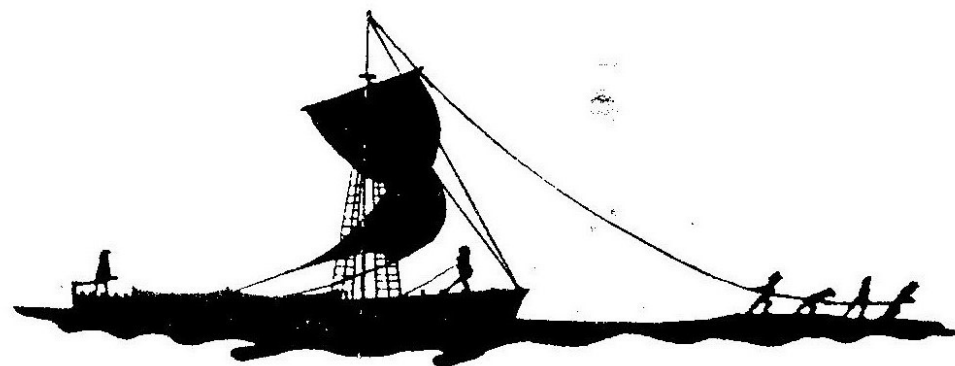


## Contacts

Chairman & Research	Hugh Conway-Jones 1 Grovelands, Gloucester, GL4 7JF.	Glo. 619679
Secretary	Janet Illingworth-Cooper 2a Oxford St, Gloucester, GL1 3EQ.	(work) Glo. 504294
Treasurer	Les Dalton 4 Conway Rd, Gloucester, GL3 3PL.	Glo. 617236
Crafts	Peter Wallace 16c Grosvenor Rd, Gloucester, GL2 0SA	Glo. 24686
Dredger Drivers	Alan Garnett 16 Honeythorne Close, Gloucester, GL2 6LU.	Glo. 303489
Fielding Engine	Trevor Hill 154 Cheltenham Rd, Gloucester, GL2 0JR.	Glo. 25578
Helpers and Hosts	Richard Trelfa 23 Honeythorne Close, Gloucester, GL2 6LU.	Glo. 304116
Meetings	Doris Toller 5 Hemmingsdale Rd, Gloucester, GL2 6HN.	Glo. 424272
Membership Secretary	Marian Palmer 17 The Firs, Heathville Rd, Gloucester, GL1 3EW.	Glo. 20885
Newsletter Editor	Philip Conway-Jones 1 Grovelands, Gloucester, GL4 7JF.	Glo. 619679
Restoration	David McDougall Nat. Wat. Mus., Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EH.	(work) Glo. 307009
Steam Crane	Alan Conder 12 Bathurst Park Rd, Lydney, GL15 5HG.	Dean 844384
Talks Service	Peter Thompson 43 Forest View Rd, Gloucester, GL4 0BY.	Glo. 20442

*All views expressed in Llanthony Log are those of the Editor and individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Friends of the National Waterways Museum.*

# LLANTHONY LOG



## Newsletter of the Friends of the National Waterways Museum

ISSUE NO. 12 - MARCH 1991

## Diary Dates

- Mar 29 Friends helping with Easter Crafts Weekend at the Museum.  
- Apr 1
- Apr 14 Gloucester Boat and Watersports Jumble '91 in the Museum car park. (For further details, see Page 10.)
- Apr 16 Severn Scrapbook. The ever popular Fred Rowbotham returns with more slides and stories. Museum Schools Room at 7.30.
- Apr 20-1 Fenders and Ropework Course. (For further details, see Page 11.)
- Apr 26-8 IWA Region AGM, talks and visits based on the Berkeley Arms Hotel.
- May 14 IWA meeting at Tewkesbury Marina Yacht Club at 7.30.
- May 18-9 Friends helping with Horses Weekend at the Museum. (For further details, see Page 2.)
- May 21 Friends AGM followed by more vintage films from the Museum's collection. Museum Schools Room at 7.30. (For agenda, see Page 15.)
- Jun 2 Waverley paddle steamer trip from Sharpness to Ilfracombe and return. (For details, contact Les Dalton on Glo. 617236)
- Jun 22-3 Museum Tugs Weekend and IWA Gloucester Docks Gathering. (For further details, see Pages 2 and 11.)
- Jul 14 IWA coach/boat/train trip to Welshpool. For details, contact Kay Jennings on 0432 270907.

For evening meetings, car access to the Museum is from Southgate St. Non-members are welcome. Raffles will be held to raise money for the Dredger Restoration Fund.

