

*Stroudwater, Thames & Severn
Canal Trust Limited*

THE TROW

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

Number 53

Summer 1986



COPY DATE FOR THE
NEXT TROW
10th AUGUST

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

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Editorial

Regular contributors to the TROW may be shocked by the copy date for the next issue. Let me assure you that we do not intend to publish monthly in future! Our aim is merely to revert to the long established quarterly dates which are as follows: -

Autumn issue	10th August
Winter issue	10th November
Spring issue	10th February
Summer issue	10th May

Publication date will then follow as soon as possible. Please could I ask contributors for their co-operation in meeting the deadlines so that we may keep to regular quarterly publication.

This issue is packed with news of the Trust's activities, and I wonder if there is an area where YOU would like to become involved? Why not give it a try? You have nothing to lose and lots to gain!

DAVID JOWETT

FRONT COVER: Raft Race '86. The Clothiers Arms on their special design flip-over raft! Pictured here shortly before their retirement.

Secretary's Report

Our readers will be pleased to know that at long last Stroud District Council have granted Outline Planning permission for our proposed development at Wallbridge; the culmination of three years' intensive studies. We now have three years in which to submit full detailed proposals. The land acquisition negotiations are also in hand. However, no work can commence until a start is made on the East/West ByPass, which is currently held up awaiting the result of a compulsory purchase order appeal. The Trust's position is that it fully supports the urgent need for an East/West ByPass to circumvent the current traffic hiatus in Stroud.

The Trust Council has been seriously considering the overall picture of the canals, and has reached the conclusion that the vital component to obtaining credibility is to relink Stroud with the inland waterway network. Initial studies indicate that work should be concentrated between Pike Bridge at Eastington and the tail of Hope Mill Lock at Thrupp, and that this work should be targeted to take place over the next five years. This would give a $7\frac{1}{2}$ mile length of waterway for vessels of up to 15'6" wide x 70'0" long, with a 6'0" draught and 7'0" minimum headroom. It is anticipated that the majority of the canal works would be carried out by a Manpower Services Commission Community Programme giving employment to approximately 100 persons per year. Naturally, there will be certain works such as the Ocean Railway Bridge and the Bath Road Crossing outside the scope of the Community Programme workers, but initial studies indicate that such a programme is both feasible and can be carried out on this time base.

During this period engineering studies in conjunction with our consultants, Freeman Fox Braine & Partners can be carried out on the section from the junction with the Sharpness Canal to Pike Lock, in order that this work could immediately follow on.

This does not mean that the Trust has abandoned its overall objective to relink the Severn and the Thames. It is intended that this initial project will be fully publicised, and should answer our critics in the Stroud area who have recently been putting pen to paper and expressing their views in the local press.

Our congratulations to Tony (Heave-Ho) Jones and his Western Branch for building and running their first trip boat, The Bell of Wallbridge, on the Thames & Severn at Wallbridge in Stroud each Sunday. A second vessel sponsored by the Clothiers Arms is rapidly nearing completion, and should be in operation by the time you receive this TROW. At long last the Trust is making a return on its investment in the canals. Well done, Western Branch. If anyone is interested in operating these vessels and their successors at various points on the canals, they should contact Tony Jones on Stroud 2915. Prior instruction will be given.

Our thanks to John Edwards and his twenty five Archway pupils who have spent three days working on the canal at Eastington. This is the third successive year that John has brought his navvies to aid us. Also our old friends, Francis Turner and his group, have been continuing their regular visits aiding the restoration of Blunder Lock. Our sincere thanks to Francis and Company.

DAVID BOAKES

Thames End Branch

The Branch has had a busy quarter, in spite of some thinly attended meetings. After the long winter the towpath has been reclaimed and is now clear again from Latton to the Spine Road and for some distance to the north. As well as the scheduled weekends, several extra workparties have taken place, including a welcome visit by our friends from Bristol University.

During their visit it was possible to remove from the lock the mud and debris which have accumulated during rebuilding, and retrieve the odd tool and scaffold clamp which had managed to be overcome by gravity since the last pump-out.

Pumping revealed a healthy fish population, so the last foot or so of water was left in the lock to give them a sporting chance and, hopefully, endear us to the conservationists.

