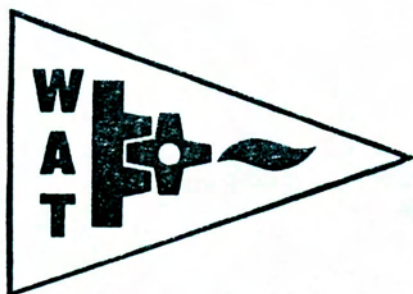
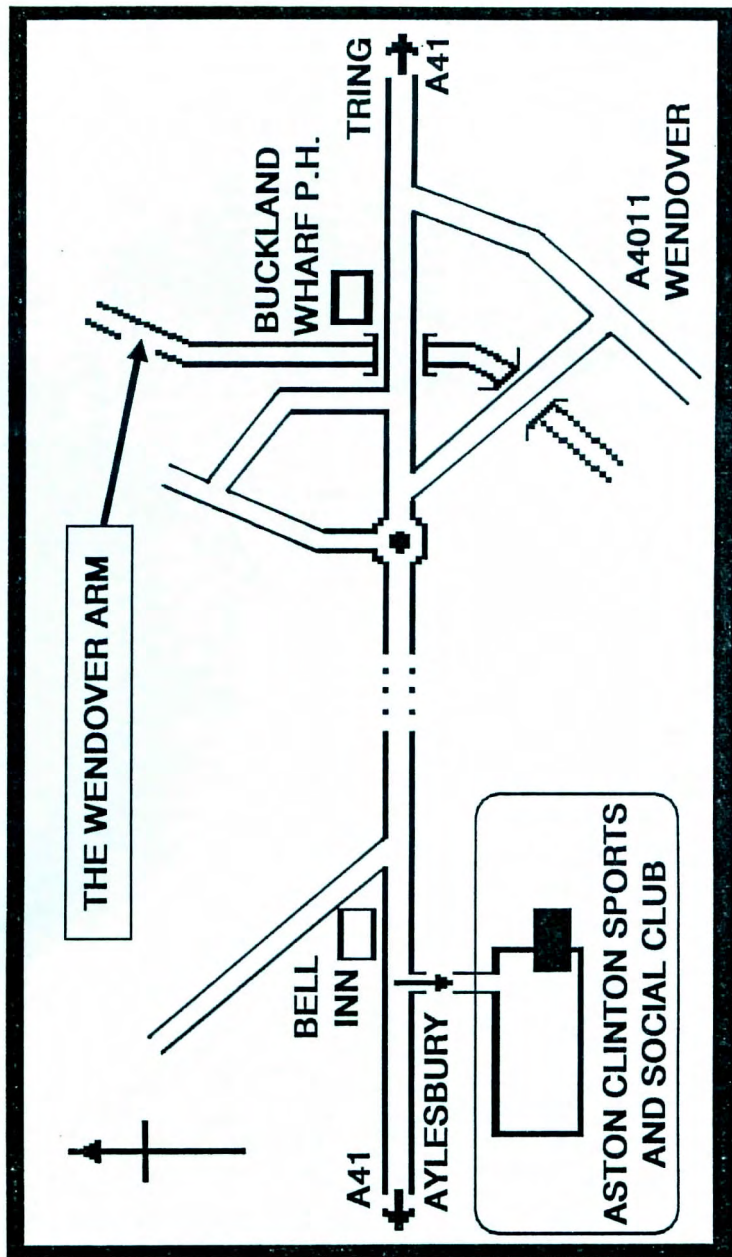


# *Wendover Arm News*

The newsletter of the **Wendover Arm Trust**



Issue No. 1  
Winter 1989



WENDOVER ARM TRUST - FIRST ANNIVERSARY SOCIAL EVENT

# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In this, the first Newsletter of the Trust, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our members.

Since incorporation, the Trust's membership has grown steadily. This is a sure sign that the Wendover Arm is regarded as a vital waterway and one which should be protected now and restored as soon as possible.

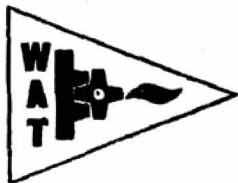
The members of the Wendover Arm Group, the informal body that preceded the Trust, worked extremely hard in the three years of its existence to ensure that the Trust got off to a good start.

I am very proud to be Chairman of the Trust's inaugural Committee, a group of people determined to see a successful outcome to our aims. Details of some of the activities undertaken by the Committee during 1989 are elsewhere in this newsletter.

As we head optimistically towards 1990, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone of you a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Martin Wood

## LOGO DESIGN



The Arm was built primarily as a source of water to supply the locks down from the Tring summit. When continual leakage problems caused the closure of the Arm, about 80 years ago, the all important water was culverted under the dry section to Tringford and pumped back into the Arm. It is because of this continual need for water that the Arm is still in existence today. So the logo design shows a representation of a section of rack and pinion paddle-gear with an indication of flowing water - the initials of the Trust complete the design.