Friends are welcome at the Inland Waterways Association meetings which are held at the Tewkesbury Marina Yacht Club, off the Bredon Road B4080, on the left, 250 yards north of the junction with the A38.

## Special Events at the Museum

- Mar 29 Waterways Crafts, Painting, knotting and fender making, costumes, crochet, rag rugs and model making.
- May 12 Engine Rally sponsored by A T Poeton Ltd. Large and small diesel engines in operation all around the site.
- May 18-9 Horses Weekend. Shires and working horses of all kinds. Meet the owners and handlers and watch a wide range of displays, including working farriers. (See also below.)
- Jun 22-3 Tugs from a wide variety will be gathered at the Museum. A chance to see them in action, take a ride and watch a tug-of-war. Also model tugs and characters from ITV6s popular 'Tugs' programme. (See also below.)
- Aug 31-  
Sep 1 Modellers Weekend. Models of all kinds - on water and on land - steam and diesel - working and static. Meet the model makers and marvel at the details in miniature.
- Oct 5-6 Lifting and Shifting sponsored by B E T Plant Services. Machines that lift and load, from mighty cranes to small fork lifts. Watch them at work and have a go. Displays on canal maintenance and repair.

## Equine Exploits - *A note from Jane Savery*

Peter the shire horse will be playing host to a variety of equine friends again this year for the 1991 Horses Weekend at the Museum on the 18th and 19th of May. Any Friends who fancy horsing around for the Saturday or Sunday, please let me know (through the Museum) so that I can trot around, rather than gallop!

## Crew Wanted for Kennet

Friends will be operating the tug Kennet during the Museum's Tugs Weekend (22-3 June) and on other occasions during the summer, and volunteers are required to handle ropes and sell tickets. The money raised will go towards the Friends Dredger Restoration Appeal. If you can offer any help, please contact Alan Garnett on Gloucester 303489.

*Compiled by Alan Garnett.*

Following the successful salvage of the Dredger in August last year after its unfortunate sinking some seven weeks previously, considerable progress has been made in the long job of restoring it to working order. After the general steam jet cleaning of the below deck areas by Des Fforde reported earlier, excellent follow-up work has been done by Reg Price on washing down the sides and bulkhead of the Engine Room together with the inside of the superstructure above the Main Engine and Boiler.

The Boiler has successfully undergone a hydraulic proof pressure test to approx 15 bars (217.5 psi.) in the presence of the Insurance Company's Inspector. This pressure is 1.5 times the max. Working Pressure of 10 bars (145 psi.). Any doubts regarding the structural integrity of the boiler shell and tubing have therefore been dispelled, and a very large potential restoration cost removed.

Following the first-aid preservation measures on the deck machinery and main engine, effort has now been concentrated on dismantling the Main Engine components. The two stub shafts coupled to the engine crankshaft and carrying the bucket chain belt drive pulleys have been removed, requiring the use of hired lifting tackle. Ray Swan has extracted the keys securing the pulleys to the shafts, thus enabling the pulleys to be drawn off. The bearing surfaces of both shafts have been wrapped in protective tape. It is anticipated that these surfaces will require metal spraying and re-machining to overcome some corrosion and wear damage.

Before returning the lifting tackle, it was also used in removing both the HP and LP Cylinder head covers, thus exposing part of the cylinder bores. A preliminary examination indicates only minor corrosion but a closer inspection awaits the removal of the pistons. The steam inlet and speed governor valves have been removed together with the governor drive gear. The beam connected to the LP Crosshead for driving the Condenser Air Pump, Feed Pump and Bilge Pump was dismantled, and the Bilge Pump together with its associated pipework was taken out. The condenser cooling water discharge pipe has also been removed and a wooden blanking plate fitted to the flanged connection on the side of the hull to prevent cold air blowing in.

Following this work, the Stephenson Link Motions, which operate the steam inlet valves on each cylinder have been removed, and the connecting

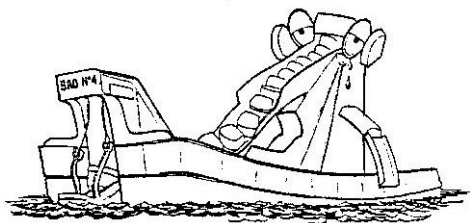
rod small end (crosshead end) and big end bearings dismantled. By using timber packing, each piston was jacked up and secured at the crosshead slippers, enabling the connecting rods to be removed. With all these components out of the way, attention turned to removing the main bearing caps to allow the crankshaft to be lifted from its bearings, which was achieved by using a trolley jack under the half coupling at each end of the shaft and subsequently supporting it on timber packing on the main bearing blocks. The main bearing journal surfaces have sustained damage which requires repair, so it will be necessary to lift the crankshaft out of the dredger. Its calculated weight is 3.6 cwt. (183 kilogrammes). All exposed bearing surfaces have been protected with underwater grease and protective tape.

