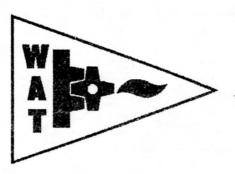
Wendover Arm

News

The newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust



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THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST

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Alan Swaisland

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Once again I must say how pleased I was to see so many of you at the AGM in October. Your continued support at this meeting gives the Council members a lot of encouragement and makes the effort they all put into the Trust work seem very worthwhile. Full marks also go to Arthur Dungate of the Surrey and Hampshire Canals Society for the most interesting and amusing slide presentation mainly of the Basingstoke Canal - those of you who were not present missed an excellent evening.

As I said at the AGM I am very sorry to have to say goodbye to Janet Packe as a member of the Council after so many years (there is more about Janet elsewhere in this issue). We must also say goodbye to John Branch who is retiring from the Council because of ill health after having served for one year - we all wish John a speedy recovery.

On Sunday October 23rd the Trust acted as hosts to the Southern Canals Association; there is a longer report of this meeting later.

When the inspector who presided at the 1990 Aston Clinton Bypass Inquiry made his findings publicly known we all thought the subject

was closed and that all was well. Last week, however, a "Mini" Public Inquiry was held at the Forte Posthouse at Aylesbury to discuss, among other items such as the diverted footpaths and noise levels, the water balancing ponds which were to be constructed on the present site of the canal after realignment. Some residents of Drayton Beauchamp (BADPA) thought that these ponds would cause flooding in their village and so, for the purposes of this Inquiry, the Highways Agency (who are working for the DoT) and BW have produced a scheme whereby the new length of the canal together with a considerable length of the existing canal will be waterproofed and the "sump" will be moved to the east of Drayton Beauchamp bridge. This scheme was accepted by BADPA who then dropped any objection to the realignment of the canal and the nett result will be that restoration will receive quite a considerable dividend from the building of the new road.

Looking forward to next year, plans are well in hand for the 1995 Festival - a third of the craft stalls have already been taken up and things are looking good for another first class event.

December 1994

Once again I must ask all of you if you can spare time to tackle the "Jungle" which has to be removed from the dry section before relining and re-watering can take place. Our membership is now well over 400 and yet only a handful of volunteers turn out for our monthly work parties. We have the use of 2 Tirfor winches to pull out tree roots but, alas, what use can they be if there is nobody to use them? Wendover Arm News

Please make an attempt to come down to the Arm on the first Sunday of each month from January to April (actually the second Sunday in January) to assist with this work which will save a considerable amount of expense when the final restoration takes place.

May I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rogen Lewis

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership of the Trust now stands at 442 members.

Listed below are the members who have joined the Trust since the last report.

Mr D Atkins	Bulbourne
Mrs G R Ford	Tring
Mr M C D Malone	
Mr & Mrs J M Rowe	
Mr & Mrs M C Tizard	Hertford
Mr D C Wedd	

Welcome to the Trust.

4

Barry Martin

Membership Secretary

JANET

As I said at the AGM I am very sorry to have to say farewell to Janet Packe as a member of the Trust Council, as are all the other Council members.

Janet has been with us since the meeting at the Rose and Crown in Tring on October 2nd 1985 which was organised by the Grand Union Canal Society and chaired by the GUCS President, Illtyd Harrington, when it was decided to form a group to be known as the Wendover Arm Group, who's aim would be to "promote the restoration of the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal to good and navigable order and to maintain and improve the Waterway for the use and benefit of the public."

At the first meeting of the "Group" which was attended by 19 interested people, Janet was asked if she would be the Group's Secretary and she readily accepted, and has been the Secretary of both WAG and then the Trust continuously since then.

In all of the time that she was the Secretary she has worked relentlessly on our behalf and has been an excellent ambassador for us, especially during the time that she worked at Cowroast Marina when she was in direct contact with so many boaters. We all give her our very best wishes for the future and we will be only too pleased to welcome her back to the Council whenever she wishes to return.

On behalf of all the Trust members I would like to say "Thank you very much Janet".

With Janet's departure there now only remain three of the original 19 members from the inaugural meeting still serving on the Council!

Roger Lewis

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Council welcomes John Rowe to the Committee following his election at the Annual General Meeting on 19 October 1994. John is an active member of the Chiltern Society and the the Trust is pleased that the link with this body will continue.

