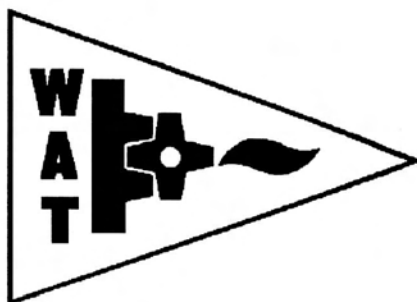


Wendover Arm News



The newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust

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Winter 1996/7

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THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST

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Chairman's Report

I am sure that you will all join with me in congratulating our President on his election to the distinguished office of Lord Mayor, the highest honour that can be conferred upon anyone in the City of London, and an honour so well deserved.

As usual the AGM was very well attended on a very dismal evening, I was delighted to see so many of you at Aston Clinton. This year we were honoured by the presence of the Mayor of Tring and the Chairman of Wendover Parish Council, both of whom attended to show their continued support for Trust. The discussion which followed the usual business of the meeting made for the liveliest A.G.M. to date and the decision, made by the majority of the members present, means that the Trust Council must take immediate steps to implement the restoration of Little Tring Bridge. This had always been our first objective until we were distracted by hopes of getting "Big Money" from the Millennium Commission. Roger Leishman has been asked to form a sub-committee with this aim in view.

Those of you who were there will, I'm sure, agree with me that the illustrated talk on the restoration of the Upper Avon given by Dr Guy Johnson was excellent and went to show what could be done in the terms of restoration.

I am very pleased to welcome new blood onto the Council in the person of Mike Griffin. Mike is a keen boater and a regular attendee at the May Canal Festivals, he owns a boat named "Keb". Mike has agreed to take over as our Publicity Officer and to act as the Minute Secretary although we are still in need of someone to fill the position of Trust Honorary Secretary. I was very sorry to lose three of the stalwarts of last year's Council, Richard House, Mike Chessher and co-opted member, Terry Kemp. There is more about each of these members on page 11.

Arrangements are well in hand for the 1997 Festival, the eighth, which will be held, as usual on the Late Spring Bank Holiday May 25th and May 26th. Mr and Mrs John Brown have again agreed to allow us to use their field. Bob and

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Joanne Wheal report that entries are already coming in well for the Craft Tent, the London Branch of the Caravan Club are again anxious to join us and Barry Martin will be sending out boaters application forms early in the New Year. We will again be holding a Grand Draw and this year's principle prize will be a week's boating holiday kindly donated by The Wyvern Shipping Company. Grebe Canal Cruises, who until now have donated this prize, have sold their holiday hire boats and so they could not offer this gift again. We are most grateful to Rod and Margaret Saunders for their generosity over the last seven years -thank you

both most sincerely. This year the Festival will be honoured by the presence of The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor (our President) who will perform the opening ceremony and will, I'm sure, add a touch of pageantry to this very important fund-raising event.

Although I am writing these notes before Christmas I don't expect that you will be reading them until January and so may I wish you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year and hope that you all had a very Merry Christmas.

Roger Lewis

Editor's Apology

I am really sorry for the delay in getting this issue of the newsletter to you. First my computer went very sick and had to be sent to Ireland for strong medicine. Then Christmas got in the way and then work and then and then.....

A GREAT BIG thank you to everyone who has written and/or sent photos. Photographs are not cost effective to incorporate into a relatively low volume newsletter but the written contributions are really welcome, especially when included on a disk! Another big thank you to Dave and Caroline Clark for again printing the newsletter at no cost to the Trust.

Hope that the next issue won't be too long in coming.

Have a good 1997 and keep up the good work.

Ian

The Lord Mayor's Show

A proud Roger Lewis reports



It all began with a letter which I received in June of last year, in which our President, Alderman Roger Cork, said that he may be elected to be Lord Mayor of the City of London in September 1996, thus following in the footsteps of his father, our first President - Sir Kenneth Cork. He asked, in that letter, if the Trust would be willing to participate in the Lord Mayor's Show which would take place on November 9th 1996 and said that it would give him great pleasure, as our President, if we would support him if he was duly elected. He was to be the 669th Lord Mayor.

