

Wendover Arm News

Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust





Stage One in Water June 2010

**Come and join the Celebrations for the Trust's 21st
Birthday at our Anniversary Dinner & A.G.M.**

**On: Wednesday October 20th
At: Aston Clinton Sports & Social Club**

This year, the Council have decided to hold a buffet dinner rather than the usual ploughman's supper for the 21st A.G.M. of the Wendover Arm Trust. The evening will commence with guests arriving from 7.30pm ready for a 2 course buffet dinner served from 8pm. The A.G.M business will start at 9.30pm after the raffle and club 100 lottery draw have been made.

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AGM and Fund Raising

This edition continues the theme of looking back at the many curious ways the Trust has raised money in the past and we look forward to our **annual general meeting** to be held in on October 20th.

The good weather this year has resulted in significant progress on the restoration and a great deal of interest from the passing public. The picture opposite shows stage one of phase two of the restoration in water for the first time in over a hundred years. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the restoration it is certainly worth the trip now. It is within a short walk of the bridge

at Drayton Beauchamp. You can see the initial experimental section that was used to prove the method would hold water and how the vegetation has grown to look like it has always been there. Then there's the mooring bay that took us about a year to build as well as the impressive new section in water. Already families of swans, coots and mallards have moved in and their offspring are thriving.

Despite a vigorous growing season in the spring the site is neat and tidy thanks to volunteers scrub bashing and good relations with local farmers during their hedge trimming activities.

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One of our More Bizarre Ways of Raising Money



Iwa National Festival Milton Keynes 2001

The photo above shows some of our happy band of Bog Cleaners at the IWA National Festival at Milton Keynes in 2001.

It all started at one of our council meetings where it was announced that an offer had been made by the IWA National Festival Committee for a donation of £500 to any volunteer organisation who would be willing to take on a specific task at the National Festival to be held at Milton Keynes.

We were obviously very interested and asked for more details and it was at this point that the

task was explained. It was to spend 4 days cleaning and servicing the 6 toilet blocks at the festival.

Not to be deterred I offered to take on the task of organising the work so we quickly accepted the IWA offer and announced our willingness to carry out this very necessary and important function. I think it was at this point that I was promoted to the giddy height of Bog Cleaning Superintendent. I will not repeat what Jo said when I arrived home from the meeting and told her what I had let us in for.

My first job was to enlist the help of some willing volunteers and much to Jo's relief, who at this time had visions of spending 4 days on her own cleaning loos, we had several hardy souls who came forward with offers of help. I am not sure to this day what the attraction was. I would like to think that it was out of a sense of duty and support for the Trust but I rather suspect that it was the chance to spend 4 days wearing those lovely pink Marigold gloves that really swayed the issue, especially for the men. The ladies were all wearing yellow gloves whilst the men were all in pink.

We did however, strange as it may seem, enjoy the experience and managed to raise over £700, this being made up from the £500 IWA donation and a further sum of just over £200 from collection boxes which we placed by the toilet blocks.

The event was brought to an end by the closing ceremony and parade of all the helpers. The Wendover Arm Bog Cleaners took our position at the end of the line (we knew our place) and we marched around the arena with our mops, buckets and bags of toilet rolls to great applause and

cries of "well done the boggies" and we all felt that perhaps our work had been appreciated.

You might think that this is the end of the story but no. In 2003 the National Festival returned to Southern waters and was to be held at Beale Park on the Thames. We must have done something right in 2001 because the IWA Festival Committee contacted the Trust immediately to ask if we would be willing to take on the task once again. This time however the donation would be for £750, an offer which we were only too willing to accept. I therefore set off once again to round up our volunteers and we took on the task for a second time. This time we managed to raise almost £1000 from the IWA donation plus what we collected in the boxes.

We managed therefore to raise over £1700 for the Trust simply by cleaning loos so to all those who helped to carry out such a vital task at those events very well done and many thanks on behalf of the Trust, and yes, you can keep the gloves.

Ray Orth
Bog Cleaning Superintendent
(retired)

Wildlife Watch

Ducks

Did you ever wonder what happens to all the male mallards in summer? Well this time of year the males are said to be in eclipse (June-September). Their plumage is similar to that of the female, the easiest way to tell the difference is that the males have a lighter colour bill, it is a shade of yellow. The males leave the breeding area to change their plumage, this journey is known as the moult migration.

