

Jul 4-5 - Gloucester Gathering - boats, crafts, trade stands and activities at the Docks, organised by IWA and BW.

S — *Diary* — N
"Mud"

Jul 11-12 - Evesham River Festival.

Aug 13 - Imogen's War. A celebration of the women who worked on the waterways by the Mikron Theatre Company at the Museum starting at 7.30.

Aug 29-31 - IWA National Waterways Festival at Wakefield.

Sep - IWA Boaters Forum with British Waterways speakers - to be arranged.

Oct 3-4 - Friends helping at Lifting and Shifting Weekend. To offer help, contact Les Dalton or Charlie Wallace.

Oct 13 - London River. A talk by Brian Cornell, a former Thames waterman and lighterman, in the Museum Schools Room at 7.30.

Nov 17 - Along the Cotswold Canals with Richard Attwood. An IWA meeting at the Tewkesbury Marina Yacht Club at 7.30.

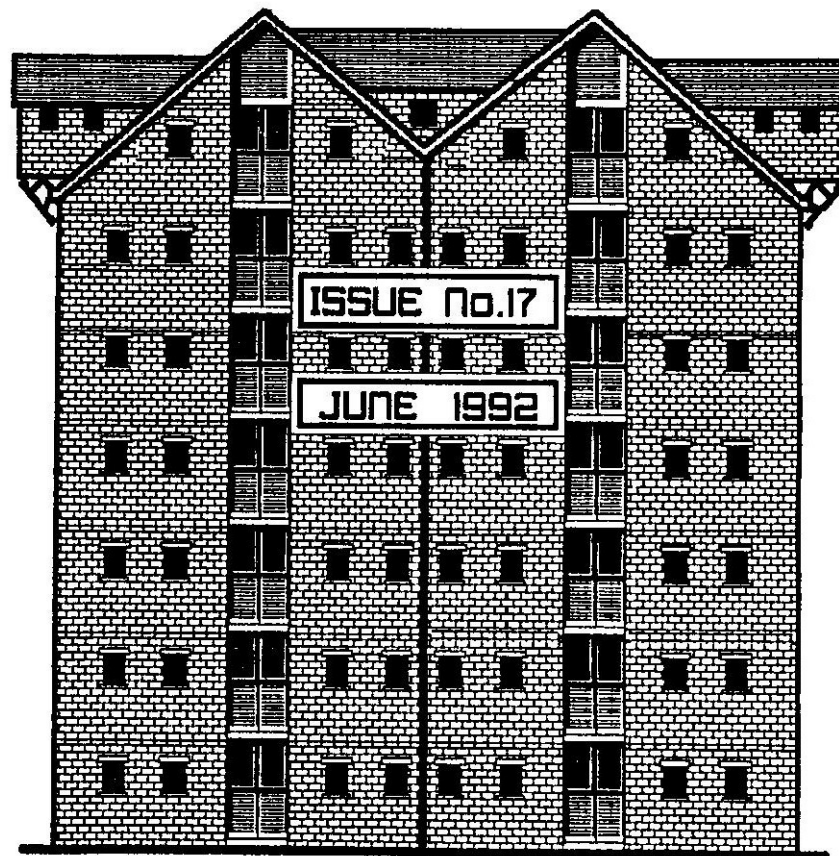
Dec 15 - Modelling Severn Trows. A talk by Peter Wallace, who made some of the models in the Museum, in the Museum Schools Room at 7.30.

For evening meetings, car access to the Museum is from Southgate St. Non-members are welcome

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

- for more *Diary* turn back one page.

LLANTHONY LOG



Newsletter of the Friends of the
National Waterways Museum



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EDITORIAL

This is the second issue of Llanthony Log under the new Editorship. Unfortunately the first issue (No. 16), it has to be admitted, had its faults, and inevitably there was some, mainly constructive, criticism received - not least over the different type faces used. One particular point concerned the change in the design of the cover. I feel that many readers did not, perhaps, appreciate that the original design represented the weathervane over the Schools Room at the Museum, and depicted everyone pulling together. As however the current design does reflect both the Museum's and the Friends' logo appearing on such items as notepaper and sweatshirts, the change of Editorship seemed to be a good time also to make the cover change. In fact, a consensus of opinion at the AGM. showed a majority in favour of the new cover. I hope that readers will find this issue to be an improvement.

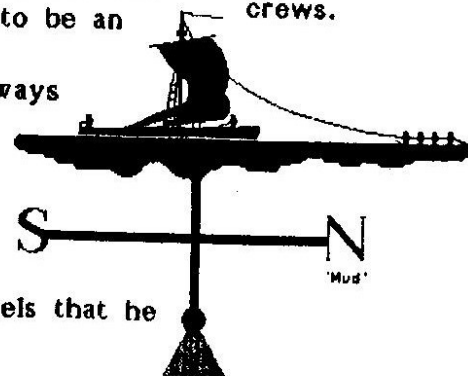
I am always pleased to receive contributions for inclusion in Llanthony Log, so if anyone who has not yet done so, feels that he

or she can produce even a short article on a topic of interest with waterways connections, I shall be delighted.

A.L.G.

KENNET MAKES A TON

The vintage Motor Tug 'Kennet, owned by David Mitton, and kindly allowed by him to be used by the Museum, has done very useful work for the Dredger Restoration Fund since the sinking. This has been achieved by running trips around the Docks at a charge of 50p. per head, and which have proved to be very popular. Recently she took £273 in April and a fantastic total of £539 in May. In fact during the 3 days of the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend in May, the takings were in excess of £200, of which a record £100 was achieved on the Monday! All credit to Alan Morgan and his crews.



