

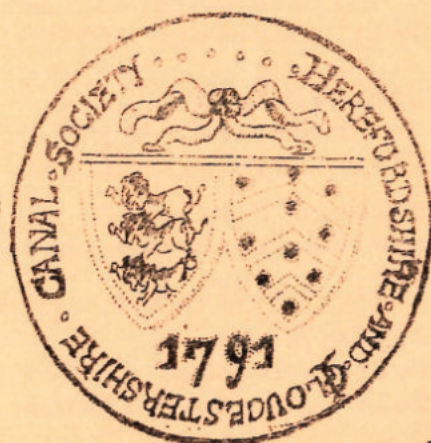


40p

FREE TO
MEMBERS



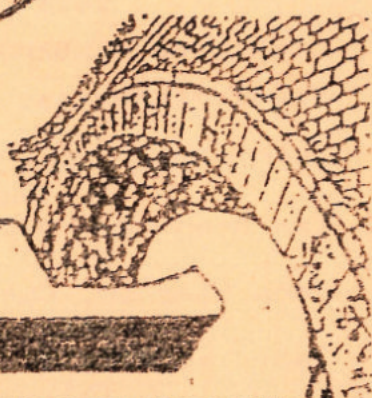
FORMED



IN 1983

THE

WHARFINGER



Journal of the Herefordshire and
Gloucestershire Canal Society

EDITION NO. 20^A SUMMER 1988

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY

VICE PRESIDENT

MAJOR ROBERT BARNES

CHAIRMAN: Tony Austin-Bailey
7, Gaisford Close, Hereford.
Tel: Hereford 269704

VICE

CHAIRMAN: Michael Potts,
3, Cranstone, Upper Breinton, Hereford
Tel: Hereford 56392

SECRETARY: Richard Morley,
New House, Rocky Lane, Shobdon
Tel: 056881 470 Herefordshire.

TREASURER: James Dunn,
Poole Cottage, 5, St. Ethelbert St.,
Tel: Hereford 274106 Hereford.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Nigel Jefferies, 19, Wilcroft Park, Bartestree,
Tel: Hereford 850661 Hereford.

Cliff Penny, "Coppice" Burley Gate Hereford
Tel Hereford 820420

Ian Reed, 22, Robinson's Meadow, Ledbury,
Tel: Ledbury 5877 Herefordshire.

John Startin, Conifers, Little Birch, Hereford.
Tel: Golden Valley 540559

Peter Woodfield, 60, Whittern Way, Hereford.
Tel: Hereford 275244

Graham Ettles, Carlton House, 117, Leckhampton
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. Road,
Tel: (0242) 512802

Derek Gray, 40, Hewitt Avenue, Hereford.

Stephen Fitzmaurice, 45 Princess Ave College Est
Tel: Hereford 268146 Hereford.

RESTORATION NEWS

MORE HELP
WANTED
PLEASE



SOUTHERN CANAL GROUP MEETING

Stephen Fitzmaurice and myself attended a meeting of the Southern Canal Group at Aberdulas near Neath recently.

We had a most enjoyable and informative day there. We viewed the restoration taking place on the Neath Canal. Lock gates being built at their workshops. Much of the work being done by the youth opportunity programme. They seemed all much more professional in the society and more active. This may be because that a) they have been going much longer than us but mainly I think because of b) many tasks are being done by full time officers and restoration work by manpower services. Their funds seem to come from local councils and the Welsh Office.

They did show us a video of lock gates being fitted in a restored lock and restoration work taking place. They got some publicity a little while ago when the Blue Peter programme showed lock gates being built and fitted here.

Although much of their canal seems to be in better condition than ours, bearing in mind that it closed much more recent than ours, they do have many very difficult problems to overcome like ourselves.

One of these problems being very much like the one Richard reports on in this edition. But Wesh Water have a plan to solve this one.

It was very informative just to talk to members from other canal groups and see how they overcome

problems.

many of their problems.

If you are out for a ride in the area to pop in. There is a tourist information centre and car park next to the canal and nearby is the Aberdulas Falls.

There are two canals here the Neath Canal and the Tennant canal. Sadly the later is unavailable for restoration. The Tennant canal, privately owned is watered throughout with a lock at each end of the canal and by the locks could be made navigable fairly easily. The owners will not let restoration take place or navigation be made available. The water is used for a nearby power station I believe.

To view the Neath Canal you will find much of it paralell and in many places right next to the main Glyn-neath to Neath road.

Mike Potts

MINI WARFINGER?

I am sorry that your Warfinger is a bit sparce this time but I have been very busy running a business, doing work at home, attending work parties doing slide shows, attending a canal group meeting, prodicing handbills etc and arranging outings and events. I have not had time to write all the articles required. To date I have had just one article for this edition!

Mike Potts



THE LONDON CROSSING

5

Next time you are at Monkhide , take a little time off and walk along the road that leads to Monksbury Court and then follow the footpath to where the Canal line crosses the Little River Lodon . It is a short and gentle stroll - less than a mile in fact - through quiet and unpretentious English countryside , but , as you go , walk with reverence and with a keen and perceptive eye , for , within these modest yards , lie the key to the restoration of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal . Here , encapsulated within 760 yards lie examples of nearly all the problems likely to be encountered in the restoration of the Canal . Solve them , and we will have the experience with which to tackle the similar , and greater , challenges along the line ; falter , and the Society may be looking towards the more modest objectives already expressed by the sceptics .

Start by leaning over the Bridge parapet at Middle Court (or open David Bick's book at page 57). Here an average depth of 23'-6" of water overlies a full four feet of silt and decayed vegetation which has accumulated for 100 years since the Canal's closure . Furthermore , the water is held up so that it is at least 3ft above the level of the restored section at Skew Bridge . Clearly the opening of this 170 yard length to navigation will involve the lowering of the water and the removal of some 1000 cubic yards of aquatic filth . To achieve this in such a way that will not be environmentally and ecologically disastrous will call for some clever Engineering and good public relations in order to preserve the good-will of those who live near this attractive stretch of water .

Walking further along the road , we reach the 275 yard length of infilled Canal . In theory the excavation of 10,000 cubic yards of fill may present no serious technical problem , but the disposal of it (and who knows what it comprises ?) could be difficult . Ideally , it might be used to re-create the demolished embankments at the Frome & Lodon valleys , but more of that later . About an acre of land will be required for permanent Canal use , in addition to which some land may also be temporarily needed for access and spoil disposal, for all of which the Landowner might reasonably expect payment .

As far as I am concerned , the Bridge leading to Monksbury Court is an enigma . Unless my survey work is wrong - and I make no claims of infallibility - the underside of the arch (the soffit) is a bare 2'-6" above the water-level at Skew Bridge - far too low to permit navigation . The Bridge does ^{it} seem to have been recently lowered : has it subsided or been reconstructed since the closure of the Canal ? Other than cost , however , there should be no major problem in replacing it with a navigable culvert .

No great problems with the next 135 yards . Here the decaying profile of the Canal is easily seen as it crosses the meadow , eastwards , towards

* EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS *

* Sunday work parties 10.00 am start. *

* Crews pitch..Monkhide Skew Bridge. *

* (May have a new extra site near Roman *

* road Hereford shortly. Next edition). *

* Sunday 5th June Sunday 3rd July *

* Sunday 7th August Sunday 4th September *

* SUMMER EVENING WORK GROUPS *

* Turn up when available, start about 7.00pm *

* TUESDAY 7th JUNE.WEDNESDAY 15th JUNE *

* THURSDAY 23rd JUNE.FRIDAY 1st JULY *

* MONDAY 11th JULY. TUESDAY 19th JULY *

* WEDNESDAY 27th JULY THURSDAY 4th AUGUST *

* FRIDAY 12th AUGUST MONDAY 22nd AUGUST *

* TUESDAY 30th AUGUST NO WORK GROUP DUE TO *

* BANK HOLIDAY RALLY ATTENDANCE. *

* WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER *

* ***** *

* COACH TOUR AND CRUISE *

* SUNDAY 10th JULY--KENNETT AND AVON CANAL *

* Start 8.30 am Leominster Bus station. *

* 9.00 am Hereford Bus station. *

* Coach to Hungerford, morning cruise aboard *

* the Kennett and Avon Narrow Boat the *

* "Rose of Hungerford". Lunch may be pre *

* booked when ticket purchased, or bring your *

* own picnic. *

* After lunch the coach will take us to the *

* Crofton steam pumping house, unfortunately *

* not in steam that day, but open for us. *

* Then on by coach to visit the Canal Centre *

* at Devises and the Caen Hill lock flight *

* (time permitting). Return home about 7.00 *

* pm Hereford 7.30 pm Leominster. *

* ***** *

FUTURE EVENTS FUTURE EVENTS

SEPTEMBER.....

