

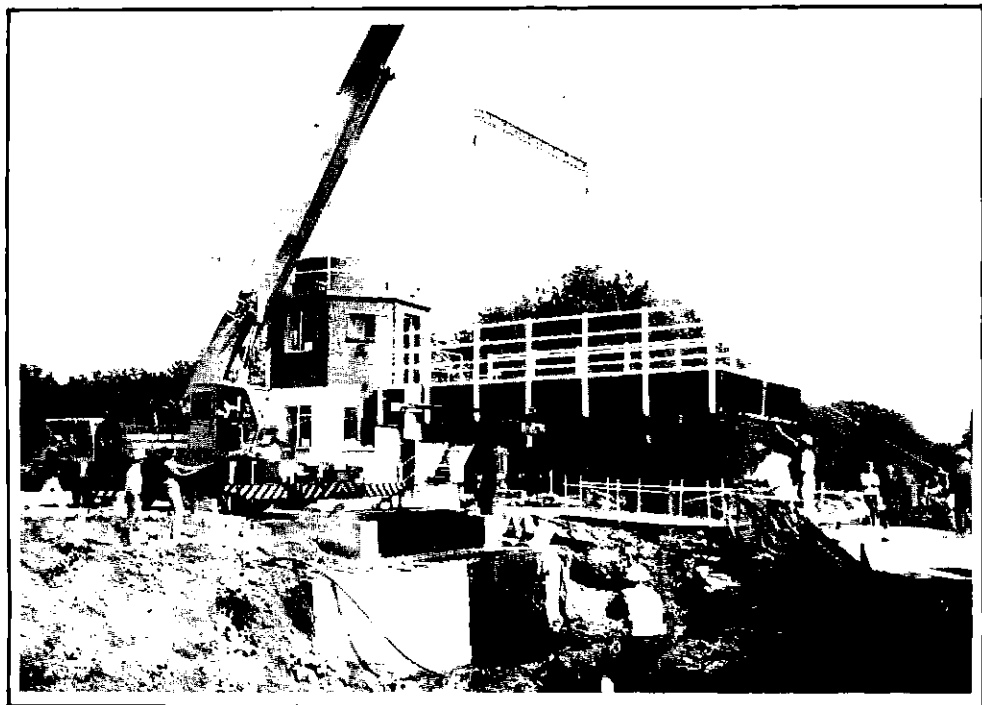
# Trow

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

No 85

SUMMER 1994

50p



Cotswold Canals  
Trust

# Cotswold Canals Trust

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

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 Sir Anthony Kershaw M.C. : Roger Knapman M.P. : Sir John Knill Bt.

**HONORARY CIVIL ENGINEER:** Roger House

**THE COTSWOLD CANALS TRUST IS A REGISTERED CHARITY.  
 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.

**REGISTERED OFFICE:** 1 ROWCROFT, STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
**REGISTERED COMPANY:** The Stroudwater-Thames & Severn Canal Trust Ltd  
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*Trow*

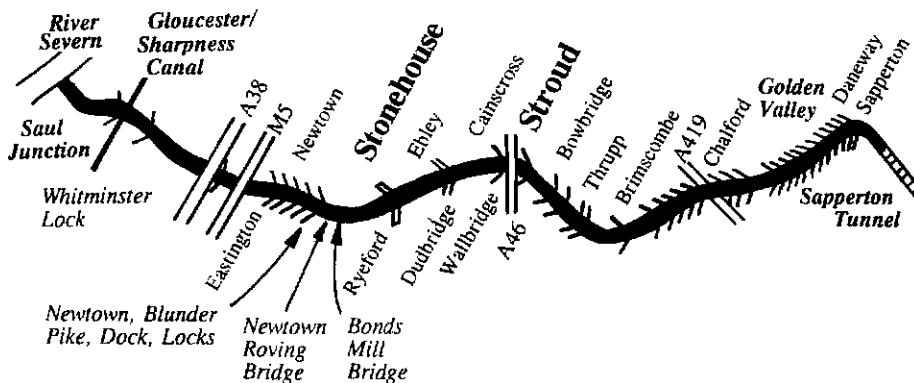
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The views and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent the views & opinions of the Cotswold Canals Trust

**THE HISTORIC ROUTE**

<< STROUDWATER NAVIGATION \* THAMES & SEVERN CANAL >>



# Reflections of the General Secretary

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*Commander NICOLAS WRIGHT*

There can be no doubt that Bonds Mill Bridge has dominated our working life during the first four months of 1994. Why was this? We have the world's first Advanced Composite Construction System road bridge (ACCS) here on the Stroudwater Navigation. It is also the largest single project yet undertaken by the Trust, both in financial terms as well as pure engineering. So both sides of this equation need to be nursed along to achieve our aims. Maximum payments to be completed by the end of the financial year just finished, work on the ground to be run at corresponding speed. Therefore our thanks to the bridge specialists, particularly Jim Thorpe of Maunsell Structural Plastics and Richard Irvine of DCT. Without their help and enthusiasm this operation would not have been achievable. Also thanks to many others who have been involved with installing the bridge which, with structural testing, is now known as the LINK project.

Our special thanks go to Bob Constable and his team at Upper Mills who have manufactured steelwork of an extremely high quality at Flocon & Larner, local to the bridge at Stonehouse, also working under an extremely tight timescale.

On the ground the substructure work was initially undertaken by Ken Bailey as the Trust's site co-ordinator and primary worker and, when Ken left to obtain full employment, by Roger Sanders and his team. Without Ken's initial input and enthusiasm and Roger's cheerful, skilled and most determined approach with a project which was much more complicated than we had originally anticipated, we could still be looking at a hole in the ground.

The arrival of the bridge sections on a very wet and windy Friday afternoon aroused a lot of interest from Trust members and others. Later, glueing the sections together during a WRG "bridge building week", under the tutelage of David Mack, brought a whole host of new and familiar Trust faces onto the scene. Not the best of weathers, but by the end of the Easter week the bridge looked more shipshape, or rather bridgeshape.

Now as I write, the final touches need to be put to the supporting steelwork before the bridge is finally craned into position in early May. Before the 16th July celebrations the Trust's electronic and hydraulic experts will need to test and tune all mechanisms to ensure the bridge is fully operational and that navigation can finally be extended up to the Ocean Railway Bridge.