At the Committee meeting on December 14th, Mike Chessher was co-opted. Mike has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Wendover Arm restoration and is also the Festival site manager. He has offered his help in seeking grant funding from where ever it may be available.

December 1994

FESTIVAL 1995

The first meeting of the committee for this year was held in October, since which time there have been two further meetings. Jobs were shared out as usual, with many people kindly agreeing to do the same jobs again this time.

One major change is that Beryl Martin, after spending three years stuck away counting money, has decided that it would be interesting this time to see where it comes from. Although she will continue to mastermind the financial side prior to the weekend, we are very grateful to Stephen Hurley who has offered to do the unenviable task over the Festival proper. Sherry Sherwood, who has master-minded the harbour for us, has also decided to have a rest, and Jack Vatcher has bravely come forward to fill the position of Harbour Master.

A big hole waiting to be filled at the moment is that of the caravans. Herts branch of the Caravan Club normally organise a rally on site, and are immensely helpful in providing labour, running the tombola, and generally brightening up the site. Unfortunately for us, they are organising the Caravan Club National Rally on the same weekend, and as this is in the South for once other local branches are going too. We need to fill this void - are you a member of a club or group who would like to come? Please let us know if you can help, or know anybody who can.

Arrangements generally are well in hand - the craft tent is filling well, Mike Chessher has organised the marquees, loos (to be better this year, so worth coming just to see them!), and other site matters. Entertainments are planned on the biggest scale yet, but final arrangements will take a while longer so you'll just have to wait for details. We can reveal however that Mr Kite's Benefit Band, who played on the Sunday night at the last Festival, are definitely coming again so be sure not to miss it - you don't often hear music of that quality, and get a light show, in a marquee.

Prices for boaters attending are yet again being held at the same level. The feedback we got from questioning members of the public this year showed that a small increase in public admission prices would be acceptable, and indeed expected, so we are raising gate prices as this is our principal source of income from the event.



The 1995 Festival Plaque features this handsome creature!

Wendover Arm News

Now we come to your bit. The task of running the Festival is massive -about 15 people is very few for such a large event. Before the event we can cope, although we are always keen to involve others if they want to help. The real problem comes over the actual weekend this is the principal event in the Trust calendar and we would like every single member to be involved. From starting setting up the site on Thursday to tidying it all away on Tuesday, a small team works practically non-stop. It would make such a difference if every member of the Trust who possibly can get there would put in even just one hour of help. Obviously not everybody can do the manual work,

but there are plenty of jobs which involve just sitting or standing still which desperately need to be done. Don't be afraid to come forward you will never be turned down. We have asked before we know - and are very grateful to those who have come forward - but we will continue to pester you until every member has offered help, so be warned!

Right, that is the lecturing over. Now we just look forward to seeing you at the Festival, and if you have any bright ideas of how we can improve the event, entertain the public in a different way, or you would like to join the Committee, just pick up the phone and let us know.

VOUCHERS AND THAT SORT OF THING

You have been furnishing me with your unwanted petrol coupons, Kellogg's offer tokens, trading stamps etc. for some time now. Although the supply is erratic, I am encouraged that it is still there and would urge you to clear out your glove box, nag your workmates and so on to get some more to me.

Wherever possible, I convert the vouchers to goods which can then raise money through such things as the tombola at the Festival. Quite often I find that the closing date is gone before I get enough (or any!) for whatever the particular offer is,

but even then they are not wasted. I bundle them up at irregular intervals and send them to the IWA Charity Bank which, with its wider coverage, can often 'cajole' companies into accepting them late.

By the way, Esso tokens seem to have no "sell-by" date to them, so are especially useful to me. Not that I have any interest in the company -but if you have the choice please put a tiger in your tank, and a bit in our bank at the same time.

Richard House

(address given inside front cover)

RESTORATION REPORT or should this be titled 'A

Few Good Men and Women'?

The Sunday workparties started again in October, and how disappointing it was. Some of the regulars were there, and a couple of new faces as well, to continue where we left off last year. The growth then looked appalling making one wonder if it was worth all the hard work last year, but as the nettles have died down you can see that what's there is just scrubby stuff on the whole. If we could get more roots out it would be even better of course. Some progress was made, but the weather closed in midafternoon and so the day was rather short, and not much got burnt.

