

# THE WHARFINGER



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

**50p**  
free to members

**Edition 34**  
**Spring 1992**

## WHO DOES WHAT . . .

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

### RESTORATION GROUP

Brian Fox, Mike Potts, Ian Reid

### SOCIAL EVENTS

Tony Austin-Bailey

### PRESS OFFICER

Nigel Jefferies

### SALES

David Penny

### THE WHARFINGER

Cliff Penny, David Penny

### 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

The logo consists of the letters 'MEB' in a stylized, bold, sans-serif font. The 'M' and 'E' are connected, and the 'B' is also connected to the 'E'. The letters are black on a white background.

Midlands Electricity plc

Printing of The Wharfinger  
has been kindly sponsored  
by Midlands Electricity plc.

We greatly appreciate this support for  
our voluntary work which is intended to  
be for the long-term benefit of the  
community - *thank you.*

## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

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### LAUNCH AT AGM

The Charitable Trust will, at last, be formally launched at our AGM - to be held on Thursday 30th April in Ledbury. As regular readers will be aware the **Inland Waterways Association** have funded the legal costs of the Trust formation. In view of the lengthy procedure involved and the many queries raised (at times I was beginning to think that we were the first Canal Trust ever formed!) this represents a significant financial commitment - *thank you IWA*. The separate Trading Company should also be born then (a requirement of the Charity Commission) - with the costs being met from our own funds. [AGM details see page 12, Trust see page 11.]

This is a major step forward for the Canal Society (which will be formally "wound up", and all the assets transferred to the Trust, at the AGM). The need for the Charitable Status was highlighted at one of our Local Authority liaison meetings in 1989 - the advice was that the Local Authorities would be better placed to grant aid a formally constituted (and regulated) Charity. Unfortunately the formation has come at a time when Local Authority finances are particularly stretched and this reason unfortunately assumes far less significance (at present) than it did originally.

The formation of the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust** will, however, mark a major step in our progress; above all else our Charitable constitution (and the *strict regulation* that comes with it) should enhance still further our credibility with the general public, local and national businesses, and public bodies. Equally importantly it presents an opportunity for local and national businesses to support us in a tax efficient manner; our ordinary Members are also requested, *please*, to substantially increase our income by Covenanteeing their subscriptions - *it will not cost YOU any more*, the liability of the Covenant is notional and the reclaimed tax will be put to excellent use! [Details on page 22.]

### MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY PLC.

I am delighted to report that **Midlands Electricity plc.** have agreed to print **The Wharfinger** throughout 1992. This sponsorship, from Regional Headquarters, is greatly appreciated and demonstrates support for our professional approach to the voluntary work which is, after all, ultimately intended to be for the benefit of the whole community. My particular thanks to John James (from the Shrewsbury District Offices) who successfully negotiated this on our behalf. [See also page 24.]

*continued on page 2*

## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS . . . (ii)

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### UK2000/CIVIC TRUST - HEREFORD AND WORCESTER CC

Having shown representatives of UK2000 parts of the Canal last year we have been successful in obtaining an £800 grant towards the costs of spoil removal at Crews Pitch (with encouragement to submit additional grant aid applications). This follows a grant of £1,000, secured in the latter part of last year, from Hereford and Worcester County Council/Countryside Commission for other work in the Monkhide area. At a time when other sources of funding are becoming difficult (to say the least) this modest - but much appreciated assistance - is most welcome.

### INFLATION

How many letters have you read from various organisations lately explaining that, with regret, they have (yet again) no option other than to increase their charges to you? Many go on to explain that they are "holding down" the increase to the bare minimum. Certainly, over the past couple of years, there are *very few* things that have not increased in cost. Well, the good news is that (yet again) your Canal Society has NOT increased the subscriptions!

### WHICH ARE YOU?

It doesn't matter if you cannot (or don't want to) shovel some muck - *but we appreciate those who do*; it doesn't matter if you cannot (or don't want to) write an article for *The Wharfinger* - *but we appreciate those who do*; it doesn't matter if you cannot attend any meetings - *but we appreciate those who do*; it doesn't matter if you don't want to serve on a committee - *but we appreciate those who do*; it doesn't matter where you live - *our Members live all over the country, not just locally*; what *really* matters is YOUR support by way of Membership!

### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Under our current Constitution ALL Membership renewals (apart from new Members who joined after 1st January 1992) are due on the 1st April 1992. Last year we had to spend nearly £50 on postage and envelopes sending out "reminders" - PLEASE show your continued support by renewing as soon as possible - why not do it NOW and help us to keep our subscriptions low. *Please* don't forget to Covenant the payment! [FREE PROMPT PAYERS DRAW - see page 22.]

Cliff Penny, Chairman/Liaison Officer

# NICE FOR THE NINE

*By Velda West*

The Society's Christmas Dinner, on Friday 6th December 1991, was a most civilised affair as well as a gastronomic delight.

