

Stroudwater Thames & Severn Canal Trust Ltd.

TROW

Number 63

Winter 1988



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

30p

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THE VIEWS & OPINIONS IN THIS MAGAZINE DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT VIEWS & OPINIONS OF THE STROUDWATER, THAMES & SEVERN CANAL TRUST LTD.

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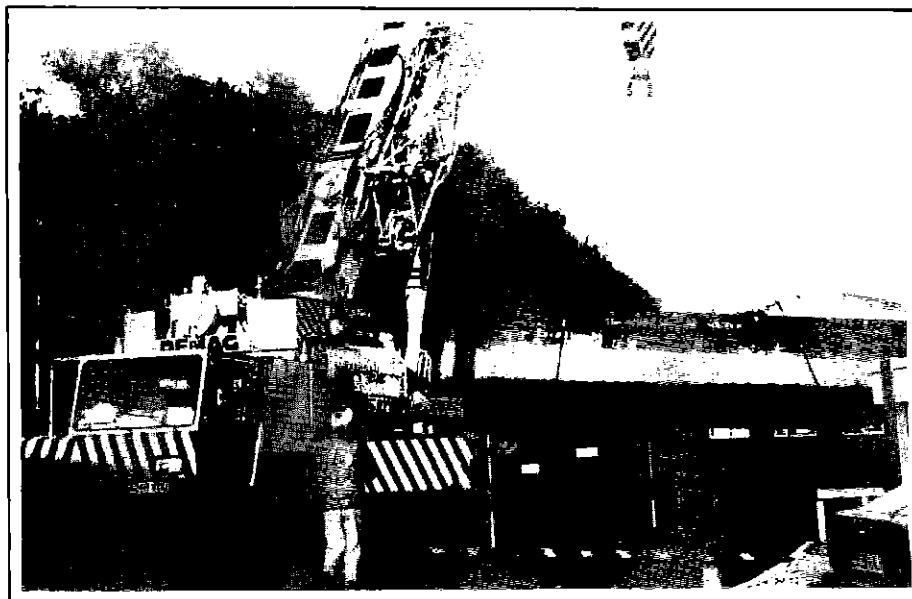
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Pictorial

The Trust barge pictured below is normally used for our dredging operations. Here, it is en route to Nutshell Bridge where it is being used as a working platform (see article, page 14).



A Plea for the Canal at Wallbridge

Recently the Southern Canals Association visited the site of the former Thames & Severn Canal at Wallbridge; they had previously visited the area before the East/West Bypass was constructed.

On their first visit they had travelled along the canal in one of the Trust's trip boats, including passing under the railway viaduct. Whilst they have experience in working on canals and are all intimately connected with their own particular restoration schemes in the South of England and Wales, none of them had ever come across, to quote a senior member, "such a wanton destruction of a formerly open stretch of waterway". They were amazed that the work had been carried out by the owners, Gloucestershire County Council, and that no effort had been made by them to make good the havoc created to the amenity and recreation value of the canal so near to Stroud.

When informed that this Trust had expended over £20,000 of its own money, to carry out surveys and obtain outline planning permission for an alternative route to relink the canal, they could not believe that the County Council have refused to assist in funding any of this expenditure.

Readers will recall that in March, B.B.C. WILDLIFE MAGAZINE awarded Gloucestershire County Council one of its six "Eyesore Awards 1988" "The Stroud Bulldozer" for the damage inflicted to the canal and its environs. To quote from the citation - "The Judges urge the Council to match its considerable achievement in finishing the Bypass ahead of schedule, by actively co-operating with the Canal Trust in creating the new canal link and thus maintaining the continuity of this aquatic habitat".

The Trust do not dispute the need and value of the Stroud East/West Bypass - we have never during our years of negotiation with the County Surveyor's Department opposed it - we have only fought for an alternative canal route to replace the infilling. The length of canal was a heavily used recreation and amenity area for walking, fishing, wildlife study, and our trip boats were more heavily patronised than anywhere else on the canal. It is now totally derelict and the remnants of canal shallow, useless and forsaken.

Who owns the property? Who has actively caused this dereliction? Gloucestershire County Council own it, the County Surveyor planned and supervised the work. In other words it is owned by the ratepayers of Gloucestershire and it has been destroyed by their employee!

Why? In order to build a claimed inexpensive road ahead of schedule. The facts are simple. The road is only inexpensive because the full costs have not been published. A major section of Stroud's environment has been destroyed and there is no intention to replace it.

The County Surveyor has informed a Councillor that the cost of relinking the canal will be £300,000; the Trust already has outline planning permission with the route and detailed sections so the canal could be relinked for £320,000 - 18% of the claimed £1,750,000 road construction costs.



A sorry sight! The recent bypass work further up this pound has left this stretch of canal stagnant and the trip boat departure point deserted. Quite a contrast to the picture overleaf from two years ago

The Trust has received minimal financial support from the County Council throughout its existence. In fact at its November 1988 meeting it voted £20,000 to the Stroud Valleys Project and rejected a motion to give a similar sum to the Canal Trust as it felt the money should go towards specific work.

Here is the opportunity for a positive and specific contribution to canal restoration and the amenity and recreational facilities of the County.

Is it too much to ask for the County Council to place this work in their budget - permission has been granted for the canal to be constructed across the adjacent private land (the remainder is owned by the County Council).

The Trust consider there is a moral, if not legal, obligation for this work to be carried out by the canal owners in order that the ratepayers and visitors to the area may once more enjoy a canal through Stroud.

We ask all County and District Councillors to consider this matter, we are prepared to meet these either privately or as a group to place the full facts before them.

Also we ask our members and friends to write and register their own protest, at this desecration, to their Councillors or to David Seed Esq, County Secretary, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Gloucester, immediately.

DAVID H. BOAKES



Secretary's Report

We are now approaching winter, we hope not a winter of discontent, and it is perhaps time to take stock of the current Trust situation and where we are heading. In many ways it is like the "Curate's Egg", good in parts but there are areas of concern.

Having just completed an extremely good M.S.C. Community Programme, we are now struggling to adapt to the new Employment Training procedures. We have lost many of our key workers and, to date, recruitment has been difficult, so our work schedules are slipping fast. The problems over Blunder Lock and Ryeford Double Locks, due to the water main bursts, have prevented the logical progression of our work. Consequently we have had to carry out minor, but essential works. Our lack of numbers has resulted in the dredging being, we hope only temporarily, halted. However, despite the problems, our Supervisor, Jim Conboy, has kept work progressing and we are now being aided by a small group of parolees from Gloucester on an experimental basis.

The East/West Bypass problems appear to be partially resolved but this area will have to be subjected to major study and effort.

The Company of Proprietors have commenced work on restoring Nutshell Bridge, using one of our barges, which has been sunk under the bridge. The barge required a 130 ton capacity crane, low loader, police escort and several volunteers to lift it out at the Brush Works and return it to the canal off Stonehouse Wharf - an exciting evening including Tony Jones immersing himself in the canal! The works are under the supervision of Mr Rowbotham, the Company's Honorary Engineer, and being carried out by Messrs. Cullimore. We hope to soon see the bridge restored to its former glory.

Mr Rowbotham also had to replace the sluices at Ryeford, during the Summer, another vital task to maintain our waterway.

Turning to the Trust, Doug Blake and Mick Day are still working on the spill weir at Westfield and we hope to have a W.R.G. Summer Camp on Dock Lock and Westfield Pound next Summer. Bill Evill and Bruce Hall are continuing to organise waste paper, opening up a fresh site at Nailsworth. Over £2,500 has been raised from this source since January - our Congratulations!

The Grand Draw (prizes listed elsewhere in this Trow) raised over £1,300 and we were proud to welcome Cllr Val. Gardiner, Chairman Stroud District Council, to a Barbecue - on the wettest night of the year - at the Ship Inn, Stonehouse to make the draw. She drew one of her own tickets and immediately donated the prize to our funds! The evening was completed with trips up the canal in the dark to everyone's enjoyment. Thanks to the Western Branch for their kind assistance.

We were recently visited by the Southern Canals Association, their largest ever party, who were taken into the tunnel - the only time Ken Goodwin, National Chairman of I.W.A. has ever been speechless with admiration for a canal tunnel. They also visited and were impressed by our works at Eastington and Ryeford. It was a pity the County Surveyor

was not present to hear their comments regarding the canal at the East/West Bypass - the last time they visited they went by boat under the railway viaduct.

Our Stonehouse trip boats have closed their season, having raised close on £700 this year. We appreciate the boatmen and women who gave their time to this task throughout the Summer.

We now look towards boats in the tunnel!

To sum up, a mixed year, we have had our disappointments and struggled, but we have achieved much and can achieve more, particularly with more funds and added commitment from our members.

DAVID H. BOAKES

Trip Boating 88

The last trips at Ryeford for this season have now been run and we can now sit back a little and take stock. At times the weather has been less than kind to us this year, this being reflected in the lower number of passengers - about 1,500 with net receipts of about £690. However, as I have said before, the success of our trip boating cannot be considered in purely financial terms. It is far more important that we are providing a regular and appreciated public service, demonstrating the practical benefits of our canal restoration and gaining support for the Trust.

That the trips have continued and that we have not missed any day on which the trips have been advertised to run, is a tribute to the small band of volunteers who comprise our crew roster. It's been touch and go at times, but even when the weather has been at its foulest someone has turned out and, against all the odds, passengers have turned up to make it worthwhile! A promising trend was the several private party bookings undertaken this season; we are now on at least one tour operator's books and hope to do more in this line next year.

Of course work doesn't end with the tripping. We now have to get the boats out of the water for maintenance and painting - the less glamorous side of boating - and volunteers would (as always) be welcome for this job. I hear that the level is rising at Coates and talk of tunnel trips is in the air. Unfortunately my wife is talking about the decorating I've been dodging all Summer. If there's anyone out there who's finished the Autumn digging, the wallpapering and painting and is looking for an escape route, please get in touch. We need more boaters! Urgent!

TONY JONES

A. G. M.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE STROUDWATER - THAMES & SEVERN CANAL TRUST LIMITED, TO BE HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOMS, STROUD LEISURE CENTRE, STRATFORD PARK, STROUD, AT 3.00pm ON SATURDAY 21st JANUARY 1989.

The Business to be transacted at the Meeting shall be as follows:-

1. To receive the Minutes for the 12th Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive the report of the Council.
3. To receive the Accounts and the Auditor's Report.
4. To fix the remuneration of the Auditors.
5. Discussion of Future Trust Activities.
6. To elect Members of the Council.
7. Any Other Business.

DAVID H. BOAKES, CEng, MIMechE,
SECRETARY TO THE TRUST.

The Meeting will be preceeded at 2.45pm by the presentation of the 1988 Sponsored Walk Awards. The Trust's Sales Stand will be present together with a photographic display of the Trust's activities.

The Trust Secretary will welcome nominations for current vacancies on the Trust Council.

NOTES

1. Notice of intending proposals for membership of the Trust Council must be forwarded to the Secretary in writing not less than 14 clear days (i.e. to arrive by 3.00pm Friday 6th January 1989) before the date of the meeting, together with the agreement in writing of the person proposed. Application forms are available from the Secretary at the Trust's Registered Office, 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Gloucestershire, GL2 7LH
2. Voting Rights - All classes of Membership, except Junior Membership, confer one vote. Junior Members have no voting rights since such members cannot be held liable under the Trust's guarantee.
3. Any members entitled to be present and to vote at the Meeting may appoint a proxy, who must be a voting Member of the Trust. The instrument appointing a proxy shall be in writing and shall be deposited at the Trust's Registered Office at 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Gloucestershire, GL2 7LH, not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.
4. Legally correct proxy forms may be obtained from the Trust's Registered Office, at 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Gloucestershire, GL2 7LH

Council Members' Report

STROUDWATER - THAMES & SEVERN CANAL TRUST LIMITED, COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 1988.

The Council submit their thirteenth Annual Report to the Members of the Stroudwater - Thames & Severn Canal Trust Limited, together with the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st March 1988.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

The following have served as Members on the Trust Council during the past financial year:-

RICHARD ATTWOOD, DOUGLAS BLAKE, KENNETH BURGIN (resigned 12 Oct 1987), BERNARD DONOVAN (co-opted 13 Jan 1988), ANNE GARFITT (resigned 15 Apr 1987), JOHN GARFITT (resigned 13 Jan 1988), MICHAEL GLEN (resigned 11 Nov 1987), BRUCE HALL, NICHOLAS MELCHIOR, MICHAEL REYNOLDS, ALEC WHITEHOUSE (resigned 25 Nov 1987), DAVID BOAKES (Secretary/Manager).

The Registered Office of the Trust remains at 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Gloucestershire.

REVIEW OF THE TRUST AND PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activity of the Trust has continued to be the restoration of both the Stroudwater Navigation and the Thames & Severn Canal. The Council has continued to remunerate the Secretary at a salary commensurate with his duties, apart from which there have been no contracts in which any Council Member had a personal interest. As Sponsors, the Trust has employed thirty persons on an M.S.C. Community Project decreasing to twenty five persons from January 1988. A Secretarial Assistant has continued to be employed on a part-time basis to assist the Secretary/Manager in his duties.

FIXED ASSETS

There are no charges outstanding over the Assets of the Trust such as would require registration under the Companies Act.

CURRENT ACTIVITY

Trust fund raising locally, has been encouraging this year, although there has been some difficulty in obtaining grants from national grant making Trusts. The proceeds from trip boating, lectures and the recently commenced regular waste paper collection at London Road Car Park in Stroud, have produced a regular base income and publicly promoted the Trust's activities.

Stroud District Council and the Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation have allocated £8,000 each to match the Trust's input into the M.S.C. C.P. Scheme for the current year. In addition Stroud District Council have made a £10,000 budget provision for the financial year 1988-89.

Our M.S.C. C.P. Scheme employed up to 30 persons to September 1987, decreasing to 25 persons until the financial year end. We ceased being independant sponsors, joining the Gloucestershire County Council C.P. Agency in January 1988. Our work has mainly been directed towards the reconstruction of Newtown Lock, Eastington whilst bank work and dredging between Eastington and Ryeford has continued.

The Western Branch has continued with their clearance work, boat building and trip boat operation. The Thames End Branch has continued its activities in the South Cerney to Latton area with particular emphasis on Cerney Wick Lock.

The Trust Officers have been involved in discussions and advice to proposed developers with regards to the effect on the canal, and a large section of the canal and its environs in the Stroud District Council area have been included in the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.

On the Stroudwater Navigation the Company of Proprietors have continued to give financial, moral and practical support to the Trust.

Unfortunately this has not been reciprocated by Gloucestershire County Council on the Thames & Severn Canal, and the environs of that canal adjacent to the recently completed Stroud East West Bypass are cause for considerable concern to the Trust and other interested bodies.

The Trust gratefully acknowledge the continuing support of our Consultant Engineers, Acer (Wales) with respect to their assistance in this area.

We have continued to receive financial assistance from the Inland Waterways Association at national and local level and major donations have been received from National Grant Making Trusts.

The canals are being increasingly used for amenity and recreation and we are encouraged by the proliferation of the flora and fauna on and near the waterways.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Whilst we have produced a fully costed restoration programme of works between Westfield Lock and Thrupp, our progress is governed by financial constraints and the failure of Gloucestershire County Council to adopt a similar interest to the Company of Proprietors for the sections of the Thames & Severn Canal they own.

We also await the resolution of the claims against Severn Trent Water Authority for the damage their mains failure caused to Ryeford Double and Blunder Locks.

The Trust will continue to safeguard the remainder of the canal route for eventual through navigation, and to promote the fullest public amenity use of these as yet unnavigable sections.

The Trust Council looks forward in 1988/9 to continued increasing progress with the support of the Trust Membership and other friends of the canal.

DAVID H. BOAKES
Secretary/Manager.

MICHAEL R. REYNOLDS
Vice Chairman

Thames End Branch

As we were unable to run one or two of our Work Parties this quarter, there has not been as much progress as we would have wished, but there have been some interesting activities. First, of course, was the canoe marathon by Chris Jones and friends, which revealed amongst other things, three dead swans in the "protected" stretch of the Upper Thames, from which beastly boats must be forever banned. Chris experienced the same depression at this sight as do most people, but we were a bit slow in getting the information to the proper authorities, so the cause of this disaster may never be known.

The other striking observation of the canoe party was the very low water level, and our friends in the Higher Thames Protection Society have discovered that they also need to protect the Thames from being pumped out of existence to flush the loos of the metropolis. This process has, of course, been going on for many years, which is why the head of the Thames is getting further and further away from the Thames Head Hotel. Presumably the process will only stop when the source of the Thames is the outfall from the sewage treatment plant just north of Swindon.

In connection with the canoe exercise, we sought permission to clear a canoe-sized strip of the canal between the Spine Road and Latton. This was declined, although we were offered the use of the River Churn which was not really in keeping with the spirit of "Operation Severn to Thames". The contact was useful however as an opportunity to confirm that policy is still to leave the canal in a weed-filled derelict state as a haven for wildlife.

One other curious snippet results from a visit to no less famous a place than Flatford Mill and Lock, which is on the River Stour. The lock appears to have been restored by facing the walls with concrete which at first sight looks considerably easier than taking the walls to bits, a brick at a time, and rebuilding them. They also move the gates with chains, which could be handy at Cerney Wick Lock where there is no longer space for balance beams. An uprising of furious purists is anticipated as the result of these observations.

Otherwise, we are trying to keep up business as usual, and I look forward to hearing from you.

DERYCK WATKINSON

Function Room
Garden

Red Lion Inn

Skittle Alley
R.A.O.B. 8875

Brian & Mo Boulton

High Street, CRICKLADE. Swindon. SN6 6DD

Tel: Swindon 750776

Walk Awards 88

The 1988 Sponsored Walk Awards presentation will take place at 2.45pm on Saturday 21st January 1989 at the Leisure Centre, Stratford Park, Stroud immediately before the Trust Annual General Meeting.

This year, the winners are as follows:-

Adult Whitbread Trophy	S M Standbridge, Churchdown
Under 16s Cup	Beth Attwood, Eastcombe
Under 12s Cup	Rebecca Woodward, Up Hatherley
Family Elliot Trophy	Bayliss Family, Minchinhampton
Dog Woofers Trophy	"Willum" Boakes, Framilode
Group Boat Enquiries Trophy	"Lowthran's Lot", Cheltenham

There was no entry in the Under 7s class, but a surprise award will be made of this award for meritorious performance.

Snippets

- On November 7th Gloucestershire County Council should have started on rebuilding Ham Mill Bridge. This follows the collapse of the parapet last Spring. It is anticipated that the lane to the site will be closed for several weeks.

- The postponed but long awaited trips into Sapperton Tunnel should hopefully get under way before the end of the year. Electric propulsion will be required to avoid both fumes and noise.

- Budge's, the contractors, are due to start removing some of the spoil left around the East - West Bypass in Stroud. The levels are to be returned to the 1986 levels which existed before construction started.

- The housing development at Bowbridge, canal-side above the lock, is now well under way.

The Clothiers Arms

1 Bath Road . Stroud . Gloucestershire

Resident Proprietors

Luciano & Aline Magalotti

Telephone Stroud [04536] 3801

Free House



End to End – Canoe Style

Was it worth it? Did anybody see us doing it? Would we ever do it again? What might it lead to? These were just some of the questions put to Mark Loxton and myself after completing, for the first time since 1911, the complete navigation of the Stroudwater and Thames & Severn Canals.

This happened – and some of you were there to witness it – during the weekend of 18th and 19th September this year. The entire trip by canoe was completed in 20 hours, comprising 8½ hours on Saturday and 11½ hours on Sunday. This was a much longer time than estimated due mainly to the fact that the total distance covered was a staggering 50 miles! This was split between 24 miles on Saturday and 26 miles on Sunday. The extra distance covered compared with that of the documented length of the two canals (Stroudwater: 8 miles, Thames & Severn: 29 miles, 37 miles in total) can only be explained by the numerous deviations needed to either bypass private land or make the passage for canoeist and walker easier.

The entire story of our trip has been documented and is available for sale with all proceeds going to the Trust. For anybody who has travelled by water or by towpath on any part of the canal it should be an interesting read.

CHRIS JONES



Not all plain sailing. The dynamic duo at Wilmoreway Lock.

Paper Round

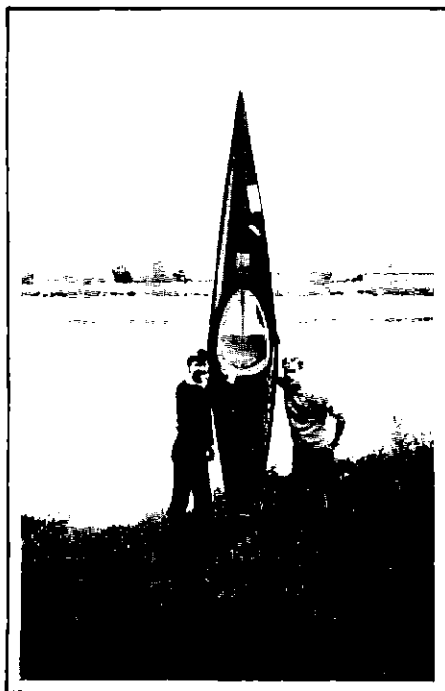
Since the waste paper collection started in January this year, we have received more than 180 tonnes of paper. This has given the Trust a useful extra income to pay all those little, and not so little, bills.

We have been very lucky to have had help from Tony Buckland and residents of the Home Farm Trust at Avening who have helped to man the paper skip on Saturdays as well as collecting waste paper. The Home Farm Trust is a registered charity which aims to provide a home, work and security for the mentally handicapped.

Recently a second paper collection has started at Nailsworth which is to operate every other Saturday. If anyone would like to help with paper collection or has a hoard of paper that they wish to get rid of, then please phone me early evenings on Stroud 6631.

BILL EVILL

LEFT: Chris and Mark at Framilode try to master the basic skills prior to their departure (other way up Chris!). RIGHT: Typical weather conditions at the spill weir worksite this autumn.



Nutshell Bridge

Anyone recently walking the Stroudwater Canal between the Ocean and Stonehouse Wharf, would have found that the towpath had been closed. They would have been diverted over the Ocean Bridge, through the Churchyard and over a temporary wooden bridge back to the towpath. The path over Nutshell Bridge was closed and a barge was firmly sunk under the bridge from which staging and shuttering had been erected. The temporary wooden footbridge also crossed the sunken barge. In addition to the Cullimore's workmen, they would frequently see Mr. Rowbotham, the Company of Proprietor's Honorary Engineer, and occasionally the Trust's Secretary with Willum "the dog", inspecting the progress of work.

What was going on?

Nutshell Bridge was constructed circa 1778 and carried the track to mills and probably an older packhorse route. In 1802 Edward Hills built a warehouse, the building to the east of the bridge, and in 1803 built the house to the west of the bridge. Both incorporated sections of the bridge in their structure. In 1804 Mr. Hills paid twenty one Guineas to allow the buildings to stand and a coalpen was built. In 1833 a gas main had been laid from Stroud to Chippenham Platt, Eastington and at least one main was subsequently laid across the bridge.

Over the last ten years the condition of the bridge has given rise to concern. Attempts to patch the arch in 1986 revealed extensive failure of the "ring", probably caused by water seepage from the maintenance of the gas main. The Company agreed to its repair and a schedule of works was drawn up by Mr. Rowbotham, certain grants were obtained and the work let out to Messrs. Cullimore.