November is best not mentioned merely to say thanks to the three who did turn up and cut a bit more back. This actually was useful, in that the wood had time to dry out before the December party (again not many there, but the best of the season so far) and the bonfire was magnificent. Eddie and Brian brought along their patent hydraulic root puller, and sensibly decided to work back near Little Tring as the kit does weigh a bit much to trundle half a mile with. BITM WRG, as mentioned else-

where, will be down for their Christmas Bash on December 17th and 18th, and we hope that a good number of members will



Wendover Arm News

turn out to help them (although unfortunately now I'm probably telling you about it when it is too late to go there). If they can be bothered to come to us, the least we can do is turn up as well.

Don't miss out on the rest of the workparties please. Remember, the first Sunday of each month, except January when we let you get over the New Year celebrations and hold it over to the second Sunday instead. We are now probably equidistant from Little Tring and Dravton Beauchamp, and after BITM have done their bit I expect we will be closer to Drayton so aim to go there, park near the bridge and follow the arrows -stopping briefly to marvel at the towpath improvements which will have been made with the scattering of wood chips over the worst of the mud.

We look forward to a record attendance - PLEASE.

Richard House and Roger Lewis

Workparty co ordinators

PARISHES OF THE ARM

Continuing the series of articles giving some random facts about the region through which the Arm runs, we move this time to Tring. The two pictures which accompany the article show a view from the High Street of the church, and one of the gargoyles which are such a feature of it.

As with the other pictures in the series, a limited edition print is available, framed or unframed, via the editor. Prices are now rock-bottom, and every sale benefits the Trust, so please let me have your orders before the editions sell out.

No. 3 - TRING

Tring grew up around the intersection of two old routes - the Icknield Way and Akeman Street. Icknield Way ran from through the length of the old Iceni kingdom, whilst Akeman Street was an important Roman road running from St. Albans to Cirencester.

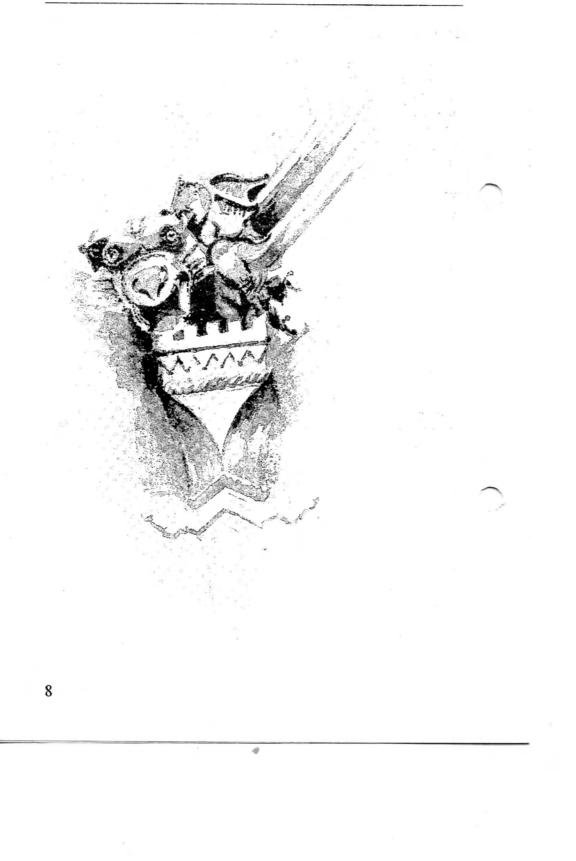
An old local rhyme which runs:

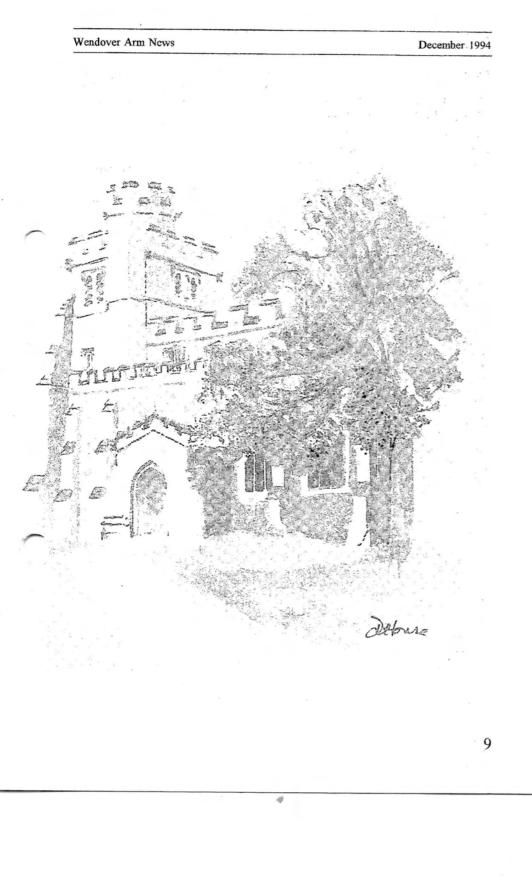
Bulbourne was a city When St. Albans was a wood, Tring was a little place And never any good.