The latest work on the Main Engine has been to slacken the 1 1/2" Whitworth nut at the top of each piston which required the use of a large tubular spanner kindly loaned to Dave McDougall by Fielding & Platt Ltd. A simple strongback was made up in the Museum's workshop and this, in conjunction with jacking screws in the two tapped holes provided in the top of the pistons, enabled the piston rod of the Low Pressure piston to be loosened on its tapered connection to the piston. The piston could then be removed from its cylinder, this being achieved with the help of hired lifting tackle. Unfortunately a problem arose with the same operation on the HP piston as the piston rod resisted all attempts to release it from its piston, and a small area of the top of the cast iron piston, around one of the jacking screw holes, which appeared to have been cracked for some time, broke off, thus preventing any more use of the strongback. The crosshead slippers and guides for both HP and LP piston rods were dismantled, and the LP piston rod and crosshead bearing block assembly removed. An attempt was then made to release the HP crosshead bearing block at the lower end of its piston rod to allow the piston and rod assembly to be withdrawn through the top of the cylinder, but this has so far been unsuccessful.

Most of the work of dismantling has been done by 'Friends' Les Drawery, Jim Simmons and myself under the general supervision of Dave McDougall and Des Fforde. All the parts removed from the Engine are being stored in the cabins on the quayside by the Dredger. The important job of cleaning them up and, where necessary, repainting is being done largely by Alan and Betty Conder and Doris Toller. I hope that this report will show that the job of restoration is proceeding, albeit slowly but surely, and we all look forward to the time when reassembly can start and the Dredger can return to full working order.

## Dredger Fund Exceeds £3000

The Friends Dredger Restoration Fund has now reached over £3000, and more is still coming in. Of this total, over £1000 has come from Friends donations, £900 from Friends fund-raising, £600 from collections at the Museum, £500 from the general fund and £140 from other organisations. Chairman Hugh Conway-Jones said he is delighted with the Friend's response to the Appeal, and he paid tribute to the hard work put into the fund raising activities and into the restoration itself. Approaches are now being made to businesses in Gloucester and to Gloucester City Council lottery fund. The aim is to raise £6000 to pay for materials and services needed this summer, so there is still a long way to go. Any further offers of help in cash or kind should be sent to the Friends Dredger Restoration Appeal, National Waterways Museum, Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EH.



## Boiler Painting Delayed by Rain

A working party in February had high hopes of getting a coat of primer on to the outside of the dredger's boiler, but things didn't quite go according to plan. In the morning, the team set to work to remove loose rust using power-driven wire brushes on the main surfaces and hand held ones for the difficult parts. This created a mist of fine particles in the confined spaces around the boiler, and the workers were glad of the face-masks provided by the Museum.

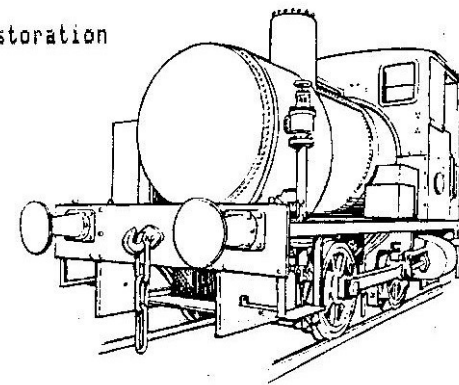
By lunchtime, most of the loose rust had been removed, but some unexpected heavy showers had left parts of the surface wet, and it was questionable whether any painting would be possible. However, a careful inspection after lunch showed that the ends of the boiler had remained dry, and so these parts at least were given a good coat of primer. Meanwhile, part of the team was diverted to clean the bottom plates under the cabin floorboards in preparation for this area also being painted in the near future.

During the summer, it is planned to have monthly dredger working parties, and more volunteers are always welcome. If you can help on occasional Sundays, please contact Hugh Conway-Jones on Glc. 619679.

## Sponsorship Prompts Locomotive Restoration

By David McDougall

Whatever happened to that Fireless Locomotive from the Gloucester Emergency power station which the Museum acquired in 1989? Hibernating peacefully in the Sack Works, it was rudely awakened for a week during the worst of this winter's snow, and it now has a new coat or two of paint over much of its upper works as the first stage of a scheme to complete its restoration in double-quick time.



Sudden interest in progressing the restoration has resulted from the offer of sponsorship finance from Nuclear Electric (one of the successor companies of the C.E.G.B. which used to own the locomotive) together with a grant for 50% of the cost from the Science Museum PRISM Fund (Preservation of Industrial and Scientific Material). This has enabled contractors to be brought in to blitz the rust, prepare the paintwork and apply undercoats to the decks, the driver's cab and the steam pressure vessel. A four man team from H A T Painting Contractors made short work of this part of the job despite the freezing weather and snow which wouldn't stay out of the Sack Works. This snow, melting in the warmth and falling as a fine mist inside the building, slowed the work down at a critical stage as the painting started, and all the goals were not quite achieved. However, finish painting is easier than rust busting, and progress is being made to catch up.

Stage two involves sending out much of the outer boiler cladding sheets for gritblasting. They will return partly painted along with many smaller parts. Stage three is steam cleaning all the years of grime and oil from the underbody and wheels and repainting as required. Stage four is reassembly followed by finish painting all over: green, red, black and white. Stage five is signwriting back all the old C.E.G.B. lettering on the sides.

Finally we have to build a railway to get it out of the shed on to a low loader for a spin around the car park and then on to some new rails outside the Warehouse. Only then do you get to ring the bell! Sounds easy enough, but somehow I think our promise to finish it all by June was rather rash. All coachpainters please apply now!

Anyone For Carpentry?

*By John Clayton*

In the March 1990 issue of *Llanthony Log*, an article told of a recently arrived BR Fruit Van needing attention to its woodwork and ended with the words "Anyone for carpentry?"

Some months after that article appeared, I was on a GSIA coach trip and chatting to a long standing member and friend, recently retired like myself, when I learned that he was a Museum volunteer working on exhibits to restore them for display. So eloquent was he in describing the joys of all this that I was persuaded that it might suit me too.

So I set out to learn more, went to the Museum, was shown around the workshops, saw some of the work in hand and met David McDougall. I also met one or two other GSIA members looking less well dressed than when we normally met. I went into the Museum itself and was, and remain, most impressed.

A few days later, having formally become a Friend, I found David and told him that I was now a volunteer. Within minutes I was rigged out in borrowed overalls and attacking a large lump of cast iron with what should be the principal item in any future logo of the volunteers - a chipping hammer!

Since that time I have joined in various activities - cleaning, painting, remodelling etc. on objects large and small. Piles of newly pristine items lie awaiting reassembly in due time into complete exhibits. One day we hope another turntable will grace the quayside - we're on our way.

However, the main thrust of the group is towards the fruit van. So that article of last year has a sequel. The carpentry is continuing - the worst completed. The rotten roof timbers were removed (together with a couple of unlucky Queen wasps), the metal parts cleaned and painted. Now it's rebuilt with the specially machined very long planks which David had made, and we're waiting for a warm still day to allow us to add the cover sheet to ensure that all is watertight. Meanwhile the carpentry continues on the walls. We're replacing timber as required, to match the original construction and we are constantly aware of the over engineering in that design. We are well past the halfway point in this stage. What's to come as yet I do not know, except that the doors need attention.

It will be nice one day to say "Well, that's a good job done", and think that 'our' fruit van can rest peacefully and await perhaps another band of future volunteers in the year 20?? Will they maybe have electric chipping hammers by then?

Oh, by the way, Alan Russell is the friend (is he still? you ask) who was responsible for this chapter in my life.

*David McDougall adds:*

A contribution of £500 from Friends' funds has been made towards material costs for the van restoration. This has purchased the new tongue and groove boarding for the roof planking, replacement planking for the four corners and inner lining boards, new sills and for repairs to the damaged door.

All new timber had to be specially machined to match the original from good quality redwood. Special wagon bolts had to be located for fixing the planking as the originals were totally corroded away. Sadly, bolts of correct type were only obtainable in too long a length so each of the 112 bolts had to be shortened to fit. Well done Keith Varney and Ian Parsons!

All the lettering on the van has been traced and will have to be copied on to the new planking when the wagon has its repaint during the summer. The intention is to preserve the van as lettered recently rather than return it to British Railways original lettering format of 1951; otherwise it would be necessary to remove some of the history such as the nice little plates giving dates of previous repair work. We may, of course, make room for a new one to bring this history up to date, followed by another when the remainder of the timber needs renewing!

The superb and extensive woodworking job done on the GWR van (Mink) by owner, Chris Perkins, and team makes our effort look small but indicates that the problems we have found already are common to both designs of van. The Museum van has a new roof with old sides and doors. His has an old roof with new sides and doors. Doubtless the opposite repairs will be needed at some time in the future!

*Anyone willing to help with this kind of restoration work on Tuesdays and Thursdays should contact David McDougall at the Museum.*

## Wright's Ropes Went Around the World

*The following notes are based on information collected by Colin Jones, a member of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, who used to work for Wrights and who regularly demonstrates ropework at the Museum.*

Wright's Ropes Ltd had their works in Garrison St, Birmingham, near to the Garrison Locks on the Grand Union Canal. They had a world-wide reputation for quality products - from a 47 inch circumference rope made in 1856 to launch the steamship Great Eastern to a strand of seven 12 thou wires for the station-finding mechanism of a domestic radio.

For making fibre ropes, sisal from East Africa or manilla from the Philippines or Indonesia was fed into a series of hackling machines where it was combed to form a continuous sliver. Next the sliver was passed through several drawing frames to make it straighter and thinner, pouring out of the final one into a revolving sliver-can about four feet high. The slivers from 24 cans were then fed into a spinning machine to appear as yarn on bobbins turning at 2000 revolutions a minute.

The yarn was originally formed into rope in the firm's rope walk, which could make lengths up to 120 fathoms (240 yards). Later modern rope-making machines were introduced, the length then only being limited by the capacity of the storage drum. The first stage was to bring a number of yarns together in a die, twisted on a revolving strander, and then three strands were fed to a rope die to emerge twisted into a rope. As well as making fibre ropes, Wrights had a huge steel rope department, where the process was basically similar but the raw material was high-class coiled wire made by a subsidiary company.

Wright's ropes carried pit cages in mine shafts throughout the world, they supported aerial railways in Norway and Switzerland and they helped in special projects such as the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the recovery of rare fish from the depths of the Pacific. A green strand was included in all Port of London Authority ropes to aid recognition.

Wright's were taken over by British Ropes in 1964, and over the next few years there was a gradual rundown of production of both fibre and wire ropes. Eventually the Garrison St works closed, but the cord, twine and splicing departments were moved to the nearby Lawley St site. It was here that Colin Jones worked with his father and started learning the skills that he demonstrates at the Museum.

## Boat and Watersports Jumble on 14 April

Preparations are well advanced for the major fund-raising event of the Friends year. Traders are booking places to sell a wide range of watersports related goods in the Museum car park at heavily discounted prices. Items on sale will include boats, chandlery, ropes, fishing tackle, inflatables, water ski and diving equipment, canoes, sailboards, clothing, hand and power tools, paints and accessories of all kinds. Also individuals will be selling dinghies, outboards and surplus gear etc. The jumble will be open from 10am to 4pm, admission £1.50. Come along and see what bargains you can find!

## Friends Stall at the Jumble

Do you have any unwanted watersports related items you would be willing to donate to the Friends to be sold in aid of the dredger appeal? Or have you anything you would like us to sell on commission? Karlo and Sheila Miklausic are organising a stall at the jumble, and they are looking for any equipment, fittings, buoyancy aids, clothes, tools, books, pictures, ornaments etc connected with boats and watersports. If you can help, please ring them on Gloucester 305292 as soon as possible.



APPARENTLY TONY HAS SAID THE DREDGER  
TO ONE OF THE BARGAIN HUNTERS

## Not the National Waterways Festival

Following the success of last year's National Waterways Festival, the Gloucester Branch of the IWA and British Waterways are promoting what is hoped will become an annual gathering of boats in the docks. As well as the boats, there will also be a trade and craft show and other attractions in the main docks area. The weekend chosen coincides with the Museum's Tugs Weekend so there should be a lot of interest to see.

The event will of course be much smaller than the National, but it will still take quite a bit of organising, so if you can offer help in any way, please contact David Mills on Cheltenham 517088. Boat entry forms can be obtained from Mrs F Milson, Cheltenham 862310.

## Double Success As Museum Scoops Two Awards

The Museum was among seven of Britain's best tourism attractions to receive top awards in a prestigious national competition. The Interpret Britain Awards were presented by the Minister of State for Wales, Sir Wyn Roberts MP at Caerphilly Castle in January. The Museum, which was one of seven winners in the open category, was described as "an effective, well-designed museum in an ideal setting." Praise was also given to the use of contemporary illustrations and photographic and film records of waterways, and the "hands-on" interpretation of waterways in use, through the computer games and various working mechanisms. The second award recognised the Museum's excellent facilities for disabled visitors.

## Fender Making and Ropework Course

As their contribution to the Dredger Fund, knot-tyers Colin Jones and Robert Jackson are running a course on fender making and ropework in the Museum Schools Room over the weekend of 20-21 April (10am to 5pm each day). Topics to be covered include making a side fender, back and eye splicing and using the halfhitch to make any shape or size of fender. The course fee (including materials) is £40. To check whether there are any places available, contact Hugh Conway-Jones on Gloucester 619679.