The toilets
are here
somewhere!

† In the early evening of
 ■ March 22nd. 1992, a new
 sound was heard in the Docks:
 the bell of the Mariners'
 Church was calling people to
 worship. The bell had just been
 repaired and rehung after a
 silence of some years, but the
 worship had continued since
 the opening of the Church on

their friends, on land
 belonging to the Dock Company,
 at a rent of 2/- a year. The
 first chaplain, Rev. James Hollis,
 wrote a book of reminiscences
 of his time in Gloucester and
 he tells us of a time when:

"Two men were
 lounging on the deck of a trow,
 in the heat of the sun one
 Sunday morning. I begged
 them to get ready for
 church."

'We have no clean clothes,
 sir, and we don't like to
 come' was the answer.

'The Chapel was built that
 you might feel comfortable
 to come even in your dirty
 clothes.'

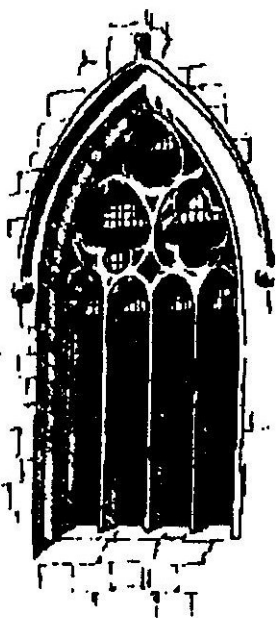
'We will come then, sir.'

Daily visiting was
 carried out by the
 chaplains. We learn from
 one of their reports that:
 "during one year, 775 ships,
 lighters and boats were
 visited and 2,569 men and
 83 women were spoken to."

The work grew and the
 chaplains' duties included open
 air services in the timber
 yards, weekly meetings among
 the women sack menders,
 comforting emigrants who left
 on Gloucester ships to go to
 America and Canada, running

The Church in the Docks

by
 Doris
 Toller

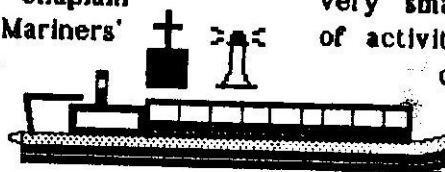


February 11th. 1849.

At that time, the Docks
 were full of ships, barges and
 narrowboats and the need for
 a church for the seamen and
 boatmen to attend was felt.
 This was built and financed by
 a group of businessmen and

† continued:- schools for
 children and
 adults- to teach them to read
 as well as to give Bible
 instruction - and services on
 board ships at the request of
 captains. About one such ship's
 service, a Cheltenham paper
 reported,

"Full church service was
 held by the chaplain
 of the Mariners'
 Church on
 board the
 MYRTLE
 HOLM. The



Rev. Mallett preached an
 earnest sermon to a
 congregation of about 48 tons
 of men, women and children:
 the captain stating that she had
 sunk 8 inches in the water,
 denoting that she had taken
 the above weight of human
 cargo on board."

Foreign ships in port
 were not neglected: booklets
 were distributed in 12
 languages and occasional
 services held in French, Danish
 and Norwegian. The chaplain's
 report for 1876 tells us that,

"Our good bishop (Bishop
 Ellcott) has always taken an
 interest in the Mariner's Church,
 and the chaplain, finding that

he understood Norwegian, his
 lordship was requested to
 preach a sermon to the many
 Norwegian sailors who were in
 port at the time."

So much for the past,
 what of the future?

There is a service in the
 church each Sunday evening
 although the congregations are
 very small. With the renewal
 of activities in the docks, the
 church is playing a
 part. There is a
 Boat Rally held
 each year during

the Spring Bank Holiday
 weekend, and at the boaters'
 request, a service has been
 held on the Sunday morning
 for over 15 years. This year,
 40 people got up in time for
 the 9am. service. A shoppers'
 Carol Service on a Saturday
 afternoon near Christmas has
 become an annual event, as
 has a morning service for Sea
 Sunday, attended by
 organisations connected with
 the sea. Other services for
 special occasions have been
 arranged, and it is hoped that
 as the docks become even
 more active these will
 increase. The service held on
 the Sunday morning of the
 IWA Rally in August 1990
 attracted so many people that

† continued:-

there was an overflow on to the pavement.

During the afternoon of 3 May this year, over 300 people came to sing "Songs of Praise" in the open air outside the Church, led by the band of the Salvation Army. As the old hymn "Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?" was sung, those early chaplains must have rejoiced.

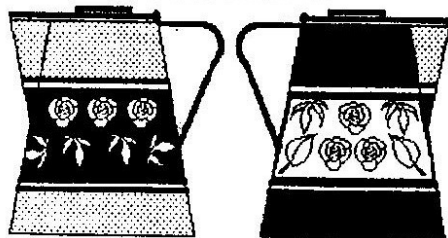
The Church is kept open each day and provides a place of quiet from the rush of our times. Do drop in, or come to any of the services, whether the regular ones on Sunday evening or the special ones which are well advertised.

If you would like to know of a connection with the Museum, the Tanhouse Singers, of which our own Marilyn MacDougall is a member, gave a concert one evening in aid of DART, and Peter Wallace has organised a Baroque Concert there at 2.30pm. on Thursday 27 August this year, as one of the Three Choirs Festival Fringe events. (The admission charge is £2.50).



