

WENDOVER ARM NEWS

Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust



Issue No. 42
January 2004

Price 50p
Free to members

From the Wendover Arm Trust Articles of Association:

To promote the restoration of the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal linking the town of Wendover in Buckinghamshire to the Grand Union Canal at Bulbourne Hertfordshire (hereinafter called 'The Waterway' which shall include all waterways, buildings, works and structures associated therewith) to good and navigable order and to maintain and improve The Waterway for the use and benefit of the public.

To promote the fullest use of The Waterway by all forms of waterborne traffic and for all forms of local amenity, tourist and recreational and water-related activities for the benefit of the public

To promote, and educate the public in, the history, use and associated wildlife of canals and inland waterways generally and of The Waterway in particular.

To restore, reconstruct, preserve and maintain canals and inland waterways and works and buildings auxiliary thereto generally provided that such objects shall be carried out in a manner beneficial to the public and recognised by the law of England as charitable.

Contributions to Wendover Arm News

Contributions are welcome on any topic related to the Wendover Arm, its construction, history, wildlife and restoration.

Letters, articles, photographs, drawings and maps are acceptable; all material will be acknowledged, credited if used and returned.

Please send any contributions to:

John Savage
WAT Newsletter Editor
16 Lakeside
TRING
Hertfordshire
HP23 5HN

Disclaimer

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

EDITORIAL

A moment of great significance for the Trust was reached on 16 November, when the 75th and final section of reinforced concrete wall for Phase 1 of the restoration was completed. In all, some 650 metres of wall have been built over the past five years, a task which must at times have seemed daunting.

This is a great achievement and a testimony to our voluntary labour force, led by Restoration Director Roger Leishman.

Another milestone for the canal happened in October with the opening of the A41 Aston Clinton by-pass and the completion of the new section of diverted canal (except for landscaping and fencing work which continues into 2004).

These events are covered in more detail in articles in this newsletter.

The Trust's A.G.M. was held in November, with a healthy increase in the number of members attending; this reflects both our growing membership and the tangible and significant progress being achieved with restoring the Arm. The formal report covering the year in question is enclosed with this newsletter.

On a less happy note, the Trust remains without a Fundraising Director, nobody having come forward since the resignation of David Andrew. This job is vital to maintain the progress now being made; it would be a tragedy if work had to be halted because all available funds had been used. So, we make no apologies for appealing again for help in filling this post. If you are not able help, please think carefully whether you know somebody else who could. A vacancy notice appears in this edition; let's pull the stops out to ensure that it does not have to be repeated next time - the salary will not get any greater (i.e. nil) but the reward in satisfaction can be immense!

Finally, a reminder that all members can do their bit for the Trust by buying and/or selling the enclosed Grand Draw tickets. Heroic members will even ask for more tickets to sell. Every pound raised goes directly to funding further restoration so let's ensure that Jo Leeson is overwhelmed with counterfoils and cheques.....

Cover photo: on 16th November, Roger Leishman (Champaign bottle in hand) acknowledges the volunteers as they remove the shuttering from the final section of wall of Phase 1. Suggestions of breaking the bottle on the wall were rejected as wasteful and the contents were consumed instead!

RESTORATION PROGRESS

Headline news is the completion of the reinforced concrete walls of Phase 1 at Little Tring. This was achieved on 16th November, when a small ceremony was staged at the removal of the final shuttering by our volunteers. Roger Leishman, Restoration Director, praised the efforts of our stalwart team of volunteers who have persevered through 150 pours of ready-mix concrete for 75 wall sections since work on the walls commenced in 1998. It must have seemed a never ending job at times and completion is certainly a moment to savour and celebrate.

Not only are the walls complete, but all the backfilling is also almost finished; some topping up will probably be necessary after the winter rains have settled the spoil, however.

Operations at Little Tring for the rest of the Winter will now concentrate on the remaining earthworks, completing the backfilling of the walls and excavating the channel ready for lining. Ground conditions are too wet to progress further lining with Bentomat; this will be resumed in the Spring. It is intended to complete the lining in 2004 ready for rewatering.