## Friends Use Influence

Three Friends joined the crew of the vintage tug Influence to bring her round from Milford Haven to Sharpness in January. Formerly an Admiralty tug, her paintwork is now in poor condition, and she will be restored in Monk Meadow Dock by David Mitton, who also owns the tug Kennet moored beside the Museum.

Skipped by Des Fforde, Influence left Milford Haven at midnight and made her way along the South Wales coast, with Terry Dellbridge and Doug Griffey taking their turn at steering and Ray Swan acting as engineer. Using charts, they followed a compass course and checked the distance off the various headlands by radar. While passing Barry in hazy conditions around breakfast time, they responded to a call from the coastguard to look for a small boat without a compass that had lost sight of the shore. They saw an echo on the radar, but when this was investigated, it wasn't the right boat and they went on their way.

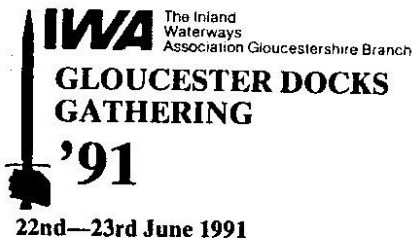
After waiting off Avonmouth for a couple of hours, they had a good run up the estuary with the tide, arriving at Sharpness around five o'clock. The only problem was a slight leak in the cooling system, and every bit of fresh water on board had to be used to top it up.

Off the dock entrance, they swung round to stem the tide and then tied up to the breakwater while a big ship came out. Going into the tidal basin, the engine was so warm it wouldn't run slowly, and so they had to give it a burst and then carry on in neutral right into the lock. Once inside the dock, they tied up alongside the North Quay and looked back on a very successful passage.

## Brush Strokes On The Cut

Cheshire-based canal artist Tony Lewery has just put the finishing touches to a masterpiece which will take pride of place on the wall of the boiler house, overlooking the Barge Arm.

Tony, who specialises in traditional canal boat painting and lives in a cottage beside the Trent and Mersey Canal, was commissioned to produce an eye-catching signboard. Measuring 15ft by 7ft, the mammoth mural features a medieval-style castle with a scenic background, along the lines of typical canal boat decoration.



## The Birmingham Boat Caravan and Leisure Show

*By Clare Caldicott - Museum Publicity Officer*

The 1991 Boat Caravan and Leisure show at the N.E.C. must have been one of the Museum's most ambitious and daunting exhibitions yet! I cannot remember another show that had so much planning, organising and worry (and ultimately the most satisfaction) as this one. It was, as they say, the big one.

The tug Kennet was taken up the motorway to form the centrepiece of the Museum's stand, and around it were display screens designed and created by Museum staff.

Although one member of staff was at the exhibition each day, the running of the stand was carried by the Friends, to whom we are very grateful. Everyone who went was terrific and seemed to enjoy themselves - we chatted to people about the Museum, about Kennet and about Gloucester as a destination. The idea of having three people on duty every day theoretically meant that each person would be able to have a lengthy break to look around the rest of the show and make contact with other stands, which breaks the ice for future shows.

The main objective of our presence was to promote the Museum, and second to that was to sell raffle tickets to raise money for the Museum. We did well during the exhibition. I saw Doug Griffey in action, and so charming was his line of patter that he could have sold ice to the eskimos - nice one Doug.

Knot-tyers Colin Jones and Robert Jackson came to the show every day and managed to get good crowds of interested onlookers and helpers, especially with their ropes made from toilet tissue, the biggest of which is going on display in the Museum. Due to bad weather before the event, the toilet tissue arrived at the Museum too late to go to the N.E.C. by van, and so Marilyn and I had to take up a bale by train. There are 45 rolls in a bale, and they were very difficult to disguise. We had some very interesting comments and some not so interesting ones. (The things we have to do for the Museum!)

The experience of working at the show was certainly memorable and one that I enjoyed. Please make contact with me if you would like to help with a future show. Thanks again for the time and effort given by the Friends - it could not have been done without you!

## The London International Boat Show

*By Lawrence Arnall*

When Clare Caldicott wrote to me asking whether I would like to assist in manning the British Waterways stand at the Boat Show in return for some free time at the show and the return rail fare, I thought that there must be some catch. There was. She wanted the volunteers to dress up in traditional boating costume. Nevertheless, it seemed a reasonable deal, so myself and my wife Alison accepted the offer for 8 January.

At British Waterways request we took the 8.45 train as opposed to earlier trains to save money, but this proved most agreeable as it was considerably quieter than the earlier trains. As a result we arrived at the show slightly after opening.