We agreed to this request and a small working committee, chaired by Trust member, Ron Pittaway, was set up. We watched videos of the 1995 Show and discussed various ideas for a float*. Each year the incoming Lord Mayor chooses a specific theme for his show and the theme of the 1996 show was to be "Putting the Great back into Britain", this was later changed to "Making Britain even Greater". We chose as the Trust's slogan "Restore Britain's Great Canals"

The committee included two very creative and artistic ladies who had soon designed a float consisting of a narrow boat on a trailer behind a mass of rocks into which volunteers were attempting to dig their way through to Wendover.

I approached Rod Saunders of Grebe Canal Cruises who agreed to let us have the use of his day book, "Dabchick" and Reg and Charles Jellis from Seabrook offered us the use of one of their articulated lorries.

One of the artistic ladies, Sue Martin, our treasurer's daughter made a scale model of the float which was on show at this year's Wendover Canal Festival and the summer was spent seeking donations in cash and kind. Bob Wheal wrote to dozens of boat clubs etc. asking for sponsorship. We were given £200 worth of vinyl to make the lorry skirt. We intended to be escorted by "navies" and so we begged white and blue overalls for them to wear (we were also es-

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corted by WRG members who wore their red overalls).

Last year one float was preceded by two JCB's and, as we thought that this type of machine was much more appropriate to digging out canals than carrying birthday cakes, (which was what these machines were doing), we approached the local Massey Ferguson Dealer from Cheddington, Andy Sharp, and he lent us two brand new MF 860 Diggers



Ron Pittaway went out to New Zealand and Australia in September and so Bob Wheal stepped in to carry on as "The person in charge"

The real work began 10 days before the event when the boat was to be lifted out by BW's crane at Marsworth. This was when I thought that we were not meant to take part in the Show at all, because although Dabchick weighs 4.7 tonnes, BW's 5 tonne crane could not lift it out of the canal! Fortunately Graeme Lockhart came to our rescue by finding a crane for us at an hours' notice.

The boat was then taken to a local farmers' barn and work began in earnest preparation. In two days and four evenings a small party of workers transformed our basic lorry and boat into a float to be proud of. We finished it at nearly midnight on the Thursday before the event and it was taken to Smithfield on Friday morning where it was inspected by the police for explosive devices and Show officials for suitability. I followed it all of the way to London and when it was in Smithfield I felt, as did Bob Wheal, that it was as good as, or better than, the professionally fitted out floats.

On Saturday morning the float was moved to London Wall, we arrived at about 9 o'clock and spent the next two hours putting the final touches to it and being briefed by the security marshals (an army major and a captain). Just before 11 o'clock we set out on our trip. The boat trip of a lifetime!

The weather, although cold, was perfect - the sun shone and the journey through the streets of London was a wonderful experience. The streets were packed full of people who were just out to enjoy themselves.

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We were float No 50 in a parade of 5,500 people who were accompanying 104 floats, 19 marching bands, 22 horse-drawn carriages and the magnificent Lord Mayor's Golden Coach.

Our own float carried the Mayors of Dacorum and Tring Town together with the Chairmen of Bucks County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Wendover, all of whom had been invited to show the world that they all supported the Wendover Arm Trust, together with members of the Trust and it was surrounded by other members of the Trust and WRG who carried shovels and pushed wheelbarrows.

The atmosphere was fantastic, the crowds cheered every float as it reached them and we were with the first narrow-boat ever to take part in this extravaganza - the biggest Lord Mayor's Show ever, the biggest unrehearsed Pageant to take place anywhere in the world. It is estimated that over 500,000 people were watching it on the London streets and a further 3 million watched it on BBC television plus a live broadcast on the World Television Service. The whole procession was 3 miles long and, as we covered a journey of 1¾ miles the

second half of the parade had barely started when the first floats had reached the end of the first leg of the trip.

We started from London Wall around Aldersgate Circus, past the Guildhall in Gresham Street, along Princes Street, Poultry, Cheapside, New Change and turned into St. Paul's Churchyard. We then had a wonderful view of St. Paul's Cathedral before we went down Ludgate Hill and Fleet Street to the Law Courts.

