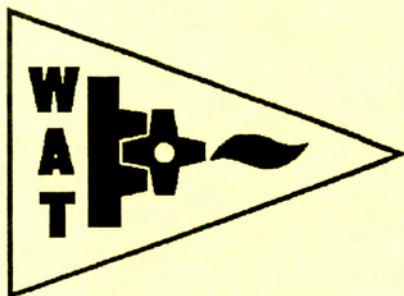


Wendover Arm News

The newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust



Issue No. 8
Winter 1991

THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Member

It is with regret that I have to announce the death, on October 13th, of our very respected President, Sir Kenneth Cork. Sir Kenneth, who has been the Trust's President since its foundation in 1988, always showed a tremendous interest in its progress and will be sadly missed by all of us. You will find a tribute to our late President on page 7.

The Trust committee discussed the appointment of Sir Kenneth's successor and invited Mr Roger Cork, Sir Kenneth's son, to fill this office. Mr Cork has happily agreed to "follow in Father's footsteps" and I am pleased to extend a cordial welcome to him.

In the last few weeks the Public Services Agency have, except for a few final touches I am told, completed the restoration of the Rothschild Bridge at Halton. Wing Commander Parkhurst of the RAF and Mr Littlejohn of the PSA are to be congratulated on this excellent piece of restoration.

Discussions are still taking place between British Waterways and the Dept. of Transport concerning the crossing of the Aston Clinton Bypass and, according to the latest reports from Mr Brian Dice, BW's Chief Executive, are proceeding favourably for the future restoration, and at the same time appear to be acceptable to the residents of Drayton Beauchamp. The Trust are very grateful to both of the local MP's, Sir Timothy Raison and Robert Jones for their interest and help in this matter,

Plans are going well for the next Festival at New Mill to be held over the Late Spring Bank Holiday in May 1992. The long awaited W.S. Atkins feasibility study on the Little Tring Bridge restoration has just arrived (on the day I am writing these notes), and a few initial impressions are included later in the newsletter. By the time you read this, we will have had our first attack on the undergrowth in the piped section at Little Tring.

I hope to see many of you at the next scrub clearance on January 5th - details of which you will find on page 6. Meanwhile I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 1992.

Roger Lewis

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

New Honorary Members

I think everyone will agree that the Wendover Canal Festivals in 1990 and 1991 were very successful both in publicising the Arm and in raising funds for restoration. One of the main factors in this success has been Mr John Brown allowing the Trust to use his field beside the Canal.

In recognition of this fact we are very pleased to announce that Mr and Mrs John Brown have been made Honorary Members of the Trust.

New Members

Listed below are the members who have joined the Trust in the past three months.

Wg.Cdr. & Mrs J L Birch Northchurch
Mr & Mrs J Brown.....Wendover
Mr C Bushnell Cottenham
Mr & Mrs R H Jones..... Stanford-le-Hope
Mr D R Lidington..... Princes Risborough
Mr & Mrs A A Simmonds.....Wendover
Miss C Vardell.....Oxtead
Mrs J M Warner Richmond

WELCOME TO THE TRUST

Thank you to all Trust members who have renewed their memberships during the past 3 months. The percentage of renewals is still very high - but unfortunately there are a small number of members who have not yet renewed, whether by intention or because they have forgotten is not yet clear!

Currently the Trust has 359 members registered.

Barry Martin - Membership Secretary

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

The Trust seeks to establish links with waterways societies, boat clubs, local authorities and interested commercial organisations.

We would be pleased to hear from Secretaries of any clubs or associations interested in becoming Corporate Members of the Trust. This membership class has a single vote and receives four copies of all Trust newsletters. The annual subscription is £10.00.

HELP

Your Trust Needs You!

There are a number of events during the year when we are offered the opportunity of attending to publicise the Trust and its aims. Whenever possible, the Committee would like to take advantage of these opportunities, but inevitably we are not always able to do so.

PLEASE - if you could spare some time to help us, let us know.

There is no need to give up a whole day. Even 1 hour would be valuable, and could then leave you free to enjoy the rest of the day at some fascinating venues.

If you would like to 'man the stand' for a while, let Rod Saunders know (his number is inside the front cover) - or contact any other member of the Committee.