The British Waterways stand was not difficult to find because it was central, the largest and the most impressive at the show. We were introduced to Bridgett and other staff running the stand. We were given the costumes and asked to look around the stand until the staff had time to show us what to emphasise when talking to the public. Just then, some VIPs and pressmen, including the chairman of British Waterways, Mr David Ingman, entered the stand. As we were the most unusually dressed, they made straight for us. Mr Ingman asked me which canal I worked on! When I explained to him that we were volunteers from the National Waterways Museum, he stated proudly to his audience how successful the museum had been since its opening.

The British Waterways stand, being the central one, attracted a considerable number of visitors. We were instructed to give them tours of the stand. Despite regular tannoy announcements, very few people took us up on this, but we spoke to a large number of people and handed out leaflets, in particular those advertising the National Waterways Museum. The stand, being a condensed replica of the canal system, comprised a lock cottage, maintenance yard and workshop, bone and flint mill and an environmental display. A replica of the Tontine Hotel at Stourport was also present. This hotel was apparently named after a local merchants annuity scheme whereby members paid into a fund, the last surviving member taking the whole. I cannot help feeling that your investment would be safer with the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, an additional benefit of which would be a reduced entrance fee to the National Waterways Museum.



Looking around the show was fascinating. If you had a considerable amount of money to spend on a boat, it would be like a supermarket, providing you with all the latest boats and gadgets. A brand new and beautifully equipped canal hire boat represented the Alvechurch Boat Company. In addition to sales, crafts such as boat painting were demonstrated. In the rest rooms and childrens activity area was displayed a large number of photographs of old canal scenes.

We left the show at around 5pm, having had a very interesting but tiring day. Thanks must go to the National Waterways Museum for allowing us the opportunity of attending. These shows clearly give a welcome occasion for employees of a wide range of companies to get together for a social, make some sales, and see what everybody else is up to. The National Waterways Museum must therefore front its own publicity rather than rely on British Waterways as a whole to do this.

Annual General Meeting on 21 May

The Friends AGM will be held in the Museum Schools Room at 7.30.

#### Agenda

1. Minutes of the last AGM.
2. Report from the Committee (enclosed).
3. Annual accounts (draft Enclosed).
4. Election of Officers and Members of the Committee.
5. Appointment of Auditor.
6. Annual subscription rates.

After the formal business, which should be very brief, there will be an opportunity to raise comments on how things have gone over the past year and to put forward ideas for the future. Particularly welcome will be any suggestions for speakers or visits and any offers to organise new activities.

Following the AGM, there will be a showing of films from the Museum collection.

#### SAMUEL BAKER OF BAKER'S QUAY

*Evelyn Christmas describes the varied interests of the man responsible for the construction of the quay just to the south of Llanthony Bridge.*

Samuel Baker's close association with Gloucester lasted for 15 years of the three critical decades when the essential foundations for the town's mid-nineteenth century economic growth were being laid. He played a positive and sometimes a decisive part in the process. When he arrived in 1832, he was a successful London merchant who had the added advantage of inherited wealth which was invested in colonial estates and shipping employed in Bristol's West Indian trade. So he was immediately seen to be a noteworthy and valued addition to the city's business community.

Several Bristol and Birmingham merchants had begun to trade through the new Gloucester docks when Baker came from London with his partner, Thomas Phillipotts. They had an additional reason for coming because Phillipotts had family ties with the town. In preparation, they registered their ship, Isabella, (225 tons) to begin their local enterprise. Unfortunately, both the intended trade with the West Indies and the partnership soon floundered on the dislocation in sugar production following the emancipation of slaves in British territories. Both weathered the setback, and Baker was already preoccupied with the prospects and problems of the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal Company.

In 1833 he joined the Company's managing committee which was soon required to defend the undertaking in tough negotiations with the Exchequer Loan Commissioners, who periodically threatened to foreclose on their massive loans. Baker's background and experience fitted him to be one of the principal protagonists for the Company, and the stiff terms of an agreement reached in 1840 were based on the financial proposals he drew up. Meanwhile, as the Commissioner's stranglehold prevented the Company from investing in necessary dock facilities, Baker, Phillipotts and others opened the way for expansion in the adjacent area of High Orchard, where they built what became known as Bakers Quay on land they had bought beside the canal. Baker also proposed to construct a drydock on other land he had purchased, since repair facilities were seriously deficient.

