

THE WHARFINGER



**Newsletter of the Herefordshire &
Gloucestershire Canal Society**

40p
free to Members

Edition 30
Spring 1991

WHO DOES WHAT . . .

VICE PRESIDENT	R. E. Barnes TD
CHAIRMAN	Cliff Penny
VICE CHAIRMAN	Mike Potts
TREASURER	Liz Wood
MINUTES SECRETARY	Nigel Jefferies
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Gwyn ("Steve") Stephens

RESTORATION GROUP

Brian Fox, Bob Palmer, Mike Potts,
Ian Reed

EVENTS GROUP

Tony Austin-Bailey, Kay Jennings

PRESS OFFICER

Nigel Jefferies

SALES

David Penny

THE WHARFINGER

Cliff Penny, David Penny, Mike Potts

HISTORIAN/ARCHIVIST

James Dunn, Nigel Jefferies

IWA / WATERWAYS LIAISON

Graham Ettles

COMMITTEE MEMBERS [in addition to those listed above]

Derek Gray, Stephen Fitzmaurice, Karen McKay

For addresses and/or telephone numbers please see
CONTACTS on the inside of the back cover.

HONORARY POSTS:-

SOLICITOR	Sue Newbould
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER	Ron Munden
CONSERVATION ADVISOR	to be appointed

Printed by **Dŵr Cymru-Welsh Water** Print Department, Brecon for our print sponsors Land and Leisure Tir A Hamdden. Our thanks to them, and to print room Manager Martyn Roberts, for all their assistance.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

1991 - OUR BI-CENTENARY

1991 marks the bi-centenary of the enabling Act of Parliament which permitted the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal to be constructed. This year also marks the 100th anniversary of the formal closure of the Ledbury to Gloucester section of the Canal to permit the (now defunct) railway to be built, thus severing the Hereford section from its link with the inland waterways network.

As will be seen from reports elsewhere in this issue of *The Wharfinger* we intend to celebrate this significant anniversary in a number of ways. As usual our underlying objective will be to gain the interest of an even wider audience and to promote the benefits that both partial and full restoration of the Canal will bring to the community and, ultimately, the inland waterways network.

CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

South Herefordshire District Council (one of the five local authorities - plus two counties - through whose area the 34 mile long Canal passes) has given the Society a most welcome anniversary present. At a recent Council Meeting the authority resolved to "protect the line of the Canal from any development which would prevent its restoration".

Planning Officer John Loynes is reported in the local press as advising the Council that the proposals were "formidable" but the Canal Society "...had a realistic approach to the restoration over a long period. To this end it was important that the route should be protected."

As well as agreeing to adopt a policy to protect the route, the Planning Committee also agreed that the Council should ask the Department of Transport to consider bridgeworks where the

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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS . . . (ii)

route was affected by the proposed A49 Hereford Bypass. [See report on page 3 regarding the Hereford Bypass.]

The decision followed negotiations with the Council which have extended over 18 months. I am convinced that we are now beginning to see positive results from the sustained efforts to promote our aims and objectives, in a professional manner, over the past year or two. As unpaid volunteers our only reward lies in such successes. However, we cannot afford to be complacent, the hard work - with both pen and spade - is only just beginning !

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

All Membership subscriptions are due for renewal (as stated on the Membership Form) on the 1st April (except for our new Members who joined after 1st January 1991). I fully appreciate that those new Members who joined at the National Waterways Festival Gloucester '90 (and subsequently) have not had a full year for their first subscription. My humble apologies. This quirk in our Constitution will be remedied in the paperwork relating to the formation of the new Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust [for news of progress see page 9].

Your Committee has reluctantly concluded that it would be inappropriate to attempt to remedy this anomaly at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting by proposing what would have to be a retrospective change in the present Constitution. Membership Rates *remain unchanged for yet another year*, and (I hope you will agree !) are quite modest in these expensive times. As with any business, cash flow is very important to us and "reminders" cost money so, *please*, pay promptly; thank you. [See page 7 for Prompt Payers Draw.]

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION ?

If every existing Member recruited just one new Member in 1991 our Membership would double . . . a little effort by many has significant results; by working *together* we can succeed !

Cliff Penny, Chairman/Liaison Officer

THE LETTER BOX - NOT THE CHIMNEY

Through the letter box just before Christmas came a most welcome present in the form of a letter from South Herefordshire District Council, proclaiming that (after 18 months negotiations by the Society) a recent Council Meeting had resolved to *"protect the line of the Canal from any development which would prevent its restoration"*. A magnificent Christmas present and prelude to our Bi-Centenary year. In the local press Planning Officer John Loynes was reported as advising the Council that the proposals were *"formidable"* but that the Canal Society *"...had a realistic approach to the restoration over a long period. To this end it was important that the route should be protected."*

The Planning Committee also agreed that the Council should ask the Department of Transport to consider bridgeworks where the route is affected by the proposed A49 Hereford Bypass. This highway proposal is subject to a Public Inquiry, beginning in March, where the Society will need to put its case for the provision of a navigable crossing of the Canal, because the Department of Transport have not seen fit to even enter into negotiations. Where the road is proposed to cross the Canal there is adequate headroom and therefore, as it crosses squarely, there is no need for any alteration to the vertical or horizontal alignment of the road. The D.O.T.'s stance is clearly against present and proposed Local Authority Policy. We hope the Secretary of State will support our view that a bridge/culvert is fully justified.

David R. Penny



MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

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Corporate Members of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Society
and Sponsors of the "Gloucester '90 National Waterways Festival"

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Cover including personal effects with a no claims bonus of up to 40%, a choice of excesses on own damage claims and no excess on third party claims.

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Our latest policy for canal cruisers with 20% no claims bonus after only two years including cover for personal effects and also for trailers if required.

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All our policies have the option of Legal Protection cover and are backed by a Major British Insurance Company.

Commercial covers and boatyards, marine engineers, surveyors, boatbuilders and repairers.

Perhaps we should be talking !

Write or telephone (9.30-6.30) now for details:-

149a High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 1AR

Tel: (0923) 770425 & 770255 Fax: 721559

COMMITTEE MATTERS

Our Committee Meetings continue to discuss a very wide range of topics and our Chairman writes his usual summary in order that all of our Members are aware of the work that is going on - rather a lot at present !