REPORT

Friends provided staff for the Museum stand at the IWA West Country Waterways Festival and National Trailboat Rally at Taunton over the late May Bank Holiday weekend. Some made the journey from Gloucester, but it was also helpful to have assistance from more local Friends. The stand was in a rather quiet part of the site, but the helpers were keen to give out leaflets, and it is likely that the majority of those visiting the rally were offered one—some more than once! This was a good way of publicising the Museum, and it was also a chance to make contact with Friends from that area who cannot easily join in activities at the Museum.



Horses large & small

Written by Pauline Hill.

Saturday and Sunday May 16th. and 17th. was Horses Weekend at the Waterways Museum. We arrived at 9.30am. on the Saturday to find Peter sharing his yard with Samson from the Forest of Dean. Peter was looking very clean, because he had spent the night in the cartshed to avoid the grass stains he normally wears after a roll in his field. The urn was put to boil ready for the visiting horses. By lunchtime there was Jacob (a Peter lookalike, the only difference being that Peter has a black back leg and Jacob has a black front leg), and Jacob's friend Sam, a wonderfully quiet 18.2 hand brown shire. Helen took great delight in riding Sam bareback around the Museum yard. Brionne and her sister joined Helen on top and had a little stroll around the yard posing for photographers. There was also a dapple grey shire, Captain Gypsy, whose cart was decked up for a wedding which they had done in the morning. Ron Elliot brought along Danny and Brian Elliot had brought William.

Most of the horses had a

cart to pull, so after lunch and lots of cups of tea, they were dressed up in their brass and tassels and hitched up to their carts. The procession set off round the Docks, coming back over the bridge and in at the Llanthony Road gates. It was very impressive and caught the eye of many a photographer. There were two parades on Saturday, and all the horses behaved very well despite the heat. We kept the animals well served with hay and water and the owners well topped up with tea.

Before the end of Saturday, Peter had to be introduced to Sam who was going to share his cartshed for the night. They were quite happy with each other, - in fact any stranger would have thought that they had always been in the habit of sharing their sleeping quarters. They had a narrow barrier between them in case they decided to disagree over anything. After settling down Peter, Sam and Samson (who was sharing Peter's stable), for the night, Jane and her helpers went home for a well-earned rest and to recharge the batteries for Sunday, when Jane was expecting even more horses.

Sunday dawned still

bright and sunny with a slight breeze which saved the horses getting too hot. Peter and Sam had spent an uneventful night and were ready for the morning grooming, so Nicola Sparrow, a Museum Friend, set to with brush and comb and Peter was soon looking as well groomed as on Saturday. Sam and Samson were also having their morning brush up as new horses began to arrive. The first was a lovely little Shetland pony called Danny who pulled a small cart which carried two people. Then there were Ron Elliot's Cream Cracker, Brian Elliot's William, Claire Dalton's Horace and Brian Mason's Sweetheart, all small ponies with plenty of spirit and keen to pull their carts. The Courage Brewery Shires arrived in their Sunday best, their names being Marquis and Victor. They were a magnificent pair, who sadly for us have now been sold to Eurodisney, so this was probably their last public appearance in this country before travelling to France. Gary Bullard, who walked his large grey, Somerset Gem, dressed in her shiny brass, all the way from Longford (some 4 or 5 miles), was in need of a glass of squash when he arrived. Eric Freeman brought his pair Duke and Topper, whilst

Cyril Lockyer had Thistlede Mystic Dream. The first parade was at 12.30 following many requests from the public, after which lunch and many cups of tea were supplied and the horses then prepared for another parade. Jane's helpers were kept busy with the shovel cleaning up around the yard and making tea. Two parades were held during the afternoon.

Everyone enjoyed the two days, and the horses returned to their homes having raised a good deal of interest. Jane took Peter to his field for a well deserved roll and night in the open air, whilst Samson spent the night in the stable before being fetched by his owners on Monday. Jane went home tired but pleased with the weekend, a culmination of forward planning and letter writing for which she must be congratulated.

Whilst the horses were busy outside, there was a harness maker demonstrating his skills in the Schools Room, and an apprentice farrier using the forge in the Blacksmiths Shop.

We all look forward to next year's Horses Weekend.

(Editor's Note). Jane Savery particularly wishes to thank all those people who helped to make this event so successful.)

Friend's Craft Weekend 3rd & 4th May '92

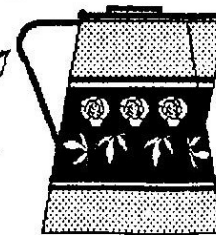
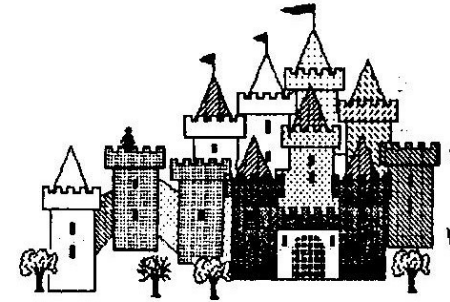
Sunday and Monday of the May Bank Holiday saw the Friends demonstrating their crafts at the Museum. John Fant from Hempsted brought along some of his superb ship models which displayed the art of "plank on frame" technique to perfection. He also included a model of the last ship in which he served in the Royal Navy. In the blacksmith's shop, Les Drewery set up his lathe and delighted visitors by introducing them to the gentle art of wood turning.

