

THE HEREFORD WHARFINGER



THW

THE JOURNAL OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE
CANAL SOCIETY



40p

(FREE TO
MEMBERS)

SPRING 1987

15
No

HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY

President:

Mr Peter Price, Tibberton Court, Tibberton, Glos.

Vice-Presidents:

Major Robert Barnes, Highway Cottage, Lyde, Hfds.

Mr David Bick, The Pound House, Market Sq., Newent.

Hon. Consultant Structural Engineer:

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Hon. Archivist:

Post Vacant.

Committee:

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Mike Potts (Vice-Chairman)

3 Cranstone, Upper Breinton, Hereford (Hereford 56392).

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Hereford Wharfinger:

Mike Potts (Editor)

3 Cranstone, Upper Breinton, Herefordshire.

NATURE CONSERVATION

Our restoration may have temporarily disturbed some of the wildlife, but unfortunately there is no way round this. However, much wildlife is already returning. We have seen ducks, a frog, a few small fish, and even a heron and a kingfisher on this stretch of waterway. We hope that more will come. When we started work here the "canal" was in fact not much more than a depression in the ground with a trickle of water running along it, and now that we have a water-filled channel it will surely encourage wildlife.

The far side of the canal away from the towpath we intend to leave nature, and here the wildlife will not be disturbed by people enjoying a relaxing stroll.

The canals I have seen enjoy a good marriage with their wildlife. An excellent example of this is the Ashby Canal in Leicestershire, a canal which is very similar to our own except, of course, that it is fully navigable. If you should ever get the chance, do explore this beautiful, peaceful, and tranquil waterway. I have seen more wildlife while cruising the Ashby Canal than on any other stretch of water. And gently cruising along at less than four miles an hour - not even walking pace - one can really enjoy and absorb Nature.

We in the Canal Society are very concerned about wildlife and hope that by restoring this section of canal we will provide a home for many plants and animals. It is sad that in sections of the Canal that have been filled in and turned into arable land, there is no room for Nature.

Our Society would benefit from the help of a Conservation Officer. Are you interested in the countryside and willing to join us? Please use the enclosed form to volunteer your services on the Committee, or just ring one of us - you will be made most welcome.

Mike Potts

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY 1st MARCH

Restoration day. Crew pitch 10.00 - 4.30 pm.
All welcome. Help required please to prepare for
our open day.

FRIDAY 20th MARCH

ALAN SIMPSON "THE TUNNEL MAN" Slide show at
the Hereford Conservative club East St 7.30 pm.

WEDNESDAY 1st APRIL

CHAT ANA ALF Social evening. Come and meet others
from the canal society. The Antelope Inn Barton
road Hereford from 8.00 pm.

SUNDAY 5th APRIL

Restoration day at Crews Pitch.

WEDNESDAY 15th APRIL

CHAT ANA ALF Antelope Inn, as above.

SUNDAY 3rd MAY

Restoration day Crews pitch.

SUNDAY 7th JUNE

Restoration day. Crews pitch. HELP for our
open day preparations.....

LATER EVENTS

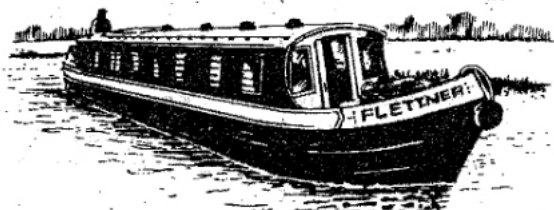
JUNE..... OPEN DAY

JULY..... COACH TOUR/CANAL CRUISE

AUGUST CANAL DRIVE/WALK

More details in the next edition.

WATCH YOUR WHARFINGER!



Red Line Boats

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GOYTRE WHARF, LLANOVER, ABERGAVENNY
GWENT NP7 9EW

Brecon-Abergavenny Canal

ALL PRICES INCLUDE FREE FUEL AND V.A.T.