suggests that the original settlement

was probably to the north of the present town, around Bulbourne where the Arm branches off the main canal. The oldest known inhabitant was found in the Grove House grounds in 1763, identified by those in the know at the time as a 'Beaker' burial, which places it in the period 2000 - 200 BC. Grove House at the time was owned by a Mr Searc, whom it was rumoured found a hoard of gold buried with the body, but melted it down quietly. Bronze and Iron age finds have been made around Wiggington, whilst there is evidence of Saxon settlements at Aldbury and Pendley, and Roman remains have come to light at Aldbury, Bulbourne and Tringford reservoir. There is some dispute over Danish finds at Dunsley, but the name Dunsley probably indicates a Danish root.

The name Tring has caused some controversy over the years as to its origins. One theory has it that it derives from 'a third', being a third of a 'hundred' (as in Chiltern Hundreds), whilst another suggests it means 'a place of trees'. Many Saxon place names end -ing, meaning 'something that belongs', but no Saxon by the name of Tr, or even Tre is known. The Domesday book refers to it variously as Tredunga, Tredunge, Treung and Treunge.





December 1994

Continued from page 7

Over the centuries, references in Charter Rolls, Patent Rolls etc. come up with: Triangle and Treangre (12th century), Trehanger, Trehenge, Treenge and Trenge (13th), Treng, Trenge, Treheng, Treenge and Trynge (14th), and Trienge, Tryng and Trynge (15th century). The 'E' seems to change to 'I' or 'Y' when 'Ecknell' becomes 'Icknell' (later Icknield). As with so many ancient places, it seems we will never know for sure what the name meant.

The Domesday book records 62 males as the population (women didn't count in those days). There was certainly some form of church on the present site at that time, and probably had been since the time of the Emperor Constantine (337AD) when Christianity was accepted throughout the Roman Empire. In 1066 the church was probably mostly wooden, but it had a belfry, and rated an incumbent. Norman stonework can be found (just) in the present church building.

The Chantry (memorial chapel) was added in the early 1300's, and a piscina for washing the altar vessels can be found on the inside wall. About the same time the floor of the chancel was relaid using Chiltern-factory production tiles, laid in either a floral or a chequer pattern, which was copied when it was restored in the 19th century. The nave was extensively reworked in the 1400's - the old Totternhoe stone columns went to help build All Saints at Marston and also the church of St Martha and St Mary in the West end of Tring. The present Portland stone columns date from the 19th century, when a major renovation took place between 1861 and 1882. The original peal of 5 bells installed in 1553 were replaced in the 1600's, and a sanctus bell added. Two further bells were added in 1882 to complete the octave, and the clock also dates from this time. Until around 1850, on winter nights, the curfew was still rung at 8 o'clock.

The early history of the Manor is a little confused, but it seems that there were regular royal visitors. The earliest owner I can find was a Colonel Henry Guy, who sold it to Sir William Gore sometime before 1700. Gore was a former Lord Mayor of London and a founder member of the Bank of England. His son became a director of the Bank, and was elected to parliament, as was his son in turn. The Gore monument in the church is by Grinling Gibbons, whose mark, a pea-pod, is hidden in the design. The house passed to Sir Drummond Smith, and then to William Kay, who built the Silk Mill. It was then let to various people before being sold to Lionel Nathan de Rothschild.

Wendover Arm News

Inclusive of 3643 acres, but excluding the furnishings and pictures, and the mill machinery, the price was £230,000 - a staggering amount at the time, especially as the income from the estate was declining and stood at just £6,000. Lionel was master of the Hastoe staghounds, and as quaintly put in Debrett 'the first member of the Jewish persuasion to enter Parliament'.