Here we stopped for lunch, the Lord Mayor really did feed the 5,000 on that day and then we returned to London Wall by way of the Embankment, Queen Victoria Street and past the Mansion House, where the new Lord Mayor and his Sheriffs saluted us all with a cheerful wave, Princes Street and once again past the Guildhall. There ended the experience of a lifetime.

The outing to London ended, just after 5 p.m., with a magnificent display of fireworks over the River Thames.

**The word float is used to describe the entries in the Lord Mayor's Show because, for hundreds of years, the procession took place on the River Thames R.L..*

The Lord Mayor's Show

Our sincere thanks to:

Grebe Canal Cruisers	Loan of Boat - Dabchick.
R. & C. Jellis	Loan of Lorry, taking the float to London and supplying 2 drivers
Sharp Plant Services	Loan of 2 Massey Ferguson Digger and supplying 2 drivers
Jewsons Ltd.	Loan of 2 x 1 meter bags of ballast - to form the basis of the rocks in the front of the display
Storeys Industrial Products	Donating the vinyl sheet used as the skirt of the float.
Sparks Marine Trimmers	Preparing the skirt
Dave Old	Signwriting
Messers Molnlyck	Donating the white overalls worn by the Trust's "Navvies"
S.C.A. Hygenic Products	Donating the blue overalls worn by the Trust's "Navvies"
Denne Engineering	Loan of barrows pushed by the Trust's "Navvies"
Mr Harvey Hodgkiss	Use of barn for preparing the float
The Lord Mayor's Show Committee	Ron Pittaway, Bob Wheal, Richard & Diane House, Susan Martin, Graeme Lockhart and Alan Rance.
The carpenters and float makers	Bob Whetton, Steve (a non-member who just turned up to help), Jack Vatcher, Ernie Choules, Mr & Mrs Gordon Richardson and Sheila Lewis

The many clubs, societies and other organisations who responded to our request for financial donations.

The V.I.P's and the members of the Trust and BITM WRG for their support throughout the whole of the procession

But, most importantly, the members of the public, who lined the streets of London and gave our float such rapturous reception and make our efforts well worth while, and our President, The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor of London, Mr Alderman Roger Cork C.C. by who's invitation we were allowed the honour of participating in this wonderful Pageant.

The Lord Mayor's Show

Jack Vatcher was there!

It all started, I think, in the bar on Saturday Night when Yoka and Sheila approached me about a ticket in the draw for the Lord Mayor's Show. They squeezed a £1.00 out of me - then I forgot about it for the rest of the Festival.

On the Monday afternoon, an announcement was made over the P.A. that the Festival Draw was about to be made, "The wind took the next part of the announcement", The next thing we heard, up by the main gate, was Roger saying " and the winner is Jack Vatcher, our harbour master".

Both my wife and I thought we had won the first prize in the Grand Draw, so I walked down to the Arena, whilst the rest of the draw was taking place. It was with some regret that I found out that I hadn't won the 1st prize of a hire boat trip but I had won 2 places on the LORD MAYOR'S SHOW TRUST FLOAT.

The next thing was a letter from Bob Wheal bulging with information and maps etc. So I went to a briefing meeting 1st November at the B.W. Yard, Bulbourne.

I arrived to find a video playing of last year "L.M. Show" in a cold loft above the workshop. The proceedings were interrupted at times by **BANGS & THE SOUND OF ROCKETS LANDING ON THE ROOF** (a Bonfire & Fireworks Party at the Junction Arms just over the Cut) was in progress.

Saturday 2nd November - to the barn where the float was being prepared on the old 8th Army Air Force Base near to Marsworth. This was to deliver some sheets of plywood and timber planks which I had in storage at home for the float. I'm not saying it was hard to find but I went to Pitstone twice before finding the WAT signs on the gate to the old airfield. I arrived only just in time as the committee and helpers were Off To The Pub for lunch.