DECEMBER COMMITTEE

■ Arrangements for our presence at the Black Country National Waterways Festival, over the August Bank Holiday, were confirmed.

■ Ongoing liaison with Forest of Dean District Council regarding the protection of the line of the Canal was reported.

■ There had been joint meetings with the Leadon Valley Electric Railway Association, the Canal Society and Gloucestershire County Highways in respect of proposals to remove part of the Railway embankment at Newent Football Ground. Although the first reaction of the Railway Association was that an objection should be raised, the Canal Society representatives had persuaded the Highway Authority that a crossing of the minor road at road level would be possible by the railway, thus avoiding a possible conflict between us.

■ A complaint regarding possible trespass was reported. The complainant was to be advised of the caution that appears under the map of the Canal on the outside back cover of "The Wharfinger" and it was agreed that Members should be reminded of this.

■ It was agreed that the Canal Society would participate in the proposed "Lift and Shift"/local canal promotion weekend at the National Waterways Museum Gloucester on 5th and 6th October.

■ It was agreed that the Society should ask the Southern Canals Meeting, in mid February, to consider legal aspects relating to the formulation of our Trust and in respect of the essential Agreements with landowners.

■ The success of regular work parties in the Newent area was reported as was the significant interest and support from local residents.

■ Arrangements in respect of the Waterway Recovery Group official Canal Camp, to be held adjacent to the Southern Portal of Oxenhall Tunnel at Easter, were discussed.

■ The Membership Secretary reported ongoing interest with a steady but small flow of new membership applications.

■ In view of the interest shown in our activities in the Newent area the Social events group were asked to investigate the mounting of a display and a suitable function in Newent.

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COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (ii)

■ The Committee resolved that no new work, involving appreciable expenditure of funds, should be undertaken on lengths of the Canal where an appropriate legal agreement was not in force. This would not preclude undertaking minor works or completing low cost work on those sites where work had already begun.

■ It was agreed that we should urgently investigate a route for the Canal in the Ledbury area where it had to deviate from the original line.

■ After a detailed debate the resignation of the Restoration Manager, Mr. Laurie Lavender, was accepted with immediate effect.

■ The outcome of a special Committee meeting held to consider the possible appointment of a Project Officer, and in relation to the formation of the Trust, was reported and subsequent action deferred to a later meeting.

■ It was agreed to enter the Hereford City competition to name the site of one of their historical site plaques and to remind the Council that we had already nominated a route for a proposed new footpath and cycleway .

JANUARY COMMITTEE

■ Arrangements were confirmed for the marquee in respect of the Black Country National Waterways Festival at Dudley this August.

■ The outcome of a meeting with Gloucestershire County Highways and Leadon Valley Railway Association was reported. The Canal Society had persuaded the Railway Association that a planning application at Newent Football Ground, for the removal of the railway embankment, need not be opposed.

■ South Herefordshire District Council had formally agreed to protect the line of the Canal throughout their District - including essential diversion routes. The Council had written to the Department of Transport urging that the proposed A49 Hereford Bypass should include provision for the Canal to pass unimpeded under it.

■ Extensive external promotional work was reported. The Chairman said that the last issue of "The Wharfinger" had been well received by a number of important organisations. The greatly improved print standard - thanks to our print Sponsors, Land and Leisure - Tir a Hamdden - was proving to be a major promotional asset.

OOPS !

In our last edition we reported that, at our November Committee, Nigel Jefferies had been congratulated on being the only surviving founder Committee Member. Our humble apologies to James Dunn who shares the honour - sorry !

COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iii)

■ It was agreed that the Canal Society should co-operate with the land owner of commercial premises in the Hereford area. We would give advice in connection with the restoration of a very short length of the Canal adjacent to a planned factory extension. For many years the Canal had been very narrow at this point; the Chairman had written to the City Council requesting that it be widened whilst the appropriate machinery was on site. The Committee were delighted to hear that this very short length of the Canal had been widened, by the land owner, as requested.

■ It was agreed that a request be made for funds from the proceeds of the National Waterways Festival, "Gloucester '90", to be utilised for the purchase of second hand construction plant. The Chairman would launch an appeal to all of the local authorities for further contributions to such a fund. [Further details are given elsewhere in this edition of "The Wharfinger".]

■ After detailed discussion it was agreed that there should be no change to the current constitution and rules to remove the current anomaly whereby annual subscriptions became due on 1st April regardless of when a Member had joined. The matter would be rectified in the by-laws applicable to the proposed Trust.

■ The Chairman reported on liaison with the Department of Transport regarding the revised route of the proposed A40 Gorsley to Gloucester link road. The Department was now willing to meet the Society to try and minimise the potential conflict.

■ Arrangements in respect of the Society's presence at the Public Inquiry relating to the A49 Hereford Bypass were discussed in some detail. [Further details elsewhere in this issue.]

■ Sutton St. Nicholas Parish footpath Wardens had been thanked for consulting the Society in advance of their proposed representations in respect of an existing footpath that lies on the line of the former towpath. Their co-operation was welcomed.

■ Arrangements were confirmed for a special meeting of the Committee, to discuss the formation of the Charitable Trust and a draft Land Owner Agreement, with our Honorary Solicitor.

■ Various insurance matters were reviewed and the actions of the Treasurer confirmed.

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Don't forget the copy deadline for the next issue of "The Wharfinger"! We would welcome your contributions!

Articles, News, and Letters are always welcome - please send your copy to David Penny at the address on the inside back cover. Thank you.

FREE DRAW- for prompt payment of your Membership Subscription

As mentioned by our Chairman on the opening pages your Membership Subscription is *due for renewal* on the 1st April.

*Except new Members who joined on, or after, 1st January, 1991.

In order to encourage **prompt payment** all Members who renew their subscription, in full, on (or before) **the commencement** of our Annual General Meeting on Thursday 25th April will have their names entered in our special **free prize draw to win a sweatshirt of your choice!**

[The draw will take place at the AGM - the first name drawn will win the prize.]
Prompt payment will greatly help the Society and as the sweatshirt has been donated by our suppliers we can improve our cash flow at no cost to the Society.

A TRI-CENTENARY ?

Oh well, so you think I have finally flipped my lid. Everywhere else in "The Wharfinger" we are talking about our Bi-Centenary and here that nutter from the "sales side of things" is talking about the Tri-Centenary. Well I haven't - I just cheated a bit! As I'll explain ...

1991 marks not only the Bi-Centenary of the original Act of Parliament, enabling the construction of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal, but also marks the Centenary of the sadder event of the closure of the Ledbury to Gloucester section, for the construction of the railway along this length, which rendered the remainder of the Canal effectively useless as it was now cut off from the rest of the inland waterways network. Thus this is the anniversary of the actions which breathed life into the Canal and of its effective death.

So you see it's both a Bi-Centenary and a Centenary year for the Society - which surely must mean we have a Tri-Centenary's worth of history to reflect upon? No. Well I did say I'd cheated didn't I, and it did make a good little story?!

We therefore have good reason to mention the significance of this year on several other pages in this issue of "The Wharfinger" - including an article by one of our historians, James Dunn, about the Canal Company's Seal that adorns our front cover. It also seemed like a good excuse to launch a new range of Society clothing bearing the Canal Company's Crest- more details on centre pages.

David R. Penny

J L PINDER & SON Boat Builders and Repairers

"The Old Basin", 138 Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove

Following our appeal, on page 23 of the last edition of "The Wharfinger" we are delighted to report that Mr. Pinder, who is one of our Corporate Members, has offered to donate the materials to enable our first trip boat to be fitted out. Yet another example of individuals and companies working *together* for the long term benefit of the inland waterways network. **Thank you.**

The Canal Company Seal

By James Dunn

Since virtually the first issue of "The Wharfinger" was produced it has always proudly exhibited its link to the past with the prominent image of the Canal Company seal on the front cover. In this article one of our two Historians, James Dunn, looks at the seal's significance.

The opening section of the Act of 1791 by which the Canal was first authorised states:-

" A company for making, completing, carrying on, and maintaining the said Canal and Collateral Cut passable for Boats, Barges, and other Vessels according to the Rules and Directions herein-after suppressed; and shall for that purpose be one Body Politick and Corporate by the Name of "The Company of Proprietors of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Navigation" and by that name shall have perpetual succession, and shall have a common seal. "

All Canal Companies needed a seal to fix to all official documents, either stamped to leave an impression in paper or pressed into softened red "sealing wax" attached to the document.

The matrix or die used to make the impression of the seal was cut in reverse in a block of, usually, hardened steel, but in the case of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Company hard brass was used.

The design of the seal shows the arms of the Cities of Hereford and Gloucester. On the right hand side are the chevrons and roundels of the City of Gloucester. The arms of the City of Hereford show "three Lions passant gardant" i.e. looking to the side



The Canal Company Seal (continued)

with three paws on the ground and right fore-paw raised. The border has ten St. Andrews crosses - these were added after the Civil War. The Royalist Garrison in Hereford was besieged by 14,000 Scottish troops for 5 weeks in 1645. When the City was relieved by King Charles I on 4th September the new coat of arms was awarded to the City as a reward for its loyalty and gallantry.

The die for the Canal Company Seal may still be seen today exhibited in the National Waterways Museum at Gloucester. For more information about Canal Company Seals "Waterways Heraldry", by Dennis Hadley, should be consulted. It is available from the National Waterways Museum, Gloucester, for £1.75.

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## TRUST FORMATION . . . UPDATE

After much consultation and consideration by the entire Committee of the Articles and Memorandum of Association a special full Committee Meeting was called in January, at which our Honorary Solicitor, Sue Newbould, was present. All the final queries were dealt with and it was agreed that these documents were a sound basis for our future. It was resolved that the Questionnaire the Charity Commissioners had sent us, and that the Chairman had largely already filled in, should be completed and sent to Bircham & Co. (our advisors on the formation) for their comments as soon as possible. Progress is slow but continuous !

### Gift Membership

Give your friends and relatives an unusual present with gift Membership of the Canal Society. Our normal rates of £5 single, £7 family, £2 junior, and £3 OAP apply, but we will add the personal touch of a Gift Certificate informing the recipient of their present, enclosed in one of our "Hereford Basin" Greetings Cards, at no additional cost.

Please send full name and address of recipient together with a brief message to be inserted in the card.

**NEW!** Tell us if your gift is for a Birthday or other occasion and if we do not have a certificate to suit we will create one !

## RESTORATION NEWS . . .

The Society's Restoration Group (Brian Fox, Ian Reed and Mike Potts, and Bob Palmer) have been very active over the last few months organising the restoration programme for 1991.

Due mainly to financial limitations we have been concentrating on low cost work, and so most of our recent work parties have been held at Newent. Although our restoration over the last few months, as ever, is not proceeding as swiftly as we would like, much has been achieved.

The Restoration Group, besides taking an active part in our regular Work Parties, have been organising our Easter Work Camp, during which a group of Waterway Recovery Group volunteers will spend a week working on the length of Canal to the South of Oxenhall Tunnel. Tools and materials needed to be arranged, accommodation, and of course permission sought to work on these sites. All of this has now been done.

The Easter Work Camp will start on Good Friday, 29th March, and run until Saturday, 6th April. Anyone wishing to come along who would like more details, please contact one of the Restoration Group - we would welcome your support! [See map of Newent area on page 14.]

WHY NOT  
SPRING  
INTO 1991  
AND HELP



OUR RESTORATION TEAM ?

VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME -  
not just for the heavy and dirty jobs !



Co-ordinators, plant  
operators, refresherment  
organisers . . . there are  
many interesting tasks -  
contact any member  
of the Restoration Group.

### NOVEMBER WORK PARTY.

This took place at the Oxenhall Lock Cottage site where a group of willing volunteers did a great deal of clearance work. The area between the two locks was cleared and the fallen trees cut up, the branches and twigs being burnt as work progressed.

It is our policy to generally leave the opposite bank from that of the towpath to grow wild and be a sanctuary for the wild life there. Any trees removed are normally taken only from the bed of the canal and as horses no longer generally ply the canals there is no reason why trees that are growing between the canal and the towpath should be disturbed.

*continued on page 11*



## RESTORATION NEWS . . . (ii)

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### DECEMBER WORK PARTY.

Probably one of the most successful for some time, having some twenty volunteers in attendance. Most of us worked further down through the Newent locks and headed towards the aqueduct, the remaining fallen trees being logged up and the line of the Canal once more being made visible. A small group also worked at Skew Bridge finishing the brickwork and having a general tidy up.

The afternoon saw a return to one of our old ideas, Mr. and Mrs. Tier kindly letting us use one of their buildings to hold a social party in. A large group of us filed off after a good morning's work to arrive not only to find the room heated ready for us, but also decorated for the Restoration Group's Christmas Party. We had a most enjoyable time - thank you.

Our thanks also to our willing friends from Swindon and to the families from Newent who worked alongside us.

### JANUARY WORK PARTY

Further work took place at Oxenhall, with a small group carrying on the work from the last two months, leaving only a short stretch to be finished to reach the aqueduct - even though heavy snow shortened our day's work. Mr. Robin Stiles, the owner, appeared very impressed with the amount of work achieved over the last few months.

### FEBRUARY WORK PARTY

A group of us spent a warm fine day clearing further along the section of Canal towards the aqueduct. The remaining short stretch to the aqueduct should be finished at the March Work Party. The section from here to the minor road has been transformed over the last few months and now reveals a section of the Canal hidden for many years.

The support shown by the many people who walk the towpath in this area has much encouraged us.

Further work parties are being arranged so please contact one of the Restoration Group [See "contacts" - inside back cover] for details if you would like to come and join us - it really can be fun and not just hard work ! We hope to hold Work Parties on :-

Sunday, 7th April; Sunday, 5th May; Sunday, 2nd June; and of course our Easter Camp from 29th March to 6th April inclusive.

*Mike Potts*

# SPRING SALES

Sales over the last few months have broken all records thanks to the kind support of the many people who make purchases from the Sales Stand, which attends all the Society's social events, and those who placed postal orders in response to the Christmas Sales List contained within the last edition of "The Wharfinger". Thank you all - it makes a substantial addition to the Society's meagre financial reserves ( no I am not going to start the sob stories again - well not quite yet ! ). It not only helps to make all the hard work worthwhile but actually helps to make it possible. So if you can support our efforts by purchasing your next Sweatshirt from us rather than the High Street, or your next Tea Towel .....

All the items below are printed locally and are of the very highest quality. They are all printed "Help Restore the Hereford and Gloucester Canal",  
in circular text.



## SWEATSHIRTS



**Original Style:- Black with large yellow print.**

26", 28", 30", 32" ..... £13.95  
S. M. L. XL. .... £14.50

**"Mike's Design":- Yellow with small black print.**

26", 28", 30", 32" ..... £13.95  
S. M. L. XL. .... £14.50

## T-SHIRTS

**Black with large yellow print.**  
26", 28", 30", 32"..... £7.50  
S. M. L. XL. .... £8.00

## POLO SHIRTS

**Navy blue with small yellow print.**  
M. L. XL. .... £14.50

Please add 10% for Packing + Delivery unless you can collect from the Sales Stand at one of our Social Events. Thank you.

Due to increased material costs our suppliers prices of the above, and thus ours, have been revised. All other prices in the Christmas Sales List remain unchanged.





In the last edition we saw the introduction of a new style of Sweatshirt, "Mike's Design", which by giving a choice has substantially increased interest in our Sweatshirts - you no longer argue whether or not to buy one but instead which design you are going to have ! On this basis, and by popular demand, we have pleasure in announcing not one, but two new designs. The first, "Liz's Design", ( again named after the ~~pain~~ person who originated the idea ) is to be held in stock in most sizes. The second, Nigel's Design, is to be on an order only basis and is launched to celebrate the Bi-Centenary of the Enabling Act of Parliament for the construction of the Canal. It bears the Canal Company's official seal - see feature, page 8.

## SWEATSHIRTS

"Liz's Design":- Black with small yellow print.

"Help restore the Hereford and Gloucester Canal"



26", 28", 30", 32" ..... £13.95

S. M. L. XL. .... £14.50

**NEW!**

## BI-CENTENARY SPECIALS

### SWEATSHIRTS

"Nigel's Design":- Bi-Centenary special

Small yellow crest on black

or

Small black crest on yellow

26", 28", 30", 32" ..... £14.95

S. M. L. XL. .... £15.95



### T-SHIRTS

Small yellow crest on black

or

Small black crest on yellow

26", 28", 30", 32"... £8.50

S. M. L. XL. .. £9.00

### POLO SHIRTS

Small yellow crest on navy

or

Small black crest on yellow

M. L. XL. .... £15.95

Please add 10% for Packing + Delivery unless you can collect from the Sales Stand at one of our Social Events. Thank you. *David R. Penny*

# EASTER CANAL CAMP

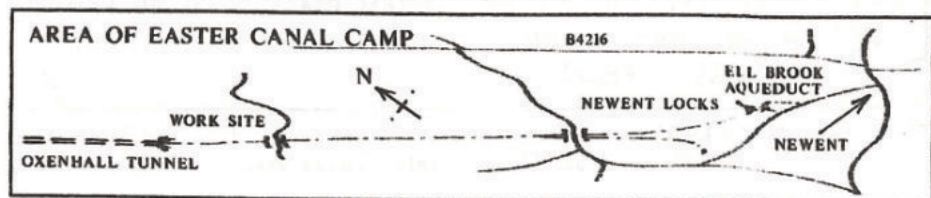
Waterway Recovery Group was formed in 1970 by enthusiasts who had been active in voluntary restoration work since the mid 1960's. Their aim was to be a co-ordinating force, not centred on any individual project, but backing up and assisting local groups with publicity, loan of tools and plant, technical advice, visiting work-parties... and Canal Camps.

WRG is now firmly established as the co-ordinating body for voluntary labour on the inland waterways of Britain and is a subsidiary company of the Inland Waterways Association (a registered charity). We are, therefore, very pleased that the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal should be chosen as one of the 5 canals to host official WRG organised restoration Canal Camps this year.

From Friday 29th March until Saturday 6th April a group of WRG volunteers will pay £24 each for the privilege of sleeping on the floor of the hall at Oxenhall. They face the challenge of the first phase of clearance work that will ultimately lead to the restoration of the Canal right up to the Southern portal of the 2,192 yard long Oxenhall Tunnel. They have our sincere thanks in anticipation of their labours; as does Mr. Golding, the land owner, without whose co-operation the work could not be undertaken. We also extend our appreciation to our own Restoration Team who have spent many hours organising the Camp in close co-operation with our colleagues from Waterway Recovery Group.



*DISCLAIMER: The above cartoon is NOT intended to represent WRG - they would, at least, be wearing safety helmets and a smile !*





# OUR NEXT EDITION .... WITH A VERY LITTLE HELP ....

A PRESS CUTTING FROM  
THE NEXT EDITION OF  
"THE WHARFINGER" ?

## MEMBERSHIP NEARS 500

Due to the magnificent support and effort of nearly our entire Membership, the Society is pleased to be able to announce that our Membership has doubled to nearly 500. This magnificent achievement has only been made possible by so many Members taking up the challenge, that we set in the spring edition of "The Wharfinger", *for each of you to go out and recruit just one new Member (or more of course !)*. Thank you all ...



Alongside is part of what could be printed in the next edition of "The Wharfinger"- if you rise to this challenge ! With this edition of "The Wharfinger" you will find a Membership Form. The challenge is to use it to *recruit* a *new* Member - if all of you manage to *recruit* just one *new* Member the FICTION alongside will become FACT. This would immeasurably strengthen YOUR SOCIETY.

[ If anyone requires additional Membership Forms they are always available from the Membership Secretary - address on the inside back cover. ]



*David R. Penny*

## WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED SINCE 1st NOVEMBER

Mr. O. Beaclair, Ashperton; Mrs. Beaclair, Ashperton; Mr. & Mrs. Blanchard, Hereford; Mr. J. R. Chapman, Newent; P. A. Edwards, Newent; Mr. & Mrs. B. Evans, Bracknell, Berks; Mr. D. G. Glibbery, West Wickham, Kent; Ms. L. P. Gower, Withington; The Earl Grey, Kingsbridge, Devon; Mr. H. Hawkins, Newent; Mr. & Mrs. Lesser, AbbeyDore; Mr. G. G. Lowthian, Longford; Ms. J. Lynham, Hereford; Ms. T. Mason, Orleton; Mr. S. E. McCord, Withington; Mr. D. Mills, Cheltenham; Mr. Brian Morgan, Clehonger; Mr. & Mrs. J. O'Keefe, Dymock; Mr. K. Pratley, Hereford; Mr. C. E. Piper, Weobley; Mr. & Mrs. G. Shetliffe, Cross Keys, Hlds; Mr. & Mrs. B. C. Snell, Tarrington, Hlds; Mr. J. D. Wall, Haverfordwest; Mr. J. W. Ward, Cranleigh, Surrey; Mr. Roy Watts, Almely, Hlds; Mr. B. Webster, Canon Frome; Mr. J. B. Wilkinson, Kidderminster; Mr. R. A. Willis, Hereford; Ms. J. Yarnold, Hereford; Dave, Stretton Grandison.

*Members joining after 23rd January 1991 will be welcomed in the next issue.*

A list of new Corporate Members will appear in the next issue of "The Wharfinger".



# FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT

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Sunday, 23rd June, will bring another "Festival of Transport" to Dymock. It has been decided to centre the whole event on the past, present and future of the old canal route from Hereford to Gloucester.

Definitely in the past category is the Gloucester - Newent - Dymock - Ledbury railway line, which closed (sadly) in the early 1960's. To show how things used to look then, there will be a demonstration of a fully operational model of the Dymock section of line, buildings and surroundings. The 33 ft. long layout incorporates more than a dozen engines and scores of carriages and goods' trucks. It took four years to build and has only been shown a few times since then.

To complement this, there will be a comprehensive photographic display of the whole route from Ledbury to Gloucester, as well as G.W.R. artefacts and accessories saved when the line was abandoned.

Partly in the present but mostly in the future category is the promised re-opening of the route to allow tramcars to operate. The **Leadon Valley Electric Railway Association** are setting up their display with videos, photographs, literature and information. Their two trams, one from 1935 (45ft. long and fully operational) and one from 1919 (28ft. long, currently undergoing restoration), will be strongly featured.

In which category is the Hereford to Gloucester canal? Obviously the Canal belongs to the past but certain parts, like Monkhide, Newent, and the Oxenhall and Aylestone tunnel areas are most definitely in the present. The future (both near and distant) means the resurrection of the whole length of canal! Check on the progress and latest news at the impressive display stand of the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society**.

As well as the adjacent Pub, which is serving hot and cold beverages, snacks and lunches all day, it is hoped that there will be other attractions also available. The admission price for the complete exhibition is 90p. for adults and 30p. for under-15's and senior citizens. So come along on 23rd June between 10.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. to the Village Hall in the centre of Dymock (between Newent and Ledbury).

For further enquiries, or offers of information, photographs etc. for showing at the exhibition, telephone Chris Clark on Dymock 204.

*N.B. Any profits from this event will be donated to the Dymock Village Hall Fund.*

*Chris Clark*



# THE HEREFORD and GLOUCESTER CANAL

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BY DAVID E BICK

Our Autumn edition of *The Wharfinger* carried the sad news that the hardback book of "our Canal", first published in 1979, was about to go out of print and it was exceedingly unlikely that it would be reprinted in the foreseeable future - if at all. What we thought would be our last copies were sold for £10 each at The National Waterways Festival *Gloucester '90* last August.

The Author, Society Member David Bick, has published a number of other books and whilst having a New Year "spring clean" found a small number of copies of *The Hereford and Gloucester Canal* in a box labelled with the title of one of his other publications. However, we are assured that there are no other boxes full of this book, so this fortunate find will not be repeated !

In fairness to those generous few who purchased the book at The National Waterways Festival at £10, and with the approval of David Bick, we have decided to sell these remaining copies *to Members ONLY* at a cost of £10 (including postage and packing). The cover price is now £6.95 and the balance will all be put towards Society funds.

*The Hereford and Gloucester Canal* contains many black and white photographs, maps and other fascinating detail. The author, David Bick, is a Chartered Engineer and has written a number of books on industrial history and archaeology. He is a member of the Railway & Canal Historical Society.

Each copy of the book has been personally signed by David Bick. If you would like a copy (or two - they make an unusual but appreciated gift at any time of the year) please send a cheque or Postal Order (payable to The H & G Canal Society) for £10 for each copy required to our Sales organiser David Penny (address on inside back cover of *The Wharfinger*). Copies will be despatched strictly on a "first come, first served" basis and, in the event of stock being exhausted, cheques will be returned promptly. Please print your name and address to help us to avoid errors. Thank you.

**IWA**

## The Inland Waterways Association

### Gloucestershire Branch Meetings

**Tuesday 16th April 7.30pm**

Another Severn Scrapbook by Fred Rowbotham at the Museum Schools Room, Gloucs. Docks.

**Friday 26th - 28th April**

Region AGM (27th at 2.30pm) weekend. Featuring talk on the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal, waterways video's, and much more. At the Berkely Arms Hotel in the centre of Berkely.

**Tuesday 14th May 7.30pm**

Reflections on Narrow Boats - an illustrated talk by Josephine Jeremiah. At Tewkesbury Marina Yacht Club.

**Saturday 22nd -23rd June**

Gloucester Gathering '91: Boat Rally; Trade & Craft Show, + Museum's Tug Weekend *plus our own H&GCS display.*

*More details in the next issue of "The Wharfinger".*

***FOR DETAILS OF OUR OWN EVENTS PLEASE SEE PAGE 24***

### **GOTTA BOTTLE?**

Without a doubt the greatest "Money spinner" at our major events is the **Bottle Draw**. This lucky number draw is very popular and most passers by can be persuaded to buy a ticket or two. However, we do need to obtain as many bottles as possible to ensure success.

At the National Waterways Festival last Summer we actually had to resort to **buying** some on the third day !

If you, or a company that you have regular contact with, might be persuaded to donate a few bottles (or even a few dozen !) then please contact our Chairman. Wine, cider, pop, beer - even whisky - all are very welcome ! *Thank you.*

### **HELP !**

We have been invited to attend more events this year than ever before - whilst this tends to prove just how effective our promotional work has been it does pose a problem in organising, transporting, erecting, and staffing our display. If you would like a change please volunteer to assist at one or more of the following:-

**APRIL 24th HEREFORD TOURISM FAIR; JUNE 22nd/23rd GLOUCESTER GATHERING '91; JUNE 23rd DYMOCK FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT** [*Yes - we are in two places at the same time !*]  
**24th/25th/26th AUGUST BLACK COUNTRY NATIONAL WATERWAYS FESTIVAL, DUDLEY; OCTOBER 5th/6th "LIFT & SHIFT" AND LOCAL WATERWAYS WEEKEND AT THE NATIONAL WATERWAYS MUSEUM...**



## MORE NATIONAL PUBLICITY

In recent months the Society has seen unprecedented publicity in local, regional, and national waterways magazines in addition to the coverage provided by the local press.

The latest coverage is provided by the "vintage restoration today" magazine OLD GLORY. This enthralling magazine is running a two part series, in its March and April editions, entitled "A Tale of Four Lost Waterways". The series focuses in depth, on waterways in both Herefordshire and Hampshire, among other things comparing some of their similarities. Among the waterways mentioned, in addition to "our" canal, are the River Lugg, the River Wye, and the Leominster Canal.

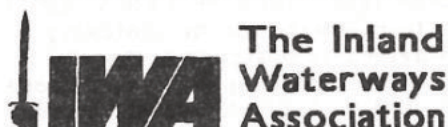
In case your local newsagent does not stock the magazine, we are very pleased, in association with OLD GLORY, to be able to offer Members of the Society the following mail order rates:-

Single issues are only £1.95 + 50p P+P direct from the publishers:-



**SPECIAL OFFER**  
Both March and April for only £4.50 inclusive.

*Please send cheque/PO payable to Old Glory to:-  
Old Glory Shop, Knowle Lane, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 8JP.  
stating issues required and referring to "The Wharfinger" offer.*



### SAVE THOSE STAMPS !

All types of trading stamps, petrol vouchers, cigarette coupons, silver foil, aluminium can ring pulls and all denominations of used postage stamps can be donated to raise money for canal restoration. The used stamps are turned into cash and the petrol vouchers etc into goods for sale. Approximately £2,000 every year is raised in this way to help the work of the Inland Waterways Association and the Waterway Recovery Group. Please send your items to:-

WRG/IWA Charity Bank, 6 Spa Lane, Hinckley, Leics, LE10 1JB

### DOES ANYONE HAVE . . . ?

Mike Potts our Vice-Chairman is anxious to obtain any old photo's, cine film, or slides of closed local railway lines that any of our Members would be prepared to loan him, or allow him to copy. If you can help please contact him on Hereford 268739.

### DOES ANYONE HAVE . . . ? (2)

If anyone has any of the following back numbers of *The Wharfinger* (in good condition) that they are prepared to give me (or loan to me for photocopying) I would be most grateful. They are:- No. 14 (Winter '86) No. 12 (Summer '86); No.'s 7, 8, 9, 10 (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter '85); No. 4 (Summer '84); and No.'s 1, and 2. If you can help please contact me at the address on the inside back cover.

*David R. Penny*

## COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iv)

### JANUARY COMMITTEE continued . . .

■ The Restoration Team reported steady progress on initial clearance work in the vicinity of Newent locks and on the welcome support of many local people.

■ Arrangements for the Waterway Recovery Group Easter Canal Camp were reviewed and found to be well advanced.

■ It was reported that Membership of the Society was now close to 250 members.

■ The Events Group reported their plans for the next three months and for the AGM.

■ The special sales leaflet in the Winter edition of "The Wharfinger" had helped sales exceed £160 in December/January alone.

■ Research was reported to be on going in respect of finding a suitable route to replace that which had been long obstructed in the Ledbury area.

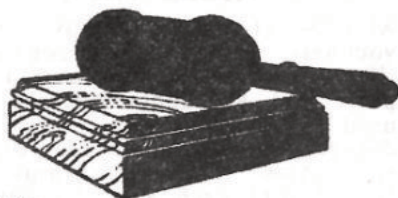
■ A draft paper in respect of the possible appointment of a Project Officer was circulated and it was agreed that discussions should also continue with the Inland Waterways Association on this important topic.

■ Whilst it had previously been agreed that the Society should hold a two day open day in May 1991, to celebrate the Bi-Centenary of the enabling Act of Parliament, it was agreed to postpone arrangements until the towpath had been cleared of excavated spoil in the Crews Pitch/Monkhide area. Every effort would be made to reconsider such an event, later in the year, once the material had been removed and the grass had become re-established.

### FEBRUARY COMMITTEE

■ Arrangements to visit South Herefordshire and Forest of Dean District Councils, to assess the impact of Planning Permissions that exist in respect of proposed developments on (or close to) the Canal, were discussed. This would then enable essential diversion routes to be protected from adverse development.

■ It was reported that the Canal Society was being increasingly mentioned in national, regional and local publications, and had received an exceptional number of requests to provide speakers for various meetings. The Society had a very full diary of exhibitions and



*continued on page 21*



## COMMITTEE MATTERS (V)

### FEBRUARY COMMITTEE continued

... shows during 1991; it was agreed to seek the help of Members in setting up, staffing and dismantling these displays.

■ The Chairman reported a very favourable response to complimentary copies of the last edition of *The Wharfinger* which had been widely circulated.

■ The Department of Transport had suggested that the Canal Society should meet with its Consulting Engineers to discuss the intended alignment of the proposed new A40 Gorsley to Gloucester Trunk Road. This followed representations from the Society regarding the latest (revised) alignment which appeared to substantially encroach on the line of the Canal. It was agreed to meet with the DoT once historical data in respect of the original Canal levels in the area had been researched.

■ It was reported that Hereford and Worcester County Council had just published a further Structure Plan Consultation Document. This incorporated a substantial number of supportive Policies, in respect of inland waterways (some specifically in respect of the Canal), many of which reflected the Chairman's detailed representations (submitted last May).

■ Following the special Committee Meeting with our Honorary Solicitor the Chairman

*continued on page 22*



***3 dimensions***

7 Bridge St.,  
Hereford.

Tel. 0432-273623

THE PROFESSIONAL SALON

***are pleased to be  
able to show their  
support for the***

HEREFORDSHIRE  
AND  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
CANAL SOCIETY

***We wish them all  
possible success  
in 1991...  
and beyond.***

# WINTER CROSSWORD

By Tony Austin-Bailey

## SOLUTION

|    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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|    | E |   | M |   | M |   | A |    |    | I |   | R |   | A |   | U |
| 9  | S | P | A | T | I | A | L |    | 10 | C | L | I | M | B | E | R |
|    | T |   | S |   | T |   |   | 11 | L  | E | T |   | A |   | I | P |
| 12 | O | N | S | T | A | G | E |    | 13 | A | L | B | A | N | I | A |
|    | R |   | E |   | T |   |   | 14 | O  | U | T |   | L |   | E | S |
| 15 | E | A | S | T | E | R | N |    | 17 | E | R | E | C | T | U | S |
|    |   |   |   | O |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | A |   |   |
| 18 | S | P | R | E | A | D | S |    | 23 | A | U | S | T | R | I | A |
|    | P |   | E |   | I |   |   | 27 | W  | E | T |   | E |   | A | M |
| 28 | A | N | D | O | R | R | A |    | 29 | T | A | C | T | I | L | E |
|    | R |   | R |   | L |   |   | 30 | G  | A | R | T |   | M |   | N |
| 31 | R | E | A | L | I | S | M |    | 32 | A | N | I | S | E | E | D |
|    | O |   | W |   | N |   | A |    |    | C |   | O |   | N |   | E |
| 33 | W | E | S | T | E | R | N |    | 34 | T | I | N | S | T | A | R |

By popular demand there will be another crossword later in the year - and the Editor may even be persuaded to offer a small prize for the first correct solution!

?????????????????  
 ? A HAPPY ?  
 ? BIRTHDAY ?  
 ? ?????? ?  
 ? Why not ?  
 ? give a Gift ?  
 ? Membership ?  
 ? Details on ?  
 ? page 9. ?  
 ??????????????????

### Extract from WRG's Navvies - Navy Diary

Rediscover a fascinating canal! Was Oxenhall Tunnel really this low, or is it a film set for Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs?

Ed. What a good fund raising idea - any offers!

## COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (vi)

### FEBRUARY COMMITTEE . . . continued

. . . reported that he had subsequently written to thank Sue Newbould for her time and suggesting a number of amendments to the proposed Land Owner Agreement.

■ The Chairman reported on the February meeting of the Southern Canals Association, which he had recently attended, at Devizes. This had been particularly useful in resolving a number of issues relating to the formation of the Canal Trust.

■ Hereford City Council had offered the Canal Society a free stand at the annual April Tourism Fair; it was agreed that we would participate, and the Chairman confirmed that the City Council had been thanked for their kind offer.

CRP



## **THANKS...**

Since the last edition of "The Wharfinger" we have received substantial support and offers of assistance from a number of individuals and companies including . . .

### **J L PINDER & SON**

Who have generously agreed to donate all the materials to fit out our first trip boat as a result of the appeal in the last edition - further details on p.7.

### **HEREFORD & WORCESTER C.C.**

Who have announced major supportive Planning Policies in their latest Structure Plan and related Strategies - now at the final Public Consultation stage.

### **SOUTH HEREFORDSHIRE D.C.**

As reported elsewhere the Council have adopted protective Planning Policies and written to the DoT regarding the lack of a bridge where the A49 Hereford Bypass will cross the Canal.

### **Mr HARRY MILLER**

Within a few hours of the last edition of "The Wharfinger" landing on the doormats, a colleague of one of our Members was "volunteering" to scan in the text of the manuscript in response to the appeal on this page.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS  
TO EVERYONE**

## **PLANT APPEAL LAUNCHED**

During late February we launched our **PLANT APPEAL** - requests for financial assistance have been sent to each of the five local authorities along the line of the Canal plus Gloucester City Council, Hereford and Worcester County Council, Gloucestershire County Council and the Inland Waterways Association (at both national and local level).

The objective is to raise funds so that the Canal Society can purchase its own (second-hand) heavy plant and equipment. Last year a substantial proportion of our (hard won) funds were spent on the hire of plant.

Our target is £12,500 by the end of May. In his letter to the bodies mentioned above Chairman Cliff Penny has explained that our intention is to purchase our own excavator, "muck shifting" dumpers/trailers and a sludge pump. We have a number of our Members who are skilled plant operators and others willing to be trained. All items are regularly required as the efforts of our Restoration Team continue on sites in both Counties.

If the target is not reached then we will adjust our "shopping list" !

A report on the progress of this important appeal will appear in the next edition of *The Wharfinger*.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY . . .**

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Many readers will have noticed that this year, for the first time, we have a full and varied programme of events, and although we are well into the year, there are still plenty of things for our Members and their friends (aren't they Members?-Ed.) to do and see.

The AGM in April marks the end of the Winter programme and the beginning of the Summer period of our outdoor activities. So why not come along to one of our Social Events and introduce yourself.

Finally, even if restoration work is not your scene, do come along to the Easter Canal Camp (or any other Work Party), and see how we are getting on (any Committee Member will tell you how to get there).

### **Friday, 22nd March**

7.30pm NEWENT LIBRARY - PUBLIC MEETING:-

To acquaint people of Newent and Dymock with progress and plans.

### **Friday, 29th March - Saturday, 6th April**

NEWENT / OXENHALL - H&G / WRG Canal Camp:-

Ellbrook aqueduct to South portal Oxenhall Tunnel.

### **Wednesday, 24th April**

LEISURE CENTRE - HEREFORD TOURISM FAIR:-

Society attending as invited exhibitor.

### **Thursday, 25th April**

7.30pm, STUDIO THEATRE, HEREFORD CATHEDRAL SCHOOL - AGM:-

To be followed by "Gloucester '90" video presentation of the National Waterways Festival last year, by Graham Ettles.

### **Sunday, 19th May**

10.15 am, NEWENT MARKET SQUARE - WALK AND RIDE:-

From Newent to Gloucester to examine current work at Newent/Oxenhall and to highlight lesser known spots towards Gloucester. Leaves Newent 10.30am, finishes Gloucester Docks 3pm. Bring a picnic or join us for a pub lunch. Excursion led by David Bick.

### **Saturday, 22nd / Sunday, 23rd June**

GLOUCESTER DOCKS - Gloucester Gathering '91:- Details on page 18.

### **Sunday, 23rd June**

DYMOCK VILLAGE HALL - Festival of Transport:- Details on page 16.

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT Tony Austin-Bailey (0432) 269704  
Kay Jennings (0432) 270907**

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This edition of The Wharfinger was compiled by Cliff and David Penny using *JetSetter* software.



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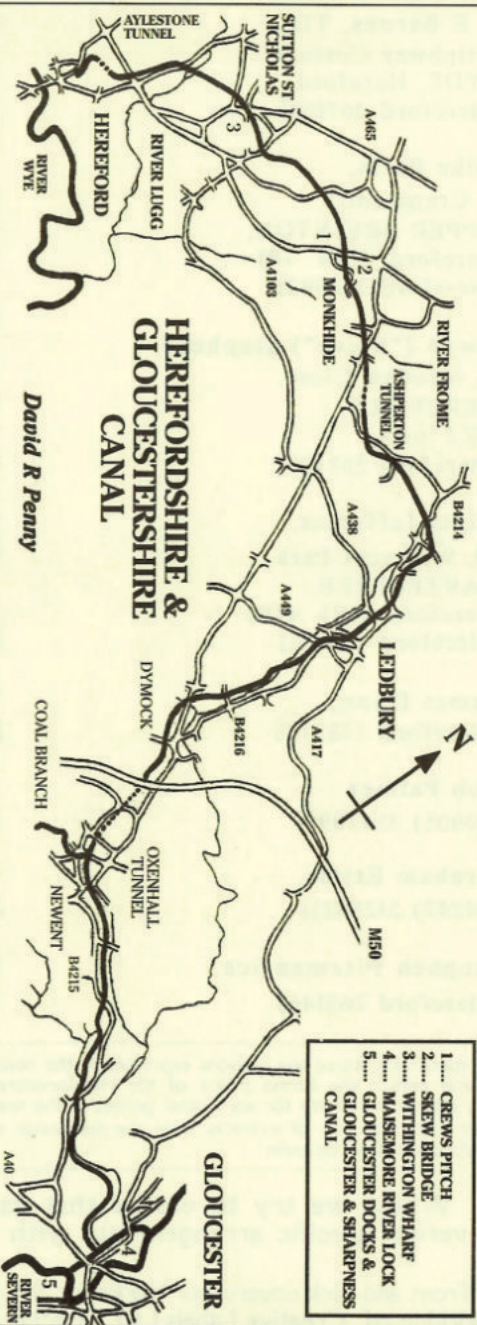
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**Whilst we try to ensure that dates are correct please  
verify specific arrangements with the relevant Organiser.**

Front and back covers; our thanks for the design and artwork to **Sandy Wooldridge of Creative Labels Ltd.,** Netherwood Road, Rotherwas, Hereford.

**Published by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society.**



David R Penny

*Please Note: We are working on the Canal with the permission and co-operation of the land owners. Unless specifically indicated it should not be assumed that there is any public right of way along the Canal towpath. Please help the Society to maintain its good relationships with the local land owners.*

Work began on the Canal in 1792 but there were many problems which meant that it was not completed until 1845, making it the last major route to be built in Britain but for the Canals of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Canal stretched for 34 miles and utilised 22 locks and 3 tunnels to overcome the problems posed by the undulating fields of Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.