Outing to the National Waterways Museum, now at Gloucester, a look at the Gloucester Docks followed if I can arrange it by a cruise either on the Sharpness canal or the Thames and Severn or Stroudwater canal. More information in the next edition or see our posters in your local Library.

Wanted your slides or cine film on canal or waterway holidays, events to make a members evening towards the end of september.

Please let me have your slides or fil by the end of the first week of September for incusion. They may be handed in at the shop, (Hereford Camera Centre 53 St Owen St Hfd.

AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

THE INLAND WATERWAYS NATIONAL WATERWAYS
RALLY

This year being held at Chesterfield. The most popular waterways event of the year. Dont miss it. Hopefully our stand will be there again this year. Volunteers required to erect, man and dismantle the show stand.

A TRIP ON THE WAVERLEY.

IF ENOUGH RESPONSE IS MADE I WILL TRY AND ORGANISE A TRIP TO CARDIFF OR PENARTH TO BOARD THE PADDLE BOAT THE WAVERLY FOR A CRUISE. SEE YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY, CONTACT ONE OF THE COMITTEE OR SEE THE POSTER IN HEREFORD CAMERA CENTRE WINDOW.

the Lodon valley. If the bed level at Skew Bridge is maintained, then between 1'-5" and 3'-0" material needs to be cleared from the base.

We now reach a fence and the 125 yard length of the Canal to the River Lodon is rapidly succumbing to the activities of the plough and bull-dozer. The original canal banks would have been 5ft - 6ft above the floor of the flood-plain, hereabouts, and it is clear where the farmer has cut a 30 yard wide gap in the bank to reduce the inundation of his land upstream. The former Bridge, Culvert or Aqueduct over the Lodon is no more, but, returning to the other side of the valley, a parallel brook still crosses the Canal line by means of an interesting little "siphon".

The problem of restoring the Canal over the River, and its flood-plain, must be discussed with the Welsh Water Authority since all work affecting statutory Main Rivers, and their flood-plains, is subject to legislation under the 1976 Land Drainage Act (with which S. Ballard esq was not confronted!). It would be wrong of me to suggest exactly what this might involve, but it seems highly doubtful if a crossing of the Lodon, with the bed level as at Skew Bridge, would be permitted. Some raising of the bed, in order to allow a large enough Bridge, Flood culverts and freeboard, is very likely to be a requirement of this work. This, in turn, would lead to the need to provide some locking arrangement, and, since this would bring the level above that of the highest pound, there will be a problem in supplying water to this section. Perhaps pumps would be used, or, a long gravity feed from further up the Lodon?

This really brings us to the end of our walk. Continue, if you wish, to the next access bridge. The Canal has been filled with junk; the bridge soffit is similar to that at Middle^{Coth}sear. Beyond, the declining remnants cross the fields to Watery Lane, where there will be problems in reinstating the Bridge, and on to the Prome Valley, where the expenses of major structures and land aquisition are likely to be more significant than problems with drainage law. Finally, if we are lucky(?) that fine section at Ashperton will be reached.

A sketch showing the above features accomanies this article, and thanks given to my daughter, Fiona, for assisting with the survey work

E. Males

Richard Morley

Have a nice walk, and come back brimming with ideas on how best to effect this important stage of the Canal's restoration.

I was spending a week visiting a friend at Hampton near London. We had travelled up to the centre of London and were waiting for the start of the next performance of "The London Experience", a very good muti slide presentation in the Trocadero centre. Well worth seeing if your in London, although rather expensive. It tells in a sequence of slides and cine film the story of London. Includind smoke wich emerges from under the seats, for the fire of London and the fog.

Oh yes! as I was saying, we were awaiting the start when we thought we would have a cup of tea downstairs. When we found that the tea came in a small plastic dissposable cup and cost 85p. It stayed there we rufused to pay that. We went out of the centre and in a small back street nearby had a mug of tea and a roll for that much, both fresh and very nice.

While there, on my holiday I had to take a trip to a photographic action at New Milton near Bournemouth. I stoped as it was very early in the morning for a light snack at the motorway services outside Southampton. After discovering what an expensive and not very apetising breakfast was available I just had a cup of tea.

At New Milton I discovered a small Cafe / restaurant right opposite the auction room. I enjoyed a reasonably priced and quite delicious breakfast. Returning later for lunch I had; Soup, a choice of roast with potatoes, roast potatoes and three veg, bread and butter pudding and a mug of tea, all for the sum of £1.80.

