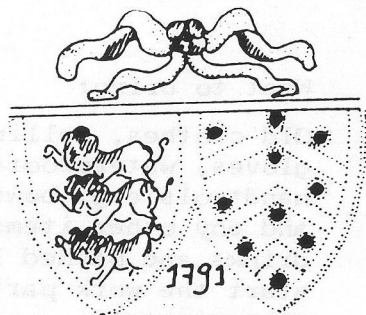


6.6.83

HEREFORD AND GLOUCESTER CANAL SOCIETY



Thankyou for joining the Hereford and Gloucester Canal Society. I hope you will find your membership worthwhile and I look forward to seeing you at the forthcoming events.

We would like to welcome Mr. Robin Andrews as Chairman. Mr. Frank Frecknall is the new Vice Chairman.

MAJOR BARNES ALLOWS CANAL CLEARANCE

Our first canal clearance project is now due to begin on the stretch near Monkhide. Those of you who attended the first canal tour will probably remember the location, with the magnificent Skew Bridge.

The landowner, Major Barnes has kindly agreed to support us in this venture. In fact, Major Barnes has been responsible for gradually clearing the canal by himself for over ten years and was therefore very pleased to hear of the formation of the Canal Society. He once went as far as getting a quote from a contractor's firm for having it dredged. He would like to see the towpath and canal cleared of trees and undergrowth with eventual replanting of trees and wild flowers. The north (off) side of the canal will remain untouched. We would like to see this part of the canal returned to an amenity for both canal enthusiasts and country lovers.

Of course, all we need now are willing helpers! Please read "Working Parties" below:

WORKING PARTIES

The Hereford and Gloucester Canal Society are hoping to hold their first working party on Sunday 3 July at Crews Pitch Wharf, nr. Monkhide, on the main Hereford-Worcester road. (A4103)

The work will initially consist of scrub and undergrowth clearance along the towpath side with the aim eventually of more mature trees in the canal bed. All this work will be carried out with the approval and guidance of the landowner.

What to bring:

Old clothes, wellingtons, waders (if possible), strong gloves, waterproofs, safety helmets (if possible), small handtools e.g. bowsaws, crowbars, spades, ropes, wheelbarrows and any other items which may be of assistance. Hot or cold drinks and packed lunches will also be required. We aim to start the work parties at 10.00 am., finishing at 4.30 pm. approximately.

Location of Worksite:

From Hereford take the A4103 Hereford to Worcester road for approximately $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles and Crews Pitch Wharf can be found on the right hand side (at the bottom of the hill). If approached from the Worcester direction, the site will be found approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile the Hereford side of Newtown crossroads. i.e. the junction of the Leominster-Gloucester road (A417 with the A4103). The grid reference of the site is SO 606442

There is only limited car parking space available so use park considerably, thus avoiding any obstruction on the highway.

The insurance we are arranging for the working parties unfortunately does not cover children under fifteen years of age. In fact, we feel that the canal working parties are unsuitable for young children due to the many dangers; for example, from the machinery, the water and the deep silt.

Future Working Party Dates:

Sunday 7 August

Sat., Sun., Mon. 27-29 August

For Further Information:

Peter Woodfield
27 Chepstow Walk
Bobblesstock
Hereford

Phone Robin Andrews
Tel: Hfd. 268854
OR:

SUMMER EVENTS

Sunday 19 June Walk along canal with a naturalist to talk on (2.30 pm) "the plants and animals of the canal" Meet at Fromes Court (Nr Canon Frome; Grid Reference SO 645435). Cream teas are available, costing about £1 a head and must be booked in advance from Mr. P.R.Ashurst. Tel: Hereford 57245 by FRIDAY 17 JUNE at the latest.

donation of photographs to be used on displays of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal Society.

MEMORABILIA

Collecting souvenirs of the canal era can be fraught with such problems as where to find them and just what to pay for them. As with any growing field of interest, prices will rise to reflect increase in demand, but one point is worth bearing in mind: that of condition. Any item in an excellent state of preservation will command a disproportionately higher premium over the identical item in only 'average' condition. Generally speaking, condition is a more important factor than rarity unless one is dealing with something that may be unique. Here are a few suggestions for the beginner:

Old Postcards Most belong to the Edwardian era or a little later. Prices start at around a £1 and rise according to subject content. Scenes of industrial activity are more desirable than dull views of an empty canal. Sources: postcard specialists, philatelists, flea markets and book auctions.