Back in the Schools Room, Colin Jones concentrated on the fascinating construction of rope fenders, whilst above him hung a piece of the celebrated Loo Roll hawser he made for the challenge of pulling a Thames barge. Ron Harpham was busy with soldering iron and glass cutter, assembling his beautiful pendants and window pieces in coloured glass. Doris Toller revived old memories for many people with the making of Rag Rugs by several methods known to her and revealed by previous visitors to the Museum.

A popular attraction was "Dick", a professional exponent of the art of Roses and Castles painting, with his charming wife dressed in the traditional costume of the Cut. We are especially grateful to them for making sure that 'show went on' in spite of severe transport difficulties. Hidden away in the Propulsion Room, were Alan Butcher working on his incredibly detailed models for the Pendon Museum and Peter Wallace enlisting the help of children, mums and dads in building a model of Heidi, a Ruhr sailing barge."

Our thanks must go to the Museum staff for keeping us fed through the enjoyable weekend.

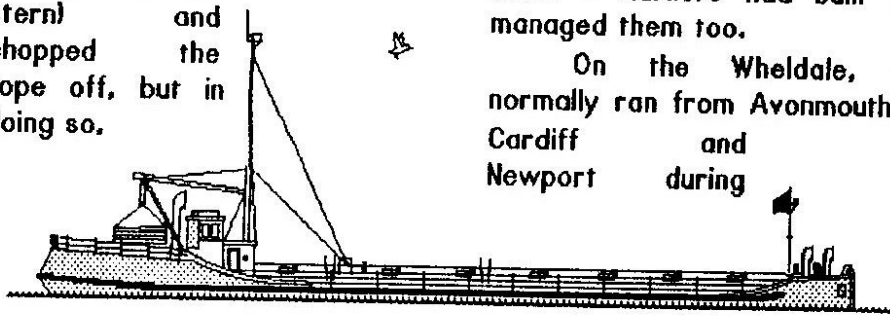
- Peter Wallace



TANKER DAYS REMEMBERED

Shortly before he died, Doug Griffey recorded these reminiscences in conversation with Hugh Conway-Jones.

My father was captain of the Severn Carrier, and I went for a trip with him one week up to Stourport and down to Avonmouth. During the trip, somewhere we picked up a rope on the propeller. When we got to Avonmouth, we loaded by the bow (to lift the stern) and chopped the rope off, but in doing so,



they must have loosened the nut. When we got up to Sharpness and swung round there, we went astern and off went the propeller! All the crew started banging on buckets and shouting "Help! Help! Help!" Fortunately Frank Savage on the tug Primrose realised what had happened. He shot his two barges into the tidal basin in front of everyone else, and then came back and picked us up.

I joined John Harkers around Easter 1949, starting on the Westerndale with Fred Beckett and family. She was then quite a recent boat that went to Worcester. I got married in the November, and then I went to the Wheldale, a brand new boat. Each motor barge had a crew of four - skipper, mate, engineer and boy. The Wheldale was built on the same lines as those coal-carrying boats that used to discharge at the power station berth - Harkers had built and managed them too.

On the Wheldale, we normally ran from Avonmouth to Cardiff and Newport during

the week. There were also some tankers that could carry about 1000 tons which came to these depots from Swansea or Fawley, but these were liable to be neaped as they had a draft of 12 to 14 ft. which was too deep for some tides, so they put Harkers tankers in there which had only 8 ft. draft, and they gradually stopped the larger tankers.

At weekends we came up to Gloucester early Saturday

TANKERS cont:-

morning and through to Worcester on the Sunday. We called it 'up and back' - we'd leave Gloucester at 5 am. and get back to Gloucester on the Sunday night. Then it was five o'clock away next morning back down the canal for a day tide into Avonmouth. We worked seven days a week continuously. You could put in for a holiday, but once you had got it they'd be on the telephone saying can you come back? Once I was away from home for seven weeks at a time.



HARKER FUNNELS

One day a parcel arrived for me down at Swansea from the wife. I opened it up in the shipping office there, and it was the pair of knickers she wore on her honeymoon. I thought to myself there must be a message here. So then I strung them up the mast! When I was at Newport after that, I'd sometimes nip home by train although we weren't supposed to. One night I was at home, Fred Collins (the Manager) called with my wages, and I had to dive under the table.

Once I got a skippers job. I had a good crew and I said to them "You come with me and we'll earn some money. Give it ten years and then we can get

out of it." You could do two round trips between Swansea and Worcester in a week by working 110 hours. You couldn't use the canal at night, but you could ask the Gloucester office to order the locks on the river at almost any time. If you could come down the river early Saturday morning, I liked to be away from Gloucester by 9 am.

and arrive at Sharpness about midday. Then I could have what I called the weekend at home before leaving at 6 am. on Sunday morning for Swansea again.