The meal was as much as I could eat, very tasty and the restaurant clean with very polite service.

In these days I am amazed how such a meal can be provided , and a profit made, at these prices.

Mike Potts



WORK REPORT WORK REPORT

As at date received no work party report for this edition I will try and report on the progress that I am aware of at the moment.

Monkhide, preparations are being made for The Waterways Recovery Group to attend at the next bank holiday weekend. The task being done is the clearance of silt from under the Skew bridge and the restoration of the towpath here.

A number of evening and ad-hoc work party groups have already done some work here recently. Little extra has been done to the west of the main road, on the newest section, lately as too many tasks not enough volunteers. But work is progressing.

A new worksite! Near the Roman road in Hereford Peak engineerin, the Morbain Group, are very interested in the restoration of the canal site on the edge of their industrial estate and are prepared to stand the expense of an excavator with operator for two days to dredge the short section here. It is hoped that permission may be eventually given for more canal to be renovated here in the future. We have the support of the City Council in this project.

It is hoped that this could make a nice city leisure walk. This would give our Canal Society more support.

It is hoped that shortly Peter Ball will excavate the canal past the Skew bridge.

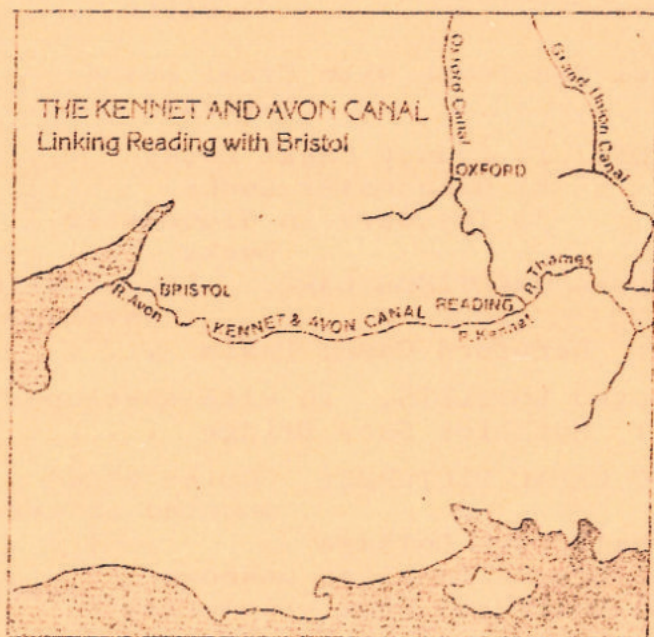
At last we are starting to get support from the local councils. We are delighted to report that a small donation has been made both from Hereford City Council and from South Hereford district Council towards our restoration work. Also the local councils have agreed to protect the line of the canal.

It is hoped that if we restore the small section of canal near the Roman road in Hereford that we may stand much more of a chance of getting a navigable culvert beneath any new road here.

Mike Fotts

The Kennet and Avon Canal

Restoration Scheme



The Wharfinger is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. The last date for copy to reach the Editor, Mike Petts, is the 12th of the previous month.

Produced by Mr. Bernard Verburton at the Reed-on-Brye Resource Centre.

N.B. Articles in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Society, but only of the writer.

SALES

BOOKS:

"The Hereford and Gloucester Canal"

by DAVID BICK

The hard backed book of our Canal £5.50

"The Diary of a Rowing Tour from Oxford

to London in 1875" by Howard Williams . . £4.50

(including navigation of the H. & G.

and the River Wye)

* * * * *

KEY RING and ADDRESS PAD (with Wild Bird

motif 50p

Colourful TEA TOWEL with Canal Scene

Various ~~£4.95~~ 1.75

POSTCARDS: 1) Lydney Canal Docks)

2) Gloucester Docks)

3) The Wave in Gloucester)

Docks)

10p
each

All-purpose GREETINGS CARD. Large, with
envelope

Picture: Hereford Canal Basin 35p

Illustrated NOTELETS. 10 with envelopes

Picture: Monkhide Skew Bridge £1.00

HISTORIC CANAL PICTURES: Copies 6"x8"
mounted on card

Oxenhall Lock Cottage)

Canal Lock - location unknown)

Canal Wharf and Lock - location)

unknown)

each

~~£3.50~~
3.50

* * * * *

ALL SALES: Peter Woodfield or Mike Potts

Addresses inside front cover.

Postage extra unless we can deliver
easily. Thank you for your support.