

Diary

Jul 23-Aug 30 Canals of Wales - a special exhibition at the Museum high-lighting the history of the canals which helped put Welsh industry in the forefront of the Industrial Revolution.

Aug 27-9 National Waterways Festival at Waltham Abbey.

Aug 28 IWA proposed coach trip to National Waterways Festival. Contact Charlie or Mary Phelps - Tel: Glos.(0452) 863437.

Aug-Oct Exhibition of paintings at the Museum showing the Shubencadie Canal by Tom Forrestal. The canal runs across Nova Scotia, and its route is pictured in 26 water-colours showing the restored and derelict sections.

Sep 10 Swindon Model Boat Club will be putting models of all shapes and sizes through their paces.

Sep 13 IWA Walk. Meet at Chalford Church layby at 6.30pm. for a walk through the valley, returning via Thames & Severn Canal towpath.

Sep 17 Friends visit to the Dudley Canal Trust and Black Country Museum. See separate slip inside.

Sep 20 IWA visit to Weston's Cider Factory at Much Marcle, Herefordshire at 7.30pm. This will be limited to a party of 20 persons maximum. Contact Charlie or Mary Phelps - Tel: Glos.(0452) 863437.

Sep 24 QBII cruise to Tewkesbury. Depart Merchants Quay at 10.30.

Oct 1-2 Preservation and Modellers Weekend. Live steam, horse rides the world of precision modelling, cranes, boats and trains.

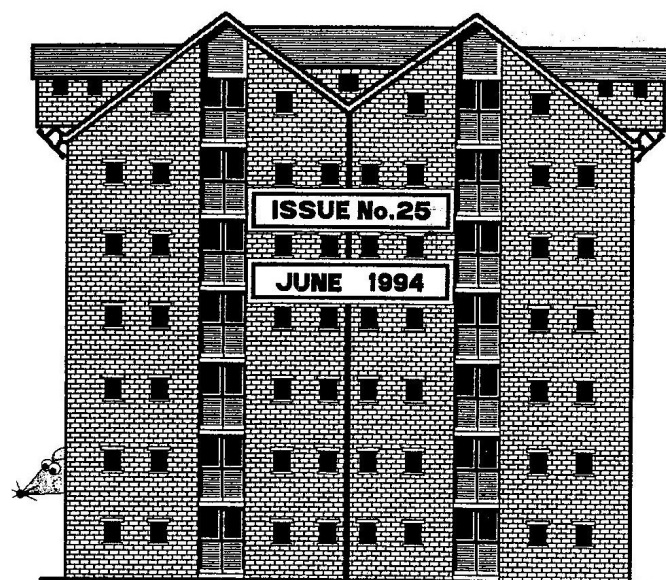
Oct 25 Edward Paget-Tomlinson will talk on 'Colours of the Cut', illustrated with some of his originals and slides. This promises to be a 'colourful' evening!

Nov 22 Hugh McKnight will show his film 'From the Rhine to the Danube', an epic 2-reeler which includes footage of the new canal connecting these rivers, opened in 1992.

Dec 20 (no, not the 4th. Tuesday). Members Night! We hope to be able to offer a light-hearted programme with informal contributions from members lasting not more than 10 minutes each. Something to help the mince pies and wine go down! Offers to William Rowley, please.

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Llanthony Log



Newsletter of the Friends of the
National Waterways Museum

The 'Friends' is Registered Charity No. 800282

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EDITORIAL

Unfortunately the poor weather in the early Spring and even more recently has not helped the Events programme. Having said this however, the Boat & Watersports Jumble in mid-April was successful, although a warmer day would perhaps have improved the attendance. The very wet Saturday and most of Sunday morning for the Horses & Tugs Weekend in May undoubtedly adversely affected the activities, particularly the various planned Tug trips, but my thanks go to the organisers and helpers for their efforts.

I must apologise for a lapse of memory on my part in reporting in the March 1994 Issue, that the presentation to Hugh Conway-Jones at the 16th. December Friends' meeting was made by Peter Wallace. In fact he was unable to be present and the presentation was made by Les Dalton.

One of our stalwart, hard-working members - Doris Toller - was very pleased when she was allowed to to reassemble a part of the condenser cooling water control valve operating spindle on No.4 Dredger recently. This made a change from her usual but nonetheless very useful tasks of chipping, painting, polishing etc. Significant progress has been made on the dredger, on which it is intended to report in the next Issue.

The steam crane is now back in service after its somewhat prolonged winter outage and overhaul period.