On the tankers, you had to be first if you could - if you lost your turn, you could lose a trip. At one time we'd say first pass Berkeley Pill is first up the canal, but sometimes another boat would try to push in. I've seen boats come together sideways trying to overtake between Berkeley Pill and Sharpness. Afterwards the bosses would say the boat with the most damage was the one in the wrong, but that wasn't always correct and the men would fight on the quay wall about it. Coming out of Gloucester Lock, you had a check rope ashore to stop

TANKERS cont:-

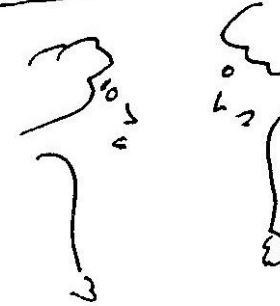
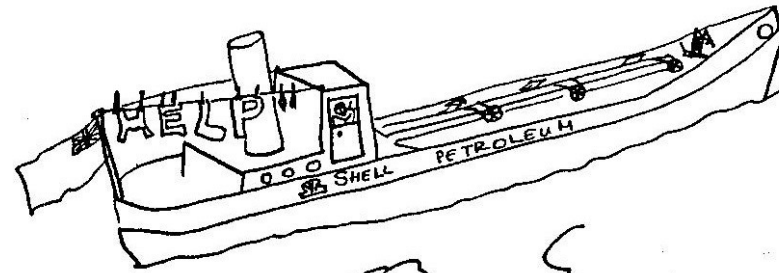
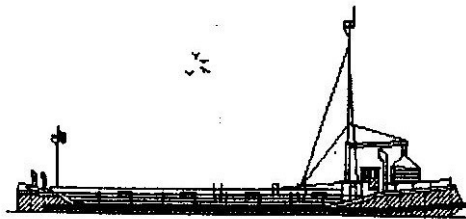
the bow being swept away from the wall due to the river current running down to the weir. As the boat almost filled the width of the lock, it was difficult to manoeuvre when moving slowly, and it only had to swing a little to jam across the mouth of the lock.

Coming down once on the Wanda with a little fresh water in the river, we were dropping down alongside the Quay when the bow got off too far, and we ended up turning round in a circle. As the boat went round, her stern touched the shore on the meadow side and her bow ended up on the wall by the lock-keeper's house. we had to start pumping the ballast out they got a tug to pull us out and we eventually went into the lock stern first.

The Worcester boats were higher than those going to Stourport which meant that you were more affected by flood water. You could be held at Upton Bridge, Haw Bridge and the Black Bridge. You'd have your marks, like tree stumps or something, and if you could see them you were alright. I could never understand why they never put fixed marks like they've got now. All you had to go by was your local knowledge and hope you had it right.

If the water was high, the big boats all used to swing at the top end of the Parting so you could come through the Black Bridge slower than the current. You'd just put the bow into the bank and let the water bring the boat round. You'd drop your anchor down on the bends to keep the boat a bit straight and then you'd pull it up again. Or you could put a wire round the end of the anchor to hold it up and just let the chain go out so it dragged on the bottom. If you started travelling fast astern by using your engine, you'd lose control of the boat. This is what happened to the barge that ended up over the weir. You came slowly down past Gloucester Quay and into the lock stern first. You couldn't hurry - it was just a matter of patience.

I left Harkers in 1962, and then I became a Severn pilot. The pay was not as good, but I could spend more time at home.



YES YOU CAN
ALWAYS TELL WHEN THEY'VE
GOT A WOMEN ON BOARD

JAMES.

Second turntable nears completion

Thanks to good work by Dave McDougall and his helpers, Alan Russell, Ian Parsons, Keith Varney and Brian Cornell, the second turntable at the Docks/Barge Arm corner of the quay is now virtually complete. Basically all that remains to be done is the installation of the timber decking. Therefore, the external access to the exhibits in the Barge Arm area is now reinstated, and another Museum feature is on view.

Mikron Theatre

Mikron Theatre Company will be visiting the Museum on Thursday 13 August to perform their latest production 'Imogen's War'. This is a celebration of the women who contributed to the war effort by working on the waterways. they were known as 'the trainees' or ironically as 'Idle Women' after the initials on the badge which wartime workers on the inland waterways received.

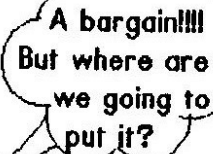
BOAT JUMBLE SCORES

AGAIN

The Boat and Watersports Jumble Sale on 5 April was a tremendous success and is now established as one of the major events in the UK providing a fine range of products for sale. Thanks to good organisation by Stuart Darnley and his team of helpers, all went well on the day, and favourable comments were received from customers, sponsors Exchange & Mart, the Boat Jumble Association and

of slipping facilities and the amount of fresh water in the river that would have made towing difficult. However better results should be possible next year.

Arrangements had been made to use Llanthony Quay for car parking, but a few days before the event, a routine check showed that the area was considerably obstructed by contractors who were demolishing the old



A bargain!!!!
But where are
we going to
put it?

other traders.

The traders were again attracted to the site by their good experience from last year of the layout, organisation and facilities. Although extra space was arranged this year, some traders still had to be refused due to lack of space. An innovation this year was the opportunity for boats for sale to be afloat in the Barge Arm. In fact, there were few takers for this, with some sellers not realising the potential and others being put off by the lack

transit sheds on the site. Fortunately, they were very co-operative, and cleared up so well that they actually provided more space than expected.

To enclose the main jumble site, arrangements had been made to borrow barriers from Nuclear Electric and plastic safety fencing from British Waterways. These were set up on Saturday afternoon, the traders' plots were marked out and road signs were erected. Some of the traders arrived while this was still going

on. Most arrived on Sunday morning, and volunteers were on duty from 6am. to show them to their places.