SELF DRIVE DAY BOATS

4-SEATER CRAFT FOR HIRE

Day 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. £24.00

HALF DAY 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. £16.50



RED DRAGON TRIP BOAT

12-SEATER SELF DRIVE

Day 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. £36.00

HALF DAY 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. £24.00

POPPY TRIP BOAT

8-SEATER SELF DRIVE

Day 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. £30.00

HALF DAY 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. £20.00

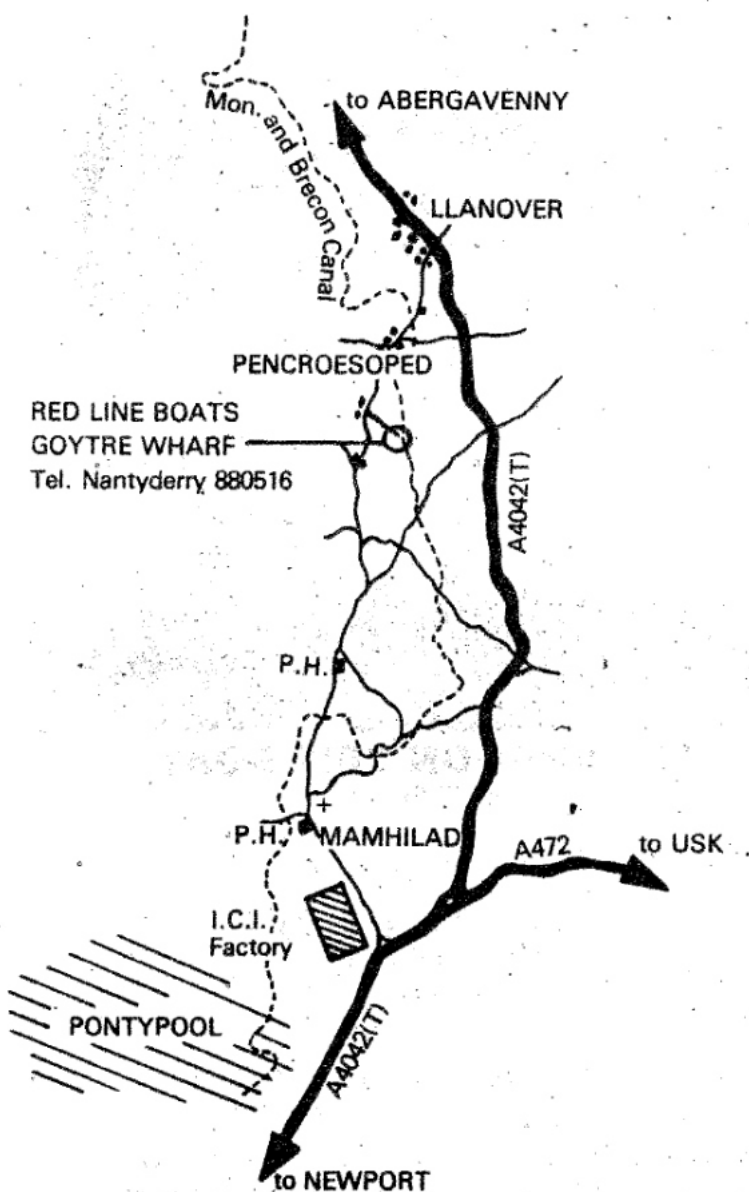
** All trips and day boats can be booked in advance
— no deposit required. Phone Nantyerry 880516*

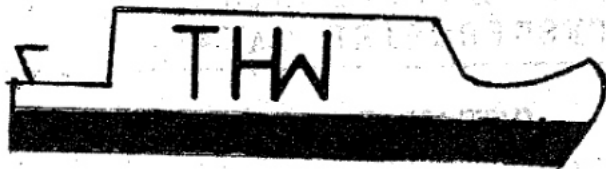
Please book in advance. If it rains, phone to say the boat will
not be required and book again when the weather improves.

BOATING

on the Brecon-Abergavenny Canal

DAILY AND WEEKLY HIRE





CREWS PITCH HISTORY.

Recently it was suggested that, as part of a tidying up of the Crew's Pitch site, we should demolish the small building alongside the Canal and rebuild it in another, more usable, form. However, we decided first to find out if its history the building's preservation. ^{warranted}

Examination of maps in the County Record Office has revealed the following:

At the time of the tithe survey of 1839, no trace of the Canal existed of course, since, as we know, the length in that area was cut in 1843. The tithe survey of 1847 showed the Canal together with the long, Nissen-like barn. It was not until the Ordnance Survey of 1886 that the small building appeared.

It is evident, therefore, that the building was erected between 1847 and 1886.

Ron Shoesmith, the local archaeologist and historian, has examined the building and has tentatively suggested the following conclusion; the fireplace and chimney structure was erected after the rest of the building, probably around the turn of the century. The evidence for this is in three parts.