None of this would have been possible without great support of staff from Gloucestershire County Council who have serviced the major grant from DOE, a vital financial factor, and have been most helpful in many other ways. We would also like to thank Helen Ratcliffe and Rupert Burton, members of the resident staff at Bonds Mill Estate, for their help on site and with "backstage" arrangements that have made the whole works so successful.

Bonds Mill Estate and Cristie Electronics also sponsored the Trust's seminar in early March at the Stonehouse Court Hotel to examine future liaison and management options for the canal as lengths are restored to full use. Some 45 people came to this meeting, representing County and District Councils, local landowners and others with particular interest in the canal. Although this is part of a long term discussion, nevertheless it is a most important topic which must be addressed and ideally settled before we progress with other major works along the waterway. Our regular meetings with Gloucestershire and Wiltshire County Councils, the three Districts and two NRA Regions continue to explore methodology and long term funding for the restoration programme.

At the same time we are assessing future maintenance requirements which can be costed over restored sections as well as progressively calculating requirements for the whole canal. This is

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becoming increasingly important when reviewing the revenue and capital budgets for future management, operations and ownership of the canal. Visitor spending, creation of jobs and other recreational activities can all be attributed to the presence of the restored canal so these also need to be added on the credit side.

At the same time, we are again seeking further Derelict Land Grant (DLG) funding or funding through the successors to DLGs for works along the waterway. Where the canal has been restored the benefits of restoration are most apparent and many people from the County and elsewhere are enjoying the improved environment along the canal.

What else has been achieved over this period? Westfield Bridge, an important landmark on the western end, has been repointed and in places rebuilt by Stroud Job Creation, who also persevere with Dock Lock: The Roving Bridge at Newtown is a volunteer project progressing well, now that the canal has been drained in that area: Anglers close to Stroud are working hard along the Wallbridge section and also at Thrupp to improve fishing: Stroud Valleys Project has undertaken excellent works at Goughs Orchard Lock, close to Brimscombe Port.

Further up the Golden Valley, winter working parties cleared the upper locks of trees and scrub, and plans are afoot to clear the next two locks in this flight during next winter. Daneway Portal restoration progresses, albeit slowly, as does the preservation of Cowground Bridge. Even further east, the Dig Deep project under the eagle eye of Neil Ritchie continues with Boxwell Spring Lock, and on completion will start at Wildmoorway Lower next Autumn. So altogether at our last assessment we have had three major and some eighteen minor projects under way throughout the last four months, primarily undertaken by volunteers.

Looking ahead, the next two major projects concern Whitminster Lock to the A38 including lock rebuild, connection to the River Frome and reconnection to the canal track from Latham. It is proposed that this is a volunteer project, planned to take about three years. We also propose that on completion of the Dock Lock works, the Stroud Job Creation team moves to Ryeford Double Lock to start an extensive rebuild, possibly lasting up to eighteen months. So plenty of activity.

Back in the office we have received the Ove Arup report on Ebley infill, now being assessed by the County Council Environmental Health staff before decisions are made on how best to remove the infill. The Ocean Railway Bridge report has been received from InterCity, now Railtrack. Various queries had been voiced on this report and we await further information from the authors. We have also received the very recent NRA report on environmentally sustained water resources. This is very much a long term report looking ahead over the next thirty years so we cannot foresee an immediate advantage to our restoration programme, although small scale canal transfer is part of the overall future strategy.

We look forward to seeing you at Bonds Mill on 16th July.

## **Gloucester/Sharpness Boat Trip**

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A trip has been arranged on Gloucester trip boat, Boadicea for Saturday 10th September. The boat will leave Gloucester Docks to travel the 16 miles south to Sharpness along the Ship Canal. The trip lasts from 10.00am - 4.00pm and the boat will pause at Purton so that trippers can view the Boat Graveyard on the Severn shore.

Tickets are available to Trust Members at a special price of £7.50 (child £6.50) from Pete Easto on 0453 545042

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# Bonds Mill Bridge - The Story So Far

*Report by KEN BAILEY & NEIL RITCHIE*

Having obtained funding, the go-ahead was given to replace the old bridge and work on the Trust's largest project got under way in November. The first task on the ground was to survey the area in detail and draw up a detailed requirement. The canal was drained in January and work started on the repair of brickwork either side of the old bridge.

It had been hoped that a temporary bridge could be installed to provide access for the duration of the replacement works. Unfortunately these arrangements fell through early in February and Ken Bailey started on the alternative - filling the canal in. For a canal restorer, this goes rather against the grain but in this case was the only way to go. The cycle shelter next to the old gun turret was dismantled and stacked to be re-erected at a later date. Three sections of piping were laid in the canal bed to take water flow from the east down the drain culvert at the bridge with one being laid for the water from the west.

This was then covered with a large green sheet so as to keep the stone infill separate from the clay canal lining. Some 220 tonnes of stone was then brought in, 20 tonnes at a time, being spread by the O&K excavator and by hand. Each layer was compacted using a pedestrian vibrating roller driven, for the most part, by Dan Lavis who just happened to be on holiday that week. The causeway was fitted with scaffold hand rails and 8m<sup>3</sup> of concrete was laid across the top to form a road-way.

At the end of February Ken Bailey finished his full-time employment with the Trust and was replaced by Roger Sanders whose first task was to divert traffic across the temporary road and

*Ken Bailey (in white) & Dan Lavis fill in the canal!*

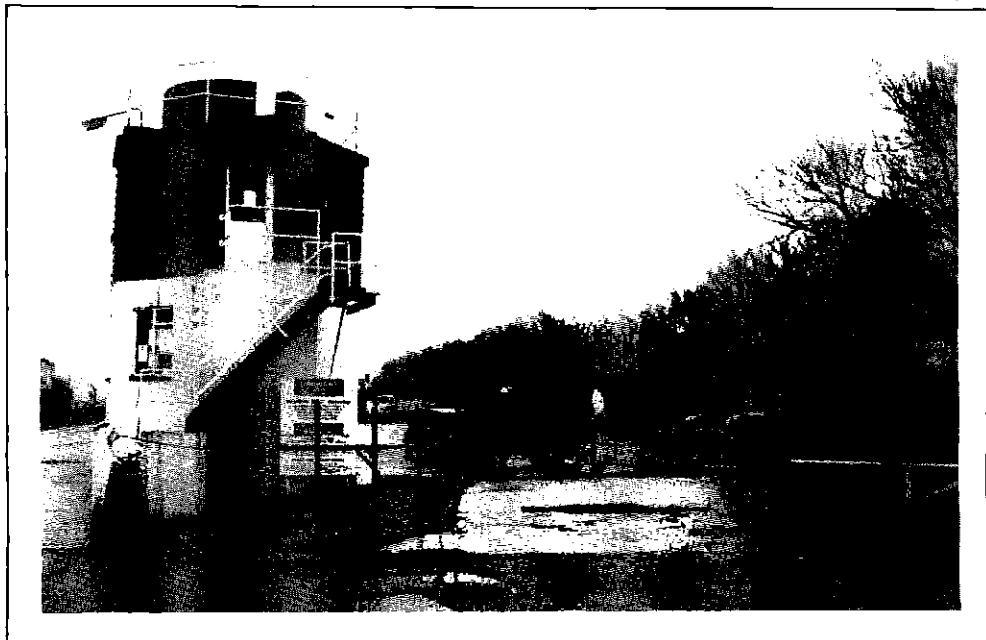


remove the old bridge. Once the timber deck was lifted away the extent of rot in the steelwork below was revealed. With the exception of five recently added steel beams, the original bridge was only a pile of rust.

The concreted back-swing proved to be solid concrete and required an excavator-mounted breaker to smash it. When the old bridge pivot was exposed it still rotated! The pivot and its timber framework has been removed from site back to the compound at Eastington - it is hoped to eventually put it back together as an exhibit by one of the locks in the area. Having excavated the area for the new foundations and laid a concrete skim a contractor was brought in to set up the rather complex reinforcing steel. Once shuttered the areas were then concreted in.

The new bridge arrived on site as two main sections and a collection of small components on the day before Good Friday when the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) camp were due to start work. This was publicised as a "Technical Camp for the installation of the world's first plastic lift-bridge". Perhaps April 1st wasn't the best date to start such a project and things didn't improve when the rubber load bearing pads on the underside of the bridge structure were found to have fallen off in transit and the largest can of Evo-Stik was bought from a local DIY store to fix them back on! Things were soon under control with David Mack from the manufacturers Maunsells (also wearing his WRG hat) issuing instructions for the construction of a tent-like structure over the two major halves of the bridge in preparation for bonding them together in a warm dry atmosphere. A wise move as it turned out, for the weather was foul even to the extent of hailstones at one stage. Cross-deck sections were laid in place and handrails bolted into place.

*The finished temporary roadway (old bridge on far left)*



Surplus volunteers were dispatched to dig a small winding hole just before Hoffmans Dam ready for the flotilla of boats expected on 16th July for the official opening ceremony, while others worked at Dock Lock bringing the bricklaying for the headwall on another stage and others helped by pouring concrete for the top cill at Pike Lock.

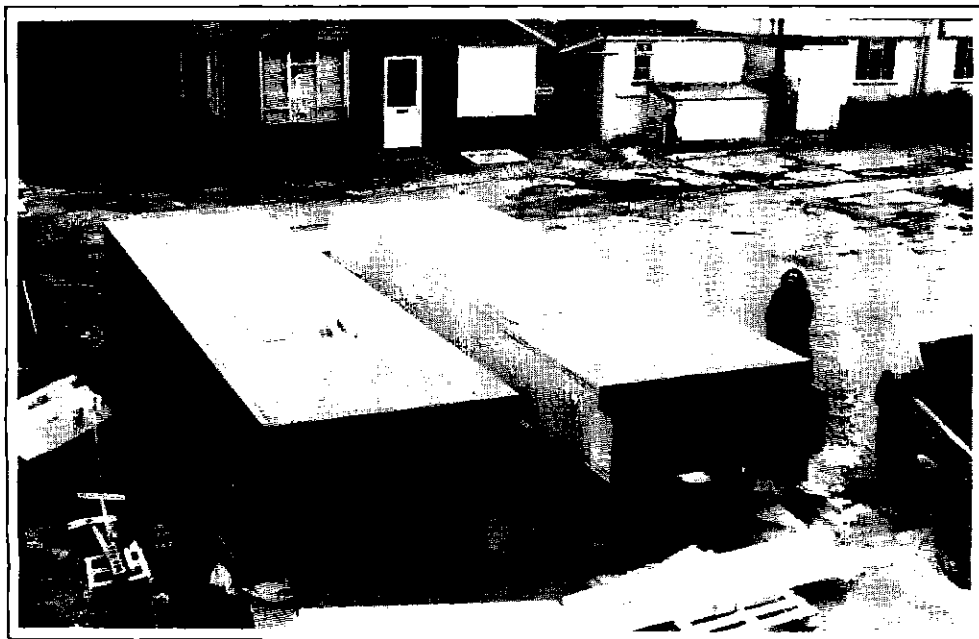
A varied selection of evening entertainments was organised for the WRG volunteers; from a tunnel trip at Coates ("Super - Can we do it again?) and a slide show at the Bisley House Inn ("the beer ran out...") to a visit to the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester (Thanks to museum curator Tony Conder for letting them in. It must have been difficult convincing the public that the museum was officially closed while allowing what looked like a dozen new age travellers to enter free of charge!).

WRG numbers dwindled as the Easter holiday passed and students had to return to college for tutorials, but the remaining five were unanimous in their enthusiasm on the last day despite not being able to see the bridge lifted into place. Hopefully they will be able to return in July to see the grand re-opening gala.

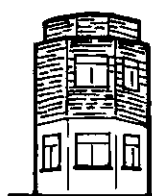
After WRG's departure John Ferris continued with a number of other tasks such as painting the edges and pinning the handrails. The steel pivot sections and edge strips arrived on site at the end of April and were fitted prior the bridge being lifted in on 3rd May. The installation attracted massive media attention including national and local TV and press coverage.

At the time of writing the hydraulics, barriers and control system have to be installed and the road surface has to be fitted. Once the bridge has been tested and put to use, the temporary roadway will have to be removed and the site cleared ready for the official opening on 16th July.

*Who's got the glue? - the bridge arrived in two halves*



*Cotswold Canals Trust* invite you to a *Fun Show*  
by the Canal



**BONDS  
MILL  
BRIDGE**

**Saturday**  
**16th July 1994**  
10.00 - 5.00

World's 1st "plastic" road bridge!

# Opening \* Celebrations

- \* Food & Drink - Bar
- \* Craft Stalls
- \* Chalford Silver Band
- \* Morris Dancers
- \* Boat Trips
- \* Kids Rides
- \* Bouncy Castle
- \* Guided Walks
- \* Displays

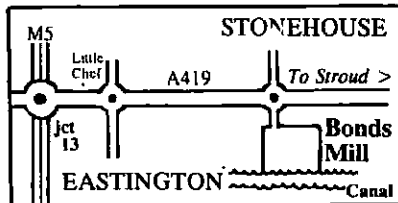
*Gathering of Boats on the Stroudwater Navigation*

\* *Bridge Re-opening Ceremony (2.00pm)* \*

**Free Entrance!**  
**Free Parking!**

Trade, Craft & General Enquiries  
ring 0453 755535

signposted from A419





# Progress at Boxwell Spring Lock & South Cerney

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*Report by NEIL RITCHIE*

## **19/20 Feb DIGDEEP BITM/NWPG (Bit In The Middle & Newbury Work Party Group)**

A highly successful weekend with two visiting groups combining to give the highest ever numbers seen working on Boxwell Spring Lock in one weekend with over 25 counted on Saturday. The spillweir is now taking shape nicely with just coping stones to be fitted along the lip and one end to be tied in to the offside wall. The wing wall on the nearside is ready to receive most of its coping stones and construction continues at its meeting with the top gate recess thanks to some skillful use of the Trust's new petrol engined stone cutter near the foundation, providing a good level to build from. For the first time in many weeks, the trestles at the lower end were accessible owing to the receding water levels and we were able to take advantage of the fine weather to extend the offside wing wall to its original extent and put the final course of blocks in place on the lower level. The mixer performed well over the weekend until Sunday lunchtime when the drive chain jumped off its sprockets (again) and was diagnosed as been "too long". Having been shortened it was decided that the chain was now "too short" but it was also "too late" since the original linkage had been cut! The remaining hours were spent mixing concrete by hand.

## **26 Feb - 5 Mar WATERWAYS RECOVERY GROUP (WRG) WINTER CAMP**

This camp was publicised as a scrub-bashing exercise with a proposed worksite stretching from Northmoor Lane, South Cerney, through to the Visitor Centre on the Spine Road, the intention being to dramatically thin out the blackthorn saplings and to fell some of the bigger trees growing in the bed of the canal, but the weather was so mild and the enthusiasm for work already in hand at Boxwell Spring so great that the first day and a half were spent laying coping stones and continuing some of the block laying in the vicinity of the top gate recess.

A new drive chain for the mixer had been purchased to replace the worn one, only to find that the top sprocket needed a spring washer and a new key. This minor delay precipitated a return to the original plan of scrub bashing and, even with the mixer back in full working order, it was going to take a lot of persuading to get the pyro-maniacs away from the bonfires.

For those of you who remember the line of willows growing across the line of the canal 150 yards below Boxwell you will find the scene much changed with all the willows severely pollarded and the area opened up. A tiny spillweir has been exposed in the region, being no more than a three foot wide arch passing under the towpath into a semi-circular pond in the field where surplus water apparently dispersed. Is this the smallest spillweir on the Thames & Severn? A few yards further along is another discovery in the form of a large steel hoop attached to what was obviously a hinged frame over an eighteen inch wide hole; presumably the means of draining this pound of water, but we have yet to establish where this culvert ran.

By the middle of the week good progress had been made and a party of three had been dispatched to the Spine Road for a day to clear the trees obstructing the view of the canal from the road and also to clear the side pond at Wilmoreway Lower Lock, greatly improving the appearance of that area.

The worksite was classified an "accident-free" zone until Judith blotted our copy book by tripping over the first aid box, scalding herself with hot soup in the process. Although it was a late arrangement, the accommodation at the Phoenix Centre in Cirencester turned out to be a great success with the entire top floor given over to sleeping quarters and the large kitchen and lounge on the ground floor providing excellent catering and drinking facilities.

A sincere thank you to the Trust members who helped to make this camp such a success.

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### **16/17 April KESCRG (Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group)**

KESCRG seem to get all the problems. The fan belt for their van had broken soon after arriving on Friday evening and a whole Saturday morning was spent looking for what all the dealers said was a nonexistent part. A simple fan belt for a Fiat van but it wasn't listed on any of the official parts lists. An alternative was eventually tracked down and duly fitted. The mixer gave up the ghost (again); something to do with a worn bearing and a drive sprocket. All the hire shops close by noon on Saturdays. I know because I visited them all! We were able to borrow a small mixer from a supporter of the Trust in Gloucester and just managed to get it on site in time for the last mix of concrete on Saturday. Another problem came to light after work started in the morning - no wheelbarrows. It seems that they had been "borrowed" for the Easter Camp at Bonds Mill and never returned. Another two hours wasted for a driver and vehicle, but a salutary lesson for all to learn; put things back where they came from, or at least tell the person responsible what has been taken and where it can be found.

The two near-side gate recesses progressed a little more and the coping stones that were laid in February and March have now been grouted in and look very good. A satisfying weekend and more work well done.

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## **IWA Restoration Committee Awards 1993**

The Inland Waterways Association make annual awards to Local Authorities and individuals concerned with canal restoration schemes within their areas.

The Trust is therefore delighted to announce that Stroud District Council was highly commended for the Robert Aickman Memorial Shield for their major contribution to restoration of the Stroudwater Navigation.

Neville Nelder, Transportation and Environment Manager, Gloucestershire County Council, was highly commended for the Waterway Companion Award, awarded for the Local Authority, Public Corporation or private company officer who has contributed significantly to waterways restoration.

The Trust congratulates Stroud District Council and Neville Nelder on their awards.

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## **Bonds Mill - From the Archives**

We are indebted to Peckhams of Stroud who have given permission to reprint the photograph in the centre pages overleaf. It is obviously taken at Bonds Mill, most likely during the Second World War. Surprisingly, the canal looks pretty similar today, with the line of trees leading away to the distant St Cyr's church (far left).

The turret is being used for its intended function - to defend the old industrial estate. You can make out its camouflage colour scheme quite clearly. Note also the gun.

That leaves a few questions. When was it taken? Why? - What was the occasion and who are the crowd? Are they the employees from Bonds Mill? If you can answer any of these questions please contact David Jowett (see front of TROW).



# The Royal Canal of Ireland

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*Introduced by MIKE REYNOLDS*

The Royal Canal, which closed in 1961, is now the most important restoration scheme in the Republic of Ireland. The Cotswold Canals Trust Council has accepted a suggestion that the Trust should "twin" with the Royal Canal Amenity Group (RCAG) which is the voluntary body supporting the restoration.

The Royal Canal is a broad waterway and was the second canal built to link Dublin to the River Shannon Navigation, the first being the Grand Canal. The canal was started in Spring 1790 with the help of a government subsidy. Construction of a deep rock cutting and a massive embankment and aqueduct over the Ryewater river valley depleted funds and the company was forced continually to raise further finance. Debt amounted to almost £1 million by 1810, yet the canal still only had 60 miles of the final 90 completed. After parliamentary investigations the company was dissolved and the canal handed over to the Directors General of Inland Navigation to be finished at public expense. It was finally opened to the Shannon in 1817. The canal was then vested in the New Royal Canal Company in which the shareholders of the old company received shares to the extent of £40 per £100 of their previous holdings. A government Board of Control exercised close supervision of management.

A branch to Longford was opened in 1830 and the canal enjoyed a measure of prosperity. Passenger boats had been run from the time of the old company and many thousands of Irish people travelled to Dublin by canal boat to emigrate to England or America. In 1845 the whole concern was sold to the Midland Great Western Railway Co. for £298,000, about one fifth the cost of building. The railway was built alongside the canal, as far as Mullingar and traffic was diverted to it.

The railways and canals of the Republic were nationalised under the C.I.E of 1944 and in 1951 the last barge owner ceased carrying on the Royal Canal. Official closure was in 1961 and in 1964 a dam was built just west of the main feeder at Mullingar and the western half of the canal was dewatered. This section has since suffered various obstructions in the form of culverted road crossings, infilled farm accesses and low level pipes.

In 1974, at a time when the IWA of Ireland was fighting closure and infilling of the Grand Canal in Dublin, Dr Ian Bath formed the RCAG. Volunteer working parties were established in Dublin and other centres. Gradually local authority and government help was obtained to augment fund raising efforts. The canal bed and towpath were cleared of overgrowth, two draglines were purchased for dredging and eventually a lock gate factory was set up employing people on government unemployment schemes.

An important step in 1986 was the transfer of the Irish canals from CIE to the Office of Public Works (OPW), the Irish equivalent of English Heritage. OPW has speeded up work on the canal and RCAG now sees itself more as a group supporting the OPW by raising public support for and awareness of the canal than conducting physical restoration work itself. The canal is open for navigation from Dublin to Mullingar and later this year a swing railway bridge in Dublin will be reinstated and boats will once again be able to enter the canal from the River Liffey and the Grand Canal. Now that the Mullingar by-pass is completed, it is hoped that a new bridge will be built there to eliminate a lowered road crossing. To the west, dredging and towpath clearance continue. The first canal pound off the Shannon via the river Camlin at Richmond Harbour was rewatered in 1972. The dry dock there has been restored and the harbour is now a busy boating centre. It is realistic to expect that the whole canal will be reopened to navigation by the year 2000.

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Over the early May Bank Holiday weekend during an Irish Canal tour, accompanied by such luminaries as Ron Oakley, David Stevenson, Sonia Rolt and Tim Wilkinson, I was able to see various sites on the Royal Canal. Our guide to the Royal was Peter Clarke, author of a new book on the canal. We were also able to spend an evening with Peter & Eddie Slane, Chairman of RGAC.

I hope that twinning of the Cotswold Canals Trust with the Royal Canal Amenity Group will enable members to visit each others' canals while having the benefit of local knowledge from members of the host society. The parallels and contrasts of the two restoration schemes should enable us to learn from each other in addition to enjoying the company of like-minded enthusiasts

## **Essex Comes to the Golden Valley**

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*Report by NEIL RITCHIE*

Essex Waterway Recovery Group evolved from Chelmsford IWA, a team that had been heavily involved with restoration work in their own area and within easy travelling distance. This was to be a new venture - a weekend away on a site that many had never visited (or even heard of!). They were asked to complete the last of the clearance work scheduled for this season at two of the locks below Daneway in the Golden Valley and duly arrived fully kitted out with all the gear needed which included a huge two handed crosscut saw and chain saw. This last item was a great asset, for in less than one day they had completed an entire weekends work - much to my consternation. What were they going to do now?

Sickeridge Upper & Middle Locks now have clean coping stones and the undergrowth and large trees have been cut back for a distance of six feet from the edges and the wood neatly stacked to provide habitation for the wildlife - a stipulation of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust who manage this area as a nature reserve. The remaining stumps will be winched out or treated in situ by Colin Stride.

So what did they do on the second day? They returned to the towpath between Boxwell Spring and Humpback Locks where the one week camp had just been working and carried on where the previous team had left off.

This group has a reputation for being something of a Gentleman's Club and this was brought home to me on the Saturday evening when I was invited to dine with them at South Cerney Village Hall. Surprise number one was the expectation that we should all dress together (or don a tie in this instance). The second surprise was the catering team who gave us the full table service and napkins. After three full courses it was jocularly suggested that the only thing missing were After Eights. No sooner said than done! Congratulations Essex WRG - you set standards for the rest of us to follow.

## **Thank You!**

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A mystery group of cyclists, who didn't want to reveal their identities, paused by the Eastington slipway one Sunday in May. They admired the trip-boat refurbishment being carried out by Judi Comber and team, and proceeded to make a £20 donation to Trust funds from their "beer kitty". Thanks!

# A G M

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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE 19TH ANNUAL MEETING OF  
THE STROUDWATER THAMES & SEVERN CANAL TRUST LIMITED  
(COTSWOLD CANALS TRUST)

to be held at  
STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL CHAMBER, EBLEY MILL, STROUD  
AT 11.00PM ON SATURDAY 16 JULY 1994.

### AGENDA

1. To receive the Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting.
2. To receive the Report of the Trust Council.
3. To receive the Accounts and Auditors Report.
4. To agree the remuneration of the Auditors.
5. To elect Members of the Trust Council.
6. Any Other Business.

### NOTES

Notices of intending proposals for Membership of the Trust Council must be lodged with the Secretary, in writing, not less than 14 clear days before the AGM together with the written agreement of the person proposed. Proposals must be sent to the Honorary Secretary, Cotswold Canals Trust, 89 Hill Corner Road, Chippenham, Wilts., SN15 1DT.

The following Members of the Trust Council retire by rotation and have offered themselves for election: Chris Jones, Robin Halliday, Ken Burgin.

**Voting Rights.** All classes of membership, except for Youth Members, are entitled to one vote each member, whether collective or individual. Youth members have no voting rights since such members cannot be held responsible in law.

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, a legally correct proxy form, appointing a proxy is obtainable from the Honorary Secretary not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.

Copies of the accounts will be available at the AGM. Members who require full copies of the accounts, to be distributed at the start of the meeting, should apply, in writing, not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting. Requests should be sent to the Cotswold Canals Trust, The Flat Office, CDC Depot, Chesterton Lane, Cirencester, Glos., GL7 1YE.

### **Resolution requiring special notice:**

Nicholas Melchior attained the age of 80 years on 26th December 1993 and, in accordance with Clause 40 of the Articles of Association, shall vacate his office as Council Member at the Annual General Meeting. A resolution to approve his continuance as a Council Member will be placed before the Trust members at the meeting

## Thanks to our Donors

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

Stroud District Council  
Courage Ltd.  
Civic Trust  
Guiting Trust  
Thrupp Canal Cruising Club  
Hamamelis Trust  
Bruce Ball Charitable Trust  
Department of the Environment  
R. M. Douglas Trust  
Stroud Town Council  
Countryside Commission  
Saul Junction Boat Owners Club  
Midland Bank plc  
North Wiltshire District Council  
Bonds Mill Estate Ltd.  
Cristie Electronics Ltd.

## Thames End Branch

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*Report by ROBIN HALLIDAY*

Despite the cold start to the spring, the Thames End Branch has experienced a successful trip-boat season with more passengers carried this year than last. We are beginning to understand the pattern followed by the tunnel springs. After the first initial surge, there is a falling off of levels before the water rises again and maintains a steady depth for two or three months. Despite the heavy rainfall, levels caused consternation at the end of January when they dropped as low as 1'6" but since then they have remained high.

Probably the high point to date was the visit on 10th April by a party from Gloucester Society for Industrial Archaeology who brought at least 50 of their members. They were blessed with fine weather and due to fine co-ordination on their part and a good turn out by Trust members, a veritable shuttle system was operated and the takings for the day were a record. The Trust was also instructed in the strengths and properties of lime mortar which binds the untold number of tunnel bricks together. We have also had visits from two motor cycle clubs, the Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group, several working party groups (Scouts and WRG) and a short visit from Radio 4! However, we still welcome more Trust crew members - please ring me on 0672 513400 to be introduced to the skills of electric outboard boating.

Looking forward, we have already taken bookings for 1995. Boat, engines and batteries are no longer in their prime but thanks to the efforts of members they still provide sterling service.

At the end of August (27/28/29) the Branch is planning a work party at Coates to remove the earth dam and to work on the towpath. It is hoped to book accommodation locally.

Evening work parties have already started for this summer. Meet on Wednesday evenings at Boxwell Spring Lock (end of Bow Wow Lane) at 5.30pm. Please ring George Smith on 0793 518470 for details.

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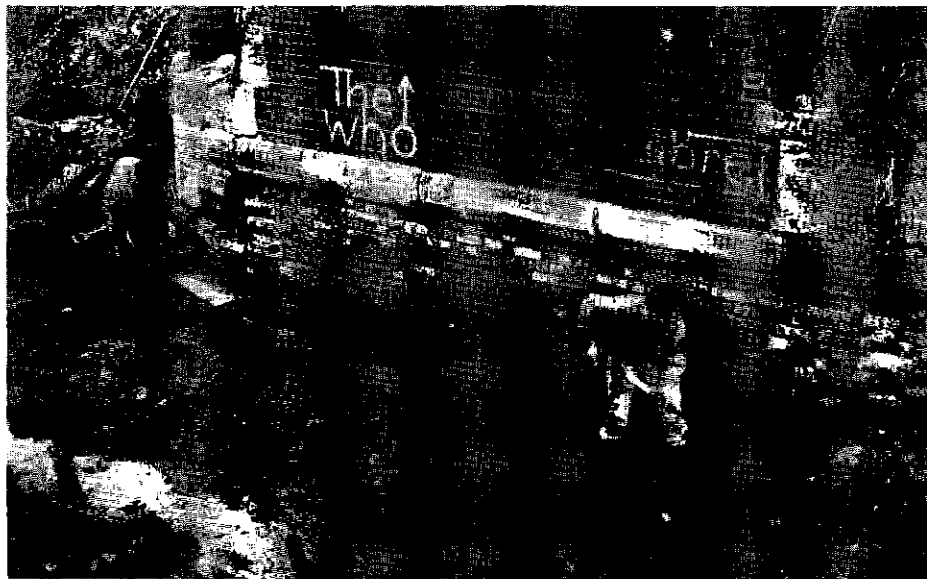
## It's Not All Bonds Mill!

*Report on other projects by KEN BAILEY*

**Newtown Roving Bridge:** Whilst the canal from Bonds Mill through to Newtown has been drained a group of volunteers have been carrying out important repairs below working water-line on Roving Bridge. The task was first thought to be relatively minor in that a few courses of bricks on the north abutment appeared to need replacement, a small section repointing and a couple of bricks on the south abutment would require removing and replacing. The job actually required has been a different story.

The North abutment eventually has had between eight and fifteen courses removed and some 400 new bricks tied back in over its entire length. The lower section of the wall having its joints cleaned out and repointed. The South abutment was originally thought to be a very minor task. On investigation it was found that a previous repair was in itself very solid but not tied to any of the brickwork behind. Also none of the brickwork below silt level (about two feet above bed) had been touched. Most of that was just packed together with mud and could be removed without the aid of any tools, just bare hands. The result was that the entire wall has been taken down in sections, to its foundations, a new concrete bed has been put in and then the wall has been rebuilt and securely tied to the brickwork behind. Some twenty courses of bricks have had to be replaced using over 1200 bricks. The task was made more difficult by the fact that the silt and clay (left from the sewer pipe installation) had to be excavated initially and the resulting hole continually filled with water. This had to be emptied out with a bucket and scoop at the start of each day and then every hour or so during the day. The resulting brickwork may not be the neatest in appearance but it is securely tied in behind and stands on a solid base. Work on the brickwork above water-line should be carried out during the summer.