Saturday 9th November 1996 - Show Day

Unfortunately, Hazel was taken ill and was unable to come to the



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show so my daughter in law, Jane, came instead. We arrived at approx. 8.00 am. at Moorgate Station and walked round to the Meeting Point at London Wall to find the float parked right by the toilets (very handy). The weather was very bright after a heavy frost, but with a very cold wind. We proceeded to finish setting up the float. - As for seeing the Lord Mayor's Show, when you're on the float, you don't see a lot, just some of what's in front and behind.

The refreshments break at half time.

Several thousand Packed lunches handed out by WRVS in under ½ hour. How to find our party, just look for Hard Hats with Gas Filled Balloons attached and you've found W.R.G.

The procession then returned to London Wall but the float was somewhat modified on a couple of bridges over the return route. (I was assured by Roger that the Headroom would be O.K.)

General Observations.

BBC TV Coverage of WAT at event was poor, not a good overall shot of the float. I was standing on

the float in front of the boat and I have a very brief glimpse of my legs and no sign of the upper boat area appeared at all, plus the commentator stumbled over his lines.

At the start of the Procession W.R.G. stuck their little hard hatted bugs on the float lower sides. They had all gone by the return to Start Point but I did. see one had stuck in the Sword Hand Guard of one of the Chief Marshall's.

The level of noise which can be made by School Children with Ref's Whistles is totally unbelievable/unbearable.

The Fireworks Display, whilst very good, only lasted 14½ minutes and it was exceedingly cold waiting on Blackfriars Bridge for almost an hour before the event.

A good time was had by both myself and Jane and we would like to thank everyone on the committee for their help especially Bob and Yoka Wheel for all their help on the day.

F J Vatcher

Winner of L.M.S. Draw

Membership Report

First the Good News !

We warmly welcome all the new members listed below who have joined the Trust since the last report.

Mr R.J. Alexander.....	Budleigh Salterton
Mr M.J. Ayland.....	Priding
Mr D. Chamberlain & Ms. C. Richmond.....	Harefield
Mr J.A.Crutchfield.....	Little Marlow
Mr & Mrs K.G.Green.....	Princes Risborough
Mr & Mrs S.Green.....	Marsworth
Mr P.J. Howes.....	Eaton Bray
Mr A.Rance.....	Puttenham

The Wendover Arm Trust's membership now stands at 516

We also welcome two new Corporate Members

Braunston Marina

Cowroast Marina

The Wendover Arm Trust now has 14 Corporate Members

Finally the Sad News !

At the end of every year the Trust, in common with most other clubs and societies, reviews it's membership lists - and finds a list of members who have not renewed their memberships.Sometimes this is a because a member has lost interest - but usually it is because the renewal letter(s) have been placed on a sideboard or shelf and forgotten. So if you have a "forgotten" renewal letter please return it as soon as possible so that I can clear my files for 1996 !

Thank you all for your support in 1996 and hopefully 1997 !

Barry Martin

Company Secretary Required

Following the resignation of Richard House from the Committee at the last AGM, the Trust urgently needs someone to take over the job of Company Secretary. We would prefer the job to go to a Trust Member but he or she should have at least some knowledge of the requirements of the Companies Acts.

It is not a particularly time consuming job but it is important that the Secretary position is filled by someone who is able to take responsibility for correctly completing the various forms and sending them to Companies House and the Charity Commissioners on time.

If you, or someone you know, could help with this very important job please contact Roger Lewis on 01442 823378.

Grand Festival Draw

As usual at this time of year we have taken the liberty of enclosing 5 books of Draw tickets and ask that you do your best to sell them to friends and neighbours, or failing that, your more amenable relatives for £1 a book. The main prize this year has been donated by Wyvern Shipping and is a one week canal holiday for two. There will be many other prizes including a ride in a hot air balloon.

We appreciate that some of you have strong feelings about these sorts of things and would prefer

that we did not send you tickets. Unfortunately, the process of compiling the newsletter mailing means that we include the tickets with every newsletter. If you do not wish to become involved, in what is after all, a form of gambling, please just disregard the tickets and accept our apologies for sending them to you.

The draw is again being promoted by Sheila Lewis. Ticket stubs and money should be sent to her at Hastoe Hill, Tring, Herts. HP23 6LU. Alternatively, you can bring them to the Charities Marquee at the Festival.