Stuart had arranged a programme of advertising in major boating and fishing magazines and newspapers covering the South West, the Midlands and Wales, often managing to get substantial discounts on the normal rates. He also negotiated sponsorship from the company which publishes Exchange & Mart, who, in addition, gave free publicity. All this brought in well over 3000 customers from as far afield as the Outer Hebrides, Colchester and Bournemouth. Around 40 Friends were on duty in shifts to collect money at the four gates and to control the car park on Llanthony Quay. (One volunteer even came in spite of suffering from a broken bone). Some of Stuart's friends also put in sterling work distributing tickets and collecting and counting the money.

The only real difficulty was the tendency of drivers to ignore the signs to the car park and to park in the docks area instead. This caused considerable congestion in the middle of the morning, and someone had to be stationed at

the Southgate St. entrance for a while to direct cars to the official car park. The main rush had passed by lunchtime, and the afternoon was much quieter. Then it was time to pack everything up, return the items that had been borrowed and clear up the litter. By six o'clock, the car park was clear, and the helpers went home knowing that their efforts had been worthwhile.

The overall profit on the jumble should be around £8270. This will easily cover the remaining expenditure needed on the dredger, and it will allow a good start to be made on the next project. Also important is the contribution the jumble has made to the image of the Museum and of the Docks. Thanks again go to Stuart Darnley for shouldering the major responsibility.



AT THE A.G.M

At the Friends AGM in May, the Committee members were re-elected en bloc, except that Les Dalton has stood down after four years as Treasurer. Les has had a

at the A.C.M. cont.-

particularly busy time over the last two years handling all the money that has been raised in response to the Dredger Appeal, and he hands over the finances in a very healthy state. The new Treasurer will be Charlie Wallace, who was recently co-opted on to the Committee to organise volunteers. Les has agreed to help with volunteers and so he has been co-opted in Charlie's place.

With regard to subscriptions, the meeting agreed to the Committee's recommendation that the individual membership rate should be increased to £8 and the family membership to £13. This maintains a margin of around £4 above the corresponding entry fees to the Museum, which have been raised recently. The increased rates will come into effect from 1 June 1992 for new members and from 1 October 1992 for existing members.

During an informal discussion following the meeting, various points were raised which will be considered by the Committee.

is scheduled to start this year, and she will be ready for the 1993 season, and at least one year's running costs are held by the Trust. The Friends have made a donation to this very worthwhile cause.

Discounts on QBII

Friends are being offered special reduced rates on the long cruises on Queen Boadicea II in the Autumn. For a round trip to Sharpness or Tewkesbury, the cost would be £8 for adults or £4 for juniors/OAPs. The dates for the cruises are Sharpness Sep 5, Tewkesbury Sep 19 and Oct 17. For further details, contact Mary Mills at the Museum (Glos. 307009).

Willow Trust orders second boat

The Willow Trust provides freedom for the disabled on the water, completely free of charge, by the use of a 70ft.x 10ft.6in. Broad Beamed 36 Ton Canal Boat 'Spirit of Freedom', which started operating on 8th April 1991, and can carry 28 disabled and helpers on day outings. She was three times oversubscribed with booking applications in 1991. As a result, a donor has made a magnificent gift which has allowed the Trustees to order a second wide beamed craft. Its building ..

M.S. OLDENBURG VISITS THE DOCKS

The M.S. Oldenburg, built and originally used in Germany, is now operated by the Landmark Trust for the National Trust as a ferry between Ilfracombe or Bideford and Lundy Island. She recently visited the Docks and this is an account of her return trip to Cleveland Pier, before proceeding to her normal areas of operation.

The following interesting contribution has been kindly provided by Sheila Simmons.

The M.S. Oldenburg was at the head of a flotilla of small boats heading out of Gloucester Docks at 9.30am. on Spring Bank Holiday Monday to sail along the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal.

Being on the upper deck of such a large vessel gives the same advantages as the top deck of a bus! Things that are invisible from a narrow-boat are seen for the first time, and one also has the pleasure of looking down on 'gongoozlers' instead of the other way round!

We proceeded in fine form, with an informative but

not obtrusive commentary on the passing scene from the Captain. For me, the best part of the canal journey was probably the stretch past Purton, where we had a wonderful view of the river, running parallel to us on the starboard side.

Sharpness was full of Bank Holiday canal users, and the Oldenburg, after dropping some passengers and picking up more, shared the large lock with a host of smaller craft, packed in rather too tightly, it appeared, when the hulls began to crunch together! Apparently the Lock-keeper had not allowed for the 'batter' or inwards slope of the lock sides at the lower water level of the lock.

Then, when the gates opened, we were out into the amazingly wide channel of the Severn and sailing on past Berkeley towards the Severn Bridge. Fred Rowbotham's slides had given me some idea of what this would be like, but actually doing it was quite an exciting experience. There was much clicking of cameras!

Work on the new bridge was pointed out to us, as we sailed on past the gleaming storage tanks of Avonmouth, and elegant Portishead,

Oldenburg cont:-

familiar landmarks, but more usually viewed from the M5.

Our destination, Cleveland Pier, came into sight all too soon, and we were at the end of our 6 hour trip - although the Oldenburg was going on to Ilfracombe.