*Early stages under Newtown Bridge*





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**Tree Clearance:** A number of volunteers have carried out a considerable amount of tree felling in the Ebley area. Bill Evill felled some eighty small trees which had been growing along the centre line of the infilled section. The felled trunks were then logged up and removed from site with the smaller debris being burnt on the spot and the stumps have been treated. This has once again opened up the line and the casual visitor can clearly see where the canal will run hopefully in the not too distant future.

Bill has also carried out some tree clearance work on the short section of canal above "Air Plants" at Thrupp. Other work on this site has been carried out by local residents.

**Plant & Equipment:** At Eastington the Massey 50B tractor has had its brakes reassembled and the wiring has been replaced making it fully road-worthy.

The old petrol mixer which has been used by the EA team at Dock Lock has now expired. Its engine finally gave up and is thought to be too old to be worth repairing. If anybody has a reasonable mixer that they no longer require please let us know.

The black trailer which has been a much used item has also come to the end of its life. It was built from the remains of a sales caravan some five years ago and has been used virtually every weekend since.

**Dock Lock:** The EA team have at last more or less completed their work in the chamber and Bob Gregory and a few others have now started to clear the brick debris from the bottom of the chamber. Once cleared the ramp into the lock can be removed and the section of canal below the lock reflooded. It is hoped to fit the remaining towpath coping stones shortly and then level the lock side. Work can then start on draining the section from Dock Lock to Pike Lock followed by fairly extensive bank repairs on the offside.

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## Go Gaily to the Galley!

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- or we will, provided you take this final opportunity to send in your favourite recipe to Maureen in the Trust Office in Cirencester. There is just a bit of space left to slip in a few of your or your family's culinary gems for the Trust's cookery book.

Thank you once more to all those who have already sent in recipes, and especially to Simon Orton who has been so enthusiastic and sent in many ideas for this book

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## Thank You!

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The Western Branch holds its meetings at the Imperial Hotel in Stroud on the first Monday of each month. Members of the Branch would like to extend their thanks to Ralph and Sue Robinson and the staff for their hospitality and allowing us to meet in a private section of the lounge bar.

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# Cotswold Canals Challenge

The Fourth Annual Cotswold Canals Challenge took place on Sunday 13 March and, despite the gusty weather, around fifty competitors entered. Once again the Trust is grateful to all who helped, especially the ADJ Canoe Club who handle the race itself and to Stroud & Swindon Building Society who provided a new "doubles" cup". David Ashley, Chairman of the Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation, presented the prizes to the deserving winners. The fifth annual event will take place next year in March or April.

## RESULTS

### THE CHALLENGE

1	Graham Cottle	Bradford on Avon CC
2	Adrian Dark	Bradford on Avon CC
3	Matthew Wiltshire	Oxford University

### SENIORS

1	Peter Russell	Stroud Valley CC
2	Terry Heffernan	Stroud Valley CC
3	Shelly Wright	ADJ Canoe Club

### JUNIORS:

1	David Holdsworth	Bradford on Avon CC
2	Andrew Smith	Four Shires Venture Scouts
3	James Vann	Four Shires Venture Scouts

### UNDER 14s

1	Marc Benson	Croesyceiling CC
2	Oliver Vann	Moreton in Marsh Scouts
3	Robert Kerslake	ADJ Canoe Club

### DOUBLES

1	Stan Missen & Chris Noakes	- Bradford on Avon CC
2	Lisa Cottle & Adam Kear	- Bradford on Avon CC
3	Hilary Corcoran & John White	- ADJ Canoe Club

CC = Canoe Club

# MAGNETIC SIGNS



100 x 40mm.....

for your fridge door?

**£1.80 each**

500 x 200mm..... for your car doors **£12.50 each**

## WATERWAY MAINTENANCE

300 x 30mm .....for bonnet & boot **£2.50 each**

Available from **CHRIS JONES**

The Courts, 27 Walton Road, Clevedon, Avon, B621 6AE

Cheques payable to **COTSWOLD CANALS TRUST** please

# Bonds Mill Bridge - Opening Celebrations!

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Make a date in your diary for Saturday 16th July, the day chosen to celebrate the re-opening of Bonds Mill Bridge, the world's first plastic road bridge.

An all-day Show (10 - 5) will take place alongside the bridge featuring Morris Dancers, Chalford Silver Band, a Bouncy Castle and other rides for the kids, craft and sales stalls. Food & Drink will be available all day. Entrance is free as is plentiful car parking.

There will be a Gathering of Trail-Boats on the canal. They will be arriving from Friday, launching at the slipway and joining the flotilla of boats which will take part in the re-opening ceremony, scheduled for 2.00pm. Some of the boats already booked in are the largest that can be trailed, notably those in the Wilderness range.

The days festivities will include the traditional "Splash!" when smaller boats will be welcome to join in the fun and perhaps travel further afield than the larger boats.

Trust Members, friends and boaters will be welcome to join in the evening celebrations at the licensed bar. In addition, Trust Members will be able to attend a brief AGM at Ebley Mill at 11.00am.

If you have a trail boat - *why not bring it?*

If you have a smaller boat - *join in the "Splash!"*

If you feel you can help on the day or before - *please come forward!*

If you can't do any of these - *Please join us for the Show and the evening, and don't forget the AGM!*

Please direct any queries or offers of help to David Jowett 0453 755535

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## Membership Matters

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### *Membership Secretary DES PINNOCK*

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

Mr G.E. Stanton, Weston-Super-Mare, Avon	Mr T.O. Verdon, Cirencester, Glos
Mr & Mrs C.C. Waggett, Stroud, Glos	Mr & Mrs D.J. Waterer, Stroud, Glos
Mr N.A.J. Spencer, London,	Mr & Mrs J. Caragher, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr D.L. Gouit, Apperley, Gloucester	Mr & Mrs W. Nield, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr D.V.S. Cottrell, Tewkesbury, Glos	Mr H.R. Smith, Swindon, Wilts
Mr & Mrs B. Gale, Solihull, West Midlands	Ms E.K. Harries, Stroud, Glos
Ms H. Clemerson, Cheltenham, Glos	Ms S. Copson, Elkstone, Cheltenham, Glos
Mr F.T.W. Pinkerton, Cheltenham, Glos	Cmdr R.D. Poulton RFD RANR, Queensland
Mr B.J. Arkell, Fairford, Glos	Ms S.C. Cain, Stroud, Glos
Mr M Munday, 59427 Unna, Germany	Mr & Mrs R.E. Burgess, Dursley, Glos
Mr L.H. Smith, Crewe, Cheshire	Mr S.J. Grant, Fordingbridge, Hants
Mrs K. Webb, Stroud, Glos	Mr & Mrs G.P. Gates, Cheltenham, Glos
Ms A. Steel, Cirencester, Glos	Miss E.F. Morse, Stonehouse, Glos
Mr A.R. Willis, Cirencester, Glos	Mr & Mrs A.T.J. Padwick, Winchester, Hants
Mr N. Hicks, Nova Scotia, CANADA	

**Membership now 1123 and still rising!**

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# Sales Order Form

	PRICE £	QTY
BETWEEN TWO RIVERS (TV Series Walk Guide)	4.50	
Canal Walks: South (Quinlan) incl. T&S	9.95	
*WS ATKINS REPORT (Saul to Stonehouse)	9.95	
*HALCROW REPORT (Lechlade to Water Park)	14.95	
*Around the Cotswold Canals (10 circular walks)	2.50	
*Churches Along the Cotswold Canals	2.50	
Discovering Canals in England (P.L. Smith)	2.50	
The Flower of Gloster (E Temple Thurston)	8.95	
The Stroudwater Canal - Vol 1 (M Handford)	3.50	
S T&S Canals in Old Photographs (Cuss & Gardiner)	7.95	
S T&S Canals Towpath Guide (Handford & Viner)	7.50	
Thames & Severn Canal (Viner)	4.25	
Working Life on Severn & Canal (Conway-Jones)	7.95	
*The Trow (all issues available)	0.50	
*Trow Binder (holds 12 issues - suits all A5 mags)	3.50	
*Map (plan and section of Cotswold Canals)	2.95	
<b>BIG DIG VIDEO</b>	<b>9.95</b>	
*Sweater - Bottle Green (embroidered logo)	S M L XL 14.95	
*Sweatshirt - Grey with embroidered logo	S M L XL 13.95	
*Sweatshirt - Green with printed logo	S M L XL 11.50	
Polo-Sweat - Navy (embroidered buckby can)	S M L XL 15.95	
*Tennis/Sport Shirt - (embroidered logo)	S M L XL 11.95	
*T-Shirt -Green (printed logo) (Child £4.50) S M L XL	5.50	
*Sew on Badge - with embroidered logo	2.45	
*Tie - with embroidered logo	5.95	
*Golfing Umbrella - Green & White (printed logos)	15.95	
*Tea Towel - Cotswolds (includes Cotswold Canals)	2.50	
*Carrier Bag Holder	2.95	
*Car Sticker OR Self Adhesive Sticker	0.50	
*Pen	0.30	
*Pencil with eraser	0.25	
*Thimble - Cotswold Canals	1.95	
*Standard Mug	3.35	
*Half Pint Tankard	3.95	
*Pint Tankard	5.95	
*Milk Jug	6.95	
*Goblet	4.95	
*Coaster (specify Green or Blue)	0.65	
* denotes special Cotswold Canals Trust item		
Please tick selections sizes and quantities. Send to CHRIS JONES, THE COURTS, 27 WALTON ROAD CLEVEDON AVON BS21 6AE (Tel 0275 875714)	TOTAL	
Cheques payable to Cotswold Canals Trust please	P & P	0.65
NAME & ADDRESS	TOTAL ORDER VALUE	
PHONE	Sum 94	

# Important Dates for Your Diary!

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W/E	4/5	Jun	<i>Lister Petter Rally at North Nibley (Sales stand (SS))</i>
Mon	6	Jun	Western Branch Meeting
Mon	13	Jun	Restoration Committee Meeting
Tue	14	Jun	Thames End Branch Meeting
Sat	25	Jun	<i>Annual Barbecue (Ring 0453 545042)</i>
Mon	4	Jul	Western Branch Meeting
W/E	9/10	Jul	DigDeep working at Boxwell Spring Lock (Lon WRG)
Tue	12	Jul	Thames End Branch Meeting
Sat	16	Jul	Annual General Meeting - (see notice p. 14)
Sat	16	Jul	<i>Bonds Mill Opening Celebrations (see p.7 &amp; 19)</i>
Sat	16	Jul	<i>Bonds Mill Evening Celebrations for Members, Friends &amp; Boaters</i>
Mon	18	Jul	Restoration Committee Meeting
W/E	23/24	Jul	DigDeep working at Boxwell Spring Lock (NWPG)
Wk	23/30	Jul	WRG Summer Camp at Boxwell Spring Lock
Mon	1	Aug	Western Branch Meeting
Tue	9	Aug	Thames End Branch Meeting
Mon	15	Aug	Restoration Committee Meeting
W/E	27/29	Aug	<i>IWA National Waterways Festival at Waltham Abbey (SS)</i>
Sun	4	Sep	<i>Canamble 3</i>
Mon	5	Sep	Western Branch Meeting
Sat	10	Sep	<i>Gloucester/Sharpness Boat Trip (see p.3)</i>
Mon	12	Sep	Restoration Committee Meeting
Tue	13	Sep	Thames End Branch Meeting
Sun	25	Sep	<i>Canamble 4</i>

Western Branch volunteers work most weekends and welcome new faces. Thames End Branch volunteers usually work the last weekend of each month. In summer both branches run evening work parties. 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 Trust Office in Cirencester.

Restoration Committee meet at 7.30pm, also at the Cirencester Office

## COVER PHOTOS:

**FRONT COVER:** *The moment of truth! The world's 1st "plastic" road bridge is lifted into place at Bonds Mill on 3rd May. There was much coverage in the media including TV and National Press.*

**BACK COVER:** *Two photos show the bridge in place but still awaiting final fitting of hydraulics, barriers and control system.*

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