## **EDITORIAL**

Welcome to the first issue of "Wendover Arm News". This will be the Trust's main means of keeping you up to date with its plans and also provide a platform for an exchange of views and information about the Wendover Arm. If you have any stories or pictures, or know any interesting facts about the canal and the surrounding area, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Recent walks along the Arm have shown that the towpath is still in very good condition except for a short section from the filled in bridge at Tringford to the stop-lock, which is narrow and sometimes slippery. The towpath was cleared and resurfaced several years ago by a manpower services scheme and since then the number of people using the towpath has greatly increased. Would you like to join a guided walk in the spring?

My thanks to committee members who have helped compile this issue, particularly Ian and Barry for the typesetting.

Beryl Martin

<b>COPY DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE - FEBRUARY 14th 1990.</b>
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## **WENDOVER ARM TRUST INAUGURAL GENERAL MEETING**

The first General Meeting of the Trust will be held in the first half of 1990. Date, venue and agenda will be notified in the next issue of this newsletter. Nominations will then be sought for members willing to stand for election to the Committee.



# THE FORMATION OF THE TRUST

The former Wendover Arm Group (WAG) was wound up in March 1989 and its assets, over £1000, were donated to the new Trust. For those of you who have not been too involved with these events perhaps I should explain the difference between WAG and the Trust.

WAG was an informal gathering of representatives from other local organisations such as the Grand Union Canal Society, the Aylesbury Canal Society, the Inland Waterways Association, the Chiltern Society, etc. At various times Local Authorities, British Waterways, the Nature Conservancy Council, local M.P. Robert Jones and others, joined the Group's meetings in order to help promote the restoration of the Wendover Arm.

Very early in WAG's existence it became apparent that there is a lot of local support for the restoration of the Wendover Arm with many individuals seeking to join the Group. Because WAG was not a conventional society in this sense, we were unable to accept these prospective members. Also very early on, WAG realised that it would have much more credibility with those Authorities who, once convinced of the value of restoring the Arm could really help to make it happen, if it was a formally constituted body.

For these reasons, steps were taken to form a Wendover Arm Trust and it was decided that if this was to be really effective it should be done properly with registration under the Companies Acts and with the Charity Commissioners. However, no-one on WAG realised just how long the process of achieving this status was going to take. All this is now in the past. On 28th February 1989 a Certificate of Incorporation was issued by Companies House followed on 20th March 1989 by the issue of a Certificate of Charitable Status from the Charity Commissioners.

The Formation of the Trust ..... continued

The Trust exists for the purposes of promoting the restoration plan as vigorously as possible and to raise the finance to pay for it. It has already been demonstrated that it is much easier to get financial assistance from other sources if you can show that you have already raised significant sums by your own efforts. Fund raising will now become a priority with approaches being made to various grant making bodies, local companies, etc, and it is here that the accountability under the Companies Act will give the Trust a credibility that WAG could never achieve.

Ian Packe - Joint Secretary

## **DONATIONS**

Since the Trust was formed we have received donations of £1000 from the Grand Union Canal Society, £300 from the Chiltern Society, and £150 from the South East Region of the Inland Waterways Association.

A further amount totalling £430 has been received from you, the members, in addition to your subscriptions.

Thank you all for your generosity.

Jim Wright - Treasurer.

## **“WATERWAY TO WENDOVER”**

In 1986, with financial help from the Aylesbury Brewery Company Limited and the Hertfordshire Branch of the Inland Waterways Association, the Wendover Arm Group published an amenity study of the Arm with the title “Waterway to Wendover”.

This 20 page booklet, with illustrations by Brian Pitman and a foreword by Robert Jones, M.P., is still available, price £1.25 plus 25p postage, from our other Joint Secretary, Janet Packe.

# **WENDOVER ARM TRUST FIRST ANNIVERSARY SOCIAL EVENT**

**Saturday 24th February 1990**

**ASTON CLINTON SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB**

**ASTON CLINTON**

**7-30 pm for 8-00 pm.**

All members and their families are invited to attend this social evening to celebrate the 1st Anniversary of the formation of the Wendover Arm Trust.

It is hoped that Sir Kenneth Cork, G.B.E. D.Litt., President of the Trust, will start the evening with a short address.

Our guest speaker will be Dr. Wynroe who will give an illustrated talk about the many interesting features to be found in the vicinity of the Wendover Arm.

A buffet supper will be provided for which there will be a small charge to cover costs and there will also be a raffle to raise money for the Trust.

This is the first time that we will have the opportunity to get together and meet our fellow members. I sincerely hope you can join us on this evening and urge you to note the date in your diaries straight away.

I look forward to meeting you there.

Martin Wood - Chairman.

For directions please see map inside back cover .



# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Trust has been open for membership six months and the response has been very good with nearly 240 members registered so far.

May I thank you all for joining and adding your support to the restoration efforts. My special thanks to those who have boosted their contribution by adding a donation and also to those who have made a deed of covenant, which greatly increases the value of the subscription - every pound helps!

The Trust has distributed hundreds of membership forms to Boat Clubs, Canal Societies, IWA Branches and Public Libraries - but - for each one completed and returned there are another dozen waiting to be filled-in. It is a strange facet of human nature that unless we fill-in a form and return it immediately it will remain on a shelf for months waiting for a few moments of our spare time.

Many people who have supported the idea of restoring the Wendover Arm and who have worked hard at various events over the years to raise money for this, the only scheme of this nature on the Southern Grand Union, have not yet found time to fill-in a membership form.

So this is where I ask all of you, who have already joined, to be ambassadors for the Trust - please talk to your friends and ask them whether they have joined yet - if they have lost their membership form, please give them the one enclosed with this newsletter.

If you need any extra forms I will be delighted to send some to you, or please feel free to make additional photocopies of the one enclosed.

I hope to see you at the Social Evening in February.

Barry Martin - Membership Secretary

7, Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts., HP1 2AE.  
Telephone (0442) 54031.



## **SALES STAND**

When you received your Trust membership card you were also promised that - "Membership will bring individual benefits with events, social gatherings, rallies, walks, newsletters, etc."

Well, our first Social Gathering will be on Saturday February 24th 1990, our first Rally will be the Wendover Canal Festival on the weekend of May 28th - 30th 1990, you are now reading our first newsletter and plans for walks along the Arm will be finalised in time for the next issue. It was also stated that - "The Trust will also commission a range of goods bearing the Trust's Logo."

The first item available to members will be sweatshirts, made by Jancraft. Colour medium grey, printed with the logo and the words "WENDOVER ARM TRUST" in dark blue on the left breast.

Sizes - Medium, Large, XL & XXL. - Price £10.00

Buy one when you come to the Social Evening in February! Thereafter they will be available from Ray Powell - High Wycombe (0494) 35152.

Other sale items being considered include burgees & horse-brasses, but prices quoted by manufacturers whom we have contacted, have been too expensive. - Do you know anyone who can help us?

## **WATERING HOLE**

One of the few buildings along the Arm which has remained virtually unaltered externally since the canal was closed to navigation is "The Buckland Wharf". Originally called The New Inn, it was refurbished by the Aylesbury Brewery Company who changed the name after hearing of the proposal to restore the Arm.

The Buckland Wharf is situated on the A41 beside the canal and has been the venue for Trust committee meetings.

# **THE WENDOVER CANAL FESTIVAL AT TRING**

Every year since 1979 when the Grand Union Canal Society presented certificates to the skippers of boats which had braved the "treacherous waters of the Wendover Arm" an increasing number of boats have attended rallies on the Arm organised by the GUCS and assisted by various bodies including the Aylesbury Canal Society and the Dunstable & District Boat Club. Some of them have been highly organised, others very informal but all have been great fun. In 1988, over 70 boats attended that year's event.

Over the weekend of May 28th-30th 1990 the Wendover Arm Trust will be holding its first rally on the Arm at New Mill. It is planned as the biggest rally yet with more boats than ever on the Arm and lots of events on the 22 acre field between the canal and the Upper Icknield Way. Mr. John Brown of Wendover is the owner of the field and it is to him we are indebted for the use of this site.

The Saturday will be devoted solely to boaters with games, competitions and entertainment whilst on the Sunday and Monday in addition to boaters we are hoping that the general public will be with us in plenty so that we can find ways of relieving them of their hard earned cash to support the restoration of the canal to Wendover.

Although plans for the rally are at an early stage we hope to have a comprehensive show with a display of Classic Cars and Stationary Engines, Craft Stalls and Trade Stands, Pony Rides, and entertainment for all. Please come by boat or by car and/or caravan to make the 1990 festival an event to remember.

Barry Martin, will be responsible for rally bookings. Barry can be contacted at 7, Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 2AE. telephone (0442) 54031.

Roger Lewis - Festival Chairman.

## UNCOMMON FEATURES

Members might like to know that the Wendover Canal Arm has some relatively uncommon features of general interest.

One is that it will be entirely without locks, constituting, with the lockless summit reaches of the Grand Union mainline, a pleasant cruising change from the normal chore of gates and paddles (still part of the exercise-giving charm of boating).

The other is that the Arm is not really a canal at all, but a "New River" in the Chilterns! It is fed by springs at its Wendover end giving a steady continuous flow, west to east. From this riverine nature, it follows that the Arm's water is particularly clean. These two points have importance for the increased wildlife potential of a restored canal arm.