CANAL SCHEME BOOST





UK2000

As heralded in past newsletters, the £2000 grant from UK2000 was presented to the Trust on August 8th. Appropriately, the presentation ceremony took place at Little Tring Bridge in the presence of Jim Saunders of W.S. Atkins, whose

study of the feasibility of the restoration of the bridge is being partly funded by the grant.

We are grateful to the Tring Gazette for coming along on the day, and for permission to reproduce opposite their photograph of the moment. Precariously balanced on the embankment of the bridge, in front of the beginning of the dry section, are from the left: Jim Saunders, Tim Sidaway of BW, your Editor, Roger Lewis, Jane Leek (UK2000 Grant Fund Manager), Beryl Martin (WAT Treasurer) Sarah Jackson (Civic Trust scheme administrator) and Caroline Clark (BW Waterway Manager).

THANK YOU UK2000

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Trust.

The editor is always pleased to receive articles, news, letters, photographs, etc. for publication.

We can also advertise boats etc. for sale - a small donation to the Trust is requested for including any private advert - please contact the Editor on 0296 630317 or send copy to the address shown inside the front cover.

Copy deadline for next issue 15th February 1992

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

January 5th - working party

Starting at 10.00 - on the dry section at Little Tring. Clear that New Year hangover in the fresh air!

12 of us cleared 55 yards on 17th November, which I calculate to be 2% of the total dry section. On that basis if every member turns out on January 5th, we should be two thirds of the way there!

(Special thanks to the WRG man who thought he was out for a peaceful walk along the towpath, and stayed to help all day.)

Bring a tool (slashing hook, loppers, bow saw, etc.), and please park where directed so we don't block the traffic.

Little Tring Bridge can be found by taking the B488 at the Aylesbury end of the Tring Bypass towards Ivinghoe. Turn left at the first crossroads and the bridge is about 1/4 mile along.

March 21st - Social evening

At the Aston Clinton Social Club - from 8pm to about 11pm.

We promise an interesting speaker, good food, and convivial company. Oh! and a bar!

Directions: The Social Club is in Aston Clinton Park, off the A41. The entrance is on the opposite side to the Bell Inn, about 100 yards towards Aylesbury. There is a map on the back cover.



May 24/25th - Festival

More details next time - but do keep it free. As usual helpers required - contact any of the Committee.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING AS MANY OF YOU AS POSSIBLE AT ONE OR ALL EVENTS.

SIR KENNETH CORK

First President of the Wendover Arm Trust

Sir Kenneth Cork GBE was born in 1913, and educated at Berkhamsted. He was the leading figure in his profession of insolvency practice - a position honoured by becoming the first accountant to have his portrait placed in the National Portrait Gallery.

Although he followed his father into the family firm of W H Cork Gully, he confessed he would have preferred at the time to have been the skipper of a rum-running schooner in the South Seas. Always a keen sailor, he named his catamaran 'Rum Runner'. However his skill with figures was already apparent at school - where he introduced poker dice to the boys. When his housemaster disapprovingly asked how much the boys were in debt, he cheerfully replied £16,735,342 8s 6d!

After distinguished service in North Africa and Italy during the war, Sir Kenneth was demobilised with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Having been responsible after hostilities ended for the British Army's catering in Italy, he completed his accountancy studies, and in 1946 became FCA and also a senior partner in Cork Gully. With his talent for bringing order out of chaos, the firm blossomed as company liquidations increased. Famous failures such as John Bloom's Rolls Razor in 1964 and Emil Savundra's Fire, Auto and Marine Insurance in 1966 led to his having a hand in almost every substantial company collapse.

Sir Kenneth somehow found time amongst his business commitments to become involved in City politics, serving on the Common Council (which he described as one of the best clubs in London) for 20 years. He was elected Lord Mayor in 1978, and during his term of office inaugurated a scheme to help the young unemployed. This reflects his keen interest in charitable work. He was a formidable fund-raiser and indefatigable worker for worthwhile causes. As chairman of the board of governors of the Royal Shakespeare Company, he was responsible for persuading the Company to make its London home at the Barbican.

The Wendover Arm Trust are particularly proud to have been associated with this remarkable man, and we are pleased that his son Roger has consented to continue the work Sir Kenneth started with us.