Old Prints These date from the late 18th Century to early 19th Century. Many of these have been removed from books, check that they have not been cropped or severely cut. Avoid torn prints and those displaying unsightly foxing. Most of those that are coloured have been done recently. Prices depend on the size of the print. Steel engraved views, particularly those of the Regent's Canal by Shepherd, are quite common. Earlier copper engravings are scarcer. Prices may start around £4. It is worth keeping an eye open for odd or damaged volumes of 18th or 19th Century books on industrial cities of England, or Arthur Young's Northern Tours. The plates may be intact despite imperfections elsewhere and the book can be snapped up quite cheaply.

Sources: print specialists and antiquarian book dealers.

Canal Acts of Parliament These date mainly to the 18th Century. The proposal to build a canal and to raise capital needed Parliamentary approval as did any further alteration or extension of the canal. At the end of the Parliamentary session all the Acts were bound together. Until recently these were allowed to catch dust in the cellars of libraries and institutions, but many have been bought by book dealers and broken up into thematic lots. Prices start at around £5 (disbound).

Sources: antiquarian book dealers and book auctions.

Those who missed the walk may be interested in a printed guide available from: J.White, 19,Grampian Close, Hereford.

Because of the success a second tour has been arranged at Newent in September.

We would like to thank landowners for giving permission to cross their land for the walk and also Robin Andrews and Nigel Jeffries for leading the walk.

SPONSORED WALK AT STROUD

The Stroudwater, Severn and Thames Canal Trust held another sponsored walk at Stroud on Sunday 8 May. The walk was for ten miles; from Stroud to Chipmans Platt and back, along a very scenic stretch, which was for the most part just about navigable. This was very well attended despite the weather and the H & G C S was represented.

At many sites along the walk, Stroudwater volunteers were in evidence; dredging, clearing tree stumps and mending the bridge parapets.

IWA WATERSPORTS DAY

Sunday 22 May was the date for the Gloucester IWA Watersports display. It was held at the Gloucester Rowing Club, an ideal site, giving waterside facility for canoe displays by the Cheltenham Canoe Club and free boat trips by IWA members.

The H & G C S took a display along as did the Stroud water Severn and Thames Canal Trust. The British Waterways Board and IWA were also represented.

HORSE-DRAWN BARGE

Snowy is used to towing barges - he spends each summer hauling a trip boat on the canal at Chester - so he wandered away across the riverside meadow while the bargees argued over that always controversial point, where to attach the tow rope to the barge. This was the leading barge of a gang, that is, the barges used to travel in pairs, close lashed stern to bow, and the towing post is positioned amidships to take account of the centre of gravity of this early articulated vehicle. In the event the purists lost, the towpost was used despite there being only the single barge and Snowy was captured and hitched up. Once he felt the weight of the barge Snowy knew that a few powerful strides would get her moving and from then on only a light pull would keep her going. The tow rope tightened and the barge leapt forwards, something we'd never experienced with our waterborne tug, and we were soon leaning on the tiller to hold out from the bank.

The most beautiful way to travel, was everyone's verdict and we can enjoy the same experience on the Hereford and Gloucester Canal if we can get about a half a mile of canal and towpath cleared. A number of other detached waterways such as the Cromford Canal in Derbyshire and the Grand Western in Somerset have very successful horse-drawn boats and the Society takes great encouragement from these enterprises.

If we cannot get a horse I already have volunteers to cow-haul a barge! Our search for a length of canal to work on continues and floating a barge would require much work and the agreement of all concerned. But a horse-drawn boat on the Canal must be a high priority for the Society, combining as it does our aims of appreciating the Canal's past and using its pleasant potential as an amenity.

F.FRECKNALL

Do you know something of interest about the Hereford and Gloucester Canal or other waterway? Have you been on an interesting or amusing waterways holiday? Could you say something about the canalside natural history or perhaps you know someone who remembers the canal as it was?

If so, please write and tell us about it. Contributions and suggestions welcome.

Contact: J.White, 19,Grampian Close, Hereford.

As you are aware, a society of this kind relies quite heavily on membership fees to sponsor projects and events. The more the merrier so please pass on information about the Society to friends.

Anyone who wishes to join should send a cheque payable to Hereford and Gloucester Canal Society to James Dunn, Old Deanery House, Cathedral Close, Hereford. Tel: 272701. .

Individual Member	£2
Junior Member	£1
Family Membership	£3
Corporate (eg Youth Groups)	£3
OAP Member	£1

Please enclose details of name and address.

Are there any keen historians among you? In particular we are looking for some people who would be willing to assist in compiling a record of the canal structures by photography, paintings and diagrams. Old photographs showing past canal life which could be carefully rephotographed to include in the survey would be much appreciated. For more information, please contact Bill Purser. Tel: Hfd. 760692.