Bideford and Lundy Island. The strong tide made landing at Clevedon on the rather makeshift looking

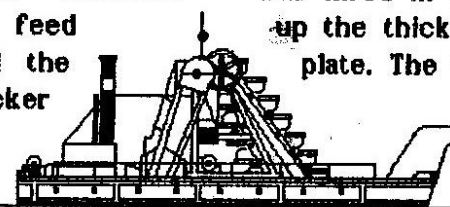
landing-stage at the end quite an exciting business, but we were soon clambering up onto the planks of the pier, and joining the coach that was to take us back to Gloucester - watching out of the window to catch a last glimpse of the Oldenburg sailing off.

We were fortunate to have had such a sunny Bank Holiday for our trip on this fine vessel.

DREDGER IN DRY DOCK

The dredger has spent two weeks in the small dry dock during May to allow various jobs to be done by Museum staff and volunteers. This period included the Shipshape and Gloucester Fashion open weekend organised by British Waterways, when the work being done on the dredger contributed to the interest of the weekend.

One important job which had to be done was to replace sections of the bulkhead between the feed water tanks and the aft rope locker where they had been badly

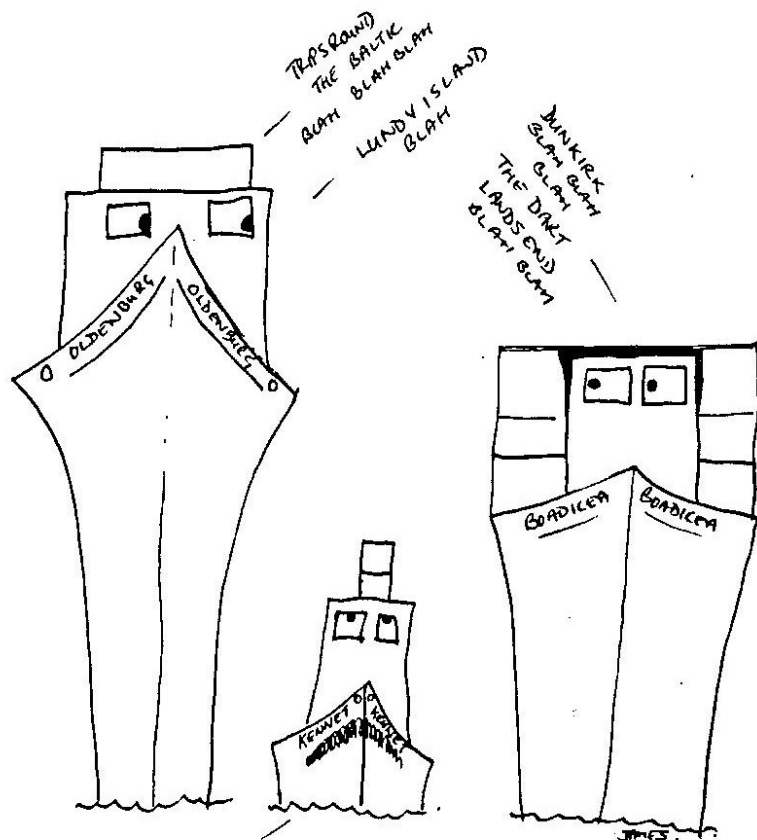


affected by corrosion allowing leaks to develop. This could not be done properly with the dredger floating because the metal surfaces could be damp from condensation and this would interfere with the subsequent painting. A contractor was brought in to burn out the affected sections and to tack in replacement panels. Then a second contractor shot-blasted the whole area to provide a good surface for painting and for the main welding. As this was a confined area, the painting was done by the

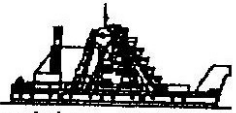
contractor using an air-fed breathing mask.

During the same period, good progress was made on strengthening the mounting of the steps at the bottom of the tower ladder. When the steps had been removed, it had been found that the metal plate behind had been badly affected by corrosion and needed to be strengthened. Taking advantage of the three-phase power supply adjoining the dry dock, a MIG welder was hired in and used to build up the thickness of the metal plate. The welder uses reel-fed wire and has a jet of inert gas which is supposed to give good welding conditions, but it wasn't easy to use in the open air as the wind tended to blow the inert gas away.

While all this was going on, work was also in hand to clean and paint the bottom and sides of the dredger up to deck level. The first stage done by Museum staff was to wash the hull with a pressure washer and then to chip and scrape the rusty parts. At the weekend, volunteers arrived to continue the filthy job of wire-brushing to get off the



ALL VERY WELL BUT NEITHER OF THEM HAVE DONE 70 MPH UP THE M5.



cont:-

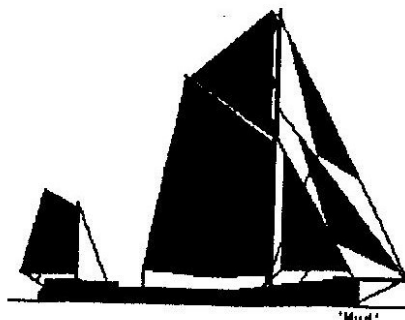
remaining mud and the loose tar on the hull. Working underneath the dredger was a miserable job as all the dirt fell on to the workers, but fortunately the condition of the surface was not too bad, and it was the sides that needed most attention. For these, staging was set up and moved around as required, although some work had to be done using ladders, particularly around the stern corners where there was not space to set up the staging.

Once the surfaces had been adequately prepared, the volunteers started painting. The underneath had two coats of bitumen paint on the areas that had been chafed or were rusty, and one coat on the remainder. The sides had a Rustoleum primer, a yellow undercoat and a grey or black gloss coat. By the end of the weekend, the underneath and most of one side was done, and the other side was finished off during the following week.