Meanwhile, tremendous progress can be reported on

Phase 2 work on the dry bed between Little Tring and Drayton Beauchamp. Peter Spary has been leading volunteers who could be spared from Phase 1 work in clearing scrub. These efforts received a huge boost in November when twenty-eight members of BITM (the Bit in the Middle branch of the Waterways Recovery Group), led by Mark Gribble, descended in force and completed a massive clearing and stumping exercise between Whitehouses and the other public footpath crossing. This section is now completely clear.

A further working party weekend in early January continued to push back the scrub frontier, with hired excavators re-profiling the cleared channel (the dry bed has an additional trench along it created when the pipeline was installed). Only about 200m of scrub now remains to be cleared and it seems almost certain that this will be completed by the Spring, leaving 1¼ miles of channel ready for relining in Phase 2. Work on this should commence in 2005, starting at the new sump at Drayton Beauchamp.

We have reached the stage where the footbridges on Phase 2 will soon be necessary. These are required to take the two public footpaths which

presently cross the dry bed over the canal channel.

One will be at Whitehouses, at the site of former swing bridge No.4, and the other will be between Whitehouses and the Herts/Bucks boundary, and will be bridge No. 4A. The bridges will allow safe access for plant and ready-mix lorries along the canal bed without the necessity for safety officers which would otherwise be required at these points whilst working.

We are very grateful to Graham Hardwick, who is a structural engineer and has volunteered to design the two footbridges, with possible further help with materials.

So, excellent progress on all fronts with another celebration in sight to mark the completion of the clearance of the dry section!



More Bentomat has been laid since the last edition, and before this task was suspended for the winter. This is as far as they got, working from the stop lock.



History in the making! The removal of the final section of shuttering on the final section of wall at Little Tring on 16th November, carefully supervised by the dog-in-charge.



The finished walls at Little Tring! Aren't they just splendid?



Clearance work at Whitehouses has uncovered this original wharf and culverts. They will be retained as heritage features. The site of the swing bridge is on the left of the view and will be the location of replacement footbridge No.4.



The team in action in January advancing the scrub clearance west of Whitehouses towards Drayton Beauchamp.



Following the scrub clearance the excavators (crewed by Ray Orth and Ron Pittaway) profile the bed ready for lining.



At the cutting edge! Only 200m more scrub to go before all the dry section is cleared.



The new A41 road bridge, viewed from the Drayton Beauchamp side. Since the road opened, a substantial wooden fence has been built on this side, and can be clearly seen in this picture. It is very effective at deflecting traffic noise, and the canal on this side of the road is remarkably quiet.

VACANCY

<i>Date:</i>	October 2003
<i>Job Description:</i>	Fundraising Director
<i>Job Duration:</i>	Minimum 12 months. Thereafter by mutual agreement.
<i>Responsibilities:</i>	Obtain grants for the Trust Restoration work
<i>Reporting to:</i>	Trust Council. The Trust Fundraising Director will be co-opted as a member of Council, as close liaison with Council is needed.
<i>Core tasks:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research funding sources• Co-ordinate, Compile, Submit and Manage grant applications• Prepare supporting information for grant-giving bodies
<i>Optional tasks:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend seminar/courses as appropriate• Present the Trust's case to target audiences
<i>Personal Qualities desired (but not essential):</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admin experience• Access to word processing computer package• Connection to internet and email
<i>Note:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed knowledge of Arm and restoration project not needed before accepting the position• Assistance will be given by other Trust members
<i>Remuneration:</i>	Voluntary unpaid position. Expenses reimbursed.
Interested? Call Bob Wheal on 07860 286 155, or talk to any Council Member	

WALKING THE ARM

For those wishing a one-way linear walk along the Arm, sparse or indirect public transport to the other end has always been a problem. There is now, however, a bus service which fulfils this role perfectly although, rather strangely, on Sundays and Bank Holidays only!

The timetable for service 161 is reproduced below; it provides:

- a link between either Marsworth or New Mill and Wendover for those wishing to walk the whole length of the Arm.
- links between Marsworth or New Mill and Aston Clinton (Stablebridge Road) and Aston Clinton (Stablebridge Road) and Wendover for those who wish to break the walk into two halves.

The best way to do it for those using a car is to park at either Wendover, Stablebridge Road, New Mill or Marsworth, take the bus to your furthest point and walk back.