I understand that two of our active Friends, Mike Pullon and Noel Michelli, have recently been in hospital and I am sure that we all wish them a speedy and complete recovery. Another Friend - Ron Williams, a member of the 'Wednesday Gang' is also, I am pleased to say, fully back in form at the Museum after his operation. A.L.G.

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VISIT TO THE DUDLEY CANAL TRUST AND BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM

The Friends have been invited to be guests of both the above organisations on Saturday 17th. September 1994. We shall need to know by 1st. August the number of Friends who are coming, so please return the attached application to Peter Wallace by that date.

Transport arrangements will depend on the total number going and we will advise you after 1st. August whether:

- 1) it will be in groups of cars, or
- 2) if a coach will run from Gloucester, and the cost per head for this.

This will be a fine opportunity to visit both places as their guests and it should be an enjoyable day for the Friends.

P.T.O. for the Application Form...

Crafts at Work

Easter - 1994

Our Chairman - Peter Wallace reports

The event was the biggest so far with a total of 15 people taking part over the 3 days. A particular feature was the publicity attracted by Mary Mills which resulted in a feature on Central News TV and a full page in the 'Citizen'.

As usual, Colin Jones, Les Drewery, Alan Butcher, Ron Harpen, John Fant, with Dick Harper-White and Jean took part, while Doris Toller made a brief appearance on the Monday afternoon.

New attractions were two calligraphers from the Glevum Scribes and from Rotherham we had 'Country Kitchens' selling home-made sweets and displaying the art of preserved bread decorated with nuts. Through the good offices of Jane Savery we had an attractive display of 'Country Crafts' by Christine Counsell of Hartpury. Avril Lansdell, the author of many books on the waterways, demonstrated the art of making Boatmen's belts and invited many visitors to try their skill on this type of embroidery.

Once again the Museum staff made us very welcome and for all concerned it was a happy event.

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APPLICATION FOR VISIT TO

DUDLEY CANAL TRUST & BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM
on SATURDAY 17th. SEPTEMBER 1994

Name of "Friend" _____

Address _____

Tel. No. _____ Number in your Party _____

If a coach runs from Gloucester, how many seats would your Party require? _____

Please send your completed Application Form to:-
Peter Wallace, 16c Grosvenor Road, Gloucester, GL2 0SA
by 1st. August 1994.

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



Saturday
16th July 1994
10.00 - 5.00

World's 1st "plastic" road bridge!

Opening * Celebrations *

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

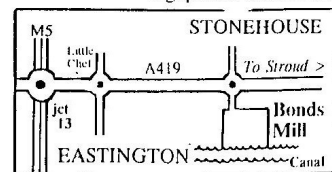
Gathering of Boats on the Stroudwater Navigation

* Bridge Re-opening Ceremony (2.00pm) *

signposted from A419

Free Entrance!
Free Parking!

Trade, Craft & General Enquiries
ring 0453 755535



BONDS MILL BRIDGE

The Story So Far

by David Jowett (*The Cotswold Canals Trust*)

The Cotswold Canals Trust is working to restore the waterway link between England's two greatest rivers, the Severn and the Thames. The route takes in the Stroudwater Navigation to the east of Stroud and the Thames and Severn Canal to the west.

One of the latest projects was to replace an old swing bridge at Bonds Mill near Stonhouse. For many years the bridge had been fixed, causing an obstruction to navigation. Replacement by a lift bridge would extend a navigable section of about one mile.

The new bridge was to be of a new Advanced Composite Structure, or in other words - plastic! This would make for a lightweight lift bridge dispensing with the need for overhead counterbalance mechanisms.

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

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

This was then covered with a large green sheet so as to keep the stone infill separate from the clay canal lining. Some 220 tonnes of stone was then brought in, 20 tonnes at a time, being spread by excavator and by hand. Each layer was compacted using a pedestrian vibrating roller. The causeway was fitted with scaffold handrails and 8m. of concrete was laid across the top to form a roadway.

At the end of February, traffic was diverted across the temporary road and the old bridge removed. Once the timber deck was lifted away, the extent of rot in the steelwork was revealed. With the exception of five recently added steel beams, the original bridge was only a pile of rust.

The concreted back-swing proved to be solid concrete and required an excavator-mounted breaker to smash it. When the old bridge pivot was exposed it still rotated! The pivot and its timber framework has been removed from the site back to the

Trust compound at Eastington - it is hoped eventually to put it back together as an exhibit by one of the locks in the area. Having excavated the area for the new foundations and laid a concrete skim, a contractor was brought in to set up the rather complex reinforcing steel. Once shuttered, the areas were then concreted in.