Swans

Cygnets are getting quite big this time of year and are still in their brown plumage. Later on, in the spring when they have white feathers their parents will send them off to seek their fortunes. Around the Wendover Arm there is a thriving singles club where they tend to go to on the Tring Reservoirs. They flock with other immature swans generally indulging in an idyllic adolescence for about three years until they finally pair up and fly off to find their own breeding grounds where, if undisturbed they will live together as a

couple for the rest of their lives.

The Mute Swan is the largest native bird in Britain and is the only swan to breed here; any other species such as Whooper Swans and Bewick's Swans are winter visitors.

Grey Herons

Grey Herons are a familiar sight on our canals as it stands in an upright position, motionless, watching and waiting with the infinite patience of the professional fisherman.

Once prey is sighted it will lower its bill down towards the water assuming a crouching position, until the fish is within striking range. By patience and stealth it earns the opportunity to strike. The idea is not to spear the fish but to grab it live, this needs the element of surprise to be successful. Although usually aimed at fish herons will also take amphibians, mammals and even birds.

Herons tend to be territorial and will defend their hunting patch with great vigour sometime even killing rivals.

Indiana Jones and the Bucks Freemasons

As part of part of their "Freemasons in the Community" initiative a contingent of the Bucks Free Masons joined us to volunteer their labour over a one week period during June.

The project was billed as industrial archaeology consequently some members were quite surprised to be digging great big holes rather than being presented with trowels and paint brushes.

The work at Whitehouses was started in May by KESCRG. The masons opened up the trenches

and discovered some quite interesting finds.

Evidence of settling ponds and a deep shaft were uncovered much to the excitement of the diggers.



Club 100 Draw Winners — Summer 2010

Number in draw 144

First Prize £172.80	No 18	Mr Stuart Bell
Second Prize £72.00	No 108	Mr Rodney Evans
Third Prize £28.80	No 120	Mr John Norton

Total Prizes £273.60

If you are not yet a member of the club 100 lottery, it is not too late to join in time for the October draw which will take place at the **AGM**. Contact Katherine for details, each lucky number costs £15 per year.

Katherine Deaney 01442 246 523 membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the twentieth first Annual General Meeting of the Wendover Arm Trust will be held at the Aston Clinton Sports and Social Club, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire on Wednesday 20th October 2010 commencing at 9.30 pm.

AGENDA

Apologies for Absence.

Minutes of the 20th Annual General Meeting held on 21st October 2009.

Chairman's Report.

Individual Trustees' Reports.

Honorary Treasurer's Report.

To receive and, if thought fit, approve the report of the Committee. (Council of Management).

To receive and, if thought fit, to approve the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet of the Trust for the Year ended on 5th April 2010, and the Report of the Independent Examiner thereon.

To re-appoint Mr F.W.P. Lea F.C.A. as Independent Examiner

To elect Members to the Council. (See Note 1 below).

By Order of the Council



John. M. Rowe
Secretary

Registered Office:
129 High Street
Berkhamsted
Herts.
HP4 2DJ

Menu

Braised steak in Madeira wine
Salmon fillets in cream and herb sauce.
Chicken baked in honey and mustard.

Vegetarian option available (must be booked in advance)

All served with a selection of potatoes and vegetables

Profiteroles with fresh fruit and chocolate sauce.
Meringues with cream and fresh fruit.

Coffee and Cake

Tickets must be booked in advance and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. To book your tickets, please complete the booking form that is enclosed and send together with **payment to Katherine**.

If you would like to come to the **A.G.M only**, join us for coffee and cake to toast the success of the Trust at 9pm, the **A.G.M. will commence at 9.30pm**. Please use the booking form to let us know you will be coming so we can make sure there is enough space.

Deadline for dinner tickets – **Saturday 16th October** or when tickets sell out
This event is open to current members of the Wendover Arm Trust, **one additional guest** per member permitted.