One, the brickwork of the fireplace and chimney is not tied into the rest of the brickwork, as would be the case had all the bricks been laid at the same time.

Two, the bricks of the fireplace and chimney are of a different type and period from those of the walls; moreover, there appears to be a difference between the two mortars employed.

Three, the roof has been modified to allow passage of the chimney, rather than being built around it as would have been the case had chimney and roof been erected simultaneously.

Regarding the use to which the building was put, the property has been in Mjr Robert Barnes' family for many years and he has told us that he has seen buildings of a similar nature used as kitchens by itinerant hop field workers so it is likely that this is the case here. The building's original purpose is unclear but it is reasonable to assume that it was intended as a simple store; whether its use was connected with the navigation or was purely agricultural cannot be stated with any certainty - as the Canal was closed officially in 1881 and the building was erected between '47 and '86 the probability is that its use was connected with canal use or closure.

Our findings can be summarised as:

Built between 1847-86 as a store, probably in connection with the length of canal alongside.

Modified around the turn of the century as a kitchen for hop pickers.

GRAND OPEN DAY 28th JUNE 1987
SEE THE FIRST RESTORED SECTION
OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND
GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL.

STEAM BOAT CRUISE.

RALLY OF SMALL BOATS & CANOES.
MAGICIAN.

FILM SHOW CANALS & WATERWAYS.
SLIDE SHOW OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE
& GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL.
DISPLAY OF CANAL FINDS.

DISPLAY OF DRAWINGS, PAINTINGS
AND PHOTOGRAPHS.
REFRESHMENTS, SALES STANDS ETC.

We are just about to have the last bit of canal on the Crews Pitch to Skew bridge section dredged for navigation. It looks somewhat different from the time we started about three years ago.

From a slight depression in the ground covered in nettles, brambles and rubbish to a CANAL.

Do come along on the 28th. If you require transport please let us know well in advance and we will only be too glad to help.

Not all the arrangements have been finalised yet so our list is only a guide and we will put more details in the next edition of The Hereford Wharfinger and also in the local press nearer the date. Please bring your friends along they will be made most welcome.

If you would like to help please ring one of the committee.

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Herefordshire and
Gloucestershire
Canal
Society



DISCOVERING
LOST CANAL TUNNELS

FRIDAY MARCH 20th 7.30pm
with ALAN SIMPSON

CONSERVATIVE CLUB EAST STREET HEREFORD
ADMISSION £1.00 (children & OAPs 50p)

ATTENTION ALL TUNNEL AND CANAL BUFFS -
WE HAVE A RARE TREAT FOR YOU!
AN EVENING WITH ALAN SIMPSON, THE FAMOUS
"TUNNEL MAN", WHO HAS EXPLORED
AND PHOTOGRAPHED, OFTEN AT GREAT PERSONAL
DANGER, MANY OF THE DISUSED CANAL TUNNELS
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

RATHER THAN DELIVERING A FORMAL LECTURE,
HIS METHOD IS TO BRING ALL HIS PHOTOGRAPHS
ALONG AND DESCRIBE THOSE TUNNELS SELECTED
BY THE AUDIENCE. IT PROMISES TO BE
A FASCINATING EVENING - DON'T MISS IT!

(REFRESHMENTS)



ALL VERY WELCOME

WILLIAM BIRD,
TIMBER & COAL MERCHANT,
Commission Agent,
AND
GENERAL WHARFINGER,
BROMYARD AND LEOMINSTER WHARFS,
WITHINGTON.

N.B.—Goods forwarded to all parts of the Kingdom.

N.C. Jefferies, September 1984

CRUISE THE WYE AT HEREFORD
WITH
SWAN CRUISERS
Tel Hereford 58254

A new service is hoped to start shortly in Hereford.

Brian Stevens and Mervyn Watkins plan to offer cruises from the Greyfriars Restaurant up to Breinton and back. A cruise of about 4 miles in all. Thier first boat will carry twelve passengers.

Although they plan to run a regular trip service thier craft will be available for charter.

It is hoped that wedding receptions at the Greyfriars Restaurant can be combined with a cruise of the river Wye.

So if you fancy a meal followed by a tranquil cruise of this pretty part of the river Wye give them a try.