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

A varied selection of evening entertainments was organised for the WRG volunteers including a tunnel trip at Coates and a visit to the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester. Our thanks go to Tony Conder for letting them in, as it must have been difficult convincing the public that the Museum was officially closed whilst allowing what looked like a dozen new age travellers to enter free of charge!

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

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

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

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THE 1994 GLOUCESTER BOAT & WATERSPORTS JUMBLE

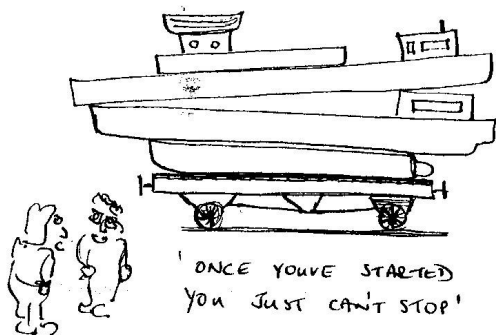
Doreen Davies tells of her part in organising this year's Event.

The task of organising this year's Boat and Watersports Jumble was taken on not fully realising the extent of what was involved and amount of work entailed, but somebody had to do it so "in for a penny in for a pound" as the saying is. We were all determined that come what may, the Jumble would be well organised and with the help of everyone involved, this was achieved.

The first job was to try to find the person in charge of the The Boat Jumble Association. In the nick of time we tracked down Roger Horton - the fixture list was already at the printers. Roger acted fast by phoning them and paying the fee on our behalf, but naturally we have reimbursed him.

Tony Conder "the boss" set aside a number of dates for meetings to outline a planned timetable, discuss progress etc.

All jumble information had to be updated, this being done in-house and photocopied. Posters, letters and booking forms were sent to all clubs and societies and to everyone on a previous list of stallholders, which unfortunately was 2 years old, but it was all we had.



Now the leg work had to come. Volunteers were recruited to attend other shows and boat jumbles to publicize our event. Dale Hughes spent a day at the Birmingham Boat Show distributing posters etc. Dave McDougall and his merry band spread the word at Cardiff and Beaulieu. The only place where we had problems was at Malvern. I met Dale outside the gates to be told that they had refused him permission to

publicize our Jumble. Apparently there had been some sort of disagreement the previous year, so being the determined person I am, and being at my most charming, I spoke to the organiser and explained our situation. Success, we were allowed in. Malvern proved to be a very successful day, we met a number of stallholders whom we had previously spoken to on the 'phone, and others who booked and paid for their pitch there and then. Everyone wanted the same pitch as last year. I sounded like a record that day and in the weeks leading up to the Jumble with "I'm very sorry but that pitch has already been booked, I'll see what I can do". With some juggling work back at the office, Judy was having a headache, the stallholders were satisfied, apart from one! oh dear he was a pain. He was no better on the day, and one of the first to arrive, set up on the wrong pitch, didn't want to move and kept insisting on taking up a whole pitch when he had only booked a car boot space. It's just past 6am, cold, dull and what am I doing here?

The day progressed well, everyone else was happy with the way the Jumble had been organised. Thanks to all who helped in any shape or form, especially Tony "the tyrant".

Who's going to volunteer for 1995?

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Friends Help at Boat & Watersports Jumble and Tugs & Horses Weekend

by Les Dalton

The Friends were well represented at the Boat & Watersports Jumble on 17 April 1994 and the Tugs and Horses Weekend on 21/22 May 1994. They sold tickets, opened gates, patrolled the perimeter fencing, answered queries, helped visitors and generally made themselves useful.

The weather was not altogether helpful to their efforts, being cool on the first occasion and generally very wet on the second, but they all coped magnificently and thanks are due to David Avery, Kath Avery, Alan Bailey, Mildred Bramley, Joy Bristow, Hugh Conway-Jones, Les Dalton, David Daw, Pam Daw, Alan Drinkwater, Beryl Drinkwater, Alan Garnett, Ann Green, Derek Hall, Mike Hookham, Margaret Hookham, Bob Ingram, Pam Latcham, Hilda Lockwood, Mary McGhee, David Radford, Derek Shorthouse, Nicola Sparrow, Peter Wallace, Ron Williams, Ossie Willis, Jean Willis, Michael Wilson and Paul and Judith Woollam.

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Canal Boat Database Helps Family Historians

The Museum's computer database of information concerning canal boats registered at Gloucester has been used to answer a number of queries recently. The database was put together by a team of Friends who transcribed all the entries from the original registers in the Gloucestershire Record Office and typed them into the Museum's computer.

The information for each boat includes the owner's name and address, the master's name, and some indication of the type of boat and the cargo usually carried. The entries have been carefully checked, and it is believed the database is a very reliable representation of the original registers. It is planned to provide a print-out of the database to the Record Office so that searchers can easily find what they want without having to handle, and possibly damage, the original documents.

In the meantime, the database on the computer can be interrogated to give virtually instant answers to a wide range of questions. A recent example arose from an enquirer who was researching his ancestors named Pready. He knew many of them were boatmen, and it was a simple matter to provide a print-out of all the Gloucester boats owned or skippered by a Pready. His grateful response was to send back a few words about canal life written by his great uncle Alfred Pready just before he died in 1963.

H. C-J.

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Reminiscences of *Alfred Pready (1886-1963)*

William Pready was my father, and both he and his father before him owned long boats. My father was a coal and salt merchant with a coalyard near Rea Lane, Quedgeley, which he acquired in 1885. His boat, the *Ellen**, was 65 feet long and held 32 to 34 tons of coal and 4 or 5 hundredweights of salt. The cabin was painted red and elaborately decorated with flowers and castles. It had living accommodation for three aboard, and food was largely bought at shops near bridges.

As a small boy, I often accompanied father. On the first trip, laden with deals from Price Walker's, we were drawn up the river to Worcester by the paddle tug *Enterprise*, towing two trows and five pairs of boats. If there was no tug, the boat was drawn from Gloucester to Stourport by father's horse.

Most trips went through Worcester to the Black Country and thence to Old

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Conduit Colliery for loading coal. Normally we returned to Gloucester, having called at Stoke Prior for salt, but occasionally we sold the load en route and returned for more. For the canals, a pair of donkeys was hired from the Worcester Canal Company. On one trip, there was too much high spirits and we had the donkey dancing on the table in a pub near the colliery.

The business was wound up in 1908, and the boat was sold to Mr Gardner, timber merchant at Sharpness**.

* Actually it was registered as the *Helen* No 177, but it was always known as *Ellen* after his wife *Ellen Lake*.

** Actually it was sold to W J Gardner in 1899.

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WAGONS ROLL HOME

by Alan Drewett

Three four-wheeled wagons delivered to Llanthony Yard made Thursday 9 December 1993 a special day for both the City of Gloucester and the National Waterways Museum. Numbered 267,289 and 321 by the Royal Navy, they marked both the return of a Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company product to its home and a more enigmatic link between Britain's 'Big Four' railways and the Senior Service.

Acquired from the Royal Navy Armaments Depot at Gosport via Hampshire-based wagon enthusiast Mike Warner, 17'6" wheelbase flatbed 267 cost £595, while the blue box vans were just £375 apiece. "They were a bargain" said Keeper of Collections David McDougall, who explained that buying a garden shed of the same size would have been more expensive, let alone purchasing three similar vehicles from British Rail. The Friends of the Museum contributes £2000 towards the expense of moving the wagons on two Allereys Transport lorries, although the good condition of the three new exhibits means that little money will have to be spent on their conservation.

Indeed box vans 289 (parked by the Barge Arm) and 321 (at the end of the warehouse) have already provided valuable and aesthetic storage facilities whilst the 27' x 8' deck of the Gloucester-built wagon now supports a Victorian ice-breaking boat from Cheshire. Ultimately it is hoped to present the two box vans to visitors as a pitched-roof salt wagon and an LNWR "Coke Open". While research at the County Records Office in Alvin Street has already yielded vital data on the more imminent restoration of RNAD 267.

As the oblong plate set almost centrally on its steel solebars suggests, the 20 ton wagon was built for the Royal Navy Propellant Factory at Caerwent, Monmouthshire as part of GRCW Order No. 8932. This comprised 16 vehicles, the first 6 of which were, ironically, 12 ton box vans with sliding doors. The only GRCW product on show in Gloucester, however, was originally RNPF 11 among nine other flatbed wagons based on an LMS deal wagon pattern of the 1930's, but rather than lengths of wood its most likely burden was torpedoes. This would certainly explain the four

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longitudinal members holding up the deck as well as the extra stiffening struts inboard of the axleboxes although the wooden bolsters were a later addition and the tare weight was originally 1 cwt. higher than current markings would suggest.

