

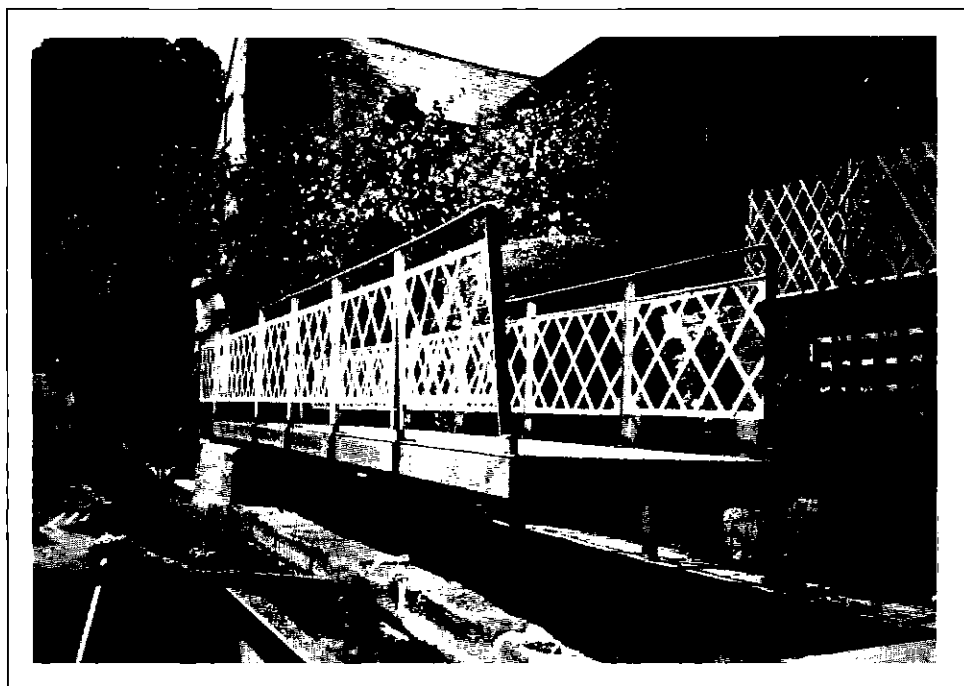
*Stroudwater, Thames & Severn  
Canal Trust Limited*

# THE TROW

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

Number 58

Autumn 1987



30p

---

**COPY DATES**

SPRING 10th February  
 SUMMER 10th May  
 AUTUMN 10th August  
 WINTER 10th November

---

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

---

# Contents

Secretary's Report	2
M.S.C. Work Report	4
Thames End Branch Report	6
Western Branch Report	7
End of the Stroudwater Canal	11
Letters to the Editor	16
Membership Matters	18
Sales	19
Dates for your Diary	20

---

This issue sees the demise of the  
 Editorial which will be replaced  
 by a more interesting "Pictorial".

---

Published by the Stroudwater, Thames & Severn Canal Trust  
 Ltd. a Registered Charity at 1 Riveredge, Framilode, Glos.

Printed by Earle & Ludlow, 77 Victoria Road, Cirencester.

## Pictorial



# Secretary's Report

## A Comment

Often we wonder what progress has been made in restoration of our canals over the years. Those of us in constant contact with the work frequently bemoan the lack of progress. Recently when I was sorting through my slides to put together a new talk, I was startled by the scenes of desolation of the canals only a few years ago, and how easily we forget the improvements that have been wrought by the volunteers and our MSC CP Schemes.

Examples were:- a derelict Coates Portal glimpsed through trees growing out of a dry infilled Kings Reach; Cerney Wick Lock, a narrow glint of water in the midst of brambles and overgrowth with the pointed roof of the roundhouse peeping through the trees; Blunder and Newtown Locks, a mass of brambles and fallen trees with an impenetrable towpath; Jon Willis cutting out fallen willows which completely blocked the canal at Upper Mills; a dragline in the bottom of Bowbridge Pound; Ryeford Basin, completely overgrown with reed and rubbish filled, with a trickle of water running through it.

Look at these same places today - Coates Portal and Kings Reach a major tourist attraction; Cerney Wick Lock awaiting gates; Blunder and Newtown Lock chambers nearing completion, with the adjacent Trust compound; trip boats operating at Bowbridge and Ryeford.

This is what the Trust has achieved, through sweat, toil and sometimes blood, and frequently against all odds.

Let us be proud of our achievements to date and look to the future from this foundation. With support and help we can reopen the canals despite what our critics say.

Our answer is the public, who every day gain pleasure from visiting the canal, probably more than attend our subsidised Leisure Centres - if we could charge for our facilities most of our financial problems would be over and our restoration and improvements would forge ahead. The restoration of our canals is not an emotive subject like meningitis, third world famine or animal cruelty, but we are also working to improve the quality of life, not for a select group, but for the benefit of the whole community.

