trust will be only too aware, 'passing by' is a euphemistic description for what appears to be a cross between a rubbish dump and a nature reserve. Passing is mainly done by the odd jogger, or more often by slightly less energetic canal walkers.

Today we saw the first Mallard ducklings for 1983. Eight of them very busily paddling along with mother duck on guard. As is often the case the first indication of their presence was her warning quack. The broods we see are usually larger than this. Typically they pick out a water circuit, say up the river and back down the canal, going around every couple of hours or so. Sadly, tomorrow there will probably be only five ducklings and she will be lucky to raise one or two.

Our home is on the site of Iles Mill, which burned down in 1913. It lies alongside Grist Mill Lock, so called after an earlier name of the mill. According to the dictionary grist-mill means a mill for grinding grain, especially for individual customers. However, this mill never ground anything to the best of our knowledge, though it had a variety of uses, and the name derives from the then owner Richard Lewis Grist.

I was looking at the lock last weekend, lying as it does in its own short length of canal between the filled-in railway bridge at St. Mary's and the lock-up garages straddling Ballinger Lock. The trout seem happy enough there and if one is prepared to wait long enough the flash of an occasional kingfisher can be seen, no doubt making life a little less idyllic for the trout.

The skeletons of the gates still hang there, where rot has not yet succeeded in eating away the once sturdy frames, whilst suffering the ignominy of the relatively modern dam holding back the water of the upper level in their stead. The resulting waterfall acts as a reminder of the days when it had a commercial purpose. A cottage just across the river which flows immediately past the lock still has a right of access for delivery of coal.

Perhaps one day

RICHARD HODKIN

IN GLOUCESTER? TIRED OF SHOPPING? RAINY DAY?

Visit GLOUCESTER FOLK MUSEUM, Westgate Street, between 21st May and 9th July 1983, to see the temporary exhibition "History and Restoration of the Stroudwater Navigation and the Thames & Severn Canal". Loan exhibits from The Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation, Canal Trust, Glos. County Council, David Viner, Stroud Museum, Griffiths and Boakes collections.

This is a unique first public display of these items, correlated by Chris Morris and his staff. **NOT TO BE MISSED!** Admission is free.

SALES SECTION

Items available by post from our Sales Manager, Mr. R. O. Nott, of Lynfield, Frome Park Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3LF (Tel: Stroud 3014). Please add postage at 40p per order for any value under £10. Orders over £10 post free.

Cheques or postable orders should be made payable to 'Stroudwater Thames & Severn Canal Trust Limited'.

The Thames & Severn Canal (in photographs) by David Viner	£2. 60
A Canal Walk through Stroud by Trevor Roberts (publ. by Trust) ..	£1. 25
Book of Canal Tunnels by John Gagg	£0. 50
Observer's Book of Canals by John Gagg	£1. 95
Wildlife of Rivers & Canals by Tony Hopkins and Pat Brassiey (p & p 50p).. .. .	£7. 95
Canal Boat Cookery by Iris Bryce	£0. 80
Imray's Waterways Map of England	£1. 25
Bartholomew's Map Inns of the Cotswolds	£0. 40
Trust Handbook and General Guide (reprinted)	£0. 60
Black & White Drawing of Tunnel House (suitable for framing) approx. 8" x 6"	£0. 25
Trust Set of 4 colour postcards (Tunnel House, Daneway Inn, King's Reach and Chalford Roundhouse)	£0. 30
Pack of 10 Stroudwater/Thames & Severn Notelets (5 different scenes, with envelopes)	£0. 50
Pack of 6 South Cerney Lock Notelets (with envelopes)	£0. 30
Trust Badges	£0. 15
Trust Car Stickers	£0. 20
Trust Ballpoint Pens	£0. 15
Trust Sweat-Shirts - deep yellow, incorporating Trust Logo, a few only in WX and Large sizes	£6. 50
Trust Commemorative Brass celebrating Restoration of Coates Portal limited issue of 200, now only 21 left	£5. 00
Back Numbers of 'THE TROW'	
Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14 to 34	£0. 10
Nos. 35 to date	£0. 20
Nos. 2, 7, 8, 10, 13 - photocopies to order only, so some delay likely	£0. 50
Echoes of a Canal Travelling Man by J. H. Burman	£2. 25
Britain's Maritime Heritage by R. Simper	£11. 95
The Stroudwater Canal Vols. 1 & 2 by M. Handford	£4. 95
Ephemera of Travel & Transport - profusely illustrated	£7. 95