This is a most useful facility and we hope it will encourage even more people to enjoy a walk alongside the Arm.

Aylesbury - Tring - Whipsnade via Wendover, Ivinghoe and Edlesborough

161

County Rider

SUNDAYS AND BANK HOLIDAYS

AYLESBURY, Bus Station Bay 7	1005	1205	1505	1705
Stoke Mandeville, Station Road	1012	1212	1512	1712
Weston Turville, Chandos	1014	1214	1514	1714
Wendover, Clock Tower	1019	1219	1519	1719
Halton Camp, Main Point	1022	1222	1522	1722
Aston Clinton, Stablebridge Road	1025	1225	1525	1725
TRING, opp. Rose & Crown	1030	1230	1530	1730
New Mill, Wingrave Road	1034	1234	1534	1734
Marsworth, Vicarage Road	1038	1238	1538	1738
Ivinghoe, Green	1042	1242	1542	1742
Edlesborough, School	(1109)	(1309)	1550	1750
Eaton Bray, Moor End Green	(1107)	(1307)	1552	1752
WHIPSNADE WILD ANIMAL PARK	1051	1251	1559	1759
WHIPSNADE WILD ANIMAL PARK	1100	1300	1608	1808
Eaton Bray, Moor End Green	1107	1307	(1552)	(1752)
Edlesborough, School	1109	1309	(1550)	(1750)
Ivinghoe, opp. Green	1117	1317	1617	1817
Marsworth, opp. Vicarage Road	1121	1321	1621	1821
New Mill, Wingrave Road	1125	1325	1625	1825
TRING, Rose & Crown	1130	1330	1630	1830
Aston Clinton, Stablebridge Road	1134	1334	1634	1834
Halton Camp, Main Point	1137	1337	1637	1837
Wendover, Clock Tower	1140	1340	1640	1840
Weston Turville, Chandos	1145	1345	1645	1845
Stoke Mandeville, Station Road	1147	1347	1647	1847
AYLESBURY, Bus Station	1154	1354	1654	1854

29.7.02

NOTE: For Sunday service to Bedgrove, Tring Road (Aylesbury) and Aston Clinton see 501 timetable; change at Aylesbury or Tring