My message is simple. We also need help - practical, financial and political, to ensure our work continues and our canals can then remain as a permanent benefit to provide work, pleasure and an improved human and wildlife habitat for the area.

## Trip Boats

Do you want to enjoy yourself, entertain your friends and aid our

work? Come for a ride on a canal trip boat on a Sunday afternoon between 1.30 and 5.30 p.m. from Bowbridge (between Stroud and Thrupp) or Ryeford Bridge (near Stonehouse). See for yourself and show your friends what has and what can be done. Sales stands for souvenirs - all proceeds to the Trust Funds. The boats were prepared and are manned by volunteers! Vacancies for helpers.

### Annual General Meeting and Walk Awards

Make a note in your diary that the 1987 AGM and Walk Awards will be held, in Stroud, on the afternoon of 21st November 1987. It is hoped that at least one set of trip boats will be operating for members that day. Full details in the next Trow.

### Membership

After several years devoted service David Jordan has resigned as Membership Secretary due to his other increasing interests. Council Member Richard Attwood, 7 Hidcote Close, Eastcombe, Stroud, (Tel: Brimscombe 885057) has taken on the position. Richard is looking at reorganising this vital aspect of the Trust, encouraging increasing membership participation and contact, so you may soon be hearing from him personally!!

Finally, my thanks to all those in and out of the Trust, who have listened, advised and helped me during my recent ill health.

DAVID H BOAKES

# THE BELL

*Wallbridge Upper Lock*  
*STROUD*

*Headquarters of*  
*S-T & S.C.T. Ltd.*  
*(Western Branch)*



*The Pub on the Cut*

# M.S.C. Work Report

## BRICK & BANK GANGS

The Brick Gang although now fewer in number, has now completed the two upper lock chamber walls at Newtown Lock. Most of their recent efforts have been concentrated on the stripping of the far main chamber wall in preparation for rebuilding. This took many weeks of hard slog with a jackhammer, lumpammers, bolsters and crow-bars. The crane has also been kept busy removing the old rubble.

We were pleased with the arrival of a bricklaying instructor, Andrew Stephens, who joined us in early August. Andy's knowledge and skill have been of great benefit to our team. In fact, by the time this report is published, we hope that the main off-side wall will be complete and that the stripping of the near-side wall will be well under way. The casual observer might well get the impression that work seems to be going somewhat slowly at Newtown. We have had to conquer unforeseen problems such as pump failure, but have been lucky in that there have been no break-ins or thefts from our site huts since the last report.

Unfortunately, one of our best labourers, John Gardiner, was involved in an extremely unpleasant accident whilst working alongside Newtown Lock Chamber. He was busy stacking bricks when, after dropping one, he stepped backwards and fell head first to the brick-lined floor of the chamber. As he had suffered a broken arm and knee-cap in the fall, he was lifted from the chamber by crane and transported to the office by van, there to be met by an ambulance. He then faced an uncomfortable stay of two weeks in hospital where he endured two operations on his arm. We all hope that John will recover quickly.

The Bank Gang has also been industrious during the past few months. The stretch of canal between Coates Tunnel Portal and the Roundhouse has been cleared of vegetation and rubbish. Their hard work has made this stretch one of the most delightful spots on the canal. Progress has been so good that the Bank Gang will soon be relocated.

## RYEFORD DREDGING GANG

Further to the last Trow report, we have been hindered by successive hydraulic failures on the dredger. However, even as this report is written, the problems are finally being ironed out.

Out thanks must go to Malcolm Critchley for his help; not least in providing a temporary tipping site adjacent to the old coal pen at Ryeford. Whilst this is only a stop-gap due to the size restrictions of the site, it has still enabled us to carry on whilst another tipping site, possibly on another stretch of the canal, is found by David Boakes. Gravel has been laid on Malcolm's access road to prevent damage to the tarmac surface.

Two photos by Jim Donisthorpe. On the left the weedcutter works between Newtown Lock and Bonds Mill Bridge. On the right the main lock chamber walls are stripped down at Newtown Lock.

---




---

Mention must be given to the "event" of moving the crane from the old tipping site (opposite Gordons Garage) to Ryeford Bridge. Complete with police escort the crane rumbled down the road, piloted by Ken Palmer. The looks on the faces of passers-by were most amusing as the crane rumbled slowly, if not quite in a straight line, towards the new tipping site. Some people, I'm sure, thought it was an old steam engine on its way to a vintage rally! We trust the hold up in traffic (at least a mile!) didn't frustrate motorists too much.

Final clearance of the old tipping site has been completed, much to the relief of the owners. Four years of accumulation of scrap metal from previous schemes was weighed in resulting in a modest contribution to Trust Funds.

Reed cutting in between the inevitable breakdowns (which Jim Palmer, our engineer, endeavours to keep to a minimum) has proceeded well. Newtown Lock to Bonds Mill Bridge is now completely clear. Cutting is now being concentrated from Bonds Mill Bridge to the Hoffmans catchment dam where reed growth is particularly dense.