One of our current anxieties is the large amount of stuff stored in the garage of our Chairman, Robin Twining, as he is liable to be leaving the district. Our Plant Site is making progress but will not be available for some time, so we would like to hear from anyone within reasonable reach of Cerney Wick who could let us have the use of some dry, weather-proof storage space.

On the subject of appeals, we put in issue 51 of The TROW a sample of a rather home-spun publicity card which had been devised in an attempt to make our activities more widely known. It provoked a letter from a Mr. A.K. Robinson of Dewsbury in Yorkshire, in which if my recollection is correct, the adjective "pathetic" occurred, and an offer to do a better one free. As the author of the offending item I could only agree with Mr. Robinson, so his offer was gladly accepted.

The result is that the Branch now has a generous stock of absolutely super publicity material, in three different forms to suit different situations, which we are busily spreading around the area. We keep telling people that canal restoring is not just wallowing about in smelly mud. It gives us great pleasure to acknowledge the contribution of Mr. Robinson, a Printer and Stationer of Dewsbury (Phone Dewsbury 462865!).

DERYCK WATKINSON

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Western Branch

The main Committee event since our last report has been the first A.G.M. of the Western Branch. The attendance was rather disappointing even though the bulk of the evening consisted of an excellent slide show. Is there anybody out there? Seriously, we would like to see more new faces at the monthly meetings and our monthly 'Noggin & Natter' Social Evenings, the latter particularly.

June's 'Noggin & Natter' was blessed with dry weather and was held as a barbecue by Wallbridge Lock with the "Bell of Wallbridge" doing duty as a trip boat. The event was a great success, both socially and financially.

It is very pleasing to report that the Work Punt Fund Appeal in the last issue of the TROW did not fall on stony ground. As a result of a most generous donation by Mr. Magalotti, Landlord of the "Clothiers Arms", a second work punt is nearly completed and should be afloat by the time you read this. We are still looking for cash and/or materials for another two!

Work on the Wallbridge/Bowbridge pound progresses and with the help of a Work Experience team of sixth formers from Marling School, should soon be complete. We will then have a channel of water from Bowbridge to Wallbridge after which work on this pound will be of a maintenance nature.

As a final note, come and have a look at Bob's garden by Wallbridge Lock, (and whilst there why not have a boat trip?). With stone recovered from the canal and some help from Branch workers, a flower bed has been landscaped by the head of the lock, extending the existing garden the full length of the lock. With the flowers now becoming established it is a transformation and a perfect example of how little it takes to enhance an unpromising canal side site

TONY JONES

Blunder Lock

Work on the head of the lock has continued to progress. The curved cill wall at the head of the lock chamber is now complete and capped with bullnose bricks; the wall will act as a back shuttering when the top cill is cast.

The existing brickwork on both wing walls was removed until a firm base was reached. Only fifty per cent of the nearside wall had to be removed whereas the far side proved to be a different case. When about half of the facing brickwork had been removed from that wall we found that the backing brickwork was extremely loose, although the facing brickwork was reasonably sound. One possible cause for the backing brickwork to be in this state was the effect of shock waves when the lock was bombed during the second world war. As a



ABOVE: Andy and Clint at work on the far side wing wall at Blunder Lock.

BELOW: The finished result - this time on the nearside.



result of what we found it was necessary to take the wall down to the chamber base.

Both walls have now been rebuilt to their required height thanks to the assistance of Andy, a bricklaying friend of the Trust. Some 2000 Engineering bricks were used and the new wall was tied into the existing work and the cavity between the two was backfilled with mass concrete.

During the weekend 5/6 July, we were again visited by Francis and his band of volunteers. With their help the existing coping stones were relaid and backfilled with concrete on both wing walls. In many cases this involved the coping stones being cut and dressed in order that they fitted. The work was speeded up by the use of a new A.E.G. angle grinder purchased by the Western Branch. This has replaced the Wolf which has bit the dust after many years of service. Stop plank grooves were also cut above the gate recess and damaged brickwork between the dam and quoin on the far side removed ready for rebricking.

We were also visited by Keith and Penny who travelled down from London for the weekend and did an excellent job of grass cutting between Pike Lock and Newtown Lock.

Some of the foregoing may sound rather technical or complicated to some of our Trust members but is really quite simple if you know the lock. We are always pleased to see new faces and to explain our work. Why not come down on one of our working dates so that we can show you what we are doing? Of course we are also pleased to welcome new volunteers - the facilities at Blunder Lock are perhaps better than you would expect and I am sure you would enjoy just a few hours spent working on the lock.

'DUG' BLAKE

Alternative Workparty

This new Workparty is a natural evolution from the Wallbridge to Bowbridge parties which were worked on the weekends when there was no work on Blunder Lock. Instead of working the same stretch of canal for months on end this newly titled Workparty will travel to different parts of the two canals.

The work will involve maintenance of stretches already cleared, including the Wallbridge pound, and work on new areas which have been neglected. The Workparty can also be used at Blunder Lock as and when the need arises.

It is hoped that more members may join the Workparty as one day it could be working in YOUR area. To find out where the next Workparty is working, please contact TONY JONES (Stroud 2915), or CLINT TAYLOR (Stonehouse 3485).

Western Branch – One Year On

When I was elected Chairman of the newly formed Western Branch last year, although a long standing member of the Trust, I had little knowledge of the background work necessary for the running of a voluntary organisation such as ours. When the Trust Secretary handed me a copy of the "Guidelines for Trust Restructure", I read the section concerning Local Groups with considerable misgivings. However, after twelve months I feel the Western Branch has performed its task as laid out in the Guidelines and justified its existence.

In promoting and publicising the work of the Trust, anyone who reads our local papers, particularly the 'Stroud News & Journal', will have noted the increasing and favourable coverage of Trust activities along with a healthy correspondence. Some letters are, admittedly critical, but that is not a bad thing, as long as we can correct and counter our critics - I feel we've given as good as we've got!

Public Relations cannot be underrated, from simply chatting to the casual towpath walker who stops to watch a working party to events such as the annual walk and the Canal Carnival and Raft Race. No chance should be missed to 'push' the canal. I believe the Committee has been pretty successful in this field, but P.R. is a job for everyone who cares for the canal. The Trust must be seen to be working and we must all ensure our activities are well publicised.

In the fundraising field the Branch has more than paid its way. Sources of income have ranged from placing collecting bottles in friendly pubs, collecting boxes at worksites, raffles at our social evenings and our own Branch sales stand at local events, to the Canal Carnival and Raft Race which this year raised £230. While large scale charity may be at present diverted abroad, our pennies mount up and no potential source of income should be ignored. We welcome any legal suggestions on fundraising, but at the same time ask that each of you consider the possibility of doing a little fundraising to supplement our efforts. The monies we have raised have all gone to purchasing tools, materials and plant for the restoration work.

The success of our efforts on the Wallbridge/Bowbridge pound can be measured by the increasing use of the pound by canoeists. With our weed cutter, the flat, work punt and skiff at work, weekends can get quite crowded, but in spite of all the human activity, the bird-life - particularly the ducks and moorhens - have continued to raise their families and remain unconcerned. We have also been involved in the continuing work at Blunder Lock which deserves far more publicity, being a major engineering venture for voluntary labour. Critics of the slow progress of the restoration work may care to consider that the attendance of voluntary adult labour on any evening or weekend at a worksite rarely exceeds half a dozen. More volunteers are urgently required if the work we have already done is to be maintained and further progress achieved.

While the increase in membership of the Trust as a result of Branch activities is difficult to assess, the fact remains that the rate

of recruitment is showing an encouraging upswing, particularly in local members. We welcome this trend and hope that the new members can become involved in Branch activities, both working and social.

In conclusion I should like to thank the Western Branch Committee who have worked so well for the Trust. Their support has made my job a pleasure, both in meetings and in the various activities we have initiated. We are of course only representatives of the members and wish to act on your views and wishes to improve on what we have achieved so far.

TONY JONES



Held over from the last TROW Tony Jones is pictured with landlady of The Bell, Nancy Green, shortly before she performed the launching ceremony of our boat "The Bell of Wallbridge".

The Trust Needs.....

With our ever increasing workload, we are looking for helpers to assist.

BRUCE HALL needs help with PUBLICITY and GRAPHICS.

RICHARD ATTWOOD, our new Sales Manager, needs SALES personnel throughout the county, and also SALEABLE ITEMS.

DAVID JOWETT needs photographs and articles for the TROW.

MARGARET BOAKES (my wife) needs someone to embroider simple motifs on to Trust sweaters.

DOUG BLAKE and NICHOLAS MELCHIOR are always happy to encourage volunteers to assist with the "physical work" of digging out the canals.

DAVID JOWETT would welcome the donation of a modern electric or electronic typewriter for preparation of the TROW. Does your workplace have a spare one?

URGENTLY REQUIRED: At least two redundant sectional garages - we will dismantle and remove from site. Why? The panels are needed for experiments in bank retention.

Please become involved. Do YOUR bit. It can be great fun. If you are not able to assist in any of these ways, you may have redundant bricks, timber, etc., that we will collect to utilise on our projects. The 'phones are open until 10 o'clock at night. If the first one doesn't answer or is engaged, just work your way through the list in the TROW.

DAVID BOAKES

Don't Forget
our new

BOAT TRIPS

Depart from Wallbridge Lock on Sundays from 1p.m.
Only 50p Adults 30p Children. Profits to Trust.
PLEASE SUPPORT OUR VENTURE. SEE YOU THERE.

Boats on the Cut

If you go down to the canal today, you're sure of a big surprise! The reason? Because we now have boats on our canal, which at last is being used for its intended purpose once more.

During the early summer months, a trip boat has become an established success, operating on the pound above Wallbridge Lock in Stroud. With a little local publicity we have managed to draw locals down on to the Thames & Severn Canal for an enjoyable return cruise towards Bowbridge.

"The Bell of Wallbridge" is better known to our members as the work punt which was launched in the Spring. It was only after the successful Raft Race, when short trips were made, that the idea of offering a regular trip service was discussed. In a very short space of time the use of an outboard motor had been arranged, crews had been organised and publicity material circulated.

Our first week nearly didn't happen, but thanks to Pete Gamble of the Victoria Inn, the loan of his outboard and petrol tank saved the day. Business was steady compared to the following Sundays when, much to our surprise, demand exceeded supply. However this should be a short term problem as a second of Tony Jones' boats will have been added to the fleet by the time you receive this TROW.

The trips will operate through the summer until the end of September at least, probably the last time the stretch of canal will be used before the obliteration that will come with the construction of the East/West bypass. Any members or friends wishing to get in on the act would be most welcome to help on the boat or to man the departure point at Wallbridge where a small sales stand is also kept. We can promise you a pleasant afternoon, - the present crew thoroughly enjoy themselves.

The spark of the trip boat idea came after the Raft Race which was itself a success. Eleven teams took to the water with the emphasis clearly on fun. The large crowd was treated to a morning of hilarious entertainment as the raft crews paddled their way (or swam!) up and down the Wallbridge pound. The ladies of The Fleece were notable for their method of propulsion; they actually pedalled their way up the course on a creation of barrels, pushbike frames and steamboat type paddles. A team from The Clothiers Arms seemed to swim most of the course before retiring to The British Oak at Bowbridge.

A presentation was made to the winners. First were a team from Benningtons of Cheltenham with a time of only seventeen minutes twenty nine seconds to complete the return trip which went most of the way to Bowbridge. Second were N.L. Hycalog whilst the ladies of The Fleece in Lightpill took third place.

DAVID JOWETT



ABOVE: The teams line up at the start of this year's Raft Race
BELOW: The ladies from The Fleece on their most unusual raft.



Tales from the Cut – The Watchdog

Many of our fellow boatmen owned dogs, not generally considered solely as pets, but expected to earn their keep in the hard working community. Mongrels of diverse origins were used as guard dogs, the only 'breed' favoured was the lurcher for poaching activities, being a silent, swift and cunning hunter. Our own small mongrel terrier, Toby, totally unoffensive ashore, when on the boats was a vociferous deterrent to any unauthorised boarder. However, the most frightful guard dog I ever encountered was a lurcher.

I was boating single with 'Comet' at the time and had tied up one autumn evening at Braunston Junction. After squaring up round the boat, checking the engine and so on, I'd had supper and settled down for a quiet evening. The boat scrubbing on her moorings indicated something coming and I stuck my head out as a loaded pair slid by. Shining paintwork and brass glinted in the light from the cabin doorway. 'Hello Andy, where you for?', I asked. 'That you Tony? - Croxley, stopping at the bottom lock tonight, be up at the 'Nelson' later, come and have a pint'.

Having been working down Gloucester way all summer a chance to catch up on the news over a pint with Andy was welcome and about half an hour later, having changed into decent clothes, I banked up the stove, put the lock and chain on the slide and set off up the towpath. It was a moonless night and I had no torch, but the path was easy walking and hopefully this late in the year no pleasure boaters' lines or mooring spikes were there to trip over. Andy's boats were tied abreast at the bottom lock and a light showing at a porthole, reckoning he was still aboard I went to knock on the butty cabin side. As I raised my hand to knock, something grasped my wrist!

All I could see beside me was a black shape and a pair of glowing eyes, but whatever had me by the wrist had teeth, and the grip was tightening. I stood petrified, another attempt to knock and the teeth clasped firmer. After what seemed an age, with dry throat I managed to croak 'Andy?'. No reply. 'Andy!'. The only reply was a menacing rumble from the thing beside me. If he'd already gone to the pub I could be here till closing time, I thought. 'ANDY!'. The slide banged back and Andy's wife looked out. 'Who's there? Oh, it's you Tony, what you shouting for? - Oh Lord, I see you've met Jasper. Alright Jasper, Friend!'

In the light from the doorway I saw my agressor was a huge black lurcher which, my credentials being favourably established, now gambolled round me so exuberantly as to near knock me over. Jo apologised and explained it was her brother's dog.

'Hang on, I've just finished tidying myself up, I'll walk up with you. I reckon our Ted owes you a drink. Your face! You were white as a sheet!'.
'It's not funny Jo, the size of that thing, it put the fear of death into me. Best not say anything to Ted. I feel a right idiot!'

By the time we reached the 'Nelson' I was in a better humour and we were both laughing as we stepped through the door.

'Hello, hello!' said Andy, 'what have you two been up to?'
 'Nothing at all' said Jo with a wicked grin, 'but Tony owes me a
 port and lemon!'

Hurriedly before rebald speculation could get out of hand, I
 called for a round and decided to tell the story. My discomfiture
 would have been broadcast on the cut telegraph soon enough
 anyway, so I had nothing to lose!

TONY JONES

Membership Matters

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:-

Association Phoenix Angling Club	Stonehouse, Glos.
Mr. R. C. Carpenter	Meysey Hampton, Cirencester.
Mr. E. J. Davis	Dursley, Glos.
Mrs. M. Fulton	London SW12.
Mr. S. A. C. Hornsby	Garden Suburb, Oldham.
Mr. N. F. Lusmore	Upper Framilode, Glos.
Miss P. M. Line	Putney, London.
Mr. & Mrs. P. Maxwell	Highworth, Wiltshire.
Mr. K. R. Nichols	Putney, London.
Mr. G. J. Pegler & Family	Brimscombe, Glos.
Mr. P. M. Walmsley	France Lynch, Glos.
Mr. D. F. Wardlesworth	London SE12.
Mrs. S. Whistler	Swindon, Wiltshire.

How to pay your subscription and save yourself the postage!
 If you have an account with 'National Girobank' you can pay your
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 in one of the envelopes they supply. Please DO NOT enclose your
 renewal reminder, you may if you need include any additional
 information, i.e. change of address etc. ON THE BACK of your
 transfer slip. These transfer slips are forwarded to us when the
 transfer has taken place, so rest assured that we know you have paid.

Mary Ritchie

I was sad to learn of the untimely death in early June of Miss
 Ritchie who lived in Ruscombe in Stroud.

Mary Ritchie was one of a small band of helpers who by addressing
 a pile of envelopes each quarter ensure that the TROW is
 distributed to Landowners, Councillors, and other parties the Trust
 is anxious should be kept in touch with its work.

DAVID JORDAN

Canals

Canals, once England's lifeline of trade,
 Oft now obscured or lost with each decade,
 Meandering ribbons or arrow like veins,
 The Industrial heartlands or countryside plains.

Canals, blocked, damaged, broken, decayed,
 Not a true picture, former glories portrayed,
 Filled up with rubbish, some courses unknown,
 Waterless reed beds, towpaths overgrown.

Canals, crumbled bridges, gateless locks,
 Deserted wharfsides, stagnant docks,
 Years long left, where nobody cares,
 Remaining untouched, sad state of affairs.

Canals, once important, routage for man,
 Originally built slave like, an industrial plan,
 Heritage forming, from creative brains,
 Immediate abandoned, enter lorries and trains.

Canals now have saviours for liberation,
 Societies formed for their restoration,
 Events thus organised for monies they need,
 The more they obtain, the more can be freed.

DAVID BAILEY

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THE CLOTHIERS ARMS AT STROUD

OPPOSITE: Two shots near Bowbridge. Above shows the canal as it was over a year ago whilst the one below shows the result of having a cleared canal.



Latton Basin

In the early days of the building of the Wilts and Berks Canal from Semington on the Kennet & Avon to the Thames at Abingdon, James Black, the Thames & Severn engineer proposed a link between his canal at Inglesham and the Wilts and Berks near Shrivenham to bypass the notoriously bad upper Thames. At that time the Wilts and Berks, fearing that Thames & Severn coal injected into their line would prejudice their expected Somerset coal trade, were not interested. However, faced in 1810 with the prospect of supplies of that coal being insufficient for the demand of both the Kennet & Avon and the Wilts & Berks, the latter's engineer, William Whitworth, son of Robert who had earlier laid out the line of the Thames & Severn summit, proposed a link between Wootton Bassett on the Wilts & Berks and Ewen on that summit, this link to be known as 'The Severn Junction Canal'. The object, as far as the Wilts & Berks was concerned, was to provide a supply of Forest or Staffordshire coal to supplement Somerset supplies.

The two companies met at Abingdon on July 14th 1810 and reached a compromise; Black still wished to link Inglesham to Shrivenham. This would be the shortest line and allow the Thames & Severn to use the whole length of their line but would thus increase tolls on coal for the Wilts & Berks and introduce it some way from the centre of their line. Instead the Severn Junction was planned from Swindon to below Latton Lock near Cricklade. Black proposed a regulating lock with a 1 ft fall at the Thames & Severn junction to protect their water supplies.

Whitworth subsequently had second thoughts; he was concerned about the danger of floods damaging both canals. The agreed site meant that at the crossing of the Thames the Severn Junction level would be only 2 ft above the river surface. His proposal, readily accepted, was to alter the site to Redfurlong Bridge, three quarters of a mile above Latton Lock, thus raising the Severn Junction level by 9½ feet. The flood danger was also minimised by carrying the Severn Junction over arches allowing flood water to pass underneath. The regulating lock, however, was not included. His estimate for the 12 mile link was £60,000; the fall of 59 ft from Swindon to Latton would be divided into 11 locks to conserve water which would have to be provided by the Wilts & Berks.

Further negotiations between the two companies settled the terms of the agreement to build the canal. Forest coal was to be given preference and entitled discounts to reduce the toll taken by the Thames & Severn to 12½p per ton, boats returning empty having delivered such coal to be exempted from all tolls. No such concession would apply to Somerset coal entering the Thames & Severn. The name was changed to 'The North Wilts Canal'; the Wilts & Berks was to subscribe five twelfths of the cost, the public four, and the Thames & Severn three of which the company itself would provide £5,000, the whole of their sinking fund. The grossly overestimated expected profit was £2,000 per annum. William Whitworth was appointed engineer.

The outline of the 192 ft by 60 ft Latton Basin was marked out on Lord Eliot's land by Disney, the Thames & Severn Chairman, and Whitworth on February 24th 1814. Friction soon developed over who

should pay for the aqueduct to cross the River Churn which flowed between the basin and the Thames & Severn. The legal view was that as the Thames & Severn had first occupied the ground the North Wilts could not be held responsible, that canal now ending at the point of its junction with the basin. Both the aqueduct and the basin were built under the supervision of John Deyner, the Thames & Severn manager; the conventional stone aqueduct cost £311.

The building of the North Wilts which included a 100 yd tunnel at Cricklade and three small aqueducts, was fraught with money problems and finally, after borrowing £15,000 from the Exchequer Loan Commissioners, was opened without fuss, on April 2nd 1819. The expected trade never materialised and in the following year the North Wilts and Wilts & Berks were amalgamated. As the Wilts & Berks had provided the major share of the money and all the water, this seemed the only way to safeguard their capital. Soon twice as much Somerset coal was passing up the North Wilts as Forest coal came down; the latter never being popular for household use along the Wilts & Berks line.