Committee Retirements at the AGM

Richard House

Richard was one of the first people to join the Trust and he became a member of Council in July 1991. He at once took up the responsibilities of Editor of the Trust newsletter and produced a total of 16 issues. On several occasions, due to lack of input from other sources, he filled most of the pages with his own journalism and his wife's delightful drawings. During the past year he has taken on the duties of Hon. Secretary.

He has also been responsible for the excellent standard of entertainment which we have enjoyed at the past 5 Festivals, both the boaters entertainment's during the evenings and the amusement and entertainment of the public during the daytime. Richard has resigned from the Council because of pressure of business commitments and I shall miss his presence at our monthly meetings. He has told me that, if circumstances change in the future, he will be only too pleased to serve again on Council and will, in any case, still continue to give us support on the Festival Committee.

Mike Chessher.

Having been a very keen attendee, with his wife Judy, at work parties for a considerable time, Mike joined the 1994 Festival Committee

as Site Manager, a task which he took on again in 1995 and '96. He was co-opted onto Council in December 1994 as Fund Raising Director and elected a full member in October 1995. It was he who organised the whole of our bid to obtain funds from the Millennium Commission, one of the biggest tasks so far undertaken by the Trust. He has now moved from Berkhamsted to Kinver and feels that the distance is too great to be able to attend our meetings. My thanks go to him for his contribution to the Trust's aims and also to Judy for sterling work that she did in organising the Tea Tent at the past 3 Festivals.

Terry Kemp.

Terry was seconded to the Grand Union Canal (South) by B.W. to replace Carol Hauck as Recreational Manager for the region but, with his vast experience in restoration gained on the Kennet & Avon Canal - where he had at one-time been the Waterway Manager - he was very soon co-opted onto our Council where he did a magnificent job in helping Mike Chessher to prepare our fund-raising bids. All too soon he was recalled to the K & A and the Trust will, I'm sure, miss his charm and expertise in it's future restoration efforts.

R.L.

Tree of Golden Gage

Bernard Banfield reminisces.

In the summer of 1940 we lived for a few weeks at "The Whitehouses" on the dry part of the Wendover Arm, halfway between Little Tring and Drayton Beauchamp. They were very solidly built, with enormous deep cellars for the storage of canalmen's equipment. There was a 100ft deep drinking water well, and the two houses each had large gardens with long-cultivated rich soil.

There was a hand-controlled sluice on the canal bank to divert water in the buried conduit, which would otherwise have flowed directly to the Little Tring steam pumps or the main canal, down to the adjacent storage reservoirs. This was long after a steam pump at the Whitehouses, serving a slightly different purpose had been removed.

Possibly the pump fed another adit drawing water from the reservoirs (? Within the 25ft suction limit).

Until the late thirties the houses were occupied by two canal workers and families. Such traditional countrymen were marvellous gardeners, needing no help from seedsmen, still less from "garden centres" and the "arboricultural depots" we have in the nineties. The families grew all the fruit bushes, greengages, damsons; in particular huge victoria plums, ripened fully on the tree, a doubly-flavoured blenheim orange; and far surpassing the flavour of apricot, nectarines and peach., a XIXth century stock whose sun-kissed upper branches bore the giant Golden Gage.

Good Canalside Grub Pubs

Mrs O.M.Shaw has written with news of two good Grub Pubs. The first is the Navigation at Castlethorpe Wharf, Cosgrove on the Grand Union. Not only is the pub. food excellent, the landlord also entertains on the piano.

Further afield and for a real Cordon Bleu restaurant (not pub grub) The Harrow Inn at Little Bedwyn on the K&A is highly recommended.

Do you have a favourite pub on the canal somewhere and are prepared to let the rest of us in on the secret? Do let us know so that we can pass the word to all WAT members.

1996 Annual General Meeting and Restoration Discussion

The full AGM minutes will follow in due course but, in a nutshell, Mike Chessher, Richard House and Terry Kemp resigned (see page 11) and Mike Griffin was appointed to the Committee. The Chairman's speech included the reading out of a so-called fact sheet published by the Little Tring and Miswell Society. This document contained so much scare mongering mis-information as to be almost libellous. For example, the possible "sites for boat based businesses" - Boat Yards or Marinas to you and me, were defined as industrial estates.

After the formal business the meeting went on to discuss the immediate options available for restoration now that the Millennium funding has been turned down and bearing in mind the funds that are currently available. Three specific proposals were considered:

1. Restore at Little Tring - re-open the bridge, re-water 500 metres of canal and build a winding hole at the 'triangle'.

2. Replace the pipe line with an open channel - but only water proof the bottom of the canal and

allow shallow water to flow until more funds are available to complete the channel to navigable water depth.

3. Restore from Wendover - restore full depth profile in sections starting at Wendover, effectively rebuilding the canal without connection to the main system until all finished..

Over a dozen speakers from the floor put forward their reasons for favouring a particular option. Some of the more widely travelled canal boaters also reported the feedback from their discussions with other (non WAT member) canal enthusiasts. Option one was clearly the most favoured with option two receiving some support and option three very little.

After the discussion, the Chairman asked for a show of hands for each option. Restoration at Little Tring received about 50 votes compared to only six for option 2 and none for option 3.

The Trust Committee will now direct its energies towards achieving this clearly defined wish of the membership.

Memoirs of a Canal Boatbuilder - Part 2

Continuing Miss Moira Hegarty's Interview with Mr Harry Fennimore. Autumn 1979

On top of the plates were guards, average 12 feet long, and they came round on the top edge of the boat and then the next one not quite so far, and the next one not so far as that, and they were nailed with huge spikes and they were 'rubbing guards'. At the stem (front) of the boat, there was a huge piece of wood for the planks to go into, and also a 'stem bar' which was a big length of iron that was 'splashed out' at the end. This was done by heating it until it was white hot and then splashed with a big sledge hammer until it looked like a pancake. This was nailed on to the top of the deck over and down the stem post - under the boat where it was splashed out again. This bar graduated from about 1/2 inch thickness to about three inches where it took all the blows.

The men I worked with were all big strong men, and to relieve the boredom, or to compensate for the bad weather conditions, we amused ourselves by having contests to see who could pick up the heaviest piece of wood or something like

that. I was not very big, but like by father also, I had very strong arms, and could lift two 56lb weights that we used to weigh the corn, right over my head. During the summer-time, (they were a 'sporty' lot), seldom a day passed without someone going into the canal - pushed in I mean, not falling! To get from the dockyard to the mill there was an obstruction (a chimney), and to get round there was a narrow ledge, one brick wide, but there was an iron rail to hold on to and swing round the chimney. We would catch hold of this iron bar and swing round onto the other side with no trouble at all.

However, one day one old chap slipped and he was hanging down on the bar with his feet just above the water. Of course, we did not help him, (you did not do things like that - you just had some fun out of it), so we went and rapped his fingers until he fell into the canal! He swam across the canal to the towpath and went home; we didn't see 'im again all day!

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They seemed to rely on me to do some things which other people wouldn't do, for some reason or other! When we launched a boat - sideways down into the canal - it was held in the first place with chains round some big posts and it was on two big baulks of timber with a railway line down the top of each one so that it could slide down into the water when the chains were released. If the chains were released and the boat went 'chains and all' into the water, the chains had to be recovered - so they said "Harry, go round the other side and lift those chains off". Well, the boat was there, waiting ready to go with nothing holding it. Of course, I went round the other side, unhooked both chains and just as I was about to walk away the boat started to move.

I was on the canal side so I just grabbed the top of the boat and went down in the water with it. It creates a terrific splash when 72ft of boat hits the water sideways - in fact it had dug the towpath away where we launched these boats, as the water washed over the towpath and into the field behind. My mates never expected to see me again, but I clung to the boat - it was just fun!!

Although there was usually one boat on the stocks, we did have boats which came to be recaulked and repaired. We used to make sure the boats were waterproof by caulking the gaps between the planks and where they were joined lengthwise. To do this we used 'okum'. The Okum was like a girl's plait as it came off the ball and we could hammer it in the gaps and then coat the whole thing with pitch which we would make by boiling tar. We had an ordinary mop and a bucketful of pitch, and we would give the boat a couple of coats and it would dry all hard and glossy.