Due to the thick mist, winter darkness, and premature sign posting of the turning, we drove first into a cul-de-sac of houses before following the correct lane into Colwall. Being on unfamiliar territory and caught out by the sprawling nature of the village, we pulled up at the first pub with a friendly air about it to seek directions. Expecting to be diverted along some obscure track into the countryside, it was a relief to hear that our destination was (isn't it always the case?) but 200 yards further on.

The Colwall Park Hotel appeared equally welcoming, a grand black-and-white building standing proud and promising warmth aglow in its yellow floodlighting. Indeed, there was a warm welcome in store, in the form of the first round of drinks compliments of the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Frost. This was to be the first of many fine touches which made the whole evening the real treat it was.

The hotel boasts Three Stars and Four Crowns, but the service was undoubtedly Five Star that night. The Manager took our coats, noted our choice from the menu and was very soon escorting us to the dining room.

In calm and cosy surroundings, we commenced on the festive fare. Beautifully presented Avocado, a fan

of green on red sauce, was served as a starter in Christmas colours, with the option of a warming and reportedly delicious beef and tomato soup. It seemed almost everybody selected roast pheasant for the main course, with myself an obvious exception indulging in my specially requested vegetarian choice of a splendid nut roast. Eating this aroused true melt-in-the-mouth sensations and the

accompanying homemade tomato sauce completed the perfect blend of flavour and texture. After a lifetime of meals spent chomping on heavy, thick, earthy-tasting nut concoctions, the Colwall chef went straight to the top of the expertise ratings for me! Everybody else appeared to enjoy their meal equally and there was much praise in addition for the superbly cooked and plentiful vegetables.

Conversation and wine flowed, desserts were selected and further raptures over the quality of the food were soon to follow. Many chose meringue and sorbet nests and one seasonal soul found room for the Christmas pudding. Others were escorted to taste bud heaven in the company of the homemade ice-cream. Milk and honey was a real option here for some, but for myself it was an unconscious decision for nuts again in the form of the praline variety. This was no scoop-of-vanilla excuse for a sweet, but a real toffee-nutty-creamy glassful which was more of a life experience than a mere third course on a menu.

*continued on page 4*



## NICE FOR THE NINE... continued

After the luxury of real cream in the ice-cream, which is oddly such a rarity these days, it was a relief to discover that the genuine article was also on offer alongside the coffee which awaited us in the retreat of the bar. Soft seats and room to spread eased that sore but satisfying sensation of a stomach amply filled. There was more conversation, the relaxing puff of a cigar for some, drinks all round yet again from the obliging Roger Conners (*thank you Roger!*) and coffee replenished by the potful.

Yes, a most civilised evening indeed, even incorporating the obligatory Toast amidst the gastronomic delights, proposed by Robert Barnes,

*Ed. Next year let's try and get into double figures...*

to Stephen Ballard, but for whose contribution towards the original completion of the Canal, we should have had no reason to be gathered for such a marvellous Christmas meal.

Friendly and helpful to the last, as was everybody we encountered at the Colwall Park, the Manager was imparting to me the secrets behind the Hotel's double-whipped ice-cream even as we were being escorted to the door on the way home.

Those are secrets very few Members of the Society have had the chance to learn. Most missed out on the entire event, ice-cream secrets and all. ***But it was extremely Nice for the Nine.***

## IN THE NEWS

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society has been very much in the news lately! Late last year the *Hereford Times*, in its *Timesman's Diary*, proved that our newsletter is read, as they kindly reported our plea (from the last edition) for experienced excavator drivers which resulted in two volunteers - *thank you*. However it is the main Gloucestershire restoration site, and our "biggest ever" social event, that have been catching many of the headlines in 1992!

"*Waterway to spend the weekend!*" was one of the banner headlines in The (Gloucester) *Citizen* early in November. A full page spread, and many photographs, reported on one of our regular Sunday work parties - "*The enthusiasts do the spade work, digging in the spirit of the Navigators, the navvies who began the cut nearly two hundred years ago*".

Thanks to the publicity efforts of Dymock Member Chris Clark all of the local papers, in

both counties, reported the plans for our January social event (as did the local radio stations - see page 7). "*Unique cine film of last tunnel trip to be shown*" said The *Citizen*. A week later a typical press report was headed "*Canal fans' cars jam roads into village*"! "*Such is the interest and excitement about the Society's ongoing restoration project, Dymock nearly ground to a halt*" was how one of the papers summed it all up.



A word of caution crept in to the latest report from the county "*Protect canal bats warning*" was the headline in anticipation of our regular first Sunday in the month February Work Party on the approach to Oxenhall Tunnel. However, as the same report suggested that we would be mustering "*several hundred people*" (Ed. would you call 15 several hundred?) the accuracy of the bat report must also be questionable. Our star speaker at the January talk, explorer Bob Simpson, is quoted as saying "*if there were bats in there it is so damp they would have trench foot*"!

## COMMITTEE MATTERS

*Three Committee Meetings are reviewed by our Chairman in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date...*

### NOVEMBER COMMITTEE

■ The first Draft Restoration Briefs - forming an Appendix to individual Land Owner Agreements - were approved for discussion with the relevant land owners.

■ H P Bulmer Limited had agreed to print the Winter edition of *The Wharfinger* in order to give the Society time to find a longer-term sponsor. The Committee welcomed the support from this major local Company.

■ The Chairman confirmed that he had written to the Gloucestershire Nature Trust offering a site meeting in response to their detailed survey of the main Gloucestershire restoration site.

■ It was agreed that the Canal Society should subscribe to the Waterways Liaison Service.

■ The initial requests for Local Authority funding had now been made in respect of the Technical Liaison Officer appointment.

■ After a delay of many months Forest of Dean District Council had responded to the Plant Fund Appeal stating that they were unable to contribute on this occasion.

■ The Vice President and Chairman reported on their recent attendance at a meeting of the Yarkhill Parish Council [the main Herefordshire restoration site lies in this Parish]. Our plans for the area were outlined and the response was generally supportive.



■ The Chairman reported a telephone conversation that could result in the Canal Society obtaining a small dredger.

■ The Hereford and Worcester Rural Development Area Strategy Committee's Project Officer had recently met with members of the Restoration Team, and some Committee Members, to explain how they might be able to assist in respect of grant aid - not necessarily from the RDA funds. This initiative was greatly appreciated.

■ A report was received from the Vice Chairman in respect of the recent Southern Canals meeting.

■ It was agreed to book four caravan pitches for the 1992 National Waterways Festival at Wakefield for use by Members manning our display.

*continued on page 6*

## COMMITTEE MATTERS ... (ii)

■ Arrangements for the formation of a sub-committee dedicated to arranging the Open Weekend at Crew's Pitch at the end of May were agreed. Mr. Basil Frost (owner of Colwall Park Hotel - one of our Corporate Members) had agreed to serve on the sub-committee; this was warmly welcomed.

■ Excellent attendances and progress were reported in respect of Canal Society working parties at both of the main restoration sites. [See page 14.]

■ With regret the Committee decided not to nominate a site for the March national "Waterway Clean Up" campaign as there was no suitable site on the Canal.

■ A productive and amicable site meeting had taken place with the Leaden Valley Electric Railway Association in respect of a joint route protection initiative in the Dymock area.

## DECEMBER COMMITTEE

■ Draft arrangements for the separate Trading Company, that would be set up as a subsidiary of the Charitable Trust, were agreed.

■ Extensive liaison in respect of future Sponsorship for the printing of The Wharfinger had been undertaken - so far without success.

■ Initial responses from the Local Authorities in respect of the Technical Liaison Officer were reported.

*continued on page 16*



## MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

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*Perhaps we should be talking!*

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Tel: (0923) 770425 & 770255  
FAX: 721559

## 8 Hours = 15 Minutes !

It was about 8.30pm on Thursday evening when the Chairman's telephone rang ... "hello Cliff, it's John Warburton of BBC Hereford and Worcester; we would like to interview you regarding next week's talk about the Canal in the Dymock and Newent area - especially about the feature on the Oxenhall Tunnel. I would like to interview you walking through a tunnel please ..."

By now our regular readers should know that we don't have any problems only challenges ! However, anyone who knows the Canal will be aware that it would be exceedingly foolhardy to attempt to enter the 2,109 yard long Oxenhall Tunnel (a point that was stressed at the talk). Our two shorter tunnels - Aylestone at Hereford and that at Ashperton (also referred to as Walsophorne Tunnel) both have a towpath - about 3ft. below the current water level ! So that was the Society's "challenge of the week" - arrange a radio interview in a flooded tunnel without taking excessive risks - and within 48 hours !

A few minutes evaluation of options and Ashperton was shortlisted. The Gloucester end portal is situated in a deep cutting running through the garden of Canal Society Member Michael Peach; fortunately he was at home (he restored, from total dereliction, Tunnel Cottage) and a quick telephone call resulted in his ready agreement to our gaining access. Committee Member Nigel Jefferies was known to have taken a canoe through the Tunnel some years ago, so he was the next contact - did he think it viable ? "Yes, as long as the water has not risen a lot higher; as long as the steps (constructed by one of our Workparties a couple of years ago to gain access down the 50ft. deep cutting) are still negotiable - and by the way I no longer have a canoe !"

By this time our Chairman was beginning to wonder if this was a radio interview that should really have been delegated to someone else ! Was it such a good idea to take John Warburton, plus technical equipment, 60/70ft. below Ashperton Cricket Pitch in a canoe ? Perhaps we should call it off ? That could lose us the support of the Sony Award winning local radio station - with the largest listening figures in the two

## 8 HOURS = 15 MINUTES . . . *continued*

counties after Radio 1 - AND we were scheduled to go out on the peak listening John Taynton Sunday Morning Show (over 200,000 listeners).

Nigel 'phoned back - "... a neighbour has a sea-going, 4 man Avon inflatable dinghy and we can borrow it." Cliff borrows four life jackets, safety helmets, and powerful torches from Welsh Water - all systems go ?

The next day the Chairman telephones BBC Hereford and Worcester to confirm that we could proceed with the interview - not walking through a tunnel but going through in a boat. Within minutes the weekend radio programme "trails" were saying that the Sunday Show with John Taynton was "going underground" - even the early morning religious programme mentioned it !

Interview morning dawns; the dinghy will be inflated in Nigel's front garden and transported on Cliff's roof rack as the site is so confined. The dinghy owner is in London, but the simple instructions are followed by Nigel to the letter - and the thing will NOT inflate ! A visit to Hereford Fire Station (they have an emergency rescue dinghy and offered to try and inflate ours) and to the Sub Aqua Club (all out) still leave us with a very flat dinghy; lots more advance publicity on the radio and the interview time only a few hours away and we are not even on site ! Cliff telephones the SAS (yes, really - he's always adding to his list of useful telephone numbers !), can they loan us a four man dinghy ? "Probably, but it will take a little while to get authorisation..."

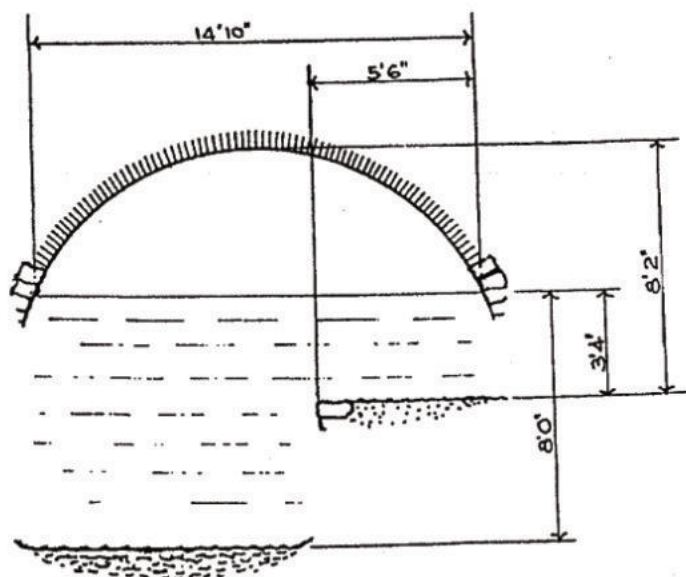
Nigel's neighbour turns up with a small portable compressor and within minutes (after hours by other methods) the dinghy is inflated [*Ed. Ideas as to what we were doing wrong on a postcard !*] and off we go to site.

Fortunately, the steps still served their purpose and we quickly got the dinghy to the mouth of the tunnel. Water level was well above the original level, some 3 ft. above the towpath, but still leaving nearly 5 ft. of headroom. Having carefully checked that there was daylight at the far end of the 400 yard long tunnel (to ensure good ventilation), lifejackets and safety helmets were donned, and the crew carefully

## 8 HOURS = 15 MINUTES . . . *continued*

paddled the Chairman into the dark unknown in a trial run that, in terms of an exercise in co-ordination by the two paddlers, proved to be valuable. All the bouncing off the walls (and even turning round to face the other way when we didn't want to) luckily took place before the interview!

John Warburton arrived as planned and, perhaps fortunately, oblivious to the fact that we had possessed a very flat inflatable until only an hour earlier! After a brief interview, as he and Cliff descended the steep steps down to the Tunnel, John Taynton played a few records whilst we kitted John Warburton up in his safety gear. Part two saw us safely into the boat, and our two crew made a splendid effort in propelling John and Cliff, plus the radio gear, into the Tunnel as the interview continued. This is where Cliff and John disagreed over what was forming from the roof and sides of the Tunnel - stalagmites said John - stalactites said Cliff (some 15/16 inches long). Back to the studio whilst a further 300 yards were covered - and the other John said our Chairman was right -



ASHPERTON (OR WALSOPTHORNE) TUNNEL

Diagram reproduced from the *Herefordshire Archaeological News*  
(Woolhope Club), No.29, 1975

## 8 HOURS = 15 MINUTES... *continued*

"tites' come down ??!" Meanwhile, down in the Tunnel John was persuading our intrepid paddlers to take him closer to the (partly obstructed by rubbish) Hereford portal. This end is very wet which proved to be another talking point, as did the fact that parts of the tunnel lining are brick, and others masonry; in excellent condition.

As we paddled back towards the entrance we had the opportunity to promote the talk the following week [see report on page 18], and (off air) to persuade the BBC to attend our Open Weekend at Crews Pitch on 24/25th May. There is no truth in the rumour that we refused to let John out of the Tunnel until this had been agreed!