A visit to the Kennet and Avon

On October 27th, Roger Lewis, Ian Packe, John Brooman and myself attended the Autumn meeting of the Southern Canals Association where we were guests of the K & A Canal Trust at Newbury. After coffee and greeting old friends, the 40 odd (and not so odd!) representatives from 9 societies were taken by coach to visit some of the new works of the 'Berkshire Gap'. (No connection with Watford Gap - apparently the gap refers to the break in the navigation here.)

Starting our tour at Padworth, the first marvel was the new Swing Bridge. Electrically operated with a BW key and very clear instructions, it cost £162,000 to build. Walking down the towpath we reached Padworth Lock - opened in 1983 'with the aid of a donation in memory of Robert Clark of Whiteleaf, Bucks'. As with almost everything we saw, this was in very good repair and obviously a great deal of effort is made to maintain the works which have been carried out.

Aldermaston Wharf next, and a 'bascule bridge'. Not being an engineer, I had to look this one up, and discovered this is a lift bridge which is raised and lowered with a counterpoise. (According to my dictionary, 'bascule' comes from the French for see-saw; 'bas' meaning down and 'cul' buttocks). By the bridge is the lock formerly known as Brewhouse Lock - alas no brewhouse now. Formerly a turf-sided lock, it is fascinating for the scalloped sides, presumably for strength originally.

Back on the coach, we zigzagged down the line of the cut to Thatcham for another walk along the towpath, to Monkey Marsh Lock. Ian summed this up well, "designed by committee", referring to the camel as a horse designed by committee. Having been originally turf-sided, the conservationists were naturally keen to keep it that way. When the K & A was opened, one side had a fine lawn growing on it but the other, rather less well established, tended to wash away when the lock was opened. Compromise inevitably was reached between tradition and practicality - and now it is a concrete-sided lock, but shaped (roughly) like a turf-sided lock. It looks hideous and uses far more water than necessary - an interesting reminder of the dangers inherent in the English 'fair-play' principle.

On from the lock to a swing bridge. Operated by hand (or rather, due to the superb balance, by one finger), this is a real tribute to the engineers who built it. (BW please note - those of us used to the swing bridge at Cheddington on the GU were greatly impressed!)

Lost in conversation about tunnels on the Basingstoke, I almost missed the point where the Kennet branches off from the canal. Strictly speaking, I suppose the canal branches off the Kennet, but it doesn't look like that. There was once a weir here, and the need for it was apparent as we progressed on to Bulls Lock. The sill is so high here that many boats have scraped over, whilst the unlucky have been thwarted and had an interesting time reversing to the nearest winding hole. The clarity of the water - thanks to the flow of the river - does at least let you see the sill clearly, which must be great comfort as you gently rock back and forth with the keel stuck fast!

And so, back on the coach. The K & A Canal Trust keep their canal beautifully - and then showed their versatility by providing us with a magnificent lunch back at Newbury Wharf. We envied them having such a lovely building to use.

The afternoon was spent on the business of the day. Discussions were held on the BW Bill, Derelict Land Grants, and other topics of general interest. As each society gave a report of the work in hand and the problems they faced, we were struck by how fortunate we are - one landowner (BW) for the entire length of the Arm, no locks, no tunnels - one felt we should finish in days!

Overall, it was a fascinating and valuable day for us all. The contacts we make through the Association enable us to avoid reinventing the wheel with every problem - somebody has usually done it before - and new ideas for fundraising and publicity occur. Our thanks to the K & A for their hospitality, and we look forward to the next meeting and catching up on the news. If any readers have the chance, I thoroughly recommend visiting this area and seeing just what can be achieved by voluntary bodies.

Richard House

COMPETITIONS

Just to while away those long Christmas nights -

1. How much water do each of the reservoirs at Marsworth hold? OK, I know they spend half the summer with more beach than Brighton, but they do have an optimum capacity, which is partly maintained by the flow down the Wendover Arm. Answers to the Editor by next copy date - closest overall wins a suitable prize!
2. The Rothschild Bridge at Halton has been beautifully restored. In Newsletter No 6 we showed the monogram which forms the central feature of the balustrades. What we want to know is: does the monogram face the road or the canal, and did it always face that way?

If I can think of a suitable prize for this, you may be lucky, but I want photographic proof - so go down to Halton and see the wonderful job the RAF and PSA have done. (While you're there, why not walk on through to Aston Clinton, and drop in to the Editorial office (or my house!) which is just past the Rising Sun).