The 16 Naval wagons represented the first Second World War work done by GRCW. Ordered in May 1940, when 'Queen Boadicea II' was helping to evacuate the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk, they were outshopped from Bristol Road in July and August with many typical Wagon Works features. Apart from a brace of the famous 'G' plates, castings identify both the four-fin buffers and 10" axleboxes as being of a standard GCRW design while the word 'GLOUCESTER' appears in full on the brake blocks. Interestingly these are applied to the three-hole wheels via adjustable torque, manually applied Morton brakes which have been marked "DO NOT USE AFTER 8-94" by the Royal Navy, who last examined the leaf springs in December 1986.

Research is now being focussed on the identification and replication of the 30' long wagon's registration plate. Such an essentially circular casting was carried by all private owner wagons which ran on mainline railways. RNAD 267, whose deck is a mere 4'-03/4" from rail height, would have been registered with the Great Western although box vans 289 and 321 began life on the London & North Western Railway. Like the mysterious 'P623' plate on the Gloucester wagon, little is known about the rebuilding of these vehicles by the LMS (as indicated on ironmongery) and RNAD but the wooden underframes, albeit non-original, are in good condition. Other common features are split spoked wheels, lack of vacuum brakes (although 321 features double Vee brake hangers), evidence of use for carrying explosives, non-original corrugated roofs (with associated uneven planking) and two-leaf "cupboard" doors. It was these features that first suggested that the wagons might originally have been the pitched-roof salt carriers once commonplace in Gloucester Docks. However, the evidence of LNWR construction now leads researchers to believe that they were an obscure pattern high sided vehicle used to convey coke, the LNWR eschewing the single drop-leaf doors and extra high-level planking used by other companies to transport this bulky commodity.

It is even possible that the LNWR Coke Opens were originally "conscripted" into the Navy to refuel battleships in 1939 but like so many aspects of their history, this idea will only be confirmed by continuing research.

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JUST ANOTHER THURSDAY

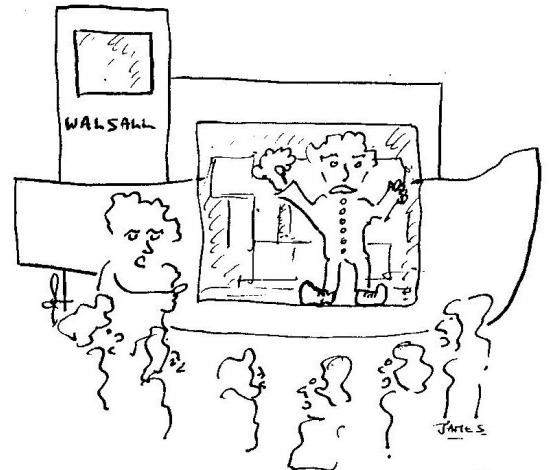
Betty Conder gives an insight into a typical day in the life of Friends who help regularly on a Thursday.

There appear to be hundreds of children, chattering like starlings, in the reception area, waiting to start their Museum visit under the serene gaze of Mrs. Drysdale, our latest recruit - and no, she does not look like Mrs. Thatcher. It must be the swept-back hair that brings the comparison, but if you have spent your time as a ship's figurehead, your hair is bound to be wind-swept.

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Jill and Rosemary are busy with the hordes but find time to hail us as we clear the crowds and head for the Office building and a mug of coffee to set us up for work. It's a calm, sunny, warmish October day - ideal for pushing ahead with outdoor jobs before Winter drives us undercover.

The exhibits in the Propulsion Room are cleaned and polished. I have wriggled into Walsall's engine room to clean the peephole windows, (surely the engineer must have been very small), the top of the Goole boat showcase has been cleaned - and it's a good thing that I'm skinny - and I've shared the cabin of Cylgate with the awful old egg-frying woman. She never stops frying eggs to clean the copper and brass.



YES SAMANTHA VERY NAUGHTY I EXPECT SHE DID SOMETHING TO BE GIVEN A JOB LIKE THAT.

Outside, Northwich is swept and polished and the stove blacklead and the stove in the dredger is shining too. Doris, Mildred and I have housekept in this fashion over previous days so our consciences are clear and we can choose our tasks.

First we catch up with the news from Doris, Keith, Alan, Mike and any other Friends who have turned up for work. Dave McDougall will brief his fireless locomotive and crane gang, Alan Conder and Mike Pullon will head for the steam crane and Doris and I collect our tools for bollard bashing on the dredger.

I am working on the water side of the boat and QB II is moored alongside, so there is plenty of backchat with the crew. Eventually they move off to Merchant's Quay, leaving the bollards clear of mooring lines. Cleaning must be speedy while QB II

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is away. I work with chipping hammer, scraper, wire brush and some very sturdy sandpaper. I don't think that the bollards have been cleaned thoroughly for a very long time and there is rust in the depressed areas surrounding them.