Bernard Banfield - Chiltern Society.



## ARCHIVES

Barry Martin is compiling an archive of historic items and pictures. Do you have any treasured photographs, newspaper cuttings, postcards or maps of the Wendover Arm or its surroundings which the Trust could borrow? These would be treated with great care and returned after the information has been recorded. Historical maps, discovered in the Bucks County Records Office at Aylesbury, have been photographed for the archives.

## CRAFT AND TRADE SHOW

At the Wendover Canal Festival one of the main features will be the Craft and Trade Show on Sunday 29th and Monday 30th May. Stall spaces costing £25 for 2 days (£15 for 1 day) can be reserved either in the large marquee or outdoors. For booking information please phone Beryl Martin on Hemel Hempstead (0442) 54031.



# ASTON CLINTON BYPASS

The announcement of the proposal to build an Aston Clinton Bypass, with its threat to sever the line of the canal, gave an added impetus to the formation of the Wendover Arm Group. Following letters from WAG and meetings between the Department of the Environment and British Waterways it was requested that a minimum headroom of 2.15m, (approx 7ft), should be allowed where the bypass crossed the Arm. The Department of the Environment have recently published detailed plans for this new road and the 2.15m navigable headroom has been confirmed for the crossing point.

While the Trust is happy that this provision has been included, and also that special earth mounding with tree planting to give acoustic relief in the neighbourhood of Drayton Beauchamp Parish Church, we must be aware that the local residents will continue to fight to have the road moved further from the village or have the road cross the Arm at low level -thereby making restoration impossible.

There will be a Public Enquiry in the New Year.

## W.S.ATKINS

On August 1st Mr Jim Saunders, an Associate Director of W.S.Atkins Consultants Ltd, spent the day with several Committee members walking the entire length of the Wendover Arm. As you may remember, W.S.Atkins were very much involved in preparing the Rochdale Canal Society's (and waterways interests in general) successful case to protect the Rochdale Canal from being cut off by the planned M66 motorway.

The Trust has received, without cost, a very helpful assessment of the Arm's potential for restoration, especially in regard to attracting commercial interests in the future. Discussions with W.S.Atkins are continuing and we are pleased to have access to professional advice from consultants with canal restoration experience.



## BRITISH WATERWAYS

British Waterways have agreed in principle to the restoration of the Arm. Friendly and constructive discussions have been held with Mr R. Calow, Waterway Manager, Grand Union Canal (South), who has outlined some of his plans for improvements to the canals in the Tring area.

He has suggested that, as a first step towards restoration, Trust volunteers, with assistance from British Waterways engineering staff, should erect markers along the Arm to show where the water level would be after restoration. We are investigating the most effective way to achieve this.

## TRING TRADES FAIR

Display boards, donated to the Trust by the Milton Keynes Branch of the Inland Waterways Association, were on view when we made our first public appearance at Tring Trades Fair. British Waterways had invited the Trust and other local waterway societies to share their marquee at Tring on 2nd & 3rd June 1989. The combined displays were amongst the most interesting at the event and many people joined the Trust on the spot.

## KINGFISHERS

An article in the Daily Mail on 28th September expressed concern that increasing water pollution is endangering kingfishers in Britain. The long dry summer and subsequent low water levels has made the problem worse.



The Avon Wildlife Trust in conjunction with Wessex Water have organised a national survey to count kingfishers and study their habitat.

In October, two Wendover Arm Trust members noted the existence of at least five kingfishers along the watered sections of the Arm. Surveys of wildlife will continue.

## **VISUAL DISPLAYS**

Martin Wood has gathered together a collection of colour slides taken along the length of the Wendover Arm. These have been arranged into an interesting presentation which has been shown to a number of societies.

This is an excellent way of publicising the Trust, increasing the membership and has also resulted in generous donations being made to our restoration fund.

Slide talks have been given to :-

The Wendover Society  
Pitstone Local History Society  
Leighton Buzzard Canal Society  
Halton Parish Residents  
Several Branches of the Inland  
Waterways Association

) by Martin Wood

and to :-

Lionhearts Cruising Club  
Tring Rotary Club

) by Roger Lewis

Martin & Roger also represented the Trust when invited to talk about the restoration of the Arm on Radio Bedfordshire.

Do you belong to a club or society who would like a talk about the Arm ?

## **TRING DOCKYARD**

A piece of Wendover Arm history, not to be missed, can be found in the December issue of Waterways World under the title - "A Browse Through a Boatbuilding Family's Album".

This seven page article records the history of Bushell Bros., Tug, Barge & Boat Builders, Tring Dockyard, Herts.

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Trust. The Editor is always pleased to consider articles, news items and letters for publication.