Well before the worst financial troubles were over, another danger threatened the Company from a different quarter. So from 1837 Baker was also required in defending its interests and those of the city and local traders, in a prolonged and bitter dispute with an interest group

centered on Worcester, over its schemes to improve navigation on the Severn. He was active locally and in London, where he was one of those representing Gloucester's case to government, and he provided detailed information on how parliamentary debates on the issues were going. This conflict was, no doubt, a cogent reason for setting up the Gloucester Chamber of Commerce in 1839, as an existing society had less definite objectives. The new organisation gave the merchants and others with related interests a strong corporate voice locally and enabled them to join with other chambers of commerce in lobbying government. Baker was a founder member and the first chairman.

In spite of the demands of canal politics and perhaps because of the Canal Company's vulnerability, Baker was in the forefront of local railway promotion, especially of those lines which had the potential to increase trade through the docks and to benefit the city more generally. He held the chairmanship of the Gloucester Provisional Committee for the Birmingham-Gloucester line in 1835, then of the permanent management committee for the whole line, and he remained a director after that. Realising the desirability of a railway west of the Severn, he acted as treasurer collecting outstanding subscriptions for a Gloucester-South Wales project, which came to nothing. However, in 1843 Baker was promoting the Dean Forest Railway Bill, and was a very active chairman of its organisation. The line's completion owed much to his leadership. To a limited extent he involved himself in the Bristol-Gloucester scheme and about the same time in 1837, in the line from Cheltenham-Swindon. Later on Baker became a director of the G.W.R. and the South Wales Company.

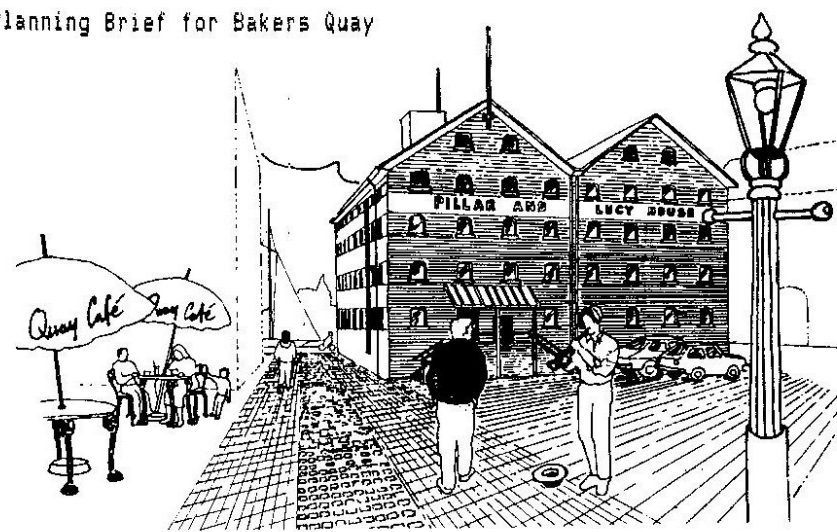
Baker made his mark equally positively in the growing business of the Gloucestershire Banking Company. Mercantile initiative and wealth had a large part in founding this, the first joint stock bank in Gloucester and in the area. It opened in 1831, at a time when additional banking facilities were sorely needed, especially for mercantile, commercial and industrial undertakings. He became a director in 1836, one of the two principal directors with overall executive responsibilities in 1840 and chairman heading the board from 1843.

With such business interests it would be very surprising not to find Baker in company with the well-to-do leaders of local society. He belonged to the Tory, True Blue Club and on occasion chaired the annual dinner. The absence of a cultural organisation for Gloucester polite society became ever more obvious in the 1830s when 'almost every town of importance' could boast of one. Baker seems to have taken the matter in hand as he was presiding over a virtually defunct Natural History Society

in 1838 when a Literary and Scientific Association took its place and he became its first president. It established itself and some years later aspired to open a museum and a good permanent library in the city, for which he offered practical encouragement. However, in spite of members' endeavours they did not succeed.

By the mid 1840s, Gloucester matters were less demanding and Baker's ties with the city weakened while the more regional and even national character of his banking and railway concerns continued. The shift was reflected in his movements; first from Enfield to Highnam Court where his family settled happily in 1833, then to Lypiatt Park and finally to Thorngrove, near Worcester. A local obituary of 1862 remembered his 'warm support of the commercial interests of the port' and 'his enterprising public spirit and his personal worth.'

Planning Brief for Bakers Quay



Gloucester City Council Planning Office has issued a draft planning brief for Bakers Quay and the adjoining land just across Llanthony Road from the Museum. The proposal is to aim for a mixed development of offices, housing, leisure uses, small shops and restaurants together with appropriate car parking. Any development should be centred on the important historic warehouses and should encourage the use of the quay and canal frontage by the general public. Within the site, the new development should be based on a series of open spaces linked together by attractive lanes. One large public square should be suitable for outdoor entertainments and be surrounded by restaurants, bars and cafes.