The dock is animated. "Soren Larsen" and "Eye Of the Wind" are being worked on in Tomi Neilsen's dry dock and just outside it. There are three fishing boats alongside each other by the Antiques Warehouse and other lovely hulls moored along the quay, being refurbished. Llanthony Bridge is lifted quite often for narrowboats and launches - people still cruising and some of them, judging by their expertise and bluff outdoor appearance, likely to live on their boats permanently.

QB II casts off on her first trip, full of children still chattering - what do they find to talk about? But Terry's commentary rises above all and they settle down to listen because he has the skill to make it really interesting.

Other school children come on the dredger and ask questions. This lot have responsible teachers who have briefed their charges well and the youngsters have questing minds. A lovely change from the dismissive, arrogant jobs and totally uninterested foreign students with whom we sometimes have to contend.

There are adult visitors too, knowledgeable people who have to be referred to Mike and Alan who can answer their technical questions, and "old boys" who wish to debate the question of women's lib. upon the discovery of women in boiler suits getting very grubby.

Lunchtime comes with a bollard ready for priming. There are some twelve of us in the staff room with our various lunchboxes; staff and Friends who have known each other for years. We work together, have parties and outings and visit each other. Our backgrounds are infinitely diverse. We share 'in' jokes, rib each other fairly mercilessly, enjoy each other's holiday experiences, pool knowledge, support each other when trouble strikes and plan new enterprises, some of them purely fantastic.

The sun is still shining when we all emerge at 2.00pm. and the cleaned bollard is brushed down, wiped with white spirit and primed. Second coats of primer go on other bollards and a black undercoat on one. They will be dry enough by the time QB II moors again. The light on the water in the dock changes, the lock opens and the huge empty grain barge Tirley comes in from the river and is moored, so skilfully, as she breaks her voyage down to Sharpness to reload.

Visitors come and often have interesting tales to tell. The children are dressed up as boat people and go to Northwich, to try to think themselves into the lives of the people who worked the canals. Friends call in- Les Drewery has turned a new pump handle for the dredger and one for Kennet too. They are beautiful things. Alan Garnett videoed the steam crane lowering the second of the belt drive pulleys into the dredger engine room and we later view the tape which has proved to be very good.

We drink mugs of tea on the dredger deck and bless the sun. About 4.30pm. we all pack up and go our separate ways. Just another Thursday. Such a happy day.

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THE KENNET REPORT

Eric Sturt, 'Chiefie' on the vintage motor tug 'Kennet', describes some recent essential repair work.

Have you ever had a real sinking feeling without actually sinking? Not perhaps the best place to have one when standing in the Engine Room of Kennet. It all started to happen one Sunday morning when Alan Morgan and I had just started Kennet's main engine and left it to warm up before using it to move the boat. We were doing all our usual checks, part of which includes moving the gear lever to the ahead and astern positions. There was not a sound, nothing, the astern gear was not working. It was lucky we were not on a trip around the basin or even down the cut. The first check we made was the reversing lever to make sure that the key and keyway were OK which they were.

I then set about removing the inspection cover on the gearbox casing to look inside the box. The clutch operating fork and blocks were seen to be worn but intact, so the next thing was to check the brake bands which work the reverse gear. To my amazement and horror, the top and bottom bands had broken completely in half!

I said to Alan that we would try to get the broken parts out through the inspection cover hole which is quite large, so I undid all the relevant nuts and bolts and managed to free only one half of the top band and remove it from the box. There was no way however, that the other offending parts were coming out by the same route.

I told Alan that this was going to be a big job, and I was not wrong. The whole gearbox top case had to be removed, including the water pumps, compressor, air starter, oil and air pressure gauges and all the associated pipework. It looked like about 4 days work to strip it all down. I set about inspecting all the parts I had lying around the Engine Room floor.

Two brake bands definitely needed replacing along with new linings and rivets, the clutch fork required building up with weld metal and then machining and two new clutch fork blocks had to be manufactured.

Brabow Engineers were the obvious choice as they had previously done some work for the boats and were known to be excellent. Des Fford and I went to see Brabow with the broken parts, having decided to manufacture the new bands from mild steel, because forgings would be very expensive.

About a week later all the parts were ready and found to be excellent and well up to Brabow's standards. I managed to buy the brake linings from Cheltenham together with rivets. I set about fitting the linings to the bands, and with the help of Bryan Brown, we finished this task at about 9 o'clock one evening. With all the parts now ready to go back in the gearbox, again with Alan and Bryan's assistance, we set about this work. All went well, albeit a long job, and we burned the midnight oil.