This County Rider service
is operated by Arriva
under contract to



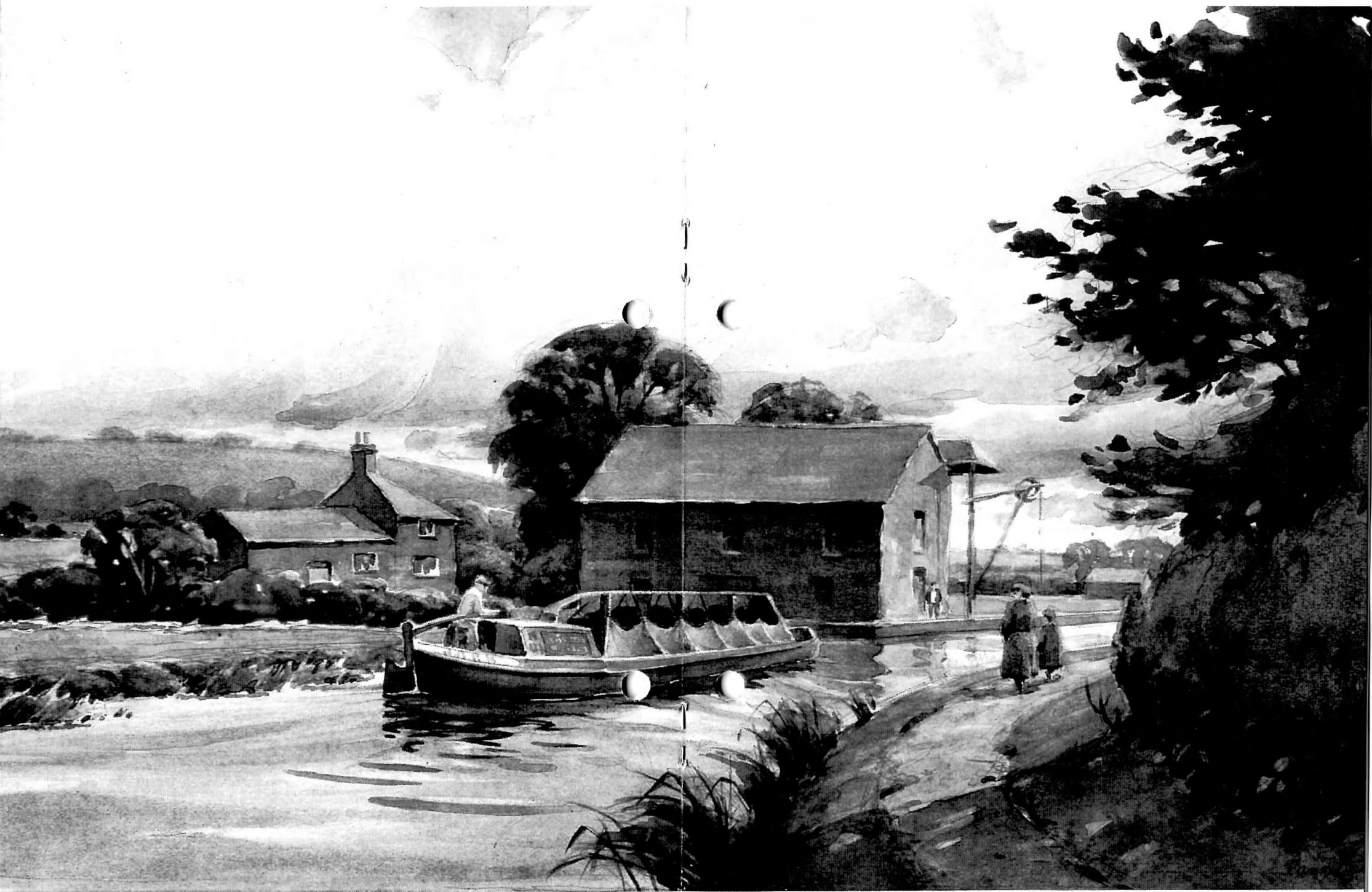
AERIAL VIEW



This photograph provides a wonderful overview of the canal diversion at Buckland/Drayton Beauchamp where the A41 Aston Clinton bypass crosses. The new and old line of the canal can be clearly seen, with the winding hole where the lines diverge. The road in this view is almost finished but not yet open. Drayton Beauchamp church and the Old Rectory are to the left of the picture.

Copies of this photograph are available from 'The Gazette', 39 Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1LH at £6 for an A5 copy or £10 for an A4.

Centrefold: another delightful watercolour by Brian Paine, this time depicting the Wharf at Wendover towards the end of its working life. The Wharfinger's Cottage on the left is still there today, albeit extended.



Wendover Canal Wharf c 1890

OFFICIAL OPENING OF ASTON CLINTON BY-PASS

Our Chairman, Bob Wheal, attended the official opening of the Aston Clinton by-pass on Friday 3rd October (although the road was not opened for public use until a couple of weeks later). Junior Transport Minister Tony McNulty performed the ceremony.

The original plan for the road (which incidentally was first mooted in 1947!) was for the A41 new road to cross the Wendover Arm on an embankment, filling in the channel and preventing any hope of restoration. The successful arguments put forward by the Trust and others at a Public enquiry ensured the future of the canal and the result is a new bridge and canal section at an additional cost of over half a million pounds.

A collection of Aston Martin cars (of significance because they are named after nearby Aston Hill) preceded the official party onto the bypass before stopping at the Wendover Arm crossing where a ceremony to name the bridge took place. A competition for the name had taken place with the children of Aston Clinton and the winner with his entry 'Saxon Way Bridge' (marking the extensive Saxon remains found during excavations on the route of the road) was Thomas McPartian.

The Minister presented Thomas with a (model) Aston Martin. As the presentation was being made, a family of swans showed perfect timing by landing gracefully on the new winding hole.

With the opening of the by-pass, traffic through Aston Clinton is expected to reduce by 70% although boat traffic under the Saxon Way Bridge will have to wait for this section to be connected with Little Tring. Perhaps someone will take a canoe onto the new section for the honour of being the first boat under the bridge? Please let us know if you do.