In the last issue of the Wharfinger Geoffrey Warren gave a transcription of Stephen Ballard's speech at the opening of the Canal to Withington. As this report from the Hereford Journal shows, it was a gala occasion despite the rain. The report makes interesting reading, not only for its description of the bustle and activity at Withington Wharf but also for its insight into the almost fanatical adulation which Ballard attracted. The list of those attending the dinner reveals a number of well-known figures and families. And the style of reporting, with its unfailing distinction between "gentlemen" (Esq.) and "citizens" (Mr. - but what, one wonders, was the status of plain "Proctor, Hereford"?) gives a glimpse of a bygone social order. But other things - such as the complaint about the state of the roads - are remarkably unchanged.

It is also apparent that the reporter, after an agreeable evening with the wine flowing freely (he had still not finished his report when his paper went to press almost 24 hours later), could find no fault with the Canal, and accepted uncritically all the flowery speeches. But could he really have been expected to foresee that by the time the Canal reached Hereford, just 4 miles and 15 months further on, nobody would want to know?

But that is in the future. Now the Canal is in its heyday, and this is its finest hour . . .

OPENING OF THE GLOUCESTER AND HEREFORD CANAL TO WITHINGTON

"Hereford Journal" Wednesday 28th February 1844.

The completion of the Canal has been for some time regarded as an object of great importance to this city and county, and the circumstances of the work having been finished up to Withington, about four miles only from Hereford, was therefore hailed with much satisfaction. A more suitable occasion indeed for paying a just tribute of respect and approval to Mr. Stephen Ballard, the talented engineer, for the manner in which he has conducted the work through the entire line, could scarcely have been chosen and he was accordingly invited to a public dinner, which was given at the City Arms Hotel on Monday last. The interest felt on the occasion by all classes of citizens was intense, and the number and respectability of those who attended were beyond all expectation.

In pursuance of the previous arrangement a procession of five boats left Ledbury at nine o'clock the same morning, the first containing a band of music, the next the committee and friends; one with goods belonging to Messrs. Bunning and Gibson; one the property of Messrs. Cowley, ditto; and one with salt from Droitwich. These boats were all decorated with union-jacks, flags, etc. and had a very pleasing appearance. About twenty-seven other boats freighted with coal, etc. followed in the course of the day. The view from the wharf at Withington along the line of the Canal to the lock was extremely picturesque, and the whole scene was peculiarly animating. On the wharf itself from fifty to sixty labourers were employed, and the whole preparations and arrangements were completed in a very short space of time. There were here four or five carts from Leominster, waiting for the arrival of the coal boats, while several waggons laden with wheat for "exportation", if we may use the term, also arrived - in short, the whole scene was one of bustling, trading animation, and formed but a miniature emblem, we hope, of the activity which will one day be displayed at the terminus in the vicinity of Widemarsh. The present wharf is on Withington Marsh, close to the Cross-keys inn, and opposite to the latter a very neat cottage has been erected for the residence of the engineer, Mr. Bateman, of Lugg Bridge Mills, who was the first to pitch a load of wheat early in the morning to be forwarded to its destination per the canal.

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The procession reached the present terminus at half-past two o'clock having been five hours on the way from Ledbury; and some delay then took place in advancing towards Hereford, in consequence of a very heavy shower of rain, the weather having been inopportune all the morning with the exception of intervals when the sun burst forth in great splendour. Three hogsheads of cider were given to the workmen, and with all good humour universally prevailed. No accident of any consequence occurred, the only circumstance of this kind being that of a horse led by a respectable inhabitant of this city getting into the canal, where he was soon released without sustaining damage.