Lionel's son Nathaniel (Natty) came to the house in 1874, was knighted in 1876 and became Lord Rothschild of Tring in 1885. When he died in 1915 the press described him as 'the richest man in the British Empire'. His son Walter seems to have been a bit of an oddball, with emus, kangaroos and zebra roaming around the Park. The Rothschild influence is obvious everywhere you go in the area, and Tring benefited from many gifts, including open spaces, Victoria Hall, Louisa Cottages, an Isolation Hospital and Nightingale Cottage. The family may have had incredible wealth, but they did believe in social services long before the welfare state began.

Tring industry was principally pillow-lace and straw-plaiting (for the hat-trade). The silk mill employed some 600 people in 1836, with children paid 3 shillings per week doing winding and cleaning, and the top wage earners (men) being paid 15 shillings per week for spinning. Cheap French imports caused a decline in the industry (some things never change!) and other industries evolved. Schooling was arranged by the lace factory - children from age 5 went to the lace school in Frogmore, and the education tradition was continued by the plaiting businesses. Canvas making was a stable occupation, and fortunately the straw-plaiting grew as the lace declined. This was very much a cottage industry, pay being assessed by the yardage of plaits produced. Standard lengths were 10, 20 (known as a score) and 40 yards, and the measurements would often be made against marks cut in the mantelpieces of the cottages.

One name which seems to be associated with Tring longer than any other is that of the Grace family. Edmund Grace was the miller of Tring at Ford in the early 1500's, and his son John was miller at New Mill. The family it seems were rather unimaginative with names - almost all were either called John or Tom, which must have caused no end of confusion but probably paid off in baffling the revenue men! Other famous families of Tring include the Washingtons, who were amongst the early settlers of America, from whom George Washington was a direct descendant.

Richard House

SOUTHERN CANALS ASSOCIATION MEETING

On Sunday October 23rd 1994 the Trust acted as host for the autumn meeting of the Southern Canals Association at the Halton Village Hall. Representatives from restoration societies from as far apart as Neath in South Wales, Chichester, New Mills in Derbyshire and Leicester attended - in all about 45 people, including David Stevenson, the immediate Past Chairman of the IWA, Michael Handford (who has been so helpful to the Trust since its inception) and Mr Ray Wood from the Department of the Environment.

We walked, or travelled by coach, along the length of the canal from Wendover to Little Tring during the morning of the visit when all of our visitors reiterated a fact of which we are all well aware; i.e. that the Wendover Arm is a beautiful canal, with magnificent views, and well worthy of restoration. After lunch a general discussion on the problems of restoration in general, and an exchange of ideas took place together with suggestions as how best to raise public funds, particularly now that the Government had launched its Millennium Fund.

We are very grateful to Halton Parish Council for allowing us to use their Village hall and to Janet and the ladies who put on a superb buffet lunch.

As all of our visitors contributed to the costs of the day, this very interesting and enjoyable day ended without depleting the Trust's funds.

Roger Lewis

HELP!

Is there anybody out there who has a small frame tent with standing head room we could borrow for the Festival weekend?

Contact Mike & Judith Chessher on 0442 865398.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Wendover Arm Trust.

WHAT CAN I BUY FOR CHRISTMAS ?

Well, if you are like my wife, you went out in the January sales eleven months ago and got the lot then. Of course, in the meantime, the thoughtless person you bought for has gone and got the very same thing for themselves anyway. So, you're back in the same situation as I always am rushing about on Christmas Eve hoping against hope that inspiration will strike.

Now there is an alternative! Shop in the comfort of your own home, just by picking up the phone. Mail order comes to the Wendover Arm this year. Our highly trained team are sitting eagerly by the phones just waiting to help you.

Our massive range covers everything you could possibly need:

T-SHIRTS, in sizes from tiny to massive, in more different colours than a Winsor and Newton paint box. When these colours run out, they will not be re-ordered, so don't be disappointed - call today.

SWEATSHIRTS, like T-shirts, all colours, all sizes.

BASEBALL CAPS, in blue, to go with their eyes.

APRONS, in fetching white with blue trim - a perennial favourite.

TEA TOWELS, in blue or green on white, with a map of the Arm. Make sure your loved one knows who is supposed to wash up in your house.

PICTURES, from the limited edition series featured only in this journal, framed and ready to hang. Choose from Wendover (3 different scenes), Buckland Church (hand tinted or not as you wish), or the two scenes from Tring in this issue.