Ron Nott, Sales Manager, with Nicholas Melchior, selling their wares to young Sponsored Walkers



The Red Cross Team studying the Trust Display Boards at the Sponsored Walk



Lock Gates arriving at Blunder Lock.
Volunteers now required to refit them.



SPONSORED WALK - 8th MAY 1983

Clearance had been obtained from the Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and the Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation to stage the 1983 Sponsored Walk along the Thames & Severn and Stroudwater Canals. Alan Jones and Jon Willis had worked out a programme of work including visits from the Francis Turner Group and Bath YMCA so that the walkers could see restoration in action.

Nick Melchior had roped in several members of the Thames End Branch as Marshalls, and Ron Nott was ready with the Sales Stand.

Margaret and members of her family had organised the catering at Eastington and David Jordan had fuelled up ready for the journey from Bromsgrove.

Supplies of forms and advertising had been issued, a realization that there were no arrangements for First Aid had resulted in urgent calls to the Stonehouse Red Cross, who swiftly filled the breach.

Everyone relaxed. Then the 'phone rang. "The towpath is blocked by a quagmire near Oil Mills Bridge!" came the message.

The Secretary swore, as only he can, and then set off to investigate.

Fifteen minutes and two mud-encrusted boots later, he had confirmed that the route, churned up by heavy lorries, was indeed impassible.

A hurried visit to the Francis Turner Group, tucking into a liquid supper at the Victoria at Eastington, and arrangements were made that they, Jon and Mick Day would transfer their efforts on Saturday to building a temporary path through the morass.

Saturday morning saw the Trust lorry, a dumper and the tractor, plus a mud-bespattered group, working flat out to build a stable route through the viscous slime.

Sunday morning saw the marshalls in position, volunteers at work and Eastington once more a centre of canal activity. Two hundred walkers set out on the ten mile journey, saw the dredger working at Ryeford, inspected the plant hut and compound at Eastington.

Margaret sold out her refreshments. Ron had a smile, a sign of good sales, despite the rain, and there was not one complaint of the morass at Oil Mills Bridge.

The walkers had both sun and torrential rain, but all of them appeared to enjoy themselves, from the tiny tot with Gran who had collected £30 plus to the tired mums and dads who had shepherded energetic youngsters for the whole ten miles.

In the steady downpour the signs were collected and the weary and damp dispersed to their homes and a well earned rest.

The indications are that we should raise between £2,000 and £3,000 from the walkers - if you did not make the Walk this year, Mike Reynolds will be only too pleased to accept your donation - **(Blackmail!!)**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

7 Stringers Close,
 Rodborough,
 Stroud,
 Glos. GL5 3RB

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on a matter raised in the 'Old Tom' column.

That the pound above Whitminster should be restored as soon as possible to provide moorings as a source of income to the Trust is, of course, an excellent scheme. I should like, however, to make this early plea that the Trust make it a matter of policy that permanent moorings be, as far as possible, confined to the offside of the canal.

As a former working boatman I can think of any number of arguments against towpath moorings, but suffice to say that a continuous, well maintained and unobstructed towpath is to the benefit of all canal users. That waterway authorities are now encouraging the provision of off-channel marinas is a belated realisation of the disadvantages of permitting indiscriminate linear towpath mooring in the past.