The Messrs. Bosley had supplied two stage coaches and a mail for the purpose of conveying visitors to Hereford; and there were likewise two or three flies, besides gigs and other vehicles; several equestrians and pedestrians were also present, and the total number of spectators was estimated at 1300; in fact the event was universally regarded as one of the utmost importance and interest. On land, Mr. Ballard, the Committee and the visitors entered the different coaches etc. and, forming a procession headed by the band, advanced towards Hereford, on arriving at which they alighted at the Hotel, being greeted with the greatest enthusiasm. At five o'clock a company amounting to about 200 and comprising many of the county gentlemen besides numbers of the citizens, sat down to an elegant repast provided in honour of the Guest, Mr. Ballard. F.H. Thomas, Esq., presided, Mr. J.D. Kedward fulfilling the duties of Vice-president, and amongst the company we noticed the Rev. John Hopton; Edward Griffiths, Esq; J. Griffiths, Esq; Rd. Hereford, Esq; The Mayor of Hereford (W. Webb Esq.); T. Davis, Esq; Capt. Price, R.N. and R.T. Barra, Esq, City Magistrates; G. Croose, Esq; F.L. Bodenham, Esq; Rev. W. Gretton; Thos. Evans, Esq; Proctor, Hereford; T. Jones, Esq, Ledbury; H. Edy, Esq; Samuel Baker, Esq, Gloucester; W.P. Price, Esq, Tibberton; E. Shelton, Esq, Thorngrove, Worcestershire; Mr. T.L. Tripp; Mr. Thomas Pulling; Mr. W. Ashton; Mr. Barnard; Mr. Draper; Mr. C. Pritchard; Messrs. Bunning and Gibson; Mr. Vevers; Mr. Pember; Mr. Williams, Eign Street; and many others of our respected fellow-citizens, whose name we have not room to mention.

(We are in possession of full notes of the speeches, but having to go to the machine at an early hour on Tuesday evening, we shall at present only give a brief summary of the whole, reserving a more ample report for a Second Edition which we intend to have ready in time for post on Wednesday afternoon, this day).

The toasts of the Queen - Prince Albert and the Royal Family - the Duke of Wellington and the Army - the Navy (Capt. Price R.N. returned thanks) - the High Sheriff (T.G. Symons, Esq) - the Lord Lieutenant of the County (Lord Bateman) - the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese - the Members for the County and City - the Mayor and Town Council of Hereford etc. were given from the chair.

The MAYOR in the name of the Town Council returned their united thanks for the honour shown them, which he duly appreciated, particularly as he felt that the Corporation had not aided so much as they ought to have done in bringing the canal to Hereford. (Cheers).

The CHAIRMAN in the proposing of the toast of the evening said, I need not enlarge on the advantages of a ready and cheap communication by water. (Hear.) It carries to the best market at the least expense the corn and the cider of the tenant, and the bark and timber of the landlord. (Hear, and cheers.) It brings to all that necessary of life in this climate, coal of superior quality to that with which we were heretofore supplied; and though at present some complaint might be made of the state of our roads, they must be continually benefited by the transfer of all heavy carriage to the Canal. (Cheers) For all these benefits we are mainly indebted to an individual, to pay respect to whom we are this day assembled, who has planned and executed the line of the Canal with great professional skill and whose zeal, upheld by exemplary patience, and aided by the kindness of manner and the well-earned reputation of strict integrity, has conciliated the many conflicting interests in the course of the canal, and triumphing over every obstacle has reached its present temporary limit. He had the honour of proposing the health of their respected guest Mr. Ballard.

(The mention of Mr. Ballard's name was received with loud cheering, continuing for some time, and repeated again and again.)

Mr. Ballard returned thanks in an exceedingly neat and modest but very effective address. He spoke gratefully of the assistance which had been afforded him by gentlemen of the county and others in carrying on the work, and expressed the gratification which he felt in having witnessed its successful progress to Withington. He looked forward with anxiety to the time when it would be opened to Hereford, to which place and the county it would be a most important benefit. (Cheers.) Wherever he might hereafter be placed, he should always remember to the latest hour of his life the kindness which he had experienced in this beautiful, fertile, and hospitable county. (Cheers.) In conclusion Mr. Ballard proposed the health of the Rev. Mr. Money and the members of the Canal Committee, which was given with enthusiasm.

The other speakers were Samuel Baker, Esq. of Gloucester; Richard Hereford Esq. of Sufton; the Rev. J. Hopton; the Vice-Chairman; W.P. Price, Esq; F.L. Bodenham, Esq; Mr. Baylis of Ledbury; Mr. Robert Ballard; Mr. J. Tomkins; Mr. Shelton; Mr. S. Ballard; Mr. Croose; Mr. Tripp; Mr. Taylor; Mr. Terry, surgeon, and others. The various observations of these gentlemen went to show that the line of the Canal had been completed in the most satisfactory manner, the work being done in a superior style, and there having been no offensive conduct to others on the part of the navigators, and fewer offences on their part than usual among labourers of that description; that landowners who had opposed the work at first and objected to its course through their property, were now in its favour; that a plan would shortly be submitted for completing the Canal to Hereford; that many shares had been sold at a premium, and that although there had been considerable apathy on the part of the inhabitants of Hereford, yet that it was now fast wearing away. No time when the line would probably be finished was mentioned, but one gentleman expressed the hope that such would be the case within twelve months. It was calculated that when finished, coal might be purchased in this city at 13s. 6d. per ton.