3. All of us who have spent time cruising the waterways have at one time or another spent time with the weedhatch up! Drop me a line or two describing the most unusual or unexplainable objects you've caught round your prop over the years. (Obviously if you picked something up on the Wendover Arm, you should lie and pretend it happened miles away!) Again I'll try to find a fitting award for the best letter.



Answers should be sent to the Editor at the address shown in the front cover - and don't forget to put those coupons and vouchers (see page 15) in the envelope and save yourself a stamp.

LETTER TO THE TRUST



British Waterways

From:

Caroline M. Clark (25th September)

Dear Roger,

Wendover Arm - Aston Clinton Bypass

Robin Garrett and Chris Mitchell met Jeremy Duffy this week to discuss our options and alternatives. I thought that you would appreciate being brought up to date.

They discussed the position of the Wendover Arm as a remainder waterway and BW's obligations to deal with this waterway in the most economical way possible. Accordingly, as things stand at present, we are unable to use our compulsory purchase powers to acquire the land for the proposed canal diversion. The Secretary of State's decision on the public enquiry also makes clear that the Department of Transport cannot use their CPO powers for this purpose.

However the situation may now change somewhat in that Department of Transport engineers consider that there could be technical and financial benefits in carrying out the diversion of the canal at road construction stage. This would permit them to provide a balancing pond on the line of the existing canal, reducing the cost of the road drainage system. They would not need to construct a culvert on the line of the existing canal and the road level at this point could be reduced further. The cost savings might well be sufficient to fund the excavation of the cutting for the canal diversion. At this stage the canal channel would not necessarily be constructed and the only requirement would be a relatively small ditch to carry the Wendover Arm feed water.

Continued over.....

As it is an essential requirement to maintain the water flow in the Wendover Arm, there should be no difficulty in exercising our own compulsory purchase powers to acquire the land for a canal diversion, if this is the only way that water flow can be maintained. Chris Mitchell will speak with Department of Transport engineers in the next few days to advise them of this development and check on progress in gaining approval to this alternative.

I will keep you informed as things progress.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline M Clark

Waterway Manager, Grand Union Canal (South)

Editorial comment: This clearly outlines the position with regard to the public enquiry on the bypass. Whilst it is now clear that there is no existing right of navigation on the Arm beyond the stop-lock, we believe that this development is encouraging and it is gratifying to know that BW are behind us 100% in our aim of fully restoring the entire length.

SO YOU THINK WE'VE GOT PROBLEMS!

Cliff Penny, Chairman of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society, talks about his society and the work they are doing.

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal is 34 miles long with 22 locks and 3 tunnels. Work began on the canal in 1792 but many problems meant it was not completed for over 50 years (1845) making it the last major route to be built in Britain - but for the canals of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal.

1991 marks the bicentenary of the enabling Act of Parliament and well as the 100th anniversary of the formal closure of the Ledbury to Gloucester section, to permit a (now defunct) railway to be built. This effectively rendered the remaining Ledbury to Hereford section useless, as it was cut off from the rest of the inland waterways network. Even so, a small amount of local traffic continued but, it soon began to silt up and slowly drifted into obscurity...

The Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Society was formed in 1983; initially to encourage greater public awareness of the Canal and to try and retain those remaining isolated stretches, so that part of our industrial heritage was not lost to future generations. Due entirely to the effective promotion of the Canal by the Society, there has been a tremendous surge of interest, especially over the past two years. The Society is firmly committed to the long term goal of full restoration; once more linking Hereford, and the many attractive towns and villages, with the national network.

Limited restoration has commenced at a number of sites in both counties, the most notable being at Monkhide, some 6 miles NE of Hereford. The work here has concentrated on either side of the Skew Bridge, reputed to be the 'Skewest' in the Country (set at some 30 degrees to the towpath). The society has substantially restored a mile of the canal and is actively working, with the co-operation of landowners, to double this. In addition, thanks to the Society, the Skew Bridge has been the subject of a restoration programme and is now listed. More recently work has commenced near the southern portal of the 2192 yard Oxenhall Tunnel and an official Waterway Recovery Group camp is scheduled for Easter. (Note - that was last Easter, so don't turn up in 1992 or you'll be lonely!)

One of the short term objectives has been to protect the line of the Canal from further adverse development and all five local authorities express increasing interest in the work of the Society. Immediately before Christmas 1990 one of them adopted a protective planning policy in respect of the line of the Canal within their district. As this includes two major road schemes (either of which would have dire effects on restoration) this is a major step forward!