It may be useful in 'selling' restoration to landowners and local authorities to point out the source of income they may gain by provision of mooring and marine facilities where their property adjoins the canal.

A. E. JONES

10 Smyth House,
 The Waterloo,
 Cirencester,
 Glos. GL7 2QR
 Tel: Cirencester 4160

Dear Editor,

Not being entirely happy with the way in which the Trust Council is elected by a very small percentage of the membership, and with a view to encouraging far more active participation in elections for the Trust Council, I would put forward the following proposals for members' comment.

That a separate leaflet should be enclosed with the Trow (the issue prior to the AGM) in which each candidate standing for election would be allotted an agreed number of words in the form of an election address. This to give the candidate's name, proposer and seconder, plus his or her views on the restoration of the canals, with proposals for future progress.

This idea would, I hope, encourage members unable to get to the Trust's AGM to take part in the election of Trust Council Members by means of a postal vote.

I believe that members should be presented with the candidates' opinions and proposals so that they can make up their own minds and vote in person or by post.

I realise that under the Trust's Charter this idea could not be made compulsory, but I think members would prefer to know who or what they are supporting, rather than having to choose from a list of names that may mean very little or nothing.

I would ask Trust members to get in touch with me personally and tell me what they think of my proposals, and with any suggestions for improvement they think fit.

PHILIP GRIFFITHS

IRELAND - VIEWS ON THE THAMES - MDCCCI

Extract from the book, found in George's Antiquarian Books, Bristol, 11.1.83, at £275.

Section II

The new canal, formed by the junction of the Thames and Severn Navigation, is an object so nearly connected, as not to be thought irrelevant to the present enquiry; and at the same time, of such importance, as to warrant the introduction of it.

This canal may be considered as the most elaborate and stupendous work of art that, perhaps, any country has accomplished; in uniting the two noblest in this kingdom. A project was formed more than a century ago to join these rivers, and a survey made by Joseph Moxon, hydrographer to King Charles II, to prove its practicability. The idea was likewise suggested by Mr. Pope, in a letter to the Honorable Mr. Digby, dated 1722, which, as it is written with a strong poetic and lively imagination, I shall give in his own words:-

I could pass whole days in only describing the future, and as yet visionary beauties that are to rise in those scenes (in Lord Bathurst's Woods, Cirencester) the palace that is to be built, the pavilions that are to glitter, the colonnades that are to adorn them; nay more, the meeting of the Thames and Severn which (when the noble owner has finer dreams than ordinary) are to be led into each other's embraces, through secret caverns of not above 12 or 15 miles, till they rise and celebrate their merge in the midst of an immense ampitheatre, which is to be the admiration of posterity a hundred years hence; but till this distant time shall arrive, that is to manifest those wonders, Mrs. Digby must contain herself with seeing what is at present no more than the finest wood in England.

That once distant period is now arrived, and the happy junction accomplished, under the survey of an able engineer, Mr. Robert Whitworth, in 1782. It may not be improper to mention, that a canal was formed by Act of Parliament in 1730, from the Severn to Wallbridge near Stroud, at which place the present work commences; the new canal ascends by Stroud, through the valley of Chalford to the height of 343 ft. by means of 28 locks and from thence to the entrance of the tunnel near Sapperton, a distance of about 7 miles 3 furlongs. The canal is about 42 ft. in width at top, and 30 at the bottom; proper warehouses are constructed on its banks for the reception of merchandise from the Severn vessels, and convenience of lading the Navigation barges. The canal is continued by a subterraneous passage or tunnel, excavated beneath Sapperton Hill, and under that part of Lord Bathurst's grounds called Haley Wood, making a distance of 2 miles and 3 furlongs.

The tunnel, the entrance to which is the subject of the view annexed to this section, is near 15 ft. in width and has sufficient depth of water to navigate barges from 60 to 70 tons burden; these barges are about 80 ft. in length, 12 in width, and draw about 4 ft. of water when loaded; hence the canal descending 134 ft., by 14 locks joins the Thames at Lechlade, a distance of about 20 miles and 2 furlongs.