Mr. Thos. Pulling, in the course of a very neat address regretting the unavoidable absence of his father from the meeting and urging on the citizens the importance of the work, said that in order to advance one step towards attaining so desirable an object the firm to which he belonged would be most happy to enrol themselves as shareholders. (Cheering).

The Chairman during the evening read a letter from Captain Watson, lamenting that he was unable to attend, but paying a high tribute of respect to the merits and talents of Mr. Ballard. Indeed every gentleman who addressed the company spoke in the highest terms of the Engineer.

Several excellent songs were given, and a more agreeable meeting has never been witnessed.



HELP WANTED - NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

In preparation for our Open Day in June we will need much extra help.

We have to prepare the entrance site for parking and for display of various items. We need to remove scrub, timber, and other debris, to clear up the derelict building there, to clean up the long building and generally tidy the whole area.

We would also be grateful for help on the Day itself. There will be all kinds of tasks for all kinds of people. If you are willing to help please contact one of the committee (phone numbers in the front of this newsletter) - transport can be arranged if required.

In the longer term, we require extra help in our restoration programme and with the general running of our Society. A bit of enthusiasm is the only requirement, and no special experience is necessary. However, if you do possess any special skill, we can find a use for it somewhere in our varied activities. We'd like to hear from you if you can: type * write letters * organise working parties * draw or paint * design posters * give talks * collate historical research * organise meetings * maintain plant * lay bricks * meet landowners * liaise with local authorities * do anything else which you feel the Society needs. There's scope for all interests! But don't feel put off if you can't do any of these things - we still need you.

And finally, a plea for more ladies! Our Committee now consists entirely of men. Come on, you ladies, do join us. Please volunteer for the Committee on the enclosed form and, if you can, come to the Annual General Meeting on 29th April.
Mike Potts.

RESTORATION NEWS

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MORE HELP
WANTED
PLEASE



We are about to finish dredging the restored section of canal up to the main road at Crews Pitch. We hope to have the winding hole cleaned out too and before the open day a turning point above the Skew bridge in order to enable the steam boat to turn around.

Mr Peter Ball has also kindly offered to start dredging the next section of canal later this year.

We extend our gratitude to Mr Peter Ball for his help with our restoration, to Mr Clay for access and Mr Edge for permission to clear the canal adjoining his property. Also to Mrs Barnes for permission to clear the next section of canal. This will take us up to the Bridge at the end of Monkhide village. This will then give us approximately one half mile of water-filled canal.

THE HEREFORD WHARFINGER.

EDITOR. Mike Potts 3 Cranstone Breinton
Hereford - 56392.

Produced by Mr Bernard Warburton at the
Ross On Wye resource centre.

Produced quarterly. March, June, September,
December. Date for copy 12th of previous
month please.

SALES

"THE HEREFORD AND GLOUCESTER CANAL"

Hard back book by David E Bick £3.95

The book of our canal.

"THE DIARY OF A ROWING TOUR FROM OXFORD
TO LONDON IN 1875" By Howard Williams £4.50

Including a detailed navigation of our
canal.

Wild bird motif Key Ring & address pad 50p
CANAL TEA TOWEL. A selection of tea towels
with various canal scenes. each... £1.95

Post cards. LYDNEY DOCKS, GLOUCESTER DOCKS,
THE WAVE IN GLOUCESTER DOCKS. 10p each

ILLUSTRATED NOTELETS. (Monkhide Skew Bridge)
Ten complete with envelopes for £1.00

"BEST WISHES" card, general purpose, large
with envelope. Picture Hereford Canal
Basin. Each 35p

Illustrated MAP of the KINGTON-LEOMINSTER-
STOURPORT canal by Geo R Kendrick. £1.95

CANAL PHOTOGRAPHS. Oxenhall Lock Cottage,
Canal Lock (location unknown), Canal Wharf
and Lock (location unknown). Approx 2
Approx 6" x 8" mounted on card £3.50 each.
Or in gilt glass frame £6.00 each.

All sales; Peter Woodfield or Mike Potts see
inside front cover Tel no. & address.

Please note carriage extra. We will try and
deliver where possible at no charge.