The society accepts that there are many challenges ahead and that full restoration will be a mammoth and lengthy task. Every project has to start somewhere and there is little doubt that the determination to succeed, and the dedication and professionalism of the Society, is earning the support of an increasing number of influential individuals and organisations.

Having met Cliff at the recent Southern Canals Association meeting, I am sure that the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal will once again open for navigation in the future, and we all wish him and his Society well. Thank you Cliff for permission to reproduce this article.

W S ATKINS FEASIBILITY STUDY

As we have only just received the preliminary report from W S Atkins, there has not yet been sufficient opportunity to study its findings in depth. However, the conclusions from the report are printed below, and further comment will be available for the next newsletter.

CONCLUSIONS

The study demonstrates that restoration of the Wendover Arm is feasible.

- ◆ Assuming the contract method were used the cost of restoration of phase 1, from Little Tring Pumping Station to Chainage 300 with the addition of a mooring basin on British Waterways land would be £413,000 (including site investigation).
- ◆ Similarly the cost of restoration of phase 2 from chainage 300 to the A41 (not including the A41 road crossing) would be £1,176,000 (including site investigation).
- ◆ These costs could be reduced by the use of Employment Training Schemes or Volunteer labour for suitable tasks as indicated in the study.

Key points to note are:

- ◆ The principle of providing a canal lining which is not bonded to the chalk sub-strata, thus permitting movement and drying out of the sub-strata without causing rupture of the canal lining.
- ◆ The abandonment of the 18" diameter salt glazed pipeline used for conveying the Wendover streams along the canal to the reservoirs.
- ◆ On completion of the restoration of phase 2 a permanent pumping facility is required to deal with the Wendover streams. It should be appreciated that this pumping facility would not be additional to the present regime. It would replace the present pumping system which raises the Wendover streams from the reservoirs back into the canal at Little Tring Pumping Station.

- ◆ We cannot comment upon the effect on the reservoirs of the loss of the Wendover stream feed or whether the Grand Union canal requires additional water from the reservoirs over and above the flow from the Wendover streams. These matters are outside the brief for this study.
- ◆ In conclusion it should be appreciated that if the Wendover Arm were restored through to Wendover as an efficient water conduit the requirement for permanent pumping is removed.

(Surely he means when, not if, the Arm is restored to Wendover -Ed.)

FREE OFFERS

It can hardly have escaped your notice that almost everything you buy these days has some kind of FREE OFFER attached.

What do you do with all those vouchers, coupons, trading stamps and the like? If you throw them away - STOP!

We can use them to get tombola prizes, raffle prizes, lucky dips etc.

Often it takes so long for an individual to eat their way through the required number of Weetabix, drink 5000 cups of Typhoo or drive 20,000 miles that you never quite get that steam iron!

So - save a few up and send them to us. Any that we are unable to use will be forwarded to the IWA/WRG Charity Bank, who last year raised over £2,000 in this way.

Send all you can get to: Richard House, "Kingsclere", Lower Icknield Way, Aston Clinton, Bucks. HP22 5JS

REMEMBER - CHECK THAT PACK AND FILL OUR SACK



TOWPATH TALK

- ☆ **Too many boaters** on the Grand Union, probably looking at the interesting work going on opposite the entrance to the Arm, cruise past in blissful ignorance of its existence. BW have agreed at the Trust's request to erect a sign on the bridge over the start of the Arm letting everybody know it's there. We are also arranging to have a box placed under the bridge to hold guides to the Arm - and of course those vital membership forms.
- ☆ **Tax refunds** from covenanted subscriptions total £335.95 - and they don't cost you a penny extra! When renewing your subscription, please consider covenanting next time, so we increase this valuable source of funds. Details from Barry Martin.
- ☆ **We are always keen** to spread the word about the Trust - and you can help. If you know of any event which might usefully be visited where we can set up a display, please let Rod Saunders or any committee member know (preferably well in advance please). Also, have you spoken to your neighbour/business colleague/pub landlord about the Trust? If not, why not?
- ☆ **Christmas approaches**, and what do you get the man (or woman) who has everything? Why not a subscription to the Wendover Arm Trust - or something from the sales goods listed on the back cover.
- ☆ **Calling other Societies:** If you would like to send a copy of your newsletter to me, I would be pleased to return the compliment. We are currently building up a 'swap' list, and would like to include as many like-minded groups as possible. If you wish to reprint any (original) article from our newsletter, please do - but we would ask that you acknowledge the source.
- ☆ **In the next issue** - well, so far not a lot. However, with all your letters pouring in (please), and the January 5th workparty report of over 1/2 mile cleared (why not?) it should make fascinating reading.