All was not over as the dinghy had to be recovered, returned to Hereford and cleaned down, so it was nearly dark by the time we had finished; in total nearly 8 hours of liaison and effort for some 15 minutes of (peak) radio time; was it worth it - OF COURSE!

Our thanks to land owner, Mr. Michael Peach; dinghy owner Mr. Patrick Cannings and Nigel Jefferies. Our special thanks to BBC Hereford & Worcester, for (once more) taking such a genuine interest in our activities. CRP

**IMPORTANT WARNING:-** *Disused canal tunnels are potentially VERY DANGEROUS places to explore. This passage was undertaken with great care, following strict safety procedures. Some of the potential dangers are not obvious, and neither the Canal Society, nor the respective owners of the adjacent private land, encourage entry by any means into any of the three tunnels on the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal. Please wait until we are in a position to run public trips into one of the tunnels; we hope this may be possible in a few years time.*

*Please also note that we are working on the Canal with the permission and co-operation of the landowners, and that, 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 relations with the landowners.*

## DO YOU KNOW ...

"Do you know that there are workmen cutting down the original Canal Bridge parapet railings on the Widemarsh Bridge in Hereford?" asked our worried Member. Equally surprising, perhaps, was the unconcerned reply - "yes we do!". Read all about it in the next edition of The Wharfinger.

**Coming soon - The BIG prize DRAW - preliminary details on page 13**

## FORMATION OF THE CHARITABLE TRUST

Regular readers will be aware that we have been in the process of forming the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for many months - in fact over two years! However, the end is at last in sight. Our thanks to the Inland Waterways Association's Solicitors (Messrs Bircham & Co; with particular thanks to Mrs Janet Cabot); our own Honorary Solicitor (Sue Newbould - who is also Company Secretary designate to the Trust) and to the IWA proper for funding the legal costs of the formation of the Charitable Trust. We are extremely grateful for this significant assistance at a time when finances are restricted.

At the Annual General Meeting [*details, page 12*] on the 30th April the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust will be inaugurated, the assets of the Canal Society transferred, and the Canal Society will then cease to exist. All paid up Members of the Canal Society will be automatically transferred to the Membership of the Trust unless they advise the Membership Secretary, in writing, to the contrary. Currently we all have a liability (under the existing Canal Society Constitution) for any debts of the Canal Society to a maximum of £1 per Member - a similar liability will exist under the Articles of Association/Memorandum for the Trust (as it does with all similar organisations to our own).

The Articles of Association and Memorandum are based upon those utilised by previously formed Canal Trusts, but have been the subject of negotiated revisions by the Charity Commission. In order to comply with the Charity Commissioners requirements, and current Company legislation, the documents are extensive (some 44 pages). Whilst a copy of the final documents will be available for inspection at the AGM, it is appreciated that Members will not have time to read them in full. A limited number of copies will be available at the Sales Stand - in view of the length of the documents a charge of £2 will have to be made to cover copying costs. Copies are available by post at £2.50 (inclusive of p&p).

In order to meet the requirements of the Charity Commissioners the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust will be a non profit making Company, therefore, an independent Trading Company will also have to be inaugurated at the AGM. H&GC Sales, trading as H&GCS, will be a wholly owned fund-raising subsidiary of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, with all profits being transferred to the Charitable Trust on a regular basis.

As stated in Chairman's Comments [*page 1 of this issue*] this is a major step forward in pursuit of our wholly voluntary work. However, it should not make any difference to our Members - we do not anticipate a sudden change in the way we do things, or an increase in subscriptions blamed on this major change in our constitution - what it should do is lay the correct foundation stone on which our further success can be confidently built. Therefore the 1992 AGM will, if nothing else, mark a major step in the history of our endeavours. CRP

The Charitable Trust status means that we are now able to benefit from Covenanted Subscriptions - please see page 22.

## *Dates For Your Diary*

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★ **Thurs 19th March - 7.30pm**

HEREFORD: *"Skittles evening"*  
*The Skittle Alley, Antelope Inn, Barton Road, Hereford.*

★ **Thurs 26th March - 7.30pm**

NEWENT: *"Tunnel Talk Number Two!"*  
Illustrated talk by Bob Simpson, Explorer, (and others!)  
Go inside Oxenhall Tunnel *the safe way* - repeat of our  
record breaking smash hit January talk - this time at:-  
*Newent Memorial Hall (rear of Old Market Square).*  
[see pages 18 and 19]

★ **Thurs 9th April - 7.30pm**

GLOUCESTER: *"The Anderton Lift"* - talk by Bill Rowley at  
*The Schools Room, National Waterways Museum, Gloucester Docks.*

★ **Sat 11th & Sun 12th April - 2pm to 5pm**

DYMOCK: *"Spring Fare"* - at the height of the famous "Daffodil Walk"  
season; afternoon teas, craft stalls, our Canal Society display + much more!  
*at Dymock Village Hall, to the rear of the Beauchamp Arms PH.*

★ **Thurs 30th April - 7.30pm**

LEDBURY: *Annual General Meeting and launch of the Trust*  
followed by *"the Canal Society in '91"* - a colourful record - at:-  
*Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury.*  
[Trust formation - see page 11]

★ **Tues 5th May - 7.30pm**

GLOUCESTER: *Frances Hart, Chief Executive,*  
*The Inland Waterways Association, at:-*  
*The Schools Room, National Waterways Museum, Gloucester Docks.*

★ **Tues 19th May - 7.30pm**

HEREFORD: *Talk on the work of the Hereford Records Office*  
+ examination of original Canal records and Maps  
*Hereford Records Office, Harold Street, Hereford.*

★ **Sun 24th & Mon 25th May - 10am to 5pm**

MONKHIDE: *"Open Weekend"*  
*preliminary details on the adjacent page.*

★ A Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society Event

★ For verification of arrangements please contact:- Tony Austin-Bailey on Hereford (0432) 269704
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**CANAL OPEN**  
**Sunday 24th & Monday 25th May**  
**WEEKEND**  
**at Crews Pitch, Monkhide**

We invite all our Members, Supporters and friends to what promises to be our biggest promotional event yet!

- ★ visit the main Herefordshire Restoration site ★
- ★ travel under the famous Skew Bridge by boat ★
- ★ display of vintage fire engines and cars ★
- ★ full Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal display ★
- ★ get afloat in a canoe ★ historical film show ★
- ★ morris dancing ★ many other attractions ★
- ★ full catering facilities ★

ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION - full details in the next issue

**Open from 10am to 5pm each day**  
**admission £1.00 (children and senior citizens 50p)**

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***Coming soon - The BIG prize DRAW!***

To mark the launch of the Charitable Trust we have decided to hold our own fund-raising **PRIZE DRAW**. Running from the AGM in April, to the National Waterways Festival in August, we hope that it will raise thousands of pounds towards restoration of the Canal. Critical to the success is *YOUR* co-operation, *please*, by selling (and even *buying*!) some of the Draw tickets when they become available in April.

Some of our Corporate Members have already entered into the fund-raising spirit by donating the star prizes for which we are most grateful.

**FIRST PRIZE:** *Donated by Black Prince Holidays* - One weeks boat hire for FOUR people.  
*[to be taken at any time prior to 1st May 1993]*

**SECOND PRIZE:** *Donated by British Marine Industries Federation* - TWO VIP tickets to the London International Boat Show 1993 + one night in a top London Hotel inc. breakfast.

**THIRD PRIZE:** *Donated by The Colwall Park Hotel* - Weekend Break for TWO people at this excellent Egon Ronay recommended hotel.

PRINTING of the tickets will, we hope, be sponsored so that all monies go to restoration.

We greatly appreciate this support - *thank you* - full details in the next issue.

# RESTORATION UPDATE

By Brian Fox

Work on the Oxenhall section of the Canal continues to move on at a good rate. We now have a hard core of keen volunteers from the Newent/Dymock area and are hopeful that the current momentum will be maintained.

Chris Clark and Roger Chandler have agreed to assume the role of coordinating the work in Gloucestershire for the time being, whilst the remainder of the team concentrates their effort at Monkhide with the preparations for the Open Weekend in May.

At Oxenhall we shall be continuing work of a similar nature to the last few Sundays but with a plan in mind now of major earth moving on this stretch later this year (providing we can raise the cash).

Our December work party had a little more emphasis on the party, although

we did work in the morning. The workers were told to be sure and be at the tunnel mouth stable (?) by 1 o'clock sharp and be ready for a special Christmas lunch. Imagine our amazement when we duly presented ourselves to be greeted by a stable

festooned with balloons and bunting, benches all round the walls, and a cooking stove on the go with a pan of steaming soup all ready. On a central

table was even a candelabra with 3 candles and a good selection of drinks.

After a quick one to wet the whistle, the

fairy godmother, in the shape of Chris's wife Lin (and family), arrived with a box full of more goodies, including rolls, butter, and hot jacket potatoes. The party commenced with much merriment, especially when Mike P. started telling jokes, and rounded off with hot Christmas pudding and cream



## RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS APPLY HERE!

On the first Sunday of each month the Canal Society Restoration Team are usually to be found actively engaged *somewhere* on the Canal. How do you know where, and what, they are doing? If *you* are interested in helping, in any way, then please find out **WHERE** they will be working, and **WHAT** they will be doing, by **TELEPHONING** a member of the Restoration Team [during the evening] *in the week prior to the first Sunday in the month.*

**SUNDAY WORK PARTIES, 10am start:-**

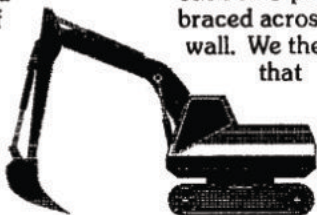
Sunday 5th April; Sunday 3rd May [*your first chance to to work for the Canal Trust !*]; Sunday 7th June

**CONTACTS:** Mike Potts on Hereford (0432) 356392  
Ian Reid on Ledbury (0531) 5877  
Brian Fox on Hereford (0432) 358628

## RESTORATION UPDATE continued

yes, all in a little stable in the middle of rural Gloucestershire. There must be a moral somewhere! A quick head count revealed 21½ people turned up on the day and I think a good time was had by all. In case you are wondering, the half was a young lad of about 3 years old who came complete with wellies and his plastic spade.

Work at our other site at Monkhide has also been continuing, as anyone who has been down there lately can see. All surplus soil has been moved from the wharf area at Crews Pitch and the towpath between there and Skew Bridge is now a green and pleasant walk again. We have just made a start at resetting the coping stones on the towpath under the Middle Court Bridge and Mrs. Barnes'



Accommodation Bridge. These stones, weighing up to about half a ton, are slipping into the Canal because the brickwork supporting them is crumbling. They are being pushed back into place using a jacking system braced across the Canal to the opposite wall. We then keep our fingers crossed that we can renovate the brickwork and backfill with concrete before the local vandals can heave them into the Canal. Yes, we have some local lads who take great pride in throwing into the Canal anything they can move!

Whatever happens, we are determined to get the Canal at Monkhide all "ship-shape" by our Open Weekend and shall be working to that end during the 1st Sunday in every month - and probably a few others too! *Brian Fox.*

## A DAY OUT WITH A DIFFERENCE ?

The Canal Society hope to be attending more events than ever before in 1992:- the two day "Spring Fare" at Dymock in mid April; our own "Open Weekend" in May; the "Gloucester Gathering" in July; the National Waterways Festival at Wakefield over the August Bank Holiday; the "Lift and Shift" event at the National Waterways Museum in the autumn plus the prospect of a couple of other events if we succeed in acquiring our own display marquee (*in hand!*)...

So why not volunteer to help staff our display at one (or more) of these events? It really is a day out with a difference and we ensure that there is time for you to look around the event as well as promoting our Canal. So far our plea in the last edition [*page 19*] for Members with caravans to help us at Wakefield has fallen on deaf ears. We have booked the caravan pitches already so please don't let us down. A brief 'phone call to Liz Connors on (0432) 271657 is all that it needs you will be made most welcome as part of the team!

### OOPS !

In the last edition we thanked Brook Brothers for their substantial assistance with bottles for our *Bottle Draw*. We apologise for giving the real donors, Davies Brook and Co. Ltd., a new name!

## COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iii)

### DECEMBER COMMITTEE *continued...*

■ Approval was given, in principle, for the purchase of a second-hand heavy duty hydraulically operated tipping trailer subject to assessment by a specialist. This would be the first item purchased from grants received for the Plant and Equipment Fund. Purchase would be delayed as a further potential source of funding had been identified.

■ The complimentary copies list for **The Wharfinger** was now in excess of 100. Compliments had been received from senior Local Authority recipients as well as from a number of other influential sources. BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester and the press were increasingly following up specific items.

■ A letter had been sent to Tewkesbury Borough Council urging them to save the former Lock House that stands in the grounds of Over Hospital at the point where the Canal connects with the River Severn. A prompt and helpful response had been received.

■ It was agreed to take a display to the Gloucester Docks Gathering on the 4th and 5th July 1992.



■ A project was agreed for submission as our bid for inclusion in the Waterway Recovery Group "Dig Deep" programme. [See page 14.]

■ Concern was expressed at the length of recent Committee Meetings - the Chairman expressed an opinion that this reflected the vast increase in activity in many aspects of our voluntary work.

■ The Restoration Team reported on successful additional workparties in the Crews Pitch area. It was agreed that it would be a retrograde step if the towpath along one length were to be left at an artificially raised level - even though this would save money and was acceptable to the land owners. A very satisfactory Christmas party (after *some* work had been done) was reported at the Gloucester site - held in the "Stable/Leggars Rest"!

■ It was agreed that the AGM should be held at Ledbury rather than the usual Hereford venue to be more central along the route of the Canal.

■ The Canal Society had arranged what proved to be a very positive and helpful site meeting at Dymock, attended by the Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucestershire Roads, and the Leadon Valley Electric Railway Association, to discuss potential restoration routes in the immediate vicinity.

*continued on page 17*

## COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iv)

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■ Messrs Chapman's of Ledbury had donated a second-hand four drawer filing cabinet, which had been promptly delivered complete with filing pockets.

■ A last minute amendment by the Charity Commission, in respect of the formation of the Trust (that would have required a quorum of one third of the Membership at future AGM's) had been challenged. The IWA Solicitors advice that we should accept a revised figure of one tenth was reluctantly accepted.