5th September 2010

Note 1. Under Article 39, nominations for election to the Council may be received by the Secretary up to seven clear days before the date of the meeting. Nominations must be in writing and signed by the proposer and by the person nominated, confirming their willingness to be elected. Only members qualified to vote at the meeting may make nominations or stand for election.

A list of Council Members standing for re-election and other members standing for election will be given at the meeting.

Note 2. Any person being a member of the Trust is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his behalf at the Annual General Meeting. Such a proxy need not be a member of the Trust. A letter nominating the proxy, signed by the member, must be received by the Secretary before the start of the meeting.

Wills, Donations, Plaques

Let's talk about something we usually don't care to think about.

We all die.

Without a will, whatever money we leave does not necessarily go to those whom we would like to benefit, nor to the causes we support.

With a will, we can decide in advance who benefits, and by how much. It's good to know our intentions are known and will be carried out.

If we name our favourite charities we have the satisfaction of knowing our support will continue after we are gone. By making clear what our wishes are, differences of opinion are avoided between family members, as each tries to remember what our intentions were.

Naming the Wendover Arm Trust in our will has another affect; our bequest is transformed into a part of a structure which remains as a permanent legacy and a future asset for others.

When a family member dies donations could be asked for at the funeral, maybe in lieu of flowers. Family, friends, and acquaintances can express their condolences in a practical way. In the past few months the Wendover Arm Trust has benefited significantly from collections taken at funerals, and donations given in memory. Some of these donations have been gift-aided, further

increasing their value.

On occasion, donations have been channelled through the Funeral Director, and the Trust has written a personal letter of thanks to every donor, where the address is known.

A further permanent and appropriate memorial for anyone who supports the restoration project is via a bridge or stanchion plaque. These plaques are cast in metal, and mounted on one of the wooden footbridges over the Arm.

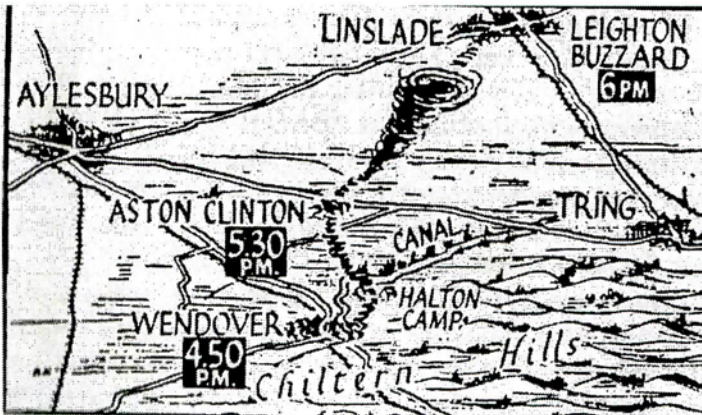
Plaques are used for a variety of purposes; simply to record support for the restoration, as a gift for someone, or as a personal but public memorial to a family member.

If the work of the Trust is already included in your own inheritance planning, you can be sure the Wendover Arm Trust will be grateful for the support and will use the money wisely.

If you would like more information about mentioning the Wendover Arm Trust in a Will, or nominating the Trust to receive donations, or to ask about Bridge Plaques, please contact the Trust Funding Director, Bob Wheal on 07860 286155, or email

funding@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk. You can also look on our website www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Bucks Hurricane



These days we seem to relate extreme weather conditions to 'Global Warming' – but on opening their *Bucks Advertiser* on 26th May 1950, local people were astonished to read the following headlines:

'SCAR TWENTY YARDS WIDE ACROSS THE FACE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE' 'A Tornado ripped its stormy path on Sunday afternoon and now there is a trail of damage through Wendover, Halton Camp, Aston Clinton and out through Linslade to Bedfordshire.'

Starting at Wendover on Sunday, 21st May 1950 it followed roughly the course of the canal for some time before veering off to cause mischief further afield.

The noise was said to be like an express train passing through a station. The sky was dark and the swirling vortex of the tornado lifting and tossing everything in its path.

At Small Dean it lifted the roof off a barn and carried it 30 feet. On reaching Wendover it took the roof off the Baptist Chapel, uprooted huge trees blocking the main London-Aylesbury road, ripped off the roof of a builder's store spoiling 7 tons of concrete.