The lack of a regulating lock at Latton was a constant source of friction; the three mile long North Wilts pound separated from the Thames & Severn by only stop gates could involve considerable losses to one canal or the other. Finally in 1826, following dire threats from the Thames & Severn, William Dunsford, the Wilts & Berks manager, built a lock on the flood aqueduct, cheekily borrowing the Thames & Severn stop planks to enable him to do so. Letters, sometimes acrimonious, frequently passed between Dunsford and Deyner. The former could never understand why the Thames & Severn did not abandon the Thames except for local traffic - "The time is gone for your large barges; even on the Kennet & Avon they are getting into the thirty ton size. It therefore appears to me that your only hopes of a merchandise trade must be an amicable understanding with us, dismissing all jealousy of our interference with your seven miles between Latton and Inglesham and in fact regarding your canal as a through merchandise trade as terminating at our junction."

In 1829 a small fast boat service was instituted between Gloucester and London using the Gloucester & Berkeley, Stroudwater, Thames & Severn and the Wilts & Berks from Latton to Abingdon despite arguments over tolls between the Thames & Severn and Wilts & Berks. Traffic rose to a maximum of 5,162 tons carried in 372 boats in 1839 but trade was soon ruined by railway competition. The average time from London to Bristol was six days and the return five.

Latton Basin remains unfilled but the Churn aqueduct and most of the former North Wilts line is no more.

A fuller description of the Wilts & Berks Canal and the relationship between it and the Thames & Severn will be found in the second edition of my 'The Wilts & Berks Canal' to be published later this year by Oakwood Press.

JACK DALBY

Sales

The following items are available by post from our Sales Manager,
Richard Attwood, 7 Hidcote Close, Eastcombe, Stroud, Glos. GL6 7EF.

Please add 40p per order to cover postage and packing for any
value under £10. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable
to "S. T & S C T Ltd".

Trust T-Shirts: White or Yellow. Sizes: Small, Medium, Large
and Extra Large £4.50

Trust Sweat Shirts: Light Grey or Light Blue. Sizes: Small,
Medium, Large, Extra Large £7.50

PLEASE NOTE: These garments tend to be undersized: i.e. please
order a size larger than normal.

Trust Notelets (Pack of 8 Views of Stroudwater Canal and
Thames & Severn Canal, with envelopes) £0.60

A Canal Walk Through Stroud £1.25

Trust Tea Towels (show several views of the canals) £1.85

Trust Key fobs £0.50

Trust Comb in case £0.30

Trust Keyring with penknife or scissors or nail clippers £0.75

Trust Bookmarks £0.30

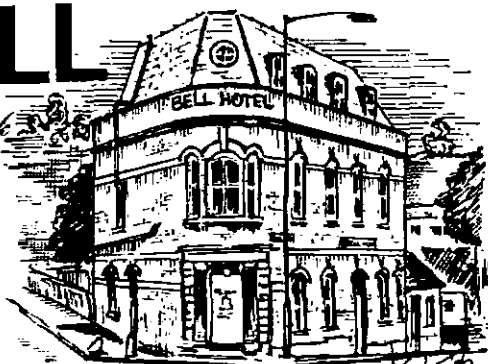
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S.T.R.C.U.L

*Headquarters of
S.T. & S.C.T. Ltd.*

(Western Branch)



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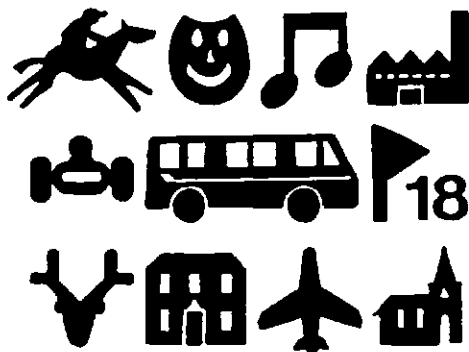
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Dates for your Diary