Footnote: since the by-pass has opened, a smart sign has appeared alongside the road proclaiming "Grand Union Canal - Wendover Arm" with the British Waterways logo. At present there is only one on the westbound carriageway.



Tony McNulty, Junior Transport Minister, with Thomas McPartian who came up with the chosen name of 'Saxon Way Bridge'.



The new section of canal looking from the A41 by-pass bridge on the day of the Official Opening. It will not normally be possible to get this view now that the road has opened.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH CHANGES

With the opening of the A41 Aston Clinton by-pass in October, the planned public footpath changes in the area of the canal diversion were implemented, and may be summarised thus

Footpath no.16, Buckland: original line across new road extinguished. Diverted alongside western side of by-pass, under the new road bridge and back alongside eastern side of by-pass to join footpaths 14 & 15, Drayton Beauchamp (near the site of the old sump).

Footpath no.28, Buckland:extinguished along towpath adjacent to the reversed flow drainage section and across new road. Diverted along new towpath west of road bridge to join footpath no.16, Buckland.

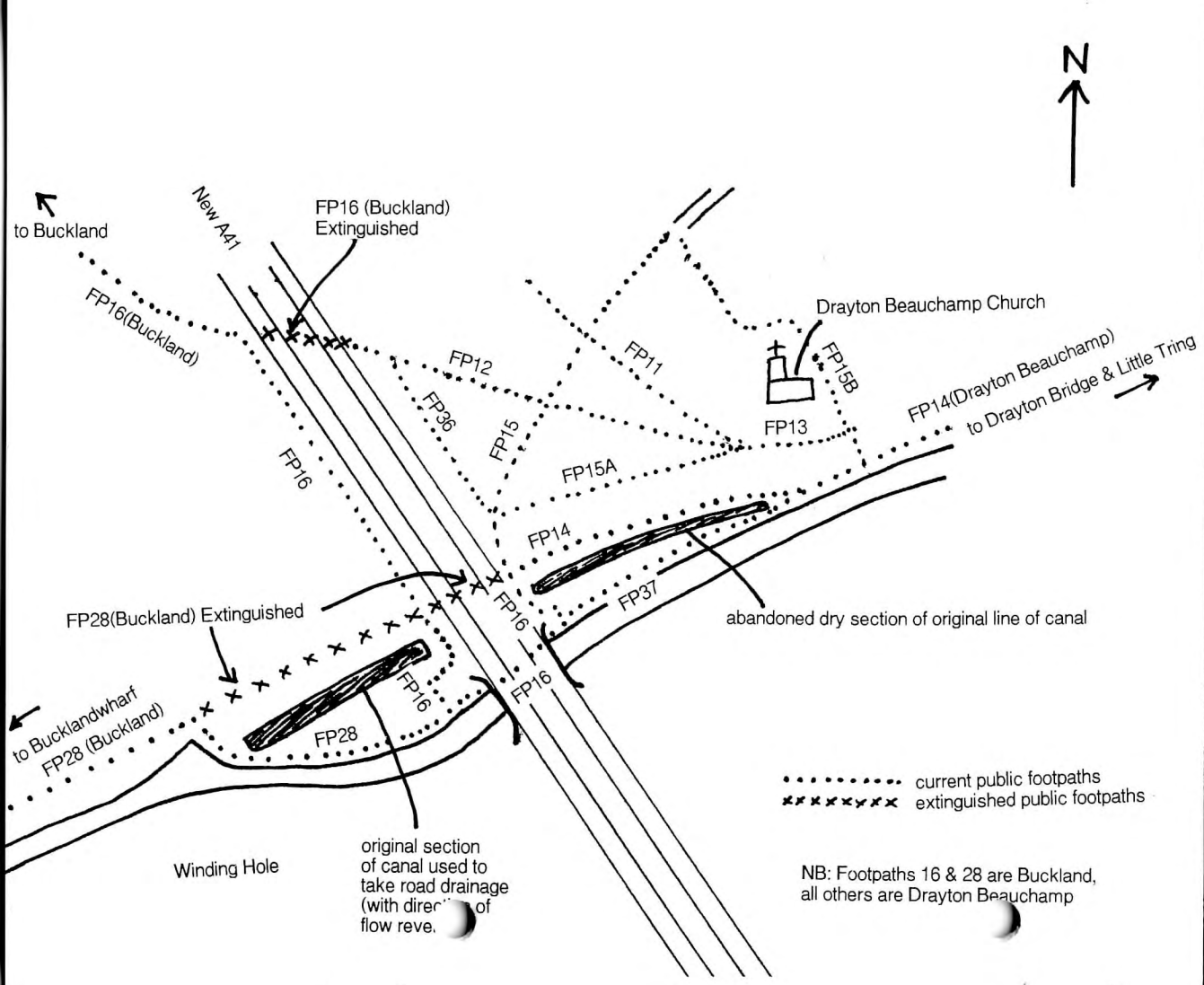
Footpath no. 36, Drayton Beauchamp: new footpath created alongside eastern edge of Church Meadow to link footpath no. 15, Drayton Beauchamp to the severed route of footpath no. 12, Drayton Beauchamp (formerly leading to footpath no. 16 Buckland).

Footpath no. 37, Drayton Beauchamp: new footpath created along new towpath east of road bridge, linking footpath no. 16, Buckland to footpath no. 14, Drayton Beauchamp (the original towpath line).

Note that footpath no. 14, Drayton Beauchamp is retained along the towpath adjacent to the abandoned dry section of the original line of the canal to maintain the link to footpaths 16, Buckland and 15 Drayton Beauchamp (near the site of the old sump).

The map on the adjacent page should hopefully make all this clear!





[Photo, opposite]
 Your intrepid Editor on footpath no. 14, Drayton Beauchamp, alongside the abandoned dry section of canal now nicely tidied up by Balfour Beatty.

NEWS IN BRIEF

● CLUB 100 DRAW

Winners of the Autumn 2003 Club 100 draw (drawn at the A.G.M.) were: First Prize (£111.60): Mr A R Holloway. Second Prize (£46.50): Mrs A H Justice. Third Prize (£18.60): Mrs O Shaw. Congratulations to them and a reminder that numbers may be acquired from Barry Martin (details inside rear cover).

● TOWPATH IMPROVEMENTS AT WENDOVER

During September contractors employed by British Waterways carried out improvements to the towpath alongside the basin at Wendover. The path had been eroding and required attention. Facilitated by Wendover Parish Council, funding was obtained from Buckinghamshire County Council (Rights of Way Department), British Waterways and the Chilterns Conservation Board; the cost of the improvements was about £15,000 and included a properly surfaced ramp from Wharf Road down to canal level.

● BULBOURNE WORKSHOPS TO CLOSE

British Waterways has announced that the historic Bulbourne Lock Gate Workshops are to close, probably in March 2004. Production is to be concentrated onto just two remaining workshops. The site is an attractive part of the local canalscape and we hope that a

sympathetic and appropriate use is found for it, preferably incorporating some heritage aspect.

● CLEAN-UP CONTINUES AT WENDOVER BASIN

Angus McKechnie has continued his excellent work on the area inside the cage at Wharf Road, Wendover. Litter, rubbish and rubble have been cleared and removed with the help of British Waterways. Vegetation has been cut back and the trees pruned. The basin area now looks very much better as a result and Angus is planning further enhancements, perhaps with the planting of some bulbs. Many thanks are due to Angus; it is good to see some 'tender loving care' being lavished on this previously neglected asset.

COMPETITION - HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE ARM?

Can you name the parishes (civil) through which the Arm passes from the junction at Bulbourne to Wendover IN THE CORRECT ORDER. Careful, because it's not quite as straightforward as you may think! Answers to the Editor (address inside rear cover). Basically for fun, but if anybody gets it right some small reward may be forthcoming. Answer in the next edition.



A view from Wharf Road, Wendover, showing in the foreground the area so beautifully tidied up by Angus McKechnie. (See News in Brief).



A photo shoot was arranged to mark the completion of the towpath improvements at Wendover. (See News in Brief). In this shot are (left to right) your Editor, Angus McKechnie and Ted Wilkinson, Chairman Wendover Parish Council.



The section of the original line, west of the by-pass, now used to take drainage from the new road. The water emerges from the culvert and flows towards the photographer, i.e. in the reverse direction to previously.



Part of the improved towpath at Wendover Basin.