It took the roof off the butchers' and The George Inn, ripped tiles off many of the houses in the street, one housewife was entering her scullery when it was whisked away in front of her eyes. Washing lines, gates, fences

and anything else left loose flew into the air never to be seen again.

Roaring down Wharf Road it just missed the Gasometer and set off towards Halton RAF Camp. People watched as it rampaged across Wharf Meadows wafting sheds, boxes, timber and branches high up in the air. As if in fun, it lifted two horses up from one meadow and put them down in another!

At Halton Camp, it damaged planes and caused havoc to power supplies and buildings.

On reaching Aston Clinton it continued ripping off roofs, uprooting trees. It surprised the local constable by lifting a horse box containing a pony high into the air only to deposit it in a field with no damage done.

At Puttenham a large chicken house containing 700 chickens was lifted into the air speeding along at an alarming rate before being deposited in another farm a mile and a half away. At least 500 chickens were reported killed or missing.

The devastation continued into Linslade where 300 houses were damaged along with several shops before the power of the tornado was eventually dissipated over Bedfordshire.

That was not the end of it though, severe storms continued to batter the whole area for some time afterwards with giant hailstones reported and flood water cutting many local roads with train and bus services cancelled.

An extensive clean-up operation was mounted involving fire and police services from far and wide. Although the damage caused was extensive the track of the hurricane was never much more than 20 yards wide and the only reported deaths as a result of the incident were two people in Bedfordshire. The two who died were Frederick Cast and James Perry, of Kempston in Bedfordshire. Both were struck by lightning and killed as they ran for shelter.

Reference Buckinghamshire Headlines, Jean Archer 1992
Bedfordshire Libraries - online
BBC - on this day - online
Press Association - online

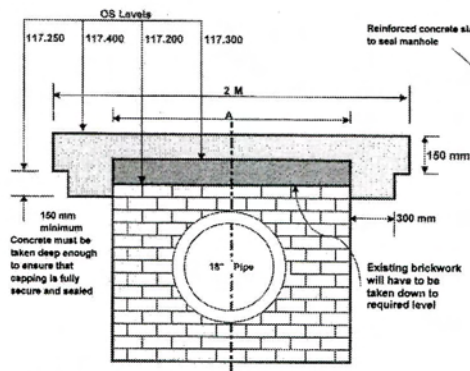
Restoration News

The August camp is now over for another year, we were blessed with largely good weather this time round and significant progress was made on pipe capping. This is perhaps the least rewarding of the regular tasks at this phase of the project, all your hard work is covered up with spoil and will remain at the bottom of the canal where nobody without a detailed knowledge of the project will ever know its there! However it is vital to the progress of the restoration and we cannot proceed without it.

For those who don't know why we have to do this work – it is because the 18 inch earthenware pipe that carries the water beneath the dry section of the canal may be vulnerable to damage if it is not protected. The 2 metre wide concrete “cap” has to cover the pipe all the way from Drayton Beauchamp to where it leaves the bed of the canal near phase one. The cap is poured and then covered with spoil, later the bed is lined with bentomat and then covered with a further layer of spoil.

There is a series of manholes in the pipeline that made for an in-

teresting puzzle — how do you cap them? The answer came from the ever practical team of Ray and Roger. Capping is stopped a little short of the manhole on either side. A slab of concrete is cast on top of the capping of a suitable size to cover the manhole (not forgetting to include 2 lifting handles in its construction!) The brickwork of the manhole is then taken down to a suitable level and the slab is manoeuvred into position covering the resultant hole. The missing section of capping is now poured and any evidence of the manhole having existed is gone.



NOTES:

Typical slab (This might vary with individual manholes)

Dimension A = 1300 mm

Dimension B = 1600 mm

Kenneth John Gaunt Graves **28th October 1937—1st July 2010**

Around 10am on Thursday July 1st I was discussing on the phone with Ken Graves the refurbishment of the bending frame that he was going to engineer in July. I was completely taken aback when, in the afternoon, his daughter phoned me to say that Ken had died of a suspected heart attack at 11.30am.

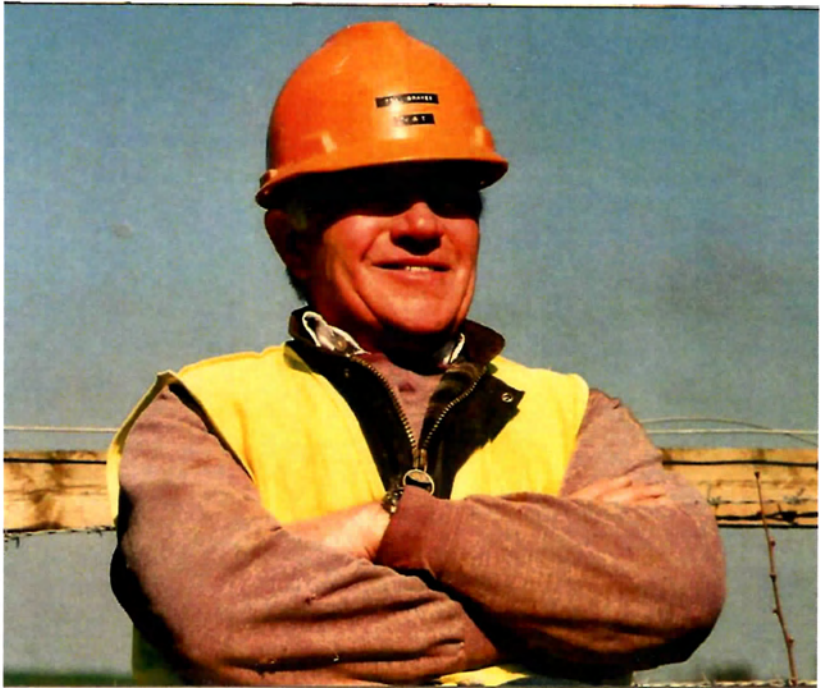
Ken was one of our original volunteers and one of my earliest memories of him was his attention to detail – after he had cleared scrub everything had to be just so, we called it Ken's potato patch. Since then I have lost count of the times he came up to me saying "I know I am a fussy old fart but

His contribution to the restoration was invaluable, he masterminded hedging, manufactured timber formwork, prepared detailed drawings for the Phase II mooring walls and helped in countless other ways.

Many of our members attended Ken's funeral at Amersham Crematorium on the 16th July showing the high regard we all had for him.

It will be difficult to imagine future working parties without Ken and his tales, he will be sorely missed.

Roger Leishman



I had known Ken for many years through our mutual hobbies of boating, but it was only when I joined the restoration team that I came to know him well. He became one of my many mentors, his standards were high, but criticism was given in a friendly and encouraging manner.

We often walked to and from the working site together, and it was on one of these occasions last year that we had the following conversation. We were passing bridge 4A and our talk turned to the plaques attached to the bridge, these commemorated many occasions, both happy and sad. As at this point he mentioned he had a living memorial "THE HEDGE" Now I had realised he was pedantic about the hedges at the site, but until that moment had not understood that he had been involved in the original planting of them.

I am sure that I speak for all the working party when I say that "THE HEDGES" will always be kept up to Ken's high standard. Each monthly working party when I walk the restored arm, I will think of KEN.

Jenny Brice

Wendover Arm Trust Council

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Trust Website	Robert Drury	01296 631121	robertjdrury@yahoo.co.uk

Non-Council Officers

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Vice-President & Trust Historian	Barry Martin	0163544472	BMartinTurner@aol.com

Festival Committee

Graeme Lockhart (Chair), Graham and Rosemary Bennett, John Brooman, Lesley Deverill, Max Deverill, Andy Januszewski, Keith Jones, Denise Laxton, Dave and Jo Leeson, Bob Wheal, Dot Zasadzka

Contact: festival@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Funding Committee

Bob Wheal (Chair), John Brooman, Peter Cleasby, James Clifton, Robert Drury, Sue Hetherington, Roger Leishman, Ray Orth, John Rowe

Contact: funding@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Restoration Committee

Roger Leishman (Chair), John Brooman, Eddy Evans, Jon Kelly, Margaret Leishman, Ray Orth, Ron Pittaway, Bob Wheal,

Contact: via Roger Leishman (see above) or restoration@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

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