This work has been achieved, with Immense labour and perseverance, within a loose rock of lime and stone; and, to secure the water, is lined throughout with well tempered clay. Over this canal are many handsome bridges of single arches, particularly that at Thameshead (as described in the view prefixed to the first section) from whence this canal receives a considerable body of water, as well as Cirencester, where it is again supplied from the River Churn.

Near the S. W. side of the town of Cirencester a large bason is constructed, with wharves and warehouses for the convenience of this navigation. The bason is supplied with water by an aqueduct formed under Lord Bathurst's pleasure grounds, which are before his house.

The length of the canal from the Severn at Froomlade to Inglesham, where it joins the River Thames, is more than 30 miles; the expense of which has considerably exceeded the sum of £200,000, three thousand of which, I am credibly informed by a principal Proprietor, have been expended in the gunpowder alone, used for the purpose of blowing up the rock.

This immense work was completed on 14th November 1789, within a period of less than seven years from its commencement. Nor is it an easy task to describe the various advantages that seem likely to be derived from its extensive connections with the different parts of Wales, Bristol, Gloucester, Shrewsbury, &c; its more inland navigation, as connected with the canals of Staffordshire and Worcestershire, and its immediate intercourse with the Thames from Lechlade towards Oxford, Wallingford, &c. to London; so various and so important are the benefits derived from hence, both to the individual and the public, and inhabitant who receives with little expense the produce of the most distant quarter of the Island delivered at his own door, and the traveller who passes smoothly and securely by it through roads no longer cut to pieces with heavy carriages, that it is much to be wished this work may prove as beneficial to the spirited and enterprising proprietors as it is a blessing to more than the countries through which it passes.

A FASCINATING SNIPPET from the Wilts. & Gloucestershire Standard of 12th January 1861, spotted by our Archivist, David Viner:

Skating Feats: On Saturday last, a gentleman of this town (Cirencester) skated along the canal from Siddington to Cricklade, and from thence to Swindon, returning in the same manner.

On Monday three gentlemen skated from Swindon to Siddington, on their way to Cirencester market, but they returned home by railway. Some beautiful skating has been witnessed on the pond in the park, several ladies having taken part in this healthy and graceful exercise.

BOOK REVIEW

WATERWAYS POSTCARDS, 1900 - 1930

by Hugh McKnight

Published by Shepperton Swan @ £4.95 (excl. p & p), 96 pp, A4, 271 illustrations

Hugh McKnight is an established canal photographer and writer, with a deep knowledge of his subject. He has now brought these talents to bear on a selection, mainly from his own extensive collection of waterways postcards. The result is a well-produced selection of historic photographs and an authoritative interpretation of a wide range of canals and navigable rivers.

The reviewer, a fellow collector, found many old friends, but sufficient new, to him, material that would ensure its purchase.

Of particular interest is the appendix listing the publishers, date and a sensible guide to the approximate value of the cards. Collectors and particularly dealers please note!

Highly recommended. Order your copy NOW from Ron Nott, Sales Manager.

HARRY BUTLER

OLD TOM

by Tim Noble

The last article dealt with the commercial prospects of the Canal up to the A.38.

The costs of such a scheme will be high, with one fixed bridge and road works (as rumour has it the Gloucestershire County Council does not advise a swing bridge), and the reconstruction of the shallow lock and a staunch gate between the river and the A.38 for flood control.

Upstream from here, what can be done? Early surveys recommend using the river for navigation to pass under the motorway, although there is an accommodation bridge on the original route which would take a narrow boat. However, it would be a pity to strangle a broad canal by such a policy, so back to the river - what potential is possible now?

Avonmouth is still a large grain and oil port: would Frome Bridge Mill originate a little trade? Or Stonehouse Industrial Estate (above Newtown Lock)? If bridges are low, i.e. six foot clearance, only lighters would pass through empty. A wheelhouse would require a further seven foot, making, say, eleven foot.