British Gas were given notice to remove their current main and work commenced in September 1988 when the barge was removed from the far side of Brush Works Bridge and sunk under Nutshell Bridge as a work platform. The temporary footbridge was installed, the footpath diverted and shuttering erected to the form of the arch. A section of the arch the full width to the inside of the parapets and approximately 12 feet wide was cut out, under Mr. Rowbotham's supervision, back to sound brickwork. It was found that the ring comprised three layers of brick having been originally "puddled" over the arch, to prevent water egress and the roadway laid over the top. This clay layer had been broken through where the gas main had been installed, allowing egress of water. The ring has been replaced with new brickwork, waterproofed with a layer of protection reinforced concrete and the roadway relaid.

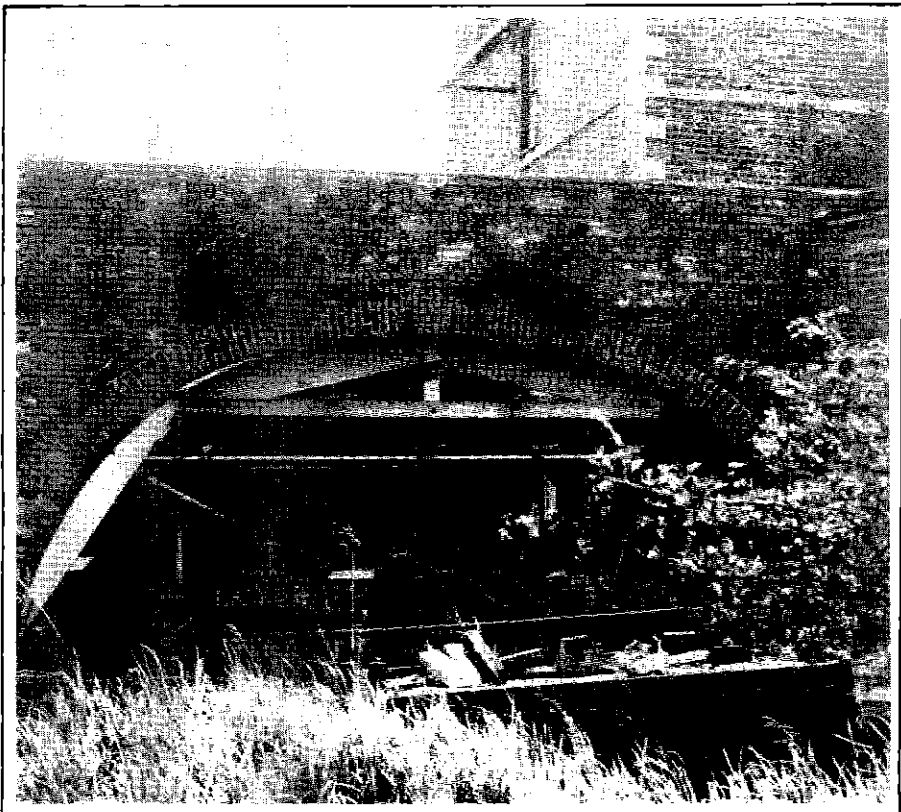
A commemorative plaque donated by the Senior Company Director, Miss G.M. Hooper, the fourth generation of her family to have been Director of the Canal Company, has been installed on an inside parapet wall.

It is to be hoped that Nutshell Bridge will now confidently face the future and still cross a restored Stroudwater Navigation in 2178 as it has since 1778.

Grand Draw

1988 GRAND DRAW DRAWN BY THE CHAIRMAN OF STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL, CLLR. VAL GARDINER ON MONDAY 26th SEPTEMBER 1988, AT THE SHIP INN, STONEHOUSE

Ticket No.	Name	Address	Prize
3975	Mrs J H Benfield	Barton, Cambs.	£10.00
36652	L J Lovesay	Brockworth, Gos.	£10.00
26793	C Garner	Swindon, Wilts.	£10.00
15219	N Melchior	Highworth, Swindon, Wilts.	£10.00
39484	Mrs A M McLean	Old Colwyn, Clwyd.	£10.00
24921	Ian Morley	Imperial Trident Assurance	£10.00
39264	J G Davenport	London	£10.00
6754	Mrs P Birkett	Thornbury	£10.00
22758	Miss A Holt	Wakefield, W.Yorks.	£10.00
7045	Val Gardiner	prize donated to Trust	£10.00
21643	Mr Handcock	Bourne, Brimscombe, Gos.	£100.00
3743	Mrs B K Hunt	Oakridge Lynch, Stroud.	£250.00



Nutshell bridge showing barge, staging and shuttering in place.

Book Review

WORKING BOATS: Reliving the Romance of the Last Days of Commercial Traffic on Britain's Canals

by Roger Alsop and Graham Dodkins

Published by David & Charles ISBN 0 7153 9181 X

This book is the story of Roger Alsop's involvement with canals. Starting with a Sunday School outing to Bingley Five Rise Locks in 1957 he progressed through pleasure boating and hotel boat operation to commercial narrow boat carrying in the mid 1960's. At the age of eighteen Roger became captain of a Willow Wren pair, mainly carrying coal from the Midlands down the Grand Union to London. He entered the insular world of boaters as a complete outsider at a time when teenagers were more interested in Beatles than Bolinders, and provides a fascinating insight into canal carrying in its twilight years. The subtitle 'Reliving the Romance...' seems a misnomer; in fact the life of the boater was clearly hard, with long hours, dirty work, poor pay and cramped conditions. The book contains interviews with many canal characters, some of them well known to today's enthusiasts. Ernie Kendall would, I'm sure, laugh at the idea of narrowboating being called romantic.

Leslie Morton is foremost amongst the personalities that Roger encountered in his working days. Morton struggled to maintain Willow Wren in carrying in the 1950's and 1960's, but his optimism in the long term future of carrying seems rather sad today, only twenty years later. Yet we should all be grateful to him, for without his efforts the canal system, busy today with pleasure traffic, might not have survived at all.

In 1985, twenty one years after leaving the cut, Roger decided to recreate a working trip down the Grand Union with a loaded pair, to see how much change there had been in the evolution from commercial to leisure usage. Together with Graham Dodkins he tracked down his former boats, Comet and Barnes - both still surviving unconverted - and arranged a coal run from Coventry to Brentford. Constant references are made between the modern day trip and the 1960's; these parallels are interesting though at times the intermingling of the two periods becomes a little confused.

Surprisingly the modern trip was completed in only four and a half days, a time compatible with those achieved in the 1960's, despite today's hazards of inept pleasure boaters, locks badly maintained and with gate paddles removed and shallow water.

Trust members will be particularly interested in the appearance of Tony Jones in the book, who before finding fulfillment in operating the Trust trip boats, owned Comet between 1968 and 1976 whilst running Stroudwater Carriers with his brother Trevor. The frontispiece shows a youthful Tony steering Comet into a lock. The brothers express some forthright views on boats and boating; I'd like to hear more of Tony's life afloat and am sure that he could write a book of equal interest to this.

At £9.95 for only 130 pages of text this book is not cheap, but I'm sure that it will be in the Christmas stocking of many canal enthusiasts. The wealth of detail it contains vividly recreates the atmosphere of canals in the 1960's and with the paucity of quality writing on this subject it is bound to become a classic alongside such books as 'Bread Upon The Waters' and 'Journeys of the Swan'.

SIMON CANNON

Membership Matters

This quarter, we are pleased to welcome the following new members:-

J R Connett	Slough.
W E Searing	Eastcombe, Stroud.
P Hajdukiewicz	Llanddeusant, Dyfed.
J R Southall & Family	Eastcombe, Stroud.
Rev P J Partington	Godalming, Surrey.
J Griffiths	Treharris, Mid-Glam.
Mr & Mrs Long	Chalfont St Peter, Bucks.
W G Heggie	Stroud.
Ian Cockram	Oakham, Rutland, Leics.

RICHARD ATTWOOD

Copy Date

Please may I draw your attention to the new copy dates printed at the top of page one. Perhaps I should explain the Trow schedule and why copy dates have been moved by a day or two.

We aim to deliver the Trow to Trust Members by the first day of March (Spring), June (Summer), September (Autumn) and December (Winter). In order to allow time for printing, packing and distribution, the Trow must be with the printers by the second week of the preceding month. Obviously my work (which includes selection of material, typing and pasting-up), can only be done during the first few days of the month. Time is Tight!

Please help me to get the Trow out on time by respecting copy date as an absolute deadline for submission. I cannot guarantee to print articles or reports received after copy date, but I do hope that this will not be necessary.

DAVID JOWETT

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

With the bicentennial year of 1989 approaching, I am hoping to gather a team of people to undertake an ambitious sponsored walk project which would be in addition to the regular annual walk.

I intend to walk the entire length of the Stroudwater and Thames & Severn Canals following the original course wherever possible on a weekend in mid 1989. I need help from people with organisation, back-up, transport, refreshments, etc. and would also welcome other walkers.

If you can walk or help and want to know more, please contact me. Hopefully, a positive response will mean that I can give further details in the next Trow. I await your call!

DAVID BAILEY, Rose Cottage, 27 Newton St. Loe, Nr. Bath, Avon.
(Telephone Bath 0225 873695)

Dear Sir,

I read with interest the letter in Trow 62 from Terry Williamson of Dursley, regarding the early history of Ryeford Double Lock.

Having recently carried out detailed research into this structure, on behalf of the Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation, in connection with the damage illustrated, I feel that the time has come for the true facts regarding Anthony Keck's design to be placed on record.

Firstly, the Stroudwater Navigation was constructed under the supervision of a Director, Benjamin Grazebrook, who was not an engineer, but employed Engineers to "set out" the canal, the locks and other structures. These Engineers were employed for only short periods and then either left or reasons were found to discharge them. The Company Minute Books indicate that Grazebrook had run out of engineers and was unable to complete this final section of canal, the remainder having been virtually completed to Stroud.