### JANUARY COMMITTEE

■ It was confirmed that the draft papers relating to the formation of a Trading Company had been passed to our Honorary Solicitor for Comment.

■ The Chairman reported that Midlands Electricity plc. were going to sponsor the printing of *The Wharfinger* throughout 1992. This was regarded as a major contribution to our work and greatly appreciated.

■ Further arrangements for the AGM were agreed - to commence at 7.30pm on Thursday 30th April at the Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury. The Canal Society would be disbanded and the Trust inaugurated at this meeting.

■ One of our Corporate Members, Black Prince Holidays, had donated a major prize for a raffle - a one week holiday for four people. This was warmly welcomed by the Committee and other initiatives were in hand in respect of additional major prizes. [Preliminary Raffle details on page 13.]

■ Three Members of the Committee were to visit the Department of Transport, and their Consultants, in respect of the proposed A40 link road in Gloucestershire, the amended proposed route for which badly affected the Canal in the Newent area.

■ A very constructive site meeting had taken place with Officers of Hereford and Worcester County Council, in respect of the provision of a small informal car park, and interpretive boards, in the Crews Pitch/Monkhide area.

■ The Vice Chairman and Minutes Secretary/Historian reported an increasing number of talks to other Societies and organisations; unfortunately the demand was such that some requests were having to be turned down.

■ The Restoration Team again reported excellent attendances at both restoration sites.

CRP

# CANAL FEVER - DYMCK STYLE !

*By Chris Clark*

Thursday, 16th January, was the day we had planned for our Canal meeting in Dymock. Three eminent speakers were primed with the role each would play during the evening and our Chairman was asked to open and conduct the meeting in his own inimitable fashion.

However, as any organiser will testify, one large uncertainty remained: just how many people would come? We had done the best we could, with reports on 5 radio stations, in numerous newspapers and canal magazines, and by the distribution of countless posters.

In pessimistic moments, we had visualised the "crowd" consisting of only us Dymock folk and the faithful committee members, all spreading out and trying to look as big as possible ! Conversely, optimistic moments promised scores of enthusiasts attending; perhaps even a hundred ! We guessed that the actual figure would probably be somewhere in between, thus making the effort of organising the event worthwhile.

The evening actually started in the morning, with Dymock's Ernie Mansell arranging the seats, 60 of them, with others folded in reserve. Then local "sparks" Andy Warren arrived, filling the hall with "one-two-three-testing" from his sound mixers, magic boxes and those frustrating coils of wire that don't seem to have any ends ! An impromptu blackboard was manufactured from sheets of "tear-

off" wallpaper, plywood and an old stepladder - it looked unusual, but it worked !

By early evening the hall was buzzing. The raffle prize table was filling up and Ern had brought the urn ! Alan Chester (famous for eating his canal Xmas dinner in a wheelbarrow !) had arrived to sort out the cars, Roger Chandler had fed the electricity meter and undertaken numerous other tasks, and our first guest had arrived, before even the speakers !



With half an hour to kick-off, a steady trickle of people had taken their seats and were watching our trio of esteemed speakers making last adjustments to the position of the screen and projector. Our local music man, Martin Edwards, laid on welcoming topical tunes such as Handel's Water Music, The Onedin Line, Guns of Navarone and, of course, Messing About On The River ! This failed to frighten anyone away, and all the seats were now taken. (Yippee, it wouldn't be a disaster after all !)

The steady trickle had turned into a stream of people, prompting us to move forward the carefully positioned projector and screen, with accompanying groans from the aforementioned esteemed trio. This done, more chairs were set out, only to be filled immediately. "Cripes," we collectively thought and moved the projector and screen yet again ! Before we knew what was happening, scores of people had descended on the

*continued on page 19*

## CANAL FEVER - DYMCK STYLE . . . *continued*

hall and were standing all around the walls. A quick count told us we were at capacity, so the doors were rapidly closed. We never thought that we would be presented with this kind of problem, and oh, how difficult it was. Small groups of people were still arriving and being reluctantly turned away. Dymock turned into a second Piccadilly Circus with cars coming and going and people wandering aimlessly about. After promising the Hall Committee not to allow in any more people, it was with regret that some 80 or so were turned away, including the Vice-President and the Historian!

Meanwhile, back inside the hall, final preparations were being made before starting time. It was only then that we noticed someone had trampled on the cable to the microphone system, which quietly refused to work!

With the excitement building up, our Chairman was asked to introduce the speakers and start the meeting. Considering that he had two people grovelling at his feet (are chairmen used to this?) armed with tools and trying to fix the microphone, he performed well and introduced the first speaker.

David Bick, the renowned author and historian gave a necessarily compact but, of course, highly interesting talk on the history of the Canal in general, then narrowed the field to highlight the Dymock to Newent section. He