SALES GOODS

THE COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF SALES ITEMS IS AS FOLLOWS:-

- * SWEATSHIRT in a variety of colours incl. blue, red, green and sizes XXL, XL, L, M, S. £10.00 each
- * T-SHIRT in same colours and sizes as above plus children's sizes. Adults £4.50 each - Childrens £4.00 each

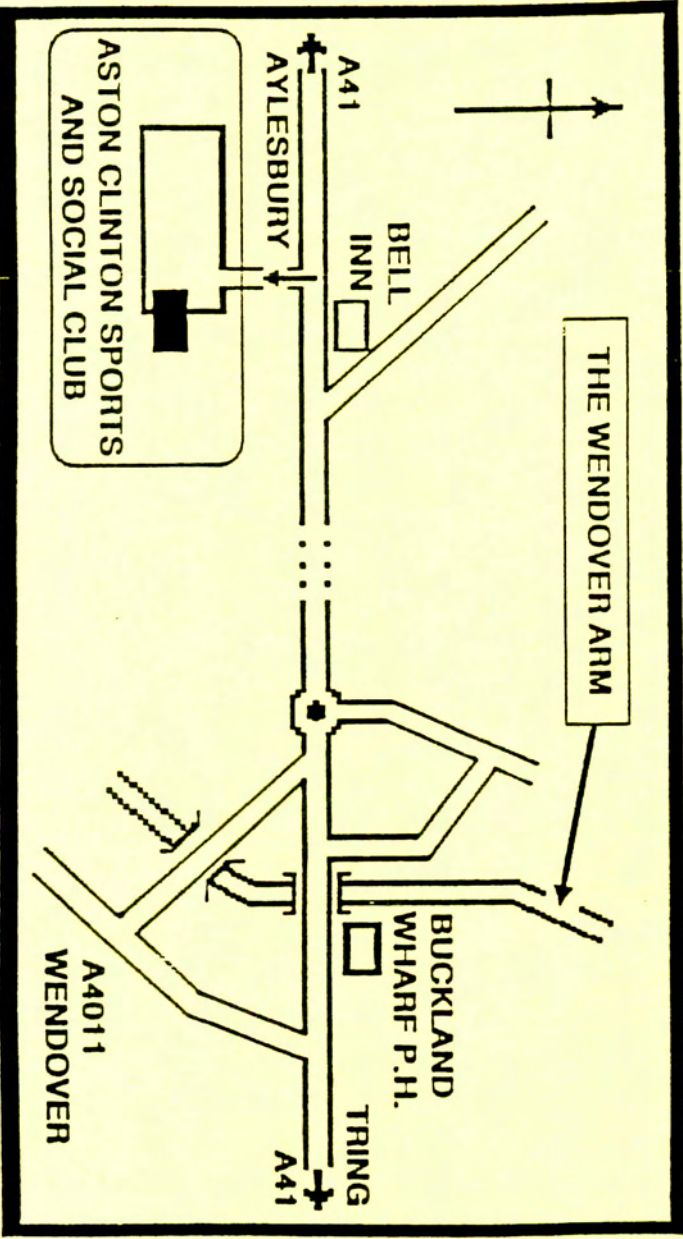
SPECIAL OFFER

Sweatshirts in grey and sizes XXI, XL, L, M, S are available at the reduced price of £8.00 each

- * TEA TOWEL - printed in either blue or green on white - £2.25 each
- * BURGEE £4.00 each
- * BALL POINT PEN £0.60 each
- * AYLESBURY & WENDOVER ARMS BOOKLET £2.00 each
- * WATERWAY TO WENDOVER (Amenity Study) £1.25 each
- * POP-UP CANAL GREETINGS CARD £1.20 each

POSTAGE WILL BE CHARGED AT COST.

The above may be ordered by telephoning Bob Wheal on 0525 381614 or by writing to him at 467, Bideford Green, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 7TZ



WENDOVER ARM TRUST

SOCIAL EVENING