During the cleaning process, it was found that the surfaces of the hull that face inwards towards the bucket ladder were very badly corroded. They looked all right

from a distance, but a light tap was enough to make great scabs of rust and tar fall off. Museum staff therefore chipped off all the loose material, and the whole area was shot-blasted before applying a coat of epoxy tar to protect it better in the future.

Those working in the dock had a good opportunity to examine the water extraction arrangements. As long as the river level is not too high, water can be drained direct from the dock into the river, and this is the usual method of emptying the dock. Once the dock is empty, the paddle is shut to prevent back-flooding. Any water which then leaks past the entrance gates flows along channels in the bottom of the dock to a sump, from which it is extracted by a float-operated pump in the nearby engine house.



'Mud'

BRITISH ASSOCIATION of Friends of Museums

Liz Howard reports on the South-West Regional Meeting on 29 April 1992.

All seem to be working with the same sorts of problems:

- a) raising money for purchases for their museums, which are facing cuts by their local authorities,
- b) encouraging visitors, and
- c) finding out about the museums in detail and helping to provide research or support of whatever kind is needed.

Most of the museums represented were either general or fine art museums.

We had a very interesting talk from Jane Baker on Devonshire artists and I was fascinated to see that there was a very specific style of painting. I wonder whether there was ever a Gloucestershire style.

After lunch, I was able to talk to one of the curatorial staff from The Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter. From this conversation, it seemed that many museums are

very worried about the care of their collections and felt that this has reached a critical phase.

I came away thinking how lucky we are at the National Waterways Museum to be able to work towards enhancing the Museum year by year, rather than feeling that the heritage is slipping away, as is obviously felt in other museums.



to the Rescue

On the day the dredger finished in the dry dock, the Museum's tug Progress was called upon to rescue the British Waterways crane-barge Gloucester which was stuck near Llanthony Weir, just down the river from Gloucester Lock.

The crane-barge had been sent down to the weir to clear floating branches and tree trunks which had collected there. This debris gets carried upstream when spring tides come over the weir, and the larger items are a hazard to navigation. Unfortunately, something had got fouled round

Progress cont:-

barge's propeller, and it could not get clear of the weir. A small tug, Margo Newman, was sent to assist, but it was not powerful enough to tow against the current. The big British Waterways tugs were too big to go down the shallow channel to the weir, and so Progress was called for.

Des Fforde, with a British Waterways man as crew, took Progress out into the river and proceeded slowly down towards the weir. About half way down, they turned round and drifted backwards with the current, trying to avoid the sunken debris in the shallow channel which could have damaged the propeller.

Initially, they put a rope on to Margo Newman, and both tugs tried to tow, but this didn't work very well as the wash from Progress made the other boats swing from one side of the channel to the other. Then Margo Newman was released, and Progress started towing the crane-barge direct using two ropes attached to the corners. This was much more successful, but it was still a slow job trying to find a way through the submerged debris that they had snagged on the way down. At some points they ended up having to drag the barge over

the obstacles, and this required all the power Progress could provide.

Eventually they brought the crane-barge up to the lock, and Margo Newman towed it in while Progress kept pulling gently upstream to avoid the current swinging the barge back towards the weir. All three boats managed to fit into the lock together, and the crane-barge was safely returned to the main dock.

Whilst the engine was hot as a result of its exertions, a whine developed in the gearbox when in the neutral position. British Waterways agreed to check the system, and a fitter came up from Sharpness. His initial reaction was that the gearbox would have to come out for repair, but this concern proved groundless after an adjustment to the engine idling speed put the matter right.

HELP WANTED!!!

TELETHON is fast approaching and the Museum is planning to make yet another rope - (k)not loo roll this time - but it could be very interesting! We need volunteers to assist over the Telethon Weekend, 18 and 19 July, as well as occasional days during the run-up to the event. So, how about taking the plunge and offering your services? If you can help, please ☎ Marilyn or Clare on (0452) 307009.

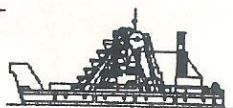


shape & Gloucester fashion

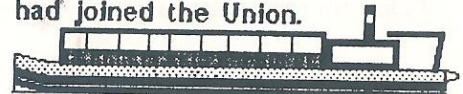
British Waterways organised an excellent open weekend at the dry docks in May with much for the public to see and plenty of staff to explain how things were done. The old engine house was open for inspection, there were exhibits in the Section workshop and there was an opportunity to try pond-dipping.



The Museum's dredger was a star exhibit in the small dry dock, and the restoration work being done by Friends added considerable interest for the visitors. Photographs were on display showing the dredger working, sunk and being raised, and a Friend was on hand to explain the pictures.



The tall ship Kaskelot was in the large dry dock, and visitors could go down into the dock and appreciate the huge size and fine lines of the hull. An observant member of the public queried why the flag being flown was not a proper Union Jack - apparently the flag had been made for a film set at a time before Ireland had joined the Union.



Tomi Nielsen, the local shipwright, also put on a good display with about ten craftsmen demonstrating their skills on a variety of projects both inside his workshops and afloat.

Jul 4-5 - Alan Firth - waterways artist.

Jul 18-19 - Telethon in the Docks.

Jul 25-26 - Jeff Howe - traditional painting.

Aug 8-9 - Jeff Howe - traditional painting.

Sep 5-6 - Modellers Weekend.



Museum

Weekend Events