NIGEL YOUNG (SENIOR SUPERVISOR) J.R. DONISTHORPE (DREDGER SUPERVISOR)

# Thames End Branch

The Branch is still having a slightly odd time, in that we are getting along nicely with actually restoring things, but our Branch meetings are reduced to below-quorum chats between officers and the most zealous. It is sadly obvious that we are still making rather a poor show in the publicity business, along with which goes the raising of funds to buy the materials needed by workers.

We would therefore like to hear from our less conspicuous supporters who might feel able, now and again, to organise film shows, skittles evenings or other activities with the object of spreading the message. This is that we have, wending its way across the area, most of the remains of an historic waterway which could become a valued community resource, even though it is no longer a commercial undertaking. Among other things, it would be useful to know of free or inexpensive venues in the area where social-type activities could take place. It is unfortunately quite easy to organise happenings which appear to be successful but cost more to stage than they bring in.

It really is preposterous that people in this part of the world still think of the Kennet & Avon when you mention canals to them, and high time that the situation was improved in our favour.

On the actual work front, steady progress continues. The finishing touches have now been put to the lock gates, and the first part of the new sill is already in place, together with the male element of the pivot system. Some of the wing walls, which previously were believed to be sound, have turned out to need work doing on them. Something will also need to be done about the side sluices, although we have most of the ironwork.

Progress continues, but a little more extra help would get us to the vital point at which things really took off. You know our number. As yet we don't know yours but it should be on record, and we may be driven to adopt the techniques of telephone selling if our appeal goes unheeded!

DERYCK WATKINSON

## “Stop Press”

The good news is that we now have a volunteer who is willing to maintain a collection of newspaper clippings which relate to our canals. If you see any item of interest in any publication, please send it to Miss C. C. V. Woodward of 74 Kinscote Road West, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham, Glos., GL51 6JR.

# Western Branch

Since the last issue of the Trow we have been very much into trip boating. While Bowbridge has not proved as popular as Wallbridge, the income from operating a single boat there has been encouraging. All loans on the new boats have been paid off and building costs will have been covered before the end of the season. At Ryeford the steel trip boats, beautifully fitted out by Doug Blake & Co., are now getting into their stride and should prove extremely profitable and popular. The run between the old railway Skew Bridge and Double Lock is a particularly attractive one, passing the swing footbridge at Ryeford Basin (the first working structure restored on the cut) and with dredger, tug and barges cluttering the pound to give a working interest.

The only disappointing aspect of the trip boating is that it is being run almost wholly by committee members, inspite of our appeal for volunteers, though at Bowbridge our thanks go to Bryan and Peggy Shellard who cheerfully turn out, rain or shine, to help. With the MSC making significant progress at Coates, putting the Kings Reach in water, the Trust is considering operating the spare wooden trip boat into the tunnel in the near future. From our tentative venture with the "Bell" and "Aline" less than two years ago, the trip boating is an expanding business giving invaluable publicity and making an increasingly significant contribution to Trust funds. All those involved are finding it a most enjoyable venture, but, to continue to operate efficiently and expand, more help is essential. Aspiring boaters please contact Clint Taylor or myself - you will be very welcome!

With allowance made for Summer Holidays, the Committee meetings continue to be well attended and always interesting. With the recent sensitive issue of the environmental impact of our work, we were pleased to welcome Peter Bullard, Field Officer for the Gloucestershire Trust for Nature Conservation, to our July meeting to explain the aims of his Trust and to discuss future liaison. The discussion was at times lively, but constructive, and achieved a better understanding of our respective aims with no major conflict of interests. While primary liaison will be between the Conservation Trust and our Central Council over the Management Proposals being produced, the Branch intends to maintain close contact. It is also felt that physical co-operation on work parties by the Conservationists could be of mutual benefit.

Work party activity throughout the Summer has been mainly confined to bank clearance. The newly laid towpath has at times been almost impassable in places with rampant herbage and a week of work by a party from Archway School was much appreciated by us and the public, the section from Bowbridge to Brimscombe being much followed by Sunday walkers. Work on improving the Griffin's feeder has been virtually completed by the MSC group and the flow down the pound much improved. Weed has been a problem to the trip boat and some raking out is needed.





The steel trip boat "Maggie Anne" during fitting out (above), transportation (below) and shortly after launching (opposite).





STROUD (045-36) 4081

THE SHAMBLES,  
HIGH STREET,  
STROUD, GLOS.  
GL5 1AP

*J. J. Davis Ropes*  
*of Stroud*  
(Established over 100 years)

ROPES, — CORDS  
TWINES

WHOLESALEERS OF BASKETWARE &  
FURNITURE

HESSIAN — WEBBING

HALTERS — HAYNETS  
SLINGS

POLYPROPYLENE

STRAPPING & MACHINES

\* Advertise \*  
Here!

Help the Stroudwater, Thames &  
Severn Canal Trust by helping  
yourself!

Please contact Richard Attwood  
on Brimscombe 885057 Rates are

Full page	£25.00
$\frac{1}{2}$ page	£12.50
$\frac{1}{4}$ page	£ 6.50

We offer 10% discount for pre-  
payment of four consecutive  
quarterly issues.

The work party programme for the Autumn and Winter is at present extremely flexible until we have finished the tripping. Tuesday evenings at Blunder Lock, the major ongoing activity is the collection, sorting and stacking of waste paper. Although the market price varies, we have a reliable outlet and this is a still growing source of income. Some members are building up quite a collection round; Bill Evill is becoming a familiar sight up and down the hills round Brimscombe and Chalford, his car bulging at the seams and trailer loaded down to its marks. Passing the word round your street alone can achieve surprising results. If you live locally, please save your paper, newsprint and magazines, and drop it round to Blunder Lock on any Tuesday evening preferably, or we can collect. Thursday evening work parties have been occupied by the towpath clearance already mentioned. It is hoped to have a major weekend working party in late September, probably on the channel clearance round Bowbridge or above Griffin Lock.

Work on the East/West Bypass continues and we understand the contractors are ahead of schedule. The embankment up to London Road is particularly impressive and the outline of the new canal bridge is now discernable, the channel piling and abutments being well advanced. The site of the marina requires considerable imagination to envisage its future state but prospects are encouraging. Of the state of the canal between Bowbridge and Wallbridge, the less said the better. The junk in Wallbridge Lock is unbelievable but with the school holidays, intrepid raftsmen are finding it a goldmine of materials and deserve every encouragement in constructive activity!

Our grateful thanks are once again due to Luciano and Aline of the "Clothiers Arms". Our share of the Woolsack Race proceeds was £260 which will be put towards the purchase of another outboard motor, and I believe some further money is due from sponsorship. Branch Members were present on the day to run a successful barbecue and leftovers were cooked on the evening of the presentation, the net takings being some £50. The Branch Sales Stand was also present.

The indefatigable Richard Attwood has taken over as Membership Secretary for the Trust and is running his computer at full revs to analyse the extent and distribution of Trust Membership with particular reference to local members. The immediate aim is to enable the Committee to make contact with Trust members in our area. With so much happening at an ever accelerating pace, we feel that given better communication, we may encourage more active participation in Trust activities.

In conclusion, the basic message is (as always) that we know you are out there and we need you! Please give us the support we badly need.

TONY JONES

# The End of the Stroudwater Canal

We are pleased to continue and conclude the story of "The End of the Stroudwater Navigation" which was written by Geoffrey Sanders and appeared in the "Stroud News & Journal" in January 1971.

Thanks are due once again to Mr. Mason who is Editor of the paper and who has kindly granted permission to reprint.

Might I suggest a re-read of the first part which appeared in the Summer issue of the Trow. Those who wish to purchase a copy for 30p plus p.& p. please see the Sales page, or better still pick one up in person from a sales stand at the trip boat departure point. In any event here is the concluding part of the article.

---

M. P. Price, the Labour Member for West Gloucestershire, gave his support to the Bill "as an inhabitant and ratepayer of the County of Gloucester". The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, Hugh Molson, disclosed that in the case of the Stroudwater Canal the Minister of Transport had received in 1941 a report from Frank Pick, a distinguished expert on transport, who expressed the opinion without any shadow of a doubt that expenditure on the canal to maintain it in good order would be quite disproportionate to any use which might be made of it.

On the other side was Chuter Ede, the former Labour Home Secretary, who spoke nostalgically of Sapperton Tunnel. "It really is one of the saddest things to see that magnificent piece of engineering derelict", he said, "and when I saw it, in a condition that was pitiful. The part that it must once have played in our commercial life can not be better typified than by the huge size of the Tunnel Inn, which at one time catered for the many men who were employed on the canal. To see it now, huge, deserted and obviously a relic of past prosperity, is one of the saddest things I can imagine".

This, he should have realised, had not made the problem of survival easy for the Stroudwater Company. Instead, he described Sir Robert Perkins' Speech as "one of the classic accounts of the way in which the canal system has been destroyed by neglect and, in some cases, by the arrogance of competitive interests". As a protest against the neglect of the canals which had been shown for so long, he intimated his support for the Member of Paddington "if he proceeds to a Division".

By now what would normally have been a formality, as Parkin had admitted, had been replaced by some degree of tension and when it came to the Division Sir Robert Perkins was seen to be immensely active in getting Members into the voting lobby. With the backing of 21 Labour Members, 144 voted for the Bill and 112 against. Had those 21 supported Parkin he would have won the battle. Still, he could not have been dissatisfied with his support, which included

Wedgewood Benn, Mrs. Barbara Castle, R. H. S. Crossman, Hugh Dalton, Chuter Ede, Michael Foot, Anthony Greenwood, James Griffiths, Jennie Lee, H. A. Marquand, Ian Mikardo, P. J. Noel-Baker, W. Paling, Sir Lynn Ungoe-Thomas and K. Younger.