Ring today to avoid disappointment call John Brooman on 0296 623542, or Richard House (pictures only) on 0296 748036.

COMMITTEE

December 1994

MATTERS

Two meetings to report on again this time - October 4th and November 16th. The next meeting takes place on December 14th - which will be in the past when you read this of course.

October

Statement to the Highways Agency concerning the mini public inquiry sent - awaiting copy of their statement.

Expression of Interest sent to Environmental Action Fund as first stage of obtaining a grant.

Rothschild lease now terminated the long saga of recovering all the land is entering its final phase (we hope).

Chairman gave a talk to Butlers Cross Ladies British Legion on 14th September, and received a donation to the Trust.

Slough Canal Event attended - over £40 raised from sales and picka-nail, which was almost totally sold out for the first time. Also present at St John Ambulance event in Wendover - disappointing sales there. Plan to attend Halton Railway Society exhibition in November mostly PR rather than sales event. BITM WRG being accommodated at Halton Village Hall during their Christmas weekend (December 17/ 18th) when they will be working on the Arm.

Brown and Merry have very kindly reprinted more copies of the "Waterway to Wendover" booklet at no charge to the Trust, for which a vote of thanks was recorded.

IWA inform us that the Arm now falls partly into Herts Branch area and partly into Chiltern Branch nice to know we can have two branches fighting for us.

Final account for 1994 Festival now prepared - profit shown as £24,639 which gives a very healthy boost to Trust funds.

November

Highways Agency statement for mini public inquiry received. Date set for hearing is November 29th.

Environmental Action Fund have accepted our Expression of Interest, and a full application has been made, after discussion with BW, for assistance with phase 1 works between 1995 and 1997 based on the inflation adjusted figures in the 1991 Atkins report.

15

Chairman gave an illustrated talk to St Albans and District Footpath Society on 27th October. A few sales were made and a donation received.

Written to the Prime Minister regarding the Millenium Fund.

A Tirfor winch which was available at auction has been bought to add to that which we have on loan from Aston Clinton Boat Club. Noted that periodic safety tests are required.

Work party attendance in November at an all time low - we must find ways to increase attendance. Trust member Ian Barrow, whose business advertises regularly in this newsletter, has offered to lend the Trust a wood chipper to use when BITM WRG come down for their Christmas Gathering on 17/18th December. This will be used to make wood chippings (what else!) to spread on the towpath between White Houses and Drayton Beauchamp where it is inclined to get very boggy to improve conditions for walkers.

Linford Manor Canalside Festival is scheduled for Sunday June 18th -Trust is invited to attend.



TOWPATH TALK

- □ This may be the last issue (probably) that I will edit. I can't say I've enjoyed every minute, but looking back it has been a rewarding job and in general I have got a lot of pleasure from it. Whether you, my adoring public, have or not may be a different matter - but I hope you have at least enjoyed some of it. This issue was due to come out last month, but a slight hiccup on the computer network I had used lost everything, and I had to start again. A back-up system is strongly recommended!
- □ The old display boards have been donated to the Buckingham Canal Society - very fitting as they were originally donated to us by the Milton Keynes branch of IWA who make up the core of the BCS.
- □ The Chairman has kindly let us keep all the Festival paraphernalia (fencing, chairs etc.) in his old farm buildings. However he has now sold the farm, and we are desperately seeking an alternative storage space. If you can help, please get in touch as soon as possible. This equipment is expensive to hire, and owning it saves us a large amount each year, but having to pay for commercial storage would rather defeat this benefit, so we want the space cheap, or even better free!
- □ A daunting prospect 50 odd canal enthusiasts (not all of them odd of course!) in Halton Village Hall and a brave local resident came in to express his concerns over restoration of the Arm. Naturally his views were listened to courteously, and I think he left feeling positively enthusiastic about the aims of the Trust. Don't forget, if anybody expresses concern about or opposition to our work, if you don't feel confident of explaining to them yourself, refer them to one of the Committee we have probably heard the problem before and if not, we need to address it in the future.

□ Idly thinking about what to do with £17.8 million pounds from the Lottery? How about a narrow boat? You'll need somewhere to moor it, and where better than Wendover? Now, all you need is to donate a small portion of your fortune (well, smallish anyway) to the Wendover Arm Trust, and we'll provide your own private canal right to your mooring. If you didn't win this time, never mind, we'll wait a week or two more!