- Sunday 3 July Working Party. See above.
(10.00 am)
- Sunday 17 July Visit to Black Country Museum and Dudley Cana
(10.00 am to Tunnel. This is an outstanding Working Museu
leave Hereford) of special interest to canal enthusiasts and
industrial archeologists. Maximum cost is
£3.50 for adults and £2 for children. This
will be reduced if we get a reasonable number
Bring a packed lunch. Bookings and enquiries
by JULY 10 to Bill Purser. Tel: Hereford
760692.
- Sunday 7 Aug. Working Party.
(10.00 am.)
- August 27-29 Working Party.
(10.00 am.)
- Sunday 11 Sept. Canal walk led by Mr. David Bick. Starting
(11.00 am) at Newent and including Oxenhall Tunnel and
the Coal Branch. Meet at Newent Market Squar
Please bring a packed lunch. Drinks availabl
at a pub.

Later dates to keep free in your diary:

- Weds. 12 October (evening)
Weds. 9 November (evening)
Weds. 7 December (evening)

HEREFORD TO ASHPERTON TOUR

The stretch chosen for the first canal tour was that between hereford and the Ashperton Tunnel. This event attracted over sixty people on Sunday 24 April, which was a normal Sunday in April, ie., it rained.

Of particular interest were the old bridges and tunnels which are still in excellent condition. The two most distinctive parts of this stretch of canal are the entrance to the Ashperton Tunnel and the superb Skew Bridge at Monkhide.

The greatest benefit of the tour was enlightening members of the Society of the present state of the canal and of the possible sites for restoration work.

The canalside is a haven for some interesting forms of wildlife (in addition to rats at the 'rubbish tips' under some canal bridges). Along some stretches there were violet cowslips and marsh marigolds.

Ensuring the continuance of existing flora and fauna will obviously be paramount when formulating any restoration plan

Share Certificates These are quite desirable items, and despite the large numbers that must have been issued, are now very scarce, particularly the earlier ones. It is evident that the shareholders also received a copy of the Act. Those that were not destroyed when the canal company was wound up, were often left with the deeds of the family estate, frequently being lodged in solicitors' offices. Gradually they are coming to light. Prices for the Hereford to Gloucester Canal are difficult to determine, but the earlier ones may command a price of £100 or more.

Sources: auctions and specialist dealers.

Maps Those devoted specifically to canals are in demand, particularly those delineating a proposed route. Prices vary enormously. Hand drawn and coloured maps accompanying the deeds of transfer are worth hunting down as each is probably unique.

Tokens The shortage of copper currency in the late 18th Century resulted in a spate of well struck $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1d tokens from 1788 to 1797. Most of these were struck in Birmingham for merchants and general traders in London and the provinces. Virtually every town and city had its own issues and

Memorabilia cont

COMPETITION

A bottle of whisky is on offer for inventing an imaginative name for the Newsletter. Please don't let the next issue be called 'Newsletter 2'. Please send your entries to: Janet White, 19, Grampian Close, Hereford by 28th June 1983. Prize is kindly donated by James Dunn.

My entry is:

Name:

Address:

they provide an interesting commentary on the socio-economic history of the period. Slogans and scenes designed to advertise and promote trade within the town are commonplace, but canal scenes are scarce. None commemorate the Hereford and Gloucester Canal, but Manchester tokens with the Arms of the Duke of Bridgewater are quite common. Coalbrookdale tokens and those of the Gloucester and Berkley, and of the Thames and Severn canals bear interesting scenes while those of the Basingstoke canal are the scarcest of all. In this field, condition is the all important factor and worn tokens should be avoided. Sources: coin dealers.

One final word of advice: always buy the best (subject to the limitations of your pocket of course) and you will never regret it. There is always a ready market for quality.

written by Alan Morris

COMMITTEE

Chairman: Robin Andrews
20 Tower Road
Hereford
Tel: 268854

Secretary: Nigel Jeffries
19 Wilcroft Park
Bartestree
Hereford
Tel: 850661

Committee: Philip Ashurst, David Bick, Ken Cook,
Frank Frecknall, Robert Morley, John Startin,
Mike Potts, Mr. P.Price, Bill Purser,
Janet White.

Membership Secretary: James Dunn, Old Deanery House,
Cathedral Close, Hereford.
Tel: 272701

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete and return to Janet White to give an idea of where the main interests lie in the society. Just tick the box against those aspects of the canal society that appeal to you.

- ☐ working parties
- ☐ visits and walks along this/other canals
- ☐ natural history talks
- ☐ historical talks
- ☐ general talks
- ☐ other; please specify: