

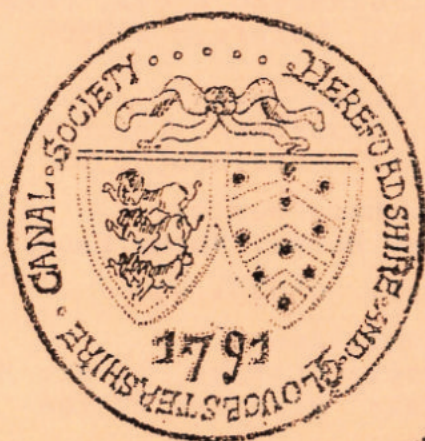


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FREE TO
MEMBERS



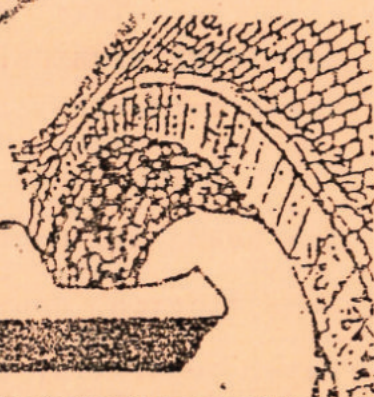
FORMED



IN 1983

THE

WHARFINGER



Journal of the Herefordshire and
Gloucestershire Canal Society

EDITION NO.

21

WINTER 1988

2 HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY

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WORK PARTY REPORT SUNDAY NOV. 6th. 1988. 3

A very good effort was made by all who attended this Work Party, to move a very large amount of hardcore from the entrance to the towpath area by Monkhide Bridge down onto the dug out section which at present forms a temporary ramp.

This will allow easier access for the Smalley And Dumper, as we hopefully progress towards the Accommodation Bridge.

Prior to and during the moving of the hardcore the area of towpath was pumped clear of water which had collected during the last few weeks. Further work was carried out on Mrs. Orams section and during the Winter months, weather permitting, we hope to concentrate on clearing the towpath section of this stretch, thus providing easier and quicker access, on foot, for the next "Big Jungle Bash" at the Easter Work Camp in 1989.

Future Work Party Dates.

SUNDAY 4th. DECEMBER '88.

SUNDAY 8th. JANUARY '89.

SUNDAY 5th. FEBRUARY '89.

SUNDAY 5th. MARCH '89.

FRIDAY 24th. MARCH TO SATURDAY 1st. APRIL '89.
EASTER WORK CAMP (WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP)

PETER WOODFIELD WORK PARTY ORGANISER.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Please can I have some! I have received no article at all for this edition of the Wharfinger. What's the matter with you lot out there. Your spellin can't be worse than mine!

Anything, a cake recipe even, We have attended the National Waterways Rally in September. Articles promised, not matured, we had a canal outing earlier, no articles, some of us have had canal holidays, still no articles. Come on out there get your pens out.

Next items for Spring edition by 12th February please.

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

I would like to wish all our members a very merry christmas and a happy new year.

1989 will prove I am sure to be a very busy year for us. We have lots planned.

We hope to hold another open day and to be able to show a new dredged and navigable length of canal. Although in hand the work to complete this is far from completed extra help would be appreciated.

What would we give for our own plant. Has anyone out there got an excavator they no longer need and would like to donate to the society, along with a dumper or truck to remove our dredgings. If we had our own plant and could afford to maintain it our progress would fly along. We have at present of course to raise funds and hire the plant and operator to do any dredging. This means that the maximum we could afford in a year is probably about two weeks or so. This is just not rapid enough.

Still we have some plans that hopefully in the next few years should speed up our operations.

EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS

SLIDE, AND FILM EVENING.

An evening of slides from members of the society with comentary. Plus a selection of 16mm films from the 1950s showing mining history in Wales. Farming in the Cotswolds and a look at Merseyside. Others as time allows.

Refreshments provided.

CATHEDRAL SCHOOL THEATRE

CHRISTMAS DINNER....

As last year we will be having a Christmas dinner in January.

All members and families are invited.

A full Christmas dinner will be provided with all the trimmings. Bring Your own wine though.

The dinner will be held again at Country Fayre in Widemarch Street. 7.45 for 8.00 pm start. \$5.50 each, children \$5.00

Date.. SATURDAY JAN 2/88 1988

Do join us we had an excelent meal last year. Very good value too.

Bookings (before Christmas please) to Mike Potts. If insuficient bookings received by Christmas the meal will not take place.

16

THE INTREPID NAVIGATOR

Whitsun Cruise - River Wye

Some say 'an idea is borne' in the same way 'as a seed is sown' and so navigating the tidal stretch of the river Wye became a reality. The sixties saw me living in an unknown corner of rural England, the lush unspoilt valley of the Wye since when a 'secret wish' has been to see greater use made of the river. Consequently at Hawkesbury 84: one might say 'the seed of the Wye was sown' more in the way of a joke, unfortunately Edward and Pauls' Father to whom it was directed died some four months later.

During the following eighteen months every possible opportunity was used to explore the rivers history, its present state, seeking local contacts and generally much research into possibilities of navigation. A 10ft dinghy (2hp) was used for reconnoitering visually and practically between Chepstow and Hereford. The tidal Severn between Sharpness and Beachley was also studied via OS maps and chart.

1986 - July came and 40ft NB Buccaneer^{had} made its epic voyage from the North-East waters in preparation for an exploratory cruise across the estuary and up river a few miles. An initial response brought further information and an offer to accompany Buccaneer on a mini cruise was made from Howard Jones and his wife Jill who have cruised the Wye as far as Llandogo in their 33ft Princess 'Sea Mist'. This is great news and something positive towards bringing boating (other than canoes) back to one of Englands most beautiful rivers. A really exciting venture was ahead!!

Whitsun - 1988 Friday 27 May - Sharpness Dock bridge was booked for 4.00 pm. 'Sea Mist' and 'Buccaneer' proceeded into the dock and thence the sea lock where a coaster was towering over us, 5.00 pm saw us through the lock and making for the vast expanse of water ahead. It was a neap tide with about 1 hour to HW consequently for the first two hours I did not make much headway 2 mph with a 13 hp Lister diesel however we made the mouth of the Wye before the ebb proved too strong a further hour took us up river to Chepstow where Buccaneer^{more} above the bridge attached to a Buoy, this anchorage proved to be rather more than exciting and would advise to anchor above the Castle in the Longhope Reach as 'Sea Mist'. For this leg of the cruise Sharpness/Tintern 'Buccaneer' had a crew of three - Skipper-Bernard Jessop - Second Mate-Paul Jennings - 1st Lt-Marilyn Slinn. 'Jims' Buoy' as it is known - Jim and Mary Simpson are locals of the Wye Valley living at Catbrook, Tintern for many years and have a wealth of information on the river and owners of a cruiser having recently become IWA branch members.

With 'Buccaneer' secured to the buoy Howard and Jill were called up on the VHF radio that had been loaned by 'Sea Mist' for the occasion informing them of it was the intention to head upriver to Tintern on the morning flood tide ie 5.00 am!! Sea Mist to spend Saturday at its mooring and proceed on the evenings tide at 4.30 pm.

Saturday 28 5.00am Up anchor and cast off from buoy; the true beauty of the Wye Valley unfolding before us makes that early rise so worthwhile all in all adding to the 'fun' of navigating on tidal waters. Rounding the first of many hairpin bends Chepstow Castle lit up with the early morning sun, quietly passing 'Sea Mist' snug at her anchorage the deep gorge of Longhope Reach at its head the 300ft high cliffs of Wintours Leap, a favourite haunt of climbers, passing Lovers Leap and Priors Reach over Hook Weir, where two years previously 'Buccaneer' had spent the night 'high and dry' - the gap being missed!! Continuing on the last bend before Tintern the workings of a Quarry ^{in operation} were ^{located} on the Welsh bank within a hundred yards an amazing sight a 'Heronry' of some 20 -30 nests clustered together, their ^{craned} necks ^{2ft}, heads and beaks turned to 'Buccaneer' as she passed quietly and swiftly by; not a single bird took flight. It was indeed a wonderful sight more so for being undisturbed by the quarry workings, with mist rising out of the tree covered hillside completed the beauty of a new day ahead. Tintern Abbey looms ahead, passing the entrance to the lock/dock (disused) under the tramway bridge over Ash Weir to tie up to yet another buoy, anchor cast astern then a well earned - return to bunks 6 -9.30 am. On rising once more a hearty breakfast was enjoyed after which it was noted low water was fast approaching - time to move to Jims' ladder on the retaining wall with anchor cast astern until tide ceased to fall. Tintern being an attraction, an ideal mooring the trio clambered the vertical ladder. At this point Paul ~~decided~~ having cruised so far with others was keen to do a little navigating on his own hence set out in the dinghy only to be discovered later some 100 yds downstream stuck on the opposite bank (shear pin problem). Buccaneer comes to the rescue towing the dingy; by this time Kay had arrived from Yorkshire followed by a series of our Wye friends, Robin Phelps who was to escort the convoy up river in his 12ft Dory, Jim and his Son, Barry Balderstone (back up crew). Amidst a flurry of excitement we heard over the VHF that 'Sea Mist' was fast approaching Tintern on the flood a swift cast off was made and the convoy headed upstream with Robin giving appropriate signals. Lynn, Brock and Coed-Ithel Weirs were navigated passing through some quite magnificent scenery. The village of Llandogo reminiscent of a Little Switzerland; prior to the passage of Coed-Ithel Weir 'Sea Mist' was advised to hold back for at that moment there was just 2 1/2 -3ft water. Directly below Ridingsstream Weir 'Buccaneer' moored for Saturday night that evening five of us (Barry joined us) spent a jolly evening at Jim and Marys beautiful home 'Forest View' over looking Tintern arriving soaked and weary however in next to no time our strength was regained thanks to the Simpsons. Saturday night 'Sea Mist' returned to its Chepstow anchorage with Robin to his mooring at Brockweir Quay.

Sunday 29 5.00am Slight movement felt round 'Buccaneer' a cursory glance at my watch, a quick peep to the window Jessops' marker (always to be used on tidal navigation) did not appear to have altered - return to the snug of my sleeping bag firstly putting kettle on! Marilyn beside me, not a stir. Half an hour later felt convinced change of movement was taking place, same procedure and YES water rising on marker. Call reveille. 6.00 am Cast off. With the sun already up we cleared Ridingstream Weir and within fifteen minutes we were at Bigsweir where there was a slight problem arose holding us up for approximately an hour; this was not over the weir itself but a deeper channel round the island where we were engaged in 'trimming branches'. Once cleared 'Buccaneer' continued slowly beyond weir to moor above Bigsweir Bridge at 8.00 am. We had now navigated to the tidal limit 15 miles up river the intention being to endeavour to reach Monmouth. Sunday evening saw Marilyn return to Gloucester with memories of a cruise never to be forgotten!

Monday 30 Casting off at a civilised hour, once again heading upstream with Paul at the bows, pole at the ready depth checking New Weir being a possible obstacle however with spring tides fast approaching we were hopeful; the weir finally conquered on the fourth attempt on Wednesday 1 June. Between the first attempt and final one. Tuesday 31 saw us cruising downstream to Tintern where a film crew from BBC Wales were awaiting us 'Buccaneer' duly obliged and cruised between the two weirs. 6.00 pm Once again head upstream Robins' Dory accompanying us as far as Brockweir. The tide was now at 'Springs' for the next three days allowing us plenty of depth over Bigsweir; 'Sea Mist' had returned up river to Bigsweir on Sunday 29.

Wednesday 1 June The conquering of New Weir proved quite a challenge with a tinge of an amazonian expedition to it. The fourth and final attempt of NW there was 3/4ft water at its shallowest however 2ft of fresh water was flowing in the weir gap at about 5mph. 'Buccaneer' a little underpowered at 13 hp, another 5 hp would have made all the difference. 8.00 am Cast off as current slackens and backs up with tidal influence, engine now cold, skipper feeling fit using 12ft pole we passed up New Weir slowly thence straight on to Redbrook rapids where there was no question that the Welsh side was the deepest; both the crew and 'Buccaneer' gave their all but to no avail, a break was called for drifted 1/2 mile downstream, cooled engine, had lunch, dinghy stowed on top for less drag. 2.00 pm Second attempt, half way up the rapids a sheltered spot between the Willows was found for mooring and conveniently 200 yards downstream from the 'Boat Inn'. 6.00 pm A string of visitors called friends from Gloucester, Marilyn and Barry and our Wye friends. The evening was rounded off by spending a convivial evening in the aptly named Inn remembering the boatmen of old would have called, What more fitting occasion to end the Wye Expedition at this point.

9

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL RALLY. MANCHESTER 88
(A successful weekend)
REPORT BY;

Stop Press. We had a very kind offer of a twelve seater trip boat for our canal at a very reasonable cost. This kind offer was made by Red Line Boats of Goytre Wharfe Nr Abergavenny. We are to investigate, a mooring place, storage, insurance running costs, crew rota etc.

AN
EXCAVATOR FOR
CHRISTMAS



NEW YEARS RESOLUTION:

TO INTRODUCE TWO NEW MEMBERS
TO THE SOCIETY IN 1989

WE NEED MANY MORE MEMBERS PLEASE
WHY NOT A MEMBERSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS!



CHESHIRE CRUISING.

11

Since the last "Wharfinger" I have enjoyed my second canal holiday.

I persuaded two of my friends to join me on a cruising holiday from Anderton to Ellesmere Port and back.

Our boat, hired from IML was very clean and comfortable. As my friends had never had a canal holiday before they did not know what to expect.

A very slow relaxing week was expected but a very enjoyable energetic week was experienced.

We visited a few canalside pubs, the Big Lock at Middlewich where it took us almost
* 1½ hours to get a ~~meal~~ the Barbridge Inn at Barbridge junction, very nice jass night too, and the Castle Hotel at Beeston where we had a very enjoyable meal.

The Middlewich Branch was very pretty but on our return journey we experienced heavy rain and gale force winds, making it hard going.

We explored Chester a very pretty city with a vast selection of shops to explore. The staircase flight of locks here were very steep and interesting. The canal from here to Ellesmereport was very weedy and had seen little traffic. We enjoyed the boat Museum although we were expecting more of a selection of boats here but it was interesting to see the ship canal so close and the lights around this area made interesting night photographs.

On our returning we were making good time so we decided to take a small diversion and visit Nantwich. We are glad we did. What a pretty town. It had just won an award from town in bloom. No wonder, there were flowers everywhere. The nice old buildings, many black and white were very attractive. The sun was out and we had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Unfortunately the next day (friday) proved to be the only one where we really had bad weather, in fact it was so bad when we went to moor the winds were so strong it took us right across the canal so we had no choice but

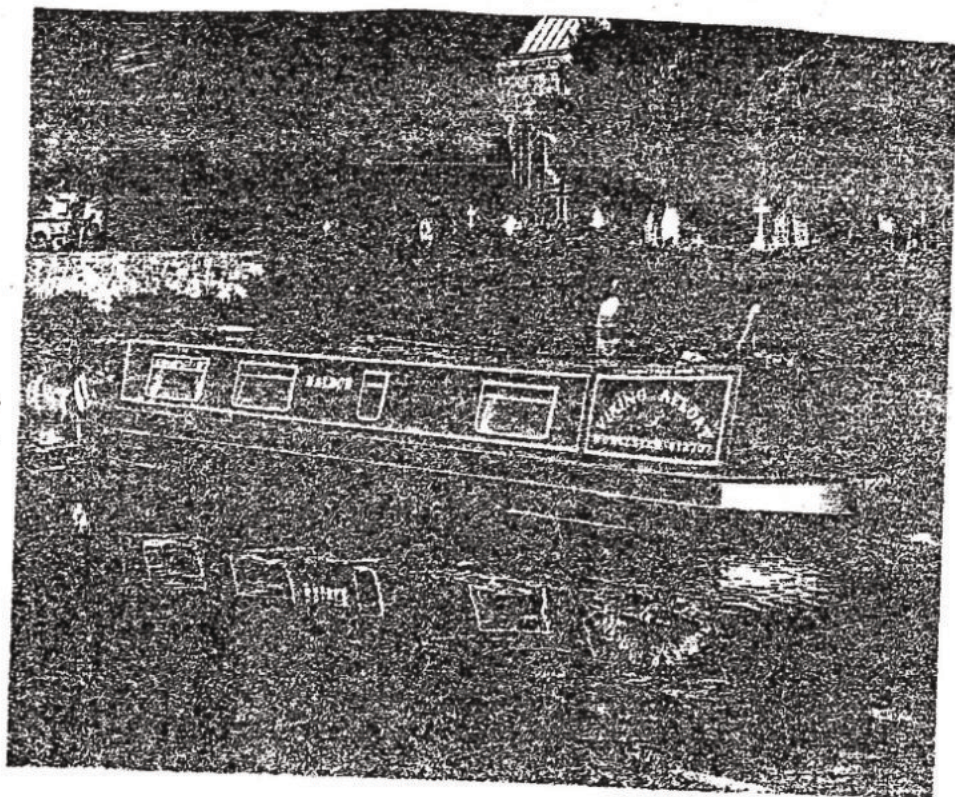
to carry on. The evening though proved to be a calm mild one. Our final night found us moored up next to the Anderton lift. This impressive structure used to lift boats from the river Weaver up to the Trent and Mersey canal.

Unfortunately when we got back on the final morning to the boat yard we found that several cars had been broken into, fortunately ours was alright.

We enjoyed breakfast in the boatyard restaurant before setting off for home.

My friends had enjoyed their holiday so much that one is being planned for 1989.

*The Middle Lock Inn although the meal we had was very nice it took us almost 1½ hours to get it and as they stopped serving food at 9,30 we were unable to get a sweet.

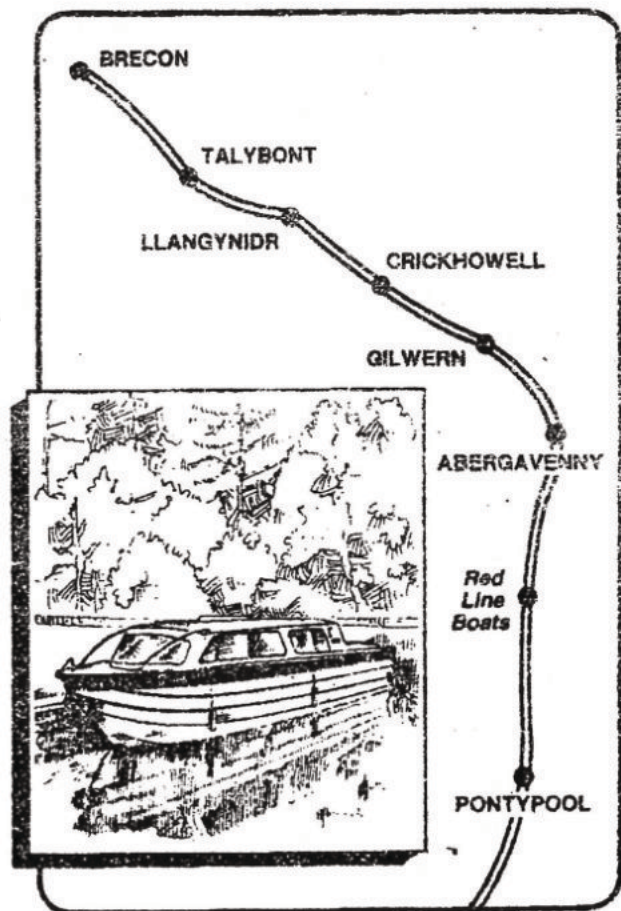


CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH I.W.A. PROGRAMME of EVENTS.

NOVEMBER 1988.

Tuesday, 15th November 7-30pm at Tewkesbury Marina.

The Clyde Puffers, a talk by Hamish Dawson.

Saturday, 19th November, Cheltenham High Street.

This is the first of five Saturdays that we hope to have our stall out this year. Look forward to see our old friends and also some new ones at the new site.

DECEMBER 1988.

Tuesday, 20th December 7-30pm at the B.W. Museum Schools Room Gloucester.

Restoring Exhibits for Gloucester, a talk by David McDougall.

JANUARY 1989.

Tuesday, 17th January 7-30pm at Tewkesbury Marina.

The AVON RING. A video of a holiday taken by Graham Ettles and Des Pincock, last year.

FEBRUARY 1989.

Tuesday, 21st February 7-30 at the B.W. Museum Schools room Gloucester.

The Pisgah of Gloucester- the story of a Barge.

A talk by Tony Paris.

MARCH 1989.

Friday, 17th March 7-30pm at the B.W. Museum Schools room Gloucester.

Annual General Meeting Inland Waterways Association Gloucestershire.

THE MINES OF NEWENT AND ROSS

Although the Forest of Dean is well known for its mining heritage, the mines which worked over a period of centuries around its northern borders have been quite forgotten. The tiny Newent Coalfield was once considered of great potential, bringing a canal to the town. Iron-ore was raised for the Newent Ironworks in the reign of Charles II, and there were trials for silver and gold, one of which, near Ross, may be attributable to the Romans.

A history of this neglected local industry, which did not cease until within living memory, is told here for the first time. It encompasses the results of many years research, with details of present-day remains, and is fully illustrated with photographs, maps and plans.

The author is a chartered engineering consultant, and has written a number of books on local history and industrial archaeology, including *The Hereford & Gloucester Canal*, *The Old Industries of Dean*, and *The Gloucester & Cheltenham Tramroad*. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and past-chairman of the Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology.

DAVID BICK

Obtainable from booksellers, or direct from the publishers.
THE POUND HOUSE, NEWENT, GLOS. GL18 1PS
ISBN 0 906885 06 X

PUBLICATION DATE: OCTOBER 19, 1987

£6.95

A5 88 pages Casebound.

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

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