Anthony Keck was also a Director and an architect with a large Stroud based practice (see Country Life October 1988). Keck only agreed to construct Ryeford Double Lock as late as 28th January 1779 for the sum of £760.00. The canal was opened from Framilode to Stroud on 24th July 1779. On 16th December 1779 Grazebrook reported to the Board that "the right hand wall of Ryeford Double Lock will sloff down if not immediately repaired".

However, repairs by Josiah Clowes, Engineer to the Thames & Severn Canal Company were completed in October 1789 - ten years later - and Anthony Keck was invoiced £58.5s.9½p for the repairs in October 1790. The Company accepted, in full payment from Mr. Keck, £45.0.0d for Clowes' work on 12th June 1791.

So Ryeford Lock never collapsed, nor was the canal apparently closed for the repairs; the work was not completed for ten years and the full cost of repairs was less than 8% of the original contract. Incidentally, a further misunderstanding, the alleged legal action, was merely arbitration as prescribed in the Company's Parliamentary Acts. Keck was not prosecuted, he did not lose the court case, nor was he obliged to dismantle and rebuild the lock at his own cost.

I hope that I have now corrected the misapprehensions regarding both Anthony Keck and Ryeford Double Lock.

DAVID H. BOAKES Framilode, Gloucestershire.

Sales

Two new items recently added to the sales stock are as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| * The Towpath Guide (Handford & Viner, 2nd Edition) | £6.50 |
| * The Full Story of the Complete Navigation
of the Canal by Canoe (September 1988) | (including P&P) £1.00 |

The following are a selection of other items available by post from me at THE COURTS, 27 WALTON ROAD, CLEVEDON, AVON, BS21 6AE. Please add 40p per order under £20 to help towards postage and packing charges. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to 'S,T & S. C. T. Ltd.'

Pens	£0.20
Pencils	£0.20
Large Badges	£0.30
Note Book	£0.45
Personal Address Book	£0.45
Comb in Case	£0.30
Book Marks	£0.45
Car Stickers	£0.10
Back Issues of the Trow (All Numbers Available!)	£0.30
Canal Walk Sheets (Set of 5)	£1.00
A Canal Walk Through Stroud	£1.25
Canal Boat Cookery (Bryce)	£0.40
Stroud As It Was (Tucker)	£2.15
Canal Walks (Squires)	£9.95
Postcards	£0.10

A complete list of all products on sale via the Trust is available from me on request.

Dates for your Diary

Mon	5 Dec	Western Branch Meeting
Tues	13 Dec	Thames End Branch Meeting
Thur	15 Dec	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
Tues	20 Dec	IWA Event - see below
Sun	25 Dec	MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!
Sun	1 Jan	AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
Mon	2 Jan	Western Branch Meeting
Tues	10 Jan	Thames End Branch Meeting
Tues	17 Jan	IWA Event - see below
Thur	19 Jan	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
W/E	28/29 Jan	Thames End Branch Working Weekend
Mon	6 Feb	Western Branch Meeting
Tues	14 Feb	Thames End Branch Meeting
Thur	16 Feb	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
Tues	21 Feb	IWA Event - see below
W/E	25/26 Feb	Thames End Branch Working Weekend
Mon	6 Mar	Western Branch Meeting
Tues	14 Mar	Thames End Branch Meeting
Thur	16 Mar	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
Fri	24 Mar	IWA Event - see below
W/E	25/26 Mar	Thames End Branch Working Weekend.

PLEASE RING THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER
(opposite) FOR FURTHER DETAILS

WESTERN BRANCH VOLUNTEERS WORK ON VARIOUS PROJECTS ON MOST WEEKENDS.

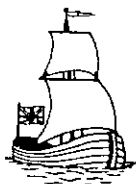
IWA EVENTS

Tues	20 Dec	RESTORING EXHIBITS FOR GLOUCESTER A talk by David McDougall at the B.W. Museum Schools Room, Gloucester	7.30 pm
Tues	17 Jan	THE AVON RING A video of a holiday taken by Graham Ettles and Des Pinnock last year, at Tewkesbury Marina	7.30 pm
Tues	21 Feb	THE PISGAH OF GLOUCESTER - The Story of a Barge. A talk by Tony Paris, at the B.W. Museum Schools Room, Gloucester	7.30 pm
Fri	24 Mar	AGM - IWA GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH at the B.W. Museum Schools Room, Gloucester	7.30 pm



FRONT COVER PICTURE: Duck! Chris Jones negotiates Ryeford Swing Bridge on his team's epic journey from Severn to Thames (see page 12)

BACK COVER PICTURE: One of Mr. Cullimore's workmen gets stuck into the top side of Nutshell Bridge (see page 14)



Who's Who in the S. T.&S. C. T. Ltd.

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THE TROW

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