The Bill was duly read a second time and committed to the calmer atmosphere of the examination by the appointed committee. It was about this time that the organisation which had been formed locally to gather support against the Bill made an ingenious attempt to acquire a majority of shares in the Canal Company and thereby circumvent its closure. Shares on which no dividend had been paid for over 30 years now quickly rose to 35 shillings and even during the committee proceedings on July 8th Mrs. Airy, representing the CPRE, said she had the night before written a cheque for £102 and she was "on the track of a lot more shares in the Company". They did not come her way as we shall see.

Council for the promoters of the Bill during the Committee stage was Mr. G. R. Rougier; for Inland Waterways, who petitioned against the Bill, Mr. E. W. H. Christie; and for the Gloucestershire County Council, Mr. Hugh Forbes.

The first witness for the Bill was Major R. J. Carruthers-Little, who had been a member of the Committee of the Company of Proprietors of Stroudwater Navigation since 1921, and who was deputising for his Chairman, W. R. Bloxham, at short notice. The acting clerk of the Company had left during the preceding week and there appeared no one to advise him. Major Carruthers-Little cut a very sorry figure when it came to cross-examination. Of a very retiring disposition he had commanded "C" Company of the 5th Gloucesters at the outbreak of the Great War, had served in France, Flanders, Egypt and Palestine and had been mentioned in despatches, but it can be imagined that he found this occasion an even greater ordeal than any during his fine war service.

He was asked by Mr. Christie if he had been present at the Second Reading of the Bill. "I was not", he replied. Had he read the Hansard account of the Second Reading, was he familiar with it? "No, I have not". Did he know what went on at the Second Reading? "Only by what was told me". Such was the tenor of many of his subsequent replies to questions.

Next day in his summing up, Mr. Christie said, "With regard to Mr. Little's evidence, it was unfortunate that he was merely a substitute for Mr. Bloxham, who was not well, but he obviously knew very little about the affairs of this Company, and I would invite the Committee to find, if the Committee were inclined to find anything of the sort, that the fact that one of the Directors of this organisation, even after 20 years of holding office, knew so little about the affairs

of the Company, is perhaps the greatest contributory factor in the destruction of this valuable national asset. There may have been other factors, factors of personality, but I cannot help feeling that the lack of energy and initiative displayed by the Committee and the Directors is perhaps the single greatest factor".

There may have been some truth in this castigation, but in the main it was unfair. No one can possibly be blamed for his dotage. The Committee, with their limited facilities for commerce, had to combat quicker and more direct means of transport. Their capital, reduced to £3,000, was totally inadequate and, needless to say, they were far from being an isolated example of a Canal Company finding the march of events too much for them. Excellent as their intentions were, the Inland Waterways Association were too late in their endeavors.

The second witness for the promoters of the Bill was Mr. Charles Kenneth Haswell, a senior engineer in the firm of Sir William Halcrow and Partners, Consulting Engineers. To reinstate the canal, he said, would involve major civil engineering work such as the dredging and the disposal of the dredged material and the replacement of all the timber lock gates. This was apart from minor works. From a preliminary estimate, the cost would be something in the order of £143,000 and it did not include repairs to the bridges.

The opposition later produced an expert, who gave a considerably lower estimate, one of £60,000. He was Mr. Cyril Boucher, a Chartered Civil Engineer, who had advised and been responsible for the design and carrying out of works on the Bridgewater Canal, the Derby Canal, Kennet & Avon, Oxford, Trent & Mersey, the River Avon, the River Trent and the River Ouse.

His estimate was governed by the Stroudwater Canal being restricted to 11 feet barges with a draught of five feet. Mr. Rougier asked him, if the canal were to be dredged for larger barges of the 15 feet type, would it not cost about £140,000? The witness would not agree. Eleven feet was the common and general beam of barges on canals. In further cross-examination, Mr. Boucher agreed that the cost of maintaining the canal would be about £1,200 a year.

Mr. R. A. Downs, then deputy surveyor of the Gloucestershire County Council, followed Mr. Haswell, and his evidence was entirely concerned with the bridges, which had become progressively more dangerous.

Among the witnesses called for the petitioners against the Bill was the Rev. Malcolm Donald, Vicar of Lower Cam, Dursley, the owner of a pleasure boat moored at the western end of the Stroudwater Canal. He spoke of the formation of the Stroudwater Canal Restoration Committee, which hoped to establish a non-profit-sharing trust to make the fullest possible use of the waterway, both from the recreational

aspect and for what commercial use could be found. Mr. Donald was on less sure ground when it came to being asked how his Committee were going to raise £60,000, or meet annual loan charges of £3,000 and the cost of maintenance amounting to £1,200. He hedged by saying they were not anticipating that the work could be done in a year or two. It might take 10 or 20 years.

The next witness was equally at a loss when it came to the financial side of restoring and then maintaining the canal for recreational purposes. She was Mrs. Enid Airy, who began dramatically by saying she represented England on the CPRE. "I have behind me", she added later, "people like Admiral Sir Richard Bevan and Wing Commander Huntly Sinclair: I have Boy Scouts, Boy's Clubs all over the County of Gloucester". Asked by Mr. Christie if she had any views she would like to give to the Committee, Mrs. Airy replied, "Yes, I have Sir. The most comforting thing I have found since I have been in this room was when I put my hand on the Bible and said: 'So help me God'. I say that because I am convinced that these valleys were made naturally and because they are beautiful... It was, I think, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that men began to pay back to God with their architecture. They decorated their gateways with balls, pineapples and urns. The whole conception was a perfect whole, a perfect unit: House, mill and artisans' dwellings".

Sooner or later the difficult question of finance was bound to be raised. Mr. Christie asked if he was right in thinking that "you yourself are prepared to put these feelings of yours to practical effect by producing finance for this purpose?". "I am", Mrs Airy replied, and then came the disclosure that the search for share holders had begun in earnest and that during the previous night she had written out a cheque for £102. Unfortunately many more cheques of £100 would be required, apart from buying shares, before the Restoration Committee could meet its obligations.

Under cross-examination Mrs. Airy was confident she could raise £60,000 to put the canal in good order. "With no prospect of getting any return in the way of a dividend?", asked Mr. Rougier. "I feel the dividend would be so great that Stroud would again be called Stroudwater", replied Mrs. Airy.

Mr. R. J. Parkhouse, a partner in the firm of Marling & Evans, followed Mrs. Airy. He did not always give the answers to questions that were expected of him and Mr. Christie was led to exclaim that perhaps he should ask permission to treat him as a hostile witness.

Mr. Christie in his final summing-up admitted that neither he nor his witnesses had made out an unassailable case for the commercial future of the canal.

The Committee concurred with the Bill and so it came back to the

House of Commons on July 26th for its Third Reading. In three minutes the proceedings were over, but in that time Ben Parkin had intervened with an amazing speech that can only be regarded as face-saving. He told the House that a responsible body now existed, in so far as the Canal Restoration Committee had acquired a controlling interest in the Navigation Company itself. This was totally untrue. It would achieve, he said, the complete removal of the possibility of profit seeking by those who held the minority of the shares. This glib remark was made after all the evidence had shown that the Canal Company's failure to make a profit was the underlying cause of the Bill. It would now render it unnecessary to create any kind of new Trust or Company.

The truth was that no Trust was created because in actual fact the Restoration Committee had not acquired a controlling interest in the Canal Company. Indeed, their subsequent complaint was the difficulty in getting shares released. Still, the fallacy enabled Parkin to appeal to his supporters not to press the matter to a Division and so the Bill was passed and very shortly afterwards received the Royal Assent. After the protracted nature of the earlier debate, the collapse of the opposition in the Third Reading had provided an anti-climax.

The Canal Company was given fresh blood and a new Chairman in the person of Col. John Goodman, Chairman of the County Council, and under their aegis the bridges were modernised where necessary and the waterways tidied up.

The Inland Waterways Association were embittered by the outcome of their campaign. Their Bulletin stated that "in the short time available it proved impossible sufficiently to arouse local opinion to take action against the coalition between the shadowy shareholders, the bridge-lowering local authorities, and the 'Stroud News' ". The last named, it was said, had cast skillful ridicule upon those who sought to preserve the canal. The ridicule was justified in view of the support for the Bill by the County Council, the Stroud Urban District Council, Stroud Rural District Council and the Gloucester Rural District Council. As Sir Harold Webbe (MP for the cities of London and Westminster) observed during the Second Reading of the Bill it was support "by people who knew something about it".

It was a tragic end, nevertheless, like Life itself. In her youth the canal had been wooed by commerce and had nought to fear from the pack-horse or wagon. In her middle-age steam and petrol brought about her decline and the defection of her partner, the Thames & Severn, reduced her to insignificance. Impecunious and decrepit, she could not hope to survive. We can be sure, however, that the historians will never allow the graceful days of her earlier existence to be forgotten.



# Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Last year when the trip boats ran from the "Bell" a small group of volunteers spent several days cutting the undergrowth down and dragging the weeds out of the pool below the "Bell". This has not been done this year for the following reasons. 1) The present lack of water and road construction. 2) The other sections of canal which are now more accessible to the public such as the new trip boat site at Bowbridge. 3) The number of people to cover the existing tasks.

To enlarge on the latter point, at present I see a small number of people in the Stroud area covering the following tasks on a regular basis. a) Running trip boats at Bowbridge. b) Building and running the new trip boats at Ryeford. c) Work on Griffin Mill Lock and the pounds above and below. d) Plant maintenance at the Eastington compound. e) Newspaper collection and sorting. f) Continued work in and around Blunder Lock.

This does not include the work put in to man the sales stand at local events which is largely carried out by a few of the regulars.

So Mr. Jones, I apologise if I have missed you helping with the above tasks, but please don't complain about the bits which we miss, please come and help. I am sure you would be able to find a task to do whether it be cleaning up the pool at the "Bell" or sorting papers, building boats or helping to run the trip boats.

KEN BAILEY Kingswood, Bristol.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the letter from Mr. Jones in the Summer issue of the Trow in which he accuses the Canal Trust of not caring about the condition of Wallbridge Basin and Wallbridge Pound.

If Mr. Jones had taken the trouble to look closely at the water level he would have seen that it was about one foot below its former level and, therefore, too shallow to operate a boat. He would also have noticed that there was no water flowing over the dam into Wallbridge Basin which accounts for the low water level.

The Western Branch of the Trust has spent many hours of work in tidying up the Wallbridge area in spite of vandals who delight in throwing anything that they can lay their hands on into the lock.

It is of course, a pity that through circumstances beyond our control these improvements have to suffer a temporary setback. However, I would have expected our own members to understand this or, at least, contact a Trust Official for an explanation.

RICHARD ATTWOOD Eastcombe, Stroud, Glos.

Dear Sir,

With regard to the reference in the Trow about the canal clearance above Bowbridge: I remember, probably from the mid or late 1920s, seeing the canal in that section being dredged. Two men in a middle-sized "barge" were using an over-size wooden "spoon" working on a pivot. Thus the bottom was scraped and the mud deposited in the barge.

Incidentally, I witnessed the launching of the last boat to be built by Abdela Mitchells. My schoolboy neighbour was a grandson of a Mr. Avens who had worked for that firm, so we went along to see the last launch. Date? Somewhere in the late 1920s I suppose, but it will be recorded somewhere.

CHRISTOPHER COX Newport, Shropshire.

Dear Sir,

It occurs to me that the Trust might benefit from a simplification of its title and emblem. I am sure the present "Stroudwater, Thames and Severn Canal Trust Limited", being quite a mouthfull, would be more easily remembered as "Cotswold Canals Trust" for instance and a more basic representation of the Trow design easier to reproduce on publicity material.

I wonder what other members' thoughts are on the subject?

JUDY BOND Stroud, Glos.

## Red Lion Inn

Brian & Mo Boulton

High Street, CRICKLADE. Swindon. SN6 6DD

Tel: Swindon 750776

Function Room

Garden

Skittle Alley

R.A.O.B. 8875

# Membership Matters

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:-

Mr D C Mander  
Mr B Shellard  
Mr P Very  
Mr N Wheeler

Stoke Bishop, Bristol  
Wotton-Under-Edge, Glos  
Cirencester, Glos  
Croxley Green, Rickmansworth.

After seven years (the usual term for hard labour!) I have reluctantly found it necessary to give up looking after the membership records. This means of course that I shall no longer be badgering members to pay their subscriptions, but fear not, there are already others waiting to take over this, along with the multitude of other tasks, which go with the job.

DAVID JORDAN



Still running! In addition to the Ryeford trip boats, an attractive cruise along the pound above Bowbridge Lock can still be enjoyed.

# Sales

19

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 under £20 to help towards packing and postal charges. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "S - T&S C T Ltd".

Trust Notelets (8 with envelopes) with canal views	£0.60
A Canal Walk Through Stroud	£1.25
Trust Tea Towels	£1.85
Trust Key Fobs	£0.40
Trust Comb in Case	£0.30
Trust Bookmarks	£0.45
The Stroudwater Canal (Handford)	£7.00
The Thames & Severn Canal (Household)	£6.95

## SPECIAL OFFERS

World Canals (Hadfield)	£16.00
Bread Upon the Waters (Blagrove)	£8.00
The Changing River (Burton)	£7.00

**YESO PRODUCTS**

1 PANCAKE CORNER  
COOMBE HILL  
GLOUCESTER  
TEL 0242 680715

FROM THE HORSE DRAWN BUTTY,  
TO THE MODERN DAY MOTOR CRUISER.

**FEATURING:-**  
1 PIECE RESIN CAST HULLS,  
SOME WITH WHITE METAL FITTINGS.  
COLOURFUL DECORATION ON HAND  
FINISHED MODELS.  
DESIGNS BY RICHARD WILSON.

**-PAINT IT YOURSELF KITS-**

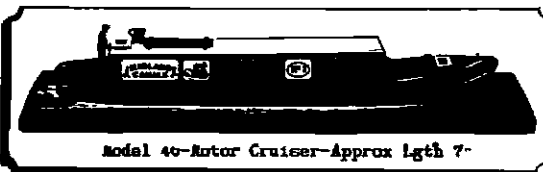
<b>OO GAUGE-</b>	<b>N GAUGE-</b>
60FT CANAL MOTOR CRUISER-MODEL 04-£08.50	70FT COVERED BUTTY-----MODEL 20-£03.50
46FT CANAL MOTOR CRUISER-MODEL 44-£04.95	
37FT CANAL MOTOR CRUISER-MODEL 34-£03.50	<b>-HAND FINISHED-</b>
<b>HO GAUGE-</b>	36FT MOTOR CRUISER-----MODEL 35-£03.75
70FT OPEN COAL BUTTY-----MODEL 50-£12.50	46FT MOTOR CRUISER-----MODEL 46-£12.50

**MODEL 35/46 LIVERY AVAILABLE:-**

MIDLAND CANALS	---	LONDON WATERWAYS
TRIKESBURY	---	NORTHERN NAVIGATIONS
GLOUCESTER DOCKS	---	ANDREW & SARAH*

**\*WEDDING SOUVENIR-LIMITED ISSUE OF 20 OR LESS (MODEL 46 ONLY).**

THESE MODELS MAKE IDEAL CHRISTMAS PRESENTS-ORDER EARLY TO BE SURE OF DELIVERY  
PLEASE ADD £1.00 FOR POSTAGE & PACKING-CHEQUES MADE OUT TO YESO PRODUCTS



Model 46-Motor Cruiser-Approx lgth 7'

**RESIN CAST MODEL NARROWBOATS  
KITS AND HAND FINISHED  
PROMOTIONAL MODELS FOR HIRE COMPANIES  
RALLYS, PRESENTATION ETC.  
OO-HO-N GAUGE**

Please note that copy date for the next issue (Winter) of the Trow will be 1st October. The schedule for producing that issue will be very tight so can I ask contributors to treat this as an absolute last date. Thanks in anticipation for your co-operation.

DAVID JOWETT

# Dates for your Diary

- SEPTEMBER 22 IWA Event. "Navigating the Upper Severn and Thames"  
A talk by DAVID HUTCHINGS at Tewkesbury Marina.
- OCTOBER 13 IWA Event. "History of Herefordshire & Glos. Canal"  
An illustrated talk by NIGEL JEFFERIES at the Yacht Club, Tewkesbury Marina.
- NOVEMBER 21 A G M Please come along to see what's going on.

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. All members, friends and other interested parties are most 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 - everyone is welcome. Past attractions have been slide shows, barbecues and boat trips.

THAMES END BRANCH MEETINGS are held on the second Tuesday of the month from 8.00pm at the "Red Lion" at Cricklade. Why not come to a meeting to see what we are doing.

THAMES END WORK PARTY is centred on Cerney Wick Lock where we would be pleased to see new faces on the last weekend of the month.

WESTERN BRANCH VOLUNTEERS are involved in practical work and trip boat operation. Please ring to find out what's happening.

## The Clothiers Arms

## Free House

1 Bath Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire

Resident Proprietors

Luciano & Aline Magalotti

Telephone Stroud [04536] 3801



FRONT COVER: Doug Blake swings the bridge for the Ryeford trip boat.  
BACK COVER: The recent collapse at Ryeford Double Lock.

### DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

ARCHIVIST DAVID J VINER B.A. A.M.A. 8 Tower St., Cirencester, Gos., GL7 1EF

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY RICHARD ATTWOOD. 7 Hidcote Close, Eastcombe, Stroud, Gos., GL6 7EF (Brimscombe 885057)

ASSISTANT MEMBERSHIP GEOFF GARAWAY. 29 Mill Farm Drive, Paganhill, Stroud, Gos., GL5 4JZ

PRESS & PUBLICITY BRUCE HALL. Springers, Watledge, Nailsworth, Gos. (Nailsworth 2384)

SALES MANAGER RICHARD ATTWOOD. 7 Hidcote Close, Eastcombe, Stroud, Gos., GL6 7EF (Brimscombe 885057)

### THAMES END BRANCH

CHAIRMAN ROBIN TWINING. 285 The Cullerns, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts. (Swindon 763243)

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

WESTERN BRANCH DOUG BLAKE. 19 Stratton Road, Gloucester, (Gloucester 415843)

CLINT TAYLOR. 43 Regent Street, Stonehouse, Gos., GL10 2AA (Stonehouse 3485)

THAMES END BRANCH NICHOLAS MELCHIOR. 28 Grove Hill, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts., SN6 7JN (Swindon 762510)

### THE TROW TEAM

EDITOR DAVID JOWETT. 1 Oxford Terrace, Springfield Road, Uplands, Stroud, Gos., GL5 1TW (Stroud 4832)

DISTRIBUTION TEAM PHIL GRIFFITHS. 10 Smythe House, The Waterloo, Cirencester, Gos., GL7 7JN (Ciren. 4160)

DES PINNOCK. 7 Vicarage Close, Churchdown, Gloucester Gloucester, GL3 2NE (Churchdown 856233)