VACANCY

<i>Date:</i>	October 2003
<i>Job Description:</i>	Trust Sales Manager
<i>Job Duration:</i>	Minimum 12 months. Thereafter by mutual agreement.
<i>Responsibilities:</i>	Sale of Trust Goods to raise funds and to increase public awareness of the Trust and its aims.
<i>Reporting to:</i>	Trust Council. It is not necessary to be a member of Council.
<i>Core tasks:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain (store, re-order, restock, keep safe) sales stock• Liaise with event organisers to be present with sales display• Enrol any necessary helpers to assist with sales display days• Display and sell at approx 6 events per year• Introduce new sales items (in consultation with WAT Council)• Keep simple records of stock and sales• Report sales status to Council on a regular basis.
<i>Optional tasks:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce new sales initiatives• Promote sales to members and others via appropriate ads, price list, etc.
<i>Personal Qualities desired (but not essential):</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willingness to engage with people• Ability to sell• Enthusiasm
Interested? Call Bob Wheal on 07860 286 155, or talk to any Council Member	

This page is for reader's letters and articles; unfortunately the contents of the page reflects those received!

Wendover Arm Trust

Registered Office: 129 High Street, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2DJ
A non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Registered in England No. 2353392
Incorporated 1989. Registered Charity No. 801190

President: Dr. David Fletcher, CBE

Vice President: Mr. Roger Lewis

The Council

Chairman

Bob Wheal
467 Bideford Green
LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Beds
LU7 2TZ
Tel: 01525 381614
07860 286155

Restoration Director & Vice Chairman

Roger Leishman
7 Hall Park
BERKHAMSTED, Herts
HP4 2NU
Tel: 01442 874536

Secretary

John Hopkins
80 Ashfield
Stantonbury
MILTON KEYNES
MK14 6AT
Tel: 01908 311521

Treasurer

John Brooman
66 Bryants Acre
Wendover
AYLESBURY, Bucks
HP22 6LA
Tel: 01296 623542

Publicity Officer & Newsletter Editor

John Savage
16 Lakeside
TRING, Herts
HP23 5HN
Tel: 01442 827702

Membership Secretary

Barry Martin
69 Wenwell Close
Aston Clinton
AYLESBURY, Bucks
HP22 5LG
Tel: 01296 630599

Trust Sales

Beryl Martin
69 Wenwell Close
Aston Clinton
AYLESBURY, Bucks
HP22 5LG
Tel: 01296 630599

Fundraising Director

Vacant

Minutes Secretary

Shelley Savage
16 Lakeside
TRING, Herts
HP23 5HN
Tel: 01442 827702

Council Member

Ray Orth
42 Lowndes Avenue
CHESHAM, Bucks
HP5 2HN
Tel: 01494 786868

Council Member

Ron Pittaway
65 Wenwell Close
Aston Clinton
AYLESBURY, Bucks
HP22 5LG
Tel: 01296 630968

BW Nominee

Matthew Routledge
BW Grand Union South
Watery Lane
Marsworth
TRING, Herts
HP23 4LZ
Tel: 01442 825938

IWA Nominee

Elizabeth Payne
33 Priors Walk
St John's Priory
LECHLADE, Glos
GL7 3HR
Tel: 01367 253121

Chiltern Society Nominee

John Rowe
Fox Meadow
Water End Lane
Potten End
BERKHAMSTED, Herts
HP4 2SH
Tel: 01442 862619

TRING/WENDOVER CANAL FESTIVAL 2004

- ★ Get the dates in your diary now; Sunday 30th and Bank Holiday Monday 31st May 2004.
- ★ All the usual attractions plus new entertainment
- ★ 2003 Festival was most successful ever with over 15,000 visitors
- ★ Boat bookings and enquiries to John Hopkins (details inside rear cover)
- ★ Trade enquiries to Bob Wheal (details inside rear cover)
- ★ General enquiries through website tringcanalfestival.org.uk or wendovercanalfestival.org.uk or telephone John Savage on 01442 827702

★ **IMPORTANT!**

**PLEASE BUY OR SELL
THE ENCLOSED GRAND
DRAW TICKETS: SEND
STUBS & CHEQUES TO
JO LEESON AT THE
ADDRESS ON TICKETS**