

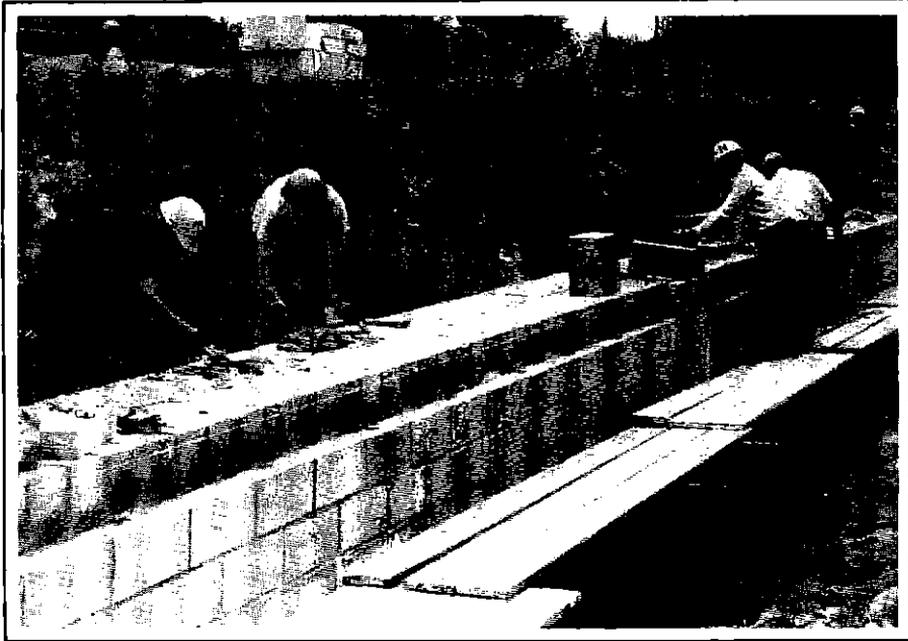
Trow

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
WORKING TO RESTORE THE
COTSWOLD CANALS

No. 82

AUTUMN 1993

50p



*Cotswold Canals
Trust*

Cotswold Canals Trust

CORRESPONDENCE TO: Cotswold Canals Trust, The Flat Office, GDC Depot, Chesterton Lane, Cirencester, Glos., GL7 1YE (Phone 0285 643440)
 GENERAL SECRETARY: Commander Nicolas Wright. P.A.: Maureen Poulton

VICE-PRESIDENTS: D. J. Bird : John Humphries O.B.E. : Peter Gadsden
 Sir Anthony Kershaw M.C. : Roger Knapman M.P. : Sir John Knill Bt.

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THE COTSWOLD CANALS TRUST IS A REGISTERED CHARITY AND ITS AIMS ARE:-

1. The preservation of the line of the Cotswold Canals (Stroudwater Navigation and Thames & Severn Canal) and promotion of their use for recreation.
2. Promotion of the towpath as a long distance Right of Way.
3. Promotion of the restoration of the Stroudwater Navigation and the Thames & Severn Canal from Saul Junction to Hope Mill Lock.
4. Promotion of the restoration of the Thames & Severn Canal from Inglesham to the Cotswold Water Park.
5. Ultimate restoration of the Cotswold Canals to navigation between Saul Junction and the River Thames.

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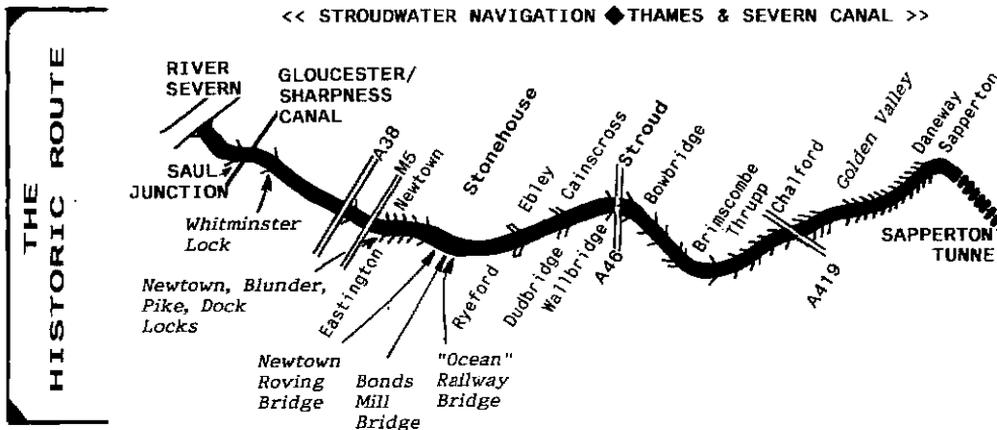
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<< STROUDWATER NAVIGATION ◆ THAMES & SEVERN CANAL >>



Reflections of the General Secretary

Commander NICOLAS WRIGHT

Here we are in mid-summer. The sun blazing down on our various groups beavering away along the canals. What have we achieved over the last few months? A new bridge at Bonds Mill, new stretches of navigation, a bigger and better bank balance? Well actually none of these, at least not today - but maybe tomorrow.

Yet great strides have been made, particularly at Dock Lock, which is totally transformed having been dug out by volunteers with the O & K and now, with the EA team from Stroud Job Creation working away at rebricking vast areas and making a most professional job of it too. It looks as though enough scaffolding has been used in the lock itself to encase St. Paul's.

Elsewhere, Boxwell Spring Lock has been having a summer recess before a week's Waterways Recovery Group (WRG) working party at the end of July. We expect great things of them, so let's hope the weather holds.

Towing path clearance has also been an important task along the canal and as a Canambler I can assure you that this task is most welcome by the users. Even those in shorts do not unduly suffer from stinging nettles and other minor obstructions.

Kingshill School, near Cirencester, undertook an environmental week working on the towing path between Siddington and Cowground Bridge through kind permission of Mr. Richard Knight. We all hope that those participating in both the ground work and interpretation of the area enjoyed it. We look forward to further co-operation with the school for future events.

This summer there seemed to be numerous working parties, talks and walks. More people thirsting for knowledge about the waterway, the Trust and our plans and proposals for the future. In support of this the second stage Atkins Report was presented to a public meeting at Ebley Mill in early June. This is the second engineering feasibility study for the west half between the Ocean and Daneway Portal. An interesting document which the Trust is now working through to obtain comments and to see how effectively the report can be utilised. We are grateful to the survey team for giving us some advanced insight to their findings although in places we still believe there are alternative means of achieving the same objective, a new canal track. We are very grateful to Stroud District Council for the long term funding of this report.

Now we have the Tunnel to survey. Last reported on in 1973, this will need to be updated, and also the length of the canal from Coates

Portal to the Cotswold Water Park. Any volunteers to undertake either of these?

We are slowly gearing up to tackle the Daneway Portal, probably with work starting early next year. Mr. John Hopkins has very kindly taken this task on so that we can achieve a thoroughly professional presentation of the requirements to English Heritage and other funding agencies. It will be nice to see the reinstated castellated portals again and hopefully yet more people will come and visit it.

In this area we are also gearing up to start work in the Upper Golden Valley on the three year programme. This calls for work on six locks, canal track and surrounding structures under the general guidance of the Trust but with help and co-operation from the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Stroud Valleys Project and BTCV. As the Upper Golden Valley is very sparsely populated we have no pockets of volunteers available in this area so it is necessary to use weekend or, maybe once work gets more clearly defined, week-long working parties between November and March. Not the best of times weather wise, but nevertheless part of our general arrangements for major environmental works along the canal agreed with the Wildlife Trust.

Tunnel boat trips have been a major success this year despite electric outboard motor and controller problems. Water levels have been kind to us with trips being run until the end of June, an exception I believe. Many people have enjoyed this trip, gazing in wonderment at the various different modes of construction shown so effectively by the boat's lights. We even had a tunnel bat search, but the bat score remained in single figures, possibly due to the wire screen gates at the eastern end.

Yes, it would have been nice to have been out and about and involved in these activities, but we have been labouring away in the Cirencester office. Fundraising has taken a lot of our time and effort with some 180 letters being sent out to charitable trusts, firms and individuals over this quarter, each one individually researched. We thank those who have responded (see list elsewhere) with such generosity and also understand the reasons when our requests for financial support are turned down, regretfully, by many others.

However, when talking about fundraising may I ask individual Trust members who work in a big, little or medium organisation to help us with our fundraising drive. There is no doubt that, nowadays, the majority of organisations will do their best to support charities like ourselves if they have employees who themselves have a good volunteer or membership track record with the charity. The concept of employee involvement and pro-active stance now taken by major companies in the U.K. may be new, but the most popular method of help, when given, is cash or financial support, both of which we will be happy to receive! We will provide all the necessary paperwork,

but if you could sound out the possibility, through management, of help by firmly asking that your organisation actively supports the Trust, we would have a vastly increased chance of being successful with fund-raising. Over to you. We will welcome any enquiries that you may have, but please do try on the Trust's behalf.

Most of the Trust's volunteers are involved in active canal-side work with spade, shovel and wellies, with boats or plant driving and rebuilding projects. At the moment we don't have many who are fund-raisers, so we are looking for volunteers to become involved in this part of the Trust's business. With such a large and enthusiastic band of members we need to commit time and energy in areas where it produces the best possible results as the whole point of using volunteers in fund-raising is to keep the costs low. Can you help make fund-raising as enjoyable as possible? Can you help arrange an event to further celebrate the Trust's coming of age? Can you help motivate others to form a team to arrange a concert, a charity football or cricket match, sponsored walk or other event to raise funds. We have a powerful case to support which is both urgent and compelling, but we need to identify methods of support along with strong and committed fund-raising. Do you have the experience, skills and enthusiasm to help us? It's not as daunting as it sounds, but it is, nevertheless, a critical part of our success. To find out more or if you can help, please contact the Cirencester office.

Those of you who read the Saturday Independent on 22nd May, might have seen the very striking photograph of Coates Roundhouse in the Appeals section. Although not particularly financially successful, the photograph and accompanying article created a lot of interest and a few new members. This is part of our long term strategy to get the canals better known by others not living in the immediate area. Clive Gunnell's HTV walk created a vast amount of interest so if it is to be networked we need to be ready to respond enthusiastically to all sorts of enquiries. Do you carry a membership form in your pocket or handbag, or in the car? A blossoming membership is a happy membership which will help us achieve our task that much faster.

Finally, despite the beautiful weather (let's hope that this is not the only summer we will have), we have just completed a draft Development/Business Plan for the Trust and canal to cover the next five years. This plan, written at the behest of the Local Authorities, is being circulated for comment to Council members. It aims to cover all aspects of restoration including historical background, current restoration schemes and future strategies, engineering feasibility studies, ownership, environmental considerations, community benefits, employment, heritage, fundraising and, finally, future management options. If you wish to read this major document for the future, please contact a Council member and ask to see his copy. Comments will be gratefully received, but there is no guarantee that they will be utilised in the next draft. Have a good summer!

Changes

Trust Council Chairman BRUCE HALL

For some time the Trust Council had found itself dealing with an ever increasing workload resulting in longer meetings and agenda items which were not given sufficient time. It was time to take action.

After much discussion, it was decided that two additional committees should be set up to reduce the workload of the Council and ensure that important items were dealt with in more detail. Furthermore it will ensure a wider contribution from members for future planning.

Restoration Committee will discuss restoration activities and co-ordinate the volunteer effort. Chairman is Ken Burgin. Meetings are listed in the TROW. CCT members are most welcome to attend.

Sales & Publicity Committee will deal with sales events, the Trow, other publications and trip boats. Chairman is Chris Jones. Less frequent meetings but nevertheless open to members.

Both committees report to Trust Council which will continue to plan overall strategy and decide policy matters. *Staff Management Committee* was set up when Nicolas Wright was appointed. It meets monthly with him to deal with financial and administrative matters and to provide continuity between Council meetings. Often one or other of its members will join with the General Secretary to meet with District Councils or other statutory bodies.

In June Ken Bailey resigned from Trust Council due to time pressures. He will be concentrating his efforts on Restoration Committee and work sites in future. Thank you Ken for your valuable contribution to Trust Council over the last four years.

Richard Attwood decided not to stand for re-election as Deputy Chairman for similar reasons, but will adopt the title of Field Officer from now on, whilst remaining on the Trust Council. Thank you Richard for your support over the past few years. Richard will continue to organise the popular Canambles and also regular work parties. I suspect that he will be no less busy! Chris Jones has become Deputy Chairman and also a member of Staff Management Committee.

I should like also to take this opportunity to mention Des Pinnock who kindly agreed to become Membership Secretary several months ago. You will have already read his first reports and I look forward to seeing ever-increasing membership numbers!

<p>We record with the regret the sudden death of Val Williamson from Dursley in April of this year.</p>

We can WRG it out!

Report by NEIL RITCHIE

For several months in advance the foundations of this project were quietly laid while others of us rushed around in a blind panic - how would we keep 30 enthusiastic navvies fully occupied on one site for a whole week? Where would they all stay? How were we going to meet the exacting criteria set by Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) Top Brass by way of standards and equipment?

Very slowly a plan of campaign emerged with Nick Wright coming up trumps again by creating openings in the accommodation front where none appeared possible. Restoration Committee worked on such details as work programmes, material and equipment requirements. One of the biggest problems appeared to be the lack of a large concrete mixer. The Trust owned nothing that was quite suitable for this undertaking and hiring was just not cost-effective. The day was saved by a local builder who donated an ideal machine in full operational order which needed only an oil change and a few minor servicing details. **Thank you Mr Smith** and thanks to our own maintenance team of Ken Bailey and Bob Gregory.

Prior to the camp, a very efficient gang from the Thames End Branch were in evidence at South Cerney for advance clearance of nettles and undergrowth. I find it amazing that a week or two of rain can produce king-sized weeds at Boxwell Springs while my own garden struggles to give even a few poor specimens of vegetables.

Robin Halliday was on hand on Friday 23rd July to receive two lorry loads of materials; 10 tons of sand, 20 bags of cement, and concrete blocks without number. Well done Robin! On Saturday the WRG trailer was transferred from the Eastington compound to Cirencester Football Club and the newly-serviced trailer followed later in the day with various essential items like diesel fuel and a toilet tent. As the first volunteers arrived at the Football Club accommodation there were audible gasps of amazement. Judith was overcome with ecstasy - the emotion, not the drug - when she found the automatic washing machine, fridge/freezer and **a fully stocked bar!** Both Ian and Judith are experienced campaigners but this accommodation was unanimously voted "the best ever".

Our panic over finding work for 30 was alleviated when it transpired that only 16 had finally paid up and arrived for the week, and the work schedule was adjusted accordingly. Saturday afternoon saw a settling-in period with most of the campers going on a trip to Eastington to see what fully-restored locks actually look like, (remember that half have never worked on canal restoration before) and to collect the second trailer.

Sunday and Monday saw a tremendous leap forward in restoration terms as the team had now found their feet and were really getting to

grips with the task in hand. (Anybody who has ever had anything to do with London WRG will understand what I mean by "finding their feet" and anybody who has tried to lift a Boxwell Block will understand the reference to "getting to grips"!)

The nearside lower wing wall was excavated down to a solid foundation and the rubble/soil backfill was taken back as far as practically possible in the presence of both a bees nest and a wasps nest.

Monday evening saw a very tired but contented crew at Eastington for a pioneering voyage in the regular trip boat and the old "Barca Romana", from Pike Lock, up through Blunder and Newtown locks to THAT PIPE. "Barca" was able to pass under the obstruction but quickly succumbed to the dreaded weed. In the spirit of true pioneers we bow-hauled to Bonds Mill bridge (with such enthusiasm we nearly got the bridge to swing for the first time in 50 years). How to wind a 30 foot craft in a 20 foot channel? With WRG, all things are possible!

Tuesday saw the block level rise to within one course of the top and good deal of clearance work carried out above the offside lower wing wall in preparation for excavation the following day. By Wednesday there were, not surprisingly, definite signs of Boxwell Block weariness setting in (a new malady for the medical dictionaries) but by lunchtime this was overcome and the team had found new energies. Foundations were laid for the remaining sections of the main nearside wall and the nearside lower wing wall and what appeared to be an archeological dig was taking place on the offside. The day was suitably rounded off by a slide show from David Jowett at the Cirencester Football Club accommodation giving a good outline of past and present work along the entire length of the canals from Saul Junction to Inglesham.



Thursday and Friday were memorable days for our illustrious Chairman as he wielded pick and shovel with the best of them but seemed to be a new convert to the idea that reinforced concrete was a better idea for lock walls - anything to save moving any more of "those blocks".....

Friday Evening, and the final fling. Trust members came along to join in the barbecue which was a great success, mainly because the threatened rain held off and, for some, the icing on the cake was the opening of the bar. Was it before or after this that Chris Lavis lost his pork chop? Who was the cook that produced a sausage that snapped in half? What did Rachel and Judith do at 2am?

Saturday, and the weary crew are packing their kit under the watchful eye of Mick Beatie who is convinced that somebody is hiding something from him - where are all the broken tools and damaged bits of gear?

Looking back, there is no doubt at all that the camp has been a resounding success with several individuals wanting to make a return visit - the highest accolade. Ten tons of sand, 20 bags of cement, 4 tons of ballast and copious quantities of water - mix well, set with blocks, bricks and stone and we have a lock structure well on the way to completion.

Well done WRG! And especially Robert Brotherston, Robert & Shirley Duncalf, Horace Edwards, Mark Gayley, Mark Leatham, David Marshall, Vicky Miller, Ian Parry, Philip Sparham, Jack Walker, David Walters, Stephen Whitely, Jane Green, Sue Birchett and particularly the two camp leaders Judith Moore and Ian Williamson who made the whole event look so deceptively easy.

Long may your silt disperse and puddle thicken!

An Invitation to Splash '93

SPLASH '93 on Sunday 5th September is a fun event which will fill the canal at Eastington with canoes, inflatables and other small boats. Remember the slipway gives access a mile of restored canal including two locks, so if you have a larger trail-boat, bring that along.

If you would like to take part but don't have a boat, a few Avon inflatables can be made available on request. They are tough little boats, used on the Kennet & Avon Canal Boto-X, powered by oars or paddles - no motors. If interested please contact the Cirencester office well in advance of Splash '93. Hire charge is a donation!

In addition to water-based activities, canal-side attractions include the Sales stand and refreshments. Trip boats will run from Blunder Lock. The event takes place all day. Radio Gloucestershire will transmit an hour-long programme from site starting at 9.00am. See you there!

New Life Members

Trust Council Chairman BRUCE HALL

Twenty one years ago the Stroudwater Canal Society came into being. Founder Members Mike & Beryl Ayland became the first Chairman and Secretary and their house became the Registered Office of the society.

In this anniversary year, I am delighted to announce that Mike and Beryl have accepted Life Membership of the Trust in recognition of their dedication and hard work in those early years.

Volunteer Work at Eastington

Report by KEN BAILEY

Most volunteer work over the last few months has been connected with the Employment Action Scheme working at Dock Lock. When the excavation of Dock Lock was completed, the volunteers spent several days transporting and erecting a large quantity of the Trust's scaffolding in Dock Lock. Initially some thirty foot on the offside wall was scaffolded to full height and about forty foot on the towpath side. The lock being twenty foot deep meant the use of approximately sixty 21' long poles and another 120 shorter poles together with all of the boards that could be found.

In order to allow the EA team to spend their time on construction work, the volunteers moved about 4000 bricks to the site using the O&K to load the farm trailer in the compound and then the International excavator to carry them from Meadow Mill weir up the widened towpath to the lock-side.

Back in the compound a number of plant repair jobs have been carried out including the rebuilding of the 3" diaphragm pump, the dumper gearbox and an overhaul of parts of the O&K excavator.

One of our valuable older members who seems to be forgotten in these reports is Charlie without whom a number of pieces of equipment would not be running. He is always willing to make that useful component which the manufacturers either no longer make or want to charge a high price for. Some of his more recent machining jobs have included handles for our trailer winches, a new bucket pin for the O&K and a bush to fit the dumper gearbox.

Employment Action Scheme

Report by KEN BURGIN

The Trust has been assisted by a workforce of about 10 working on an Employment Action (EA) Scheme. The scheme started in the spring on Pike Lock where a large amount of silt had to be cleared before any further work could commence. The silt had accumulated in the lock to an average depth of four feet during the period when the pound above Pike Lock had been empty. Trust volunteers later removed the heap of silt from the lockside.

Work then moved on to finishing the brickwork repairs left uncompleted by the earlier contractors. The head wall of the lock required extensive reconstruction as the original brickwork and stonework were in poor condition. This is now complete and awaiting the completion of the top cill by volunteers.

The EA team have now moved to Dock Lock where extensive brickwork repairs are under way following its excavation and scaffolding by volunteers.

The Trust has used employment schemes in the past with mixed results. However, unlike the earlier schemes, the workforce comprises more experienced and generally older people. The quality of work so far has been impressive and progress good.

Subject to the Trust's financial constraints, it is hoped that this team can be used on a rolling programme of brickwork (and therefore time consuming) tasks.

Whitminster Lock

Report by KEN BAILEY

Plans for the restoration of Whitminster Lock are now gathering speed. By the time you read this, the undergrowth should have been cleared from the tail of the lock and the area surveyed.

This particular lock is of great significance in that it is the first "step" off the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal. Although it has a rise of six inches it will be a complicated structure to repair. The tail of the lock is crossed by a farm access bridge at low level - this will have to be raised. The lock originally had a fall of 4'6" before the G&S was built and the water level on the lower side of the lock raised by four feet. This means that the chamber has some 11' of water in it rather than the normal seven!.

The lock is a junction onto the river and will have to cope with flood levels in the Frome and hence the chamber walls will have to be raised to the level of the flood banks. Just to add to the complexity, it is

also a requirement to be able to lower the river level without letting the G&S out, so a set of stop gates will also need to be constructed!. If anyone wants more details then please contact Ken Bailey on (0272) 601710 who will try to answer your questions.

Apart from being a complicated engineering structure, the ownership of the area is also interesting. The tail of the lock and some surrounding land is owned by British Waterways. The infilled chamber and the land towards the river is owned by the NRA. The access to the site and the offside of the farm access bridge are owned by Major Teesdale. The Trust is grateful to all these people for their co-operation in allowing permission to work on the site.

Trip Boats

Report by JUDI COMBER & ROBIN HALLIDAY

The Eastington Boat Trip Season finally got under way in July, a little later than usual this year because we were unable to operate the locks (this would have flooded the works being carried out at Pike Lock). The boat travels between Pike Lock and Newtown Lock passing through Blunder Lock. Half hour trips from 11.00am to 5.00pm on Sundays

As ever, a fund-raising effort like this requires Trust members to volunteer. This year Judi Comber has stepped forward to co-ordinate the Eastington trips. Please ring Judi if you can help in any way on 0453 884731. Ring also for details and for charter information

It is likely that 1993 will be remembered for the prolonged Tunnel Trip season which lasted until the end of June. Although successful, the recession has undoubtedly made itself felt. Boat Trip receipts on the best weekends were down on those of 1992 but overall takings for the year were the best yet reflecting the hard work put in by the crews.

A special thank you to John Lucas who kept the electric motors operational following their adaption to new controllers. There are still occasional problems with overheating but the cause is known and should soon be sorted out. Plans are afoot to construct a purpose-built Tunnel Boat. The design is still to be finalised but three years experience will go into the production of the new boat.



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Members' Work Party Dates

Members' Work party Leader **RICHARD ATTWOOD**

Last winter members did some very good cosmetic clearance work along our canals. This year I have planned even more Sunday morning work parties (starting at 9:30am) to keep our scrub clearing members perpetually exhausted!

- 12 Sep **Gough's Orchard Lock** clearup Meet at the road next to the Ship Inn, Brimscombe.
- 19 Sep **Cricklade** clearup Meet at the old road next to Cricklade Wharfhouse.
- 10 Oct **Siddington** clearup Meet at Siddington playing field by the humpback bridge.
- 31 Oct **Complete new Wallbridge towpath** Meet at Wallbridge Upper Lock
- 21 Nov **Belvedere Mews /Chalford Round House** canal clearup Meet by the garages at entrance to Belvedere Mews.
- 12 Dec **Bourne (Brimscombe)** canal clearup Meet at the entrance to Critchleys factory.
- 9 Jan **Puck Mill.** Meet at Puck Mill down the track under the railway viaduct from Frampton Mansell.
- 30 Jan **Ebley Infill** clearup Meet on the canal bed down the lane by Tamwoods in Ebley.
- 20 Feb **St Marys Lock** clearup Meet in layby at King & Castle, Brimscombe and walk up towpath.
- March **IWA Canal Clearance weekend** -date to be announced.

You may also be interested in evening work parties which are led by George Smith for the Thames End Branch. These have been held on Thursdays throughout the summer and have proved a popular venture. Work has consisted mainly of towpath clearance between the Spine Road and Latton with occasional forays further north resulting in much improved access.

The work has been light to medium and the strimmer has been put to good use with the ancient art of scything coming into its own again!

These work parties will continue into the autumn. Members are invited to help by ringing George Smith on 0793 420333.



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Membership Matters

Membership Secretary *DES PINNOCK*

This quarter we are pleased to welcome the following new members

Mr M. Jones, Cheltenham, Glos	Mr C.G. Cann, Norwich, Norfolk
Mr & Mrs W.F. Beatty, Stroud, Glos	Mr J.F. Hollister, Kingswood, Bristol
Mr & Mrs N.E. Wall, Corsham, Wilts	Mr A.G. Royffe, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr M.G. Locket, Painswick, Glos	Mr N.A. Clack, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr R. Head, Cirencester, Glos	Mr J. Warner, Stonehouse, Glos
Mr M.G. Hurford, Brockworth, Gloucester	Mr & Mrs M.J. Blanch, Upton St. Leonards, Gloucester
Mr R.D. Sears, Stoke Bruerna, Northants	Mr & Mrs B.G. Hall, Northleach, Glos
Mr D.A. Greenwell, Cheltenham, Glos	Mr G.M. Whitaker, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr & Mrs S.C. Smith, Cheltenham, Glos	Mr N.W. Brown, Cirencester, Glos
Mr A. Screen, New Mills, Stockport	Mr & Mrs R.N.M. Lang, Cirencester, Glos
Mr J.L. Hobson, Batley, W. Yorkshire	Mr & Mrs R.L. Everett, Hucclecote, Gloucester
Mrs P.D. Wickens, Cirencester, Glos	Mr A.R. Hammond, Stroud, Glos
Mr & Mrs R.L. Arnold, Stroud, Glos	Mr B.P. Barry, Wotton - Under - Edge, Glos
Ms E.J. Groves, Cirencester, Glos	Mr & Mrs D.M. Howcroft, Hardwicke, Gloucester
Mr D.E. Shulver, Withywood, Bristol	Mr C.J. Dalby, Nr. Wareham, Dorset
Mr A.T. Hayward, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol	Mr & Mrs R. Butler, Stroud, Glos
Mr & Mrs M. Rogers, Cirencester, Glos	Mr & Mrs M.C. Andrews, Hungerford, Berks
Mr Biddington, Cheltenham, Glos	Mr & Mrs I. Stewart, Cheltenham, Glos
	Mr A. Cook, Sandford, Avon

Total membership now stands at 1046 - new members still exceeding those few who leave each month.

May I also offer an apology in advance! At the beginning of each month, reminders are sent to those members who choose to pay their annual subscription in response to such a reminder. Those paying by Banker's Order do not need one - hence the saving to the Trust. Unfortunately, due to some minor errors on the computer records, a few reminders are sent to these members - my apologies; please ignore them. The Trust's monthly Bank Statement arrives at the end of each month and only then do I discover the error and correct it!

We would like to organise a series of members evenings for each of the winter months where members can meet for a natter and listen to an interesting talk. We have no problem in organising the venue, sales team and light refreshments.

We also have plenty of ideas for interesting speakers. What we desperately need is someone to contact potential speakers and make the necessary arrangements. Expenses for phone calls and postage will, of course, be covered.

Please contact **Richard Attwood** (0453 885057) if you are that someone so that the members evenings can start in January '94.

Canamble '93

Walk Leader RICHARD ATTWOOD

The 1993 Canamble began in May with a walk from Saul Junction to Brimscombe Port. Once again the walkers came from right across south west England for our annual exploration of the Cotswold Canals.

This first walk passed through the most active, at the moment, area of canal restoration. Our plans for the Walk bridge area came to life as the 55 walkers followed the Stroudwater eastward from Saul Junction. At the Eastington Flight the excellent progress at Dock and Pike Locks were inspected. The huge growth of floating weed which gave the canal its distinctive pink colour during the winter was noted. The weed, which has the Latin name of Azolla or Fairy Fern, has now turned greenish but is thicker than ever.

The plans for Bonds Mill bridge were received with interest, as were the plans for the Ocean railway crossing and the new bridge at the Ship Inn. The construction of the Ship Inn bridge will be inspected on the 1994 Canamble.

Following a leisurely lunch at the Clothiers Arms in Stroud the long climb towards Sapperton began. However, no sooner had we arrived at Brimscombe Port at the end of Canamble 1 than we were assembling there in June for Canamble 2.

Earlier in the year I had an interesting correspondence with Earl Bathurst over the possible routes which the horses and donkeys took over the summit of Sapperton Tunnel. A path near to the Bathurst Estate sawmills is known as "The Donkey Path" suggesting that was a route over the tunnel. This year Canamble 2 followed that path.

Canamble 2 is the longest of the four walks and the walkers set off at a cracking pace in order to reach the Tunnel Inn at Coates before closing time. As we passed through Sapperton village we were pleased to meet with Lord Bathurst. After a long, hot walk along the summit pound the Canamblers were very pleased to clamber on board the green double decker at Siddington.

Canamble 2 was hot and Canamble 3 was even hotter as we assembled at the start of the walk on the site of Cirencester canal basin at Whitworth Road. A number of volunteers had been hard at work in the previous weeks to ensure that the towpath, which was impassable in places last year, was in good walking order. Their efforts were not in vain as the 45 Canamblers made their hot and humid way to Cricklade with hardly a bramble scratch or nettle sting.

So far the 1993 Canamble has been a great success and I look forward to a good turn out for the final Canamble of the year on 26th September when we walk from Cricklade to Lechlade.

21st Anniversary Dinner

report by SALLY JONES

The perfect weather of a July evening and the 17th Century splendour of The Stonehouse Court Hotel nestling on the banks of the Stroudwater Navigation were ideal partners to host The Cotswold Canals Trust 21st Anniversary Dinner.

A canal restoration society reaching the grand old age of 21 must in itself be a rare occasion and a fact I'm sure we as members are all very proud of. Needless to say such a landmark must not pass without suitable celebration and this dinner was an ideal way to relive some of the events of the past 21 years. For relative newcomers such as I, it was one of those rare opportunities to have on hand many of the early campaigners such as Mike Ayland, Martin Andrews and Michael Handford, then known as The Stroudwater Canal Society.

We were particularly fortunate to welcome the finest array of after dinner speakers we could hope for on the subject of inland waterways. The presence of Clive Gunnell was particularly memorable with many excellent reminiscences of his time spent in the making of the now famous "Between Two Rivers" TV series and his experiences of inland waterway boating. We were greatly indebted to both Clive and his wife Hilary for agreeing to join with us in our birthday celebrations.

Clive was also very ably supported by David Stevenson, the chairman of the Inland Waterways Association and our very own chairman Bruce Hall. Both gentlemen spoke of matters of great interest to us all regarding our own restoration efforts and those of other projects under the guidance of the IWA in the rest of the country and in fact in other parts of the world. Under the watchful eye of Master of Ceremonies Chris Jones the evening was one of great interest and considerable enjoyment. Many thanks to all the speakers and to Richard Hughes and his staff of The Stonehouse Court Hotel for making us all so welcome and for producing such a fine celebratory dinner.



Clive Gunnell (Photo: Maureen Poulton)

Wildmoorway or Wilmoreway?

by HUMPHREY HOUSEHOLD

"Wildmoorway" is the spelling shown on the one inch ordnance survey map published in 1940 which is the one I was using during my exploration of the Thames & Severn Canal in 1948 and subsequent years.

"Wilmoreway" was the spelling, probably phonetic, used in the Thames & Severn Company Records. It was also known as Humpback. Two footpaths led from the Cirencester - Cricklade road to the canal bridge; one of which continued on to South Cerney, and the other, somewhat indirectly, to Cerney Wick.

One of the paths from the main road reached the bridge by following the canal bank for a short distance, which no doubt created the impression that the towing path changed from the south side to the north side of the canal by crossing Wilmoreway Bridge - I feel fairly certain that this was not the case. This could be confirmed by examining maps in the Thames & Severn collection in the County Records Office.



*Wilmoreway or
Wildmoorway?)
Lower Lock &
Cottage*

*Photo
taken
on
15 August 1948
by
Humphrey
Household*

Wilmoreway Lock, with a fall of 11 feet, was very wasteful of water and a side pond was therefore formed there in 1831; but the operation of the various sluices was not a matter to be left to impatient boatmen, so the Cerney Wick Watchman was moved to a newly built cottage alongside the Wilmoreway Lock.

Both cottage (rectangular, not circular) and bridge were in ruinous condition in August 1948 when I photographed them, but I would guess that the bridge has been roughly repaired from time to time because of the right-of-way established by the two footpaths which crossed it.

Thanks to our Donors

The Trust is most grateful for the donations to the Trust which have been made by the following organisations during the last quarter.

Cotswold District Council
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Gastrells School, Stroud
Inland Waterways Association Glos. & Herefordshire Branch

The Trust has recently received a Massey MF50B Tractor/Loader from Sandford Stone Limited. Thanks are due to Alan Cook, their Managing Director for this very useful piece of equipment which will replace the ageing Ferguson Tractor. Thanks also go LPH Equipment, especially Driver Phil and Branch Manager Paul O'Dell for transporting the machine from Sandford Stone's yard to Eastington.

The Trust has received a large portable office/cabin from Lee Beesley Limited who also very kindly delivered it to Eastington. This will replace one of the existing buildings to serve as tea house and office.

A new book "Canal Days in Swindon" by Dr. Eric V. Tull records present-day evidence of the abandoned Wilts. & Berks Canal. Intensive and detailed research into the canal's history relates what is visible today of the canal's past, both by text and illustration. All the bridges which were built over the canal within Swindon, of which only a few remain, are also tabulated; also the sequence of obliterating development since the canal's abandonment in 1914.

The book was recently awarded first prize in the Wiltshire Life Society history competition. More details from Jim Willis, 30 Newfield Avenue, Windy Arbour, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2AU (Tel:0926 58255)

Pike Lock Duck Antics

by *KEN BURGIN*

The spring has seen a return of the wild ducks and various clutches of ducklings. It always amazes me that any survive given the suicidal tendencies of the mother ducks. One mother duck with two of its ten two-day-old ducklings disappeared leaving the other eight on their own. Several days later she reappeared - all ten survived. She then led them over the 20 foot drop into the bottom of the pumped-out Pike Lock. Somehow the tiny ducklings managed to climb up the near vertical road embankment to get out. This family of ducks became friendly with our own domestic ducks and have become very tame with a tendency to walk into our house if we leave the door open.

Our own ducks' attempts to breed have been even more fraught. We have three females living in the same duck house, each with a nest. Things started out OK but after a while two of them decided not to bother with their eggs but to join the other one! They continued with two or three on the nest for about three weeks and then all three decided to have a day off with the boys on the canal. They then returned to the nest but all the eggs had died so did not hatch out.

The second attempt was slightly better. One duck on one nest and two on another. In spite of leaving the nests unattended for several hours on one occasion, some of the eggs in the nest with two ducks hatched. At this point the third duck, consumed with envy, abandoned her clutch of 14 nearly-ready-to-hatch eggs and joined the other two sitting on the ducklings!

We have rescued the abandoned eggs and it looks as if some will survive. You can probably guess the next problem - the ducks are not going to accept the rescued ducklings as theirs and we will be stuck with them until they are virtually full size!

The 47th Stroud District Arts Festival will take place this year between 2nd and 17th October with various exhibitions and 21 events.

Event No. 20 will be of special interest to Trust Members. A Video-showing of HTV's "Between Two Rivers" is to be made in Stroud Subscription Rooms at 7.30pm on Saturday 16th October. This will be an edited version of the five hours worth of film which were shown on HTV earlier this year.

Tickets are available at £3.00 each from the Festival Booking Office. Their address is The Stroud Festival, FREEPOST (GL114), Stroud, Glos., GL5 1BR (no stamp required).

Thames End Branch now meets at the Phoenix Centre in Cirencester. The new venue is proving to be very popular. Meetings will be held there until further notice which would be given in the TROW

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Dates for your Diary

W/E	28/30	Aug	IWA National Waterways Festival, Peterborough*
Sun	5	Sep	Cotswold Canals Splash! based at Eastington*
Mon	6	Sep	Western Branch Meeting
W/E	11/12	Sep	Stonehouse Traction Engine Rally*
Sat	11	Sep	Trip to Black Country Museum (details 0453 545042)
Sun	12	Sep	Members' Work Party - Gough's Orchard Lock
Mon	13	Sep	Restoration Committee Meeting, Pike Lock House
Tue	14	Sep	Thames End Branch Meeting
Sun	19	Sep	Members' Work Party - Cricklade towpath tidy-up
W/E	25/26	Sep	DIG DEEP at Boxwell Spring Lock (Newbury WPG)
Sun	26	Sep	Canamble Part 4 - Cricklade to Lechlade
W/E	2/3	Oct	DIG DEEP at Boxwell Spring Lock (KESKRG)
Mon	4	Oct	Western Branch Meeting
Sun	10	Oct	Members' Work Party - Siddington
Tue	12	Oct	Thames End Branch Meeting
Sat	16	Oct	Between Two Rivers - video show at Stroud Sub Rooms
Mon	18	Oct	Restoration Committee Meeting, Red Lion, Cricklade
Wed	20	Oct	TROW COPY DATE for Winter issue
Sun	31	Oct	Members' Work Party - Wallbridge
Mon	1	Nov	Western Branch Meeting
Tue	9	Nov	Thames End Branch Meeting
Mon	15	Nov	Restoration Committee Meeting, Pike Lock House
Sun	21	Nov	Members' Work Party - Belvedere Mews, Chalford
Mon	6	Dec	Western Branch Meeting
Sun	12	Dec	Members' Work Party - Bourne, Brimscombe
Mon	13	Dec	Restoration Committee Meeting, Red Lion, Cricklade
Tue	14	Dec	Thames End Branch Meeting

Western Branch volunteers work most weekends and welcome new workers. Summit & Thames End Branch volunteers usually work the last weekend of each month. More help is always needed!

Members can keep up to date at Branch meetings and special events. Western Branch meet at 7.30pm at the Imperial Hotel, Stroud. Thames End Branch meet at 8.00pm at the Phoenix Centre, Cirencester.

FRONT COVER PHOTO: *Boxwell Spring Lock - the wall takes shape, thanks to the efforts from WRG volunteers on the Summer Camp*

BACK COVER PHOTOS: *ABOVE: The Massey MF50B Tractor/Loader which was recently donated by Sandford Stone Ltd and reached us courtesy LPH Equipment
BELOW: The method of construction of the new wall at Boxwell Spring Lock can be seen quite clearly. Note the size of the dreaded "Boxwell Blocks"!*