Now, assuming the canal is of constant depth, i.e. 8 ft. (although it was rodded at Ryeford recently and found to be 7' 6" on stone bottom, most likely a coal deposit), then to give the same commercial potential as the motorway with 16 ft. gauge height bridges would have to be 8 to 9 ft. high, with lock sills adjusted to suit.

The present Stroudwater locks are about 70 ft. long and would have taken a 68½ ft. Trow (the size of the Alma before she was lengthened to 110 ft. on the grid-iron at Bristol). This does mean a modification to the chambers must be done to accommodate a 72 ft. narrow boat, because due to the shape of the lock it will not be possible to tuck a narrow boat behind one gate. Failure to deal with this problem will kill the canal before it starts by giving it a bad name as a bastard cut and finish it as a circular route for hire boats from Birmingham.

The question to be debated now by everyone in the Trust is 'Should the river navigation from the shallow lock to Meadow Mill be constructed to the new gauge structures being proposed for the River Severn up to Worcester?' EEC money may be made available for River Severn navigation improvements. It would be a waste if all the work had to be done a second time, disrupting navigation.

Freeman Fox & Partners will soon be surveying the Stroudwater for costs of restoration and methods of approach to dimensions already specified by the Trust Council. When these figures are available, they will have to be adapted to suit the best commercial potential available which will give a long and lasting income from the following sources:

- A. A.38 leg - moorings for sea-going craft
- B. Tails
- C. Moorings from Eastington to Ryeford for canal craft

giving a potential income of £50,000 plus for six miles, provided only there is a connection to the outside world.

DIARY DATES

May	28-29	Thames End Working Party
	28-30	Stroudwater Working Party
June	3	Chicken Knees-Up , Yew Tree Inn, Chaceley Stock, Nr. Tewkesbury. Organised by Tewkesbury Branch. Tickets, £2.50 to include food and entertainment, from John Barlow, tel. Tirley 333.
	4-5	Lechlade '83 , Campaign Cruise and Barbecue jointly with IWA Oxford & S. Bucks Branch (Pam Pugh, 10 Vanner Rd., Elmfield, Witney, Oxon, tel. Witney 71138) or Nicholas Melchior
	12	Stroudwater Working Party
	25-26	Thames End Working Party
	26	Stroudwater Working Party
July	10	Stroudwater Working Party
	23-24	Thames End Working Party
	24	Stroudwater Working Party
	26	Thames End Working Party (Note: weekday)
August	7	Stroudwater Working Party
	21	Stroudwater Working Party
Sept.	21 - 4	Two week work camp with Waterways Recovery Group and Thames End Branch. All members welcome to attend at any time during the two weeks.
August	27-28	Thames End Working Party
	30	Thames End Working Party (Note: weekday)
September	4	Stroudwater Working Party
	18	Stroudwater Working Party
	24	Trust Annual General Meeting

Thames End Evening Meetings are held at The Crown Inn, Cerney Wick, on the second Tuesday of the month, Summer and Winter, at 8.00 p.m.

Additional dates to those shown above will be worked as necessary - details on request from organisers below.

Stroudwater Working Parties meet at Eastington Plant Depot (OS Map Ref SO 786061) on Sundays at 9.30 a.m. Directions to the day's work site will be posted on the compound gate). Further information - contact Jon Willis, Gloucester 416694

Thames End Working Parties - work starts at 10.00 a.m. Directions on the location of the day's work is posted at Cerney Wick Lock (OS Ref. SU 079960). Further information - contact Nicholas Melchior, Swindon 762510.

Accommodation with catering is available for those wishing to stay overnight (groups and individuals), but adequate notice is essential, please.

Information on plant and equipment, also work camps, away visits and Daneway, contact Alan Jones, Stroud 78656

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