I had promised Tony Conder that the tug would be up and running for Easter. I like deadlines as it makes you get on with the task in hand. The only real problem we had resembling the gearbox were the large gaskets around the large and very

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heavy top case, as we kept ripping them trying to get this top on. We overcame this problem by using silicon sealant on the top half of the case, which did the trick.

The last items to be fitted were the water pumps, which were very heavy and bulky. I had them on the workshop bench and had taken the opportunity to strip them down for cleaning and inspection, and found the bilge pump devoid of all its working parts. No wonder it had not been pumping!

Another trip to Brabows with patterns from the other pump and again they came up trumps with a beautiful job, probably better than the original factory parts.

I had to cut out the required rubber valves from a solid sheet of rubber and hoped that they would work. I am glad to say that they do. We had various water leaks at first, but nothing serious and some small insignificant oil leaks which were all rectified.

This was a worthwhile exercise which unfortunately had to be undertaken. Kennet is back in service again and all our efforts are paying off. I wish to say a big 'thank you' to all who helped on the project.

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HORSES

21/22nd.May 1994

Pauline Hill

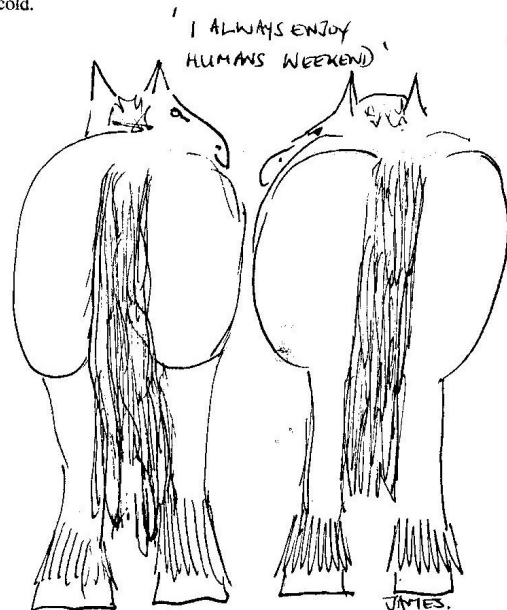
has provided the following account of the Horses' part in the Horses & Tugs weekend

The weekend started fine for Jane on the Friday evening. She was kept busy organising the removal of trucks and boats from the yard and supervising the drilling of holes to put in more rings to tie the horses to. She was expecting around 17 horses of varying sizes and colours. Peter (the Museum's Shire Horse), was settled in the cart shed for the night unaware that tomorrow was the best day of the year for him. He really enjoys the company of his friends.

On Saturday, Jane arrived early to let Peter have a wander round before the other horses arrived, the first being Bess who was tied up opposite Peter. She is a very ancient horse, who did not really look old, certainly not to my inexperienced eye. She was going to be up in the Town doing a cheese promotion event for part of the day. In a very short time the yard was transformed by about 8 horses, each being provided with a hay net to munch on. Charlie was tied up outside the kitchen door and proceeded to try to dig a hole in the floor. Luckily he was unsuccessful as he was unshod so only trimmed his own hooves. He is a 3 year old so is still learning how to behave. Next to Charlie was James, a strawberry roan, with only one eye. It was unfortunately raining steadily so Bess was moved into the cart shed to avoid her getting chilled. The other horses seemed

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unperturbed by the rain, which was just as well, because it persisted all day, very heavily at times. We kept the horse men and women well supplied with tea and biscuits to keep out the wet and cold.



Gordon, who in the past had looked after Peter at the Museum, arrived with Mystic, and Gary with Gem. There were some very smart carts, among them Jane's old Blue Bread Van, now very smartly done up as a wedding vehicle. The Weston Cider cart pulled by 2 horses also arrived.

At about 12 o'clock, Jane decided to go out on a parade, so all the horses were dressed in their livery. Charlie, being a young horse, became a bit excited about this and head butted Harold for which he received a sharp clout. He then proceeded to have another - almost successful - go at getting Harold off his feet, for which he got another clout which seemed to do the trick as he then settled to be dressed up. At 3 years old, he still has a lot to learn about manners.

The horses were all taken out to the front of the Museum and attached to their carts. Off they set, except James, who decided to go backwards, causing some confusion for the horse behind who also went in to reverse which meant the horses

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following had to be moved over to avoid a collision. After adjusting the leather strap of brasses on James' neck he seemed to settle again and they set off. There were not many people about the docks at that time as the heavens had decided to throw down the worst storm of the day. After the usual trek around the Homebase island, and the usual impatient drivers, horses and handlers arrived back dripping wet and in need of a hot cup of tea. They then all had lunch before summoning up the courage to venture back in to the rain. The horses were very good to stand in the rain without showing any sign of discomfort. During the ride, one of the Weston Cider's horses lost a shoe, so more expense for the owner.