The boat people stayed in a 'change boat', (one kept at the yard specially for this purpose). When the boat arrived at the yard for recaulking with the family aboard, the cabin would be absolutely alive with bugs, bed bugs which were nasty things - they looked like ladybirds. When the boat family moved into the change boat we closed all the apertures up in the cabin with wet sacks, then we put a tin full of brimstone in the stove, this sent off yellow poisonous fumes when it was burning. We used to set it alight by heating a lump of iron in the blacksmith's fire and then lifting the wet sack on

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the hatch and throwing the hot iron into the tin of brimstone and then quickly dropping the wet sack back over the hatch, because if you got any fumes in your mouth it nearly choked you. After a day and a night the cabin was swept out, and a shovelful of dead bugs, mice and other creatures was disposed of. The boat people were really very, very clean, although people did not think so, but when they picked up a cargo there were more bugs in the cargo, so they did not stay free of them for long after stoving.

The yard that I worked for was taken over from a yard that had all wide boats and they used to take all the hay and corn up to Paddington because at Paddington there was a big fleet of horses in stables and then they used to bring the manure from the stables back again - and that was all they did. Anybody who took a boat up could leave their horse up there, have another one to bring the boat back and then pick their horse up the next time they went there, refreshed and well fed and looked-after. Unfortunately barge horses did get injured sometimes. At each lock the towpath goes down at a sharp angle because the level of the canal drops, and when the horse was pulling the

boat with a boatline, straining to get it out of the lock, (once a barge is moving it is easy, but it is a strain to get it going), the line very often snapped, and because the horse was pulling with all its might it ended up in the canal. If you look at the side of the main canal, every so often you will see some shallow steps, about a yard wide, going down the side of the towpath into the water and these were put there specifically to get the horses out of the canal when they fell in. These steps were built against each lock, as it was accepted that the horses fell in, and however good the line was, it gradually got chafed in use and eventually broke.

The barge-horses used to have a food tin, like a nosebag, with a strap, and this tin would be painted like the barges with roses and other typical barge patterns, and the horse would feed as it was pulling the barge. Along the traces on the horses' harness, they would thread small knobs, like cotton reels, and each one was painted a different colour - everything they had had to be painted in some way. In the summer the horses had what looked like mittens put over their ears to keep the flies off.

Committee Matters

October

- The Trust's Annual Report and Accounts were approved by the directors.
- It was noted that Jennifer Thomas had written a very good article on the Wendover Arm for the September Newsletter of the Inland Waterways Protection Society
- Roger Lewis reported that he had spoken on 3 Counties Radio promoting restoration of the Wendover Arm.
- Roger Leishman reported on the success of recent work parties. The previous year's work had been very effective in stopping re-growth. All work party volunteers supported the restoration of the Little Tring section as the Trust's first priority.

November

- Following the AGM, Mike Griffin agreed to take on the Publicity role and the Fund Raising job, vacated by the resignation of Mike Chessher, was left unfilled at present. No other Committee job changes.
- Bob Wheal reported recording a piece for 3 Counties Radio together with Brian Smith of the Wendover

Society. It seems as though Mr Smith has no personal objections to boats but a number of his members do.

- The publicity arising from the Lord Mayor's Show was felt to be very successful. In addition some very useful business and supplier contacts had been made.
- The Chairman and Vice Chairman attended the Aston Clinton Residents Association AGM. No objections to restoration were raised.
- It was agreed that it was now time to get B.B.O.N.T and other wildlife supporting organisation more closely involved in the Trust's ideas.
- Bernard Banfield sent word that the Chiltern Society were planning a debate about the Arm and required an informed article for their magazine.
- The normal November work party was poorly attended - clash with the Lord Mayor's Show. The following week's joint effort with WRG was very successful.
- The new BW Recreation Manager will be Liz Kelly who takes over from Terry Kemp on January 6th.

Disclaimer

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

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