AUGUST 1986	Sun	3rd	Alternative Work party
	Mon	4th	Western Branch Meeting
	Sun	10th	Blunder Lock Work party
	Tues	12th	Thames End Meeting
	Sun	17th	Alternative Work party
	Thurs	21st	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
	Sun	24th	Blunder Lock Work party
	Sat	30th	Thames End Work party
	Sun	31st	Thames End Work party
	Sun	31st	Alternative Work party
SEPTEMBER 1986	Mon	1st	Western Branch Meeting
	Sun	7th	Blunder Lock Work party
	Tues	9th	Thames End Meeting
	Sun	14th	Alternative Work party
	Thurs	18th	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
	Sun	21st	Blunder Lock Work party
	Sat	27th	Thames End Work party
	Sun	28th	Thames End Work party
Sun	28th	Alternative Work party	
OCTOBER 1986	Sun	5th	Blunder Lock Work party
	Mon	6th	Western Branch Meeting
	Sun	12th	Alternative Work party
	Tues	14th	Thames End Meeting
	Thurs	16th	Western Branch Noggin & Natter
	Sun	19th	Blunder Lock Work party
	Sat	25th	Thames End Work party
	Sun	26th	Thames End Work party
Sun	26th	Alternative Work party	

WESTERN BRANCH MEETINGS are held on the first Monday of each month from 7.00pm in the lounge bar of The Bell at Wallbridge in Stroud. Any members and friends are welcome.

WESTERN BRANCH 'NOGGIN & NATTER' SOCIAL EVENINGS also at The Bell on the third Thursday of each month from 7.30pm. A free buffet is provided and once again all members and friends are welcome. Past Social Evenings have included Slide Shows, Boat Trips and Barbecues.

THAMES END BRANCH MEETINGS are held on the second Tuesday of each month from 8.00pm at The Red Lion at Cricklade. Any members and friends are most welcome - come and find out what we are doing.

BLUNDER LOCK WORK PARTIES are held every other Sunday as shown. Also Tuesday evenings, some Saturdays and Bank Holidays. Cooking facilities, toilets and a heated workshop are provided as is tea at regular intervals during the day. Please ring for details.

WESTERN BRANCH ALTERNATIVE WORK PARTY is a roving group which operates at various points on the canals as needed. Ring for details.

THAMES END WORK PARTY is centered on Cerney Wick Lock. New workers are always welcome on the last weekend of every month. Once again please ring for details.

BACK COVER: A pleasant picture from Cerney Wick earlier this year.

DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

ARCHIVIST	DAVID J VINER B.A. A.M.A. 8 Tower St., Cirencester, Gos., GL7 1EF
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ASSISTANT MEMBERSHIP	GEOFF GARRAWAY. 29 Mill Farm Drive, Paganhill, Stroud, Gos., GL5 4JZ
PRESS & PUBLICITY	BRUCE HALL. Springers, Watledge, Nailsworth, Gos., (Nailsworth 2384)
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THAMES END BRANCH

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SECRETARY	DERYCK WATKINSON. 12 Hampton Grove, Meysey Hampton, Cirencester, Gos., GL7 5JN (Poulton 661)
TREASURER	NICHOLAS MELCHIOR. 28 Grove Hill, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts., SN6 7JN (Swindon 762510)

WESTERN BRANCH

CHAIRMAN	TONY JONES. 7 Stringers Close, Rodborough, Stroud, Gos., GL5 3RB (Stroud 2915)
VICE-CHAIRMAN	DOUG BLAKE. 19 Stratton Road, Gloucester, (Gloucester 415843)
SECRETARY	CLINT TAYLOR. 43 Regent Street, Stonehouse, Gos., GL10 2AA (Stonehouse 3485)
TREASURER	ALEC WHITEHOUSE. 37 Cotswold Green, Stonehouse, Gos., GL10 2ET (Stonehouse 2284)

WORKING PARTIES

CO-ORDINATOR	CLINT TAYLOR. 43 Regent Street, Stonehouse, Gos., GL10 2AA (Stonehouse 3485)
EASTINGTON (BLUNDER LOCK)	DOUG BLAKE. 19 Stratton Road, Gloucester, (Gloucester 415843)
ALTERNATIVE WORKPARTY	TONY JONES. 7 Stringers Close, Rodborough, Stroud, Gos., GL5 3RB (Stroud 2915)
THAMES END	NICHOLAS MELCHIOR. 28 Grove Hill, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts., SN6 7JN (Swindon 762510)

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