The horses present on Saturday were: Duke, Samson, Charlie, James, Suzie, Mystic, Bess, Annie, Dilly, Snell, Gem, Lucky, Captain and Skipper, Prince and Pride, not forgetting Peter.

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... & TUGS WEEKEND

*an account of the 'Tugs' aspect of the weekend,
by Alan Garnett*

This year there were no British Waterways tugs around as in previous years, so those vessels available were limited to Severn Progress, Kennet and a welcome return visit by the vintage steam tug *Mayflower* from Bristol Industrial Museum.

Although Kennet was operating its usual 'round the Docks' trips, the wet weather particularly on the Saturday, mitigated against a good visitor response. However an improvement by late Sunday morning and on into the afternoon helped things along. *Mayflower* was also running trips of about 1½ hrs duration to and from the former oil terminal on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal near Sellars Bridge but again these were curtailed by the bad weather.

Mayflower was, of course, a former Gloucester tug built in 1861 by Stothert and Marten, a Bristol Company which had its roots in the Bath-based firm of Stothert, (later to become Stothert & Pitt Ltd. the famous crane manufacturers).

Her main dimensions are: Overall Length - 65' 0", Overall Beam - 12' 0", Gross Tonnage - 32 tons, Displacement Tonnage - 56 tons. She was originally operated by Timothy Hadley, the towage contractor for the then Gloucester & Berkeley Canal Company. She was used for towing trains of small sailing vessels such as trows and ketches between Sharpness and Gloucester Docks. In 1874, the tugs then at work on the canal were bought from Hadley by the Company and by the late 1890's she was the most seaworthy tug in the fleet and steps were taken to make her suitable for work in the Bristol Channel. The old single-cylinder engine was replaced in 1899 with a vertical compound condensing engine, supplied along with a new boiler, funnel, propeller and

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shafting by W.Sisson & Co. of Gloucester for £940. The steering position, which had previously been behind the funnel, was moved forward, and a waist-high iron steering shelter added to give the skipper some comfort. She went back to work outside Sharpness towing sailing vessels through dangerous stretches of the Severn Estuary to and from Portishead. Around 1907, the Canal Co. decided to compete upstream of Gloucester to Worcester. In 1909, *Mayflower* was again re-boilered (this time with a Stothert boiler) and the funnel was arranged to hinge down (counterbalanced with large weights which can still be seen), to enable her to pass under the fixed bridges upriver from Gloucester. *Mayflower* is said to have carried a wind vane in the shape of a cockerel at her masthead, and was always faster than her two sister tugs which had fox-shaped vanes - the foxes never caught the cockerel!

In the late 1930's, a wooden wheelhouse replaced the steering shelter and later the bulwarks were also replaced, and yet another boiler was installed, although the maker is unknown. British Waterways took over control of the Canal in 1948 and made efforts to modernise the tug fleet by either scrapping some or installing diesel engines, except for *Mayflower* as she was considered too old to be worth the bother. She was used mainly for towing the mud hopper barges filled by the dredger to the discharge point at Purton. In the very cold winter of 1962/3, when the motor tugs had difficulty in working, *Mayflower* once again took on ship-towing work on the Canal. At the end of that winter, she was laid up, the boiler being fired occasionally to provide steam for the Gloucester Docks fire-float or to clean the tanks of oil barges. Finally BW sold her for scrap in 1967. By chance, she survived for another 14 years slowly deteriorating at her Gloucester mooring. In 1981 she was purchased by Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery and towed back to her birthplace and was finally restored over the next 6 years by a team of volunteers to the typical appearance of a mid-to-late 19th. century tug of which type she is the only survivor. On 19th. September 1987, Mrs.D.Cridland, a great granddaughter of Timothy Hadley broke the customary bottle of champagne over her bows and she steamed again for the first time in 20 years.

Early in 1988, she steamed back to Gloucester on the first of several courtesy visits and now regularly runs during the summer months carrying visitors around Bristol City Docks.

(I am indebted to Andy King - City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery - for allowing the use of the foregoing information compiled and provided by him. - A.L.G.)

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

Meetings to be held on the 4th. Tuesday of each month, alternating with the Gloucester & Hereford Branch of the IWA, who hope to arrange meetings on the 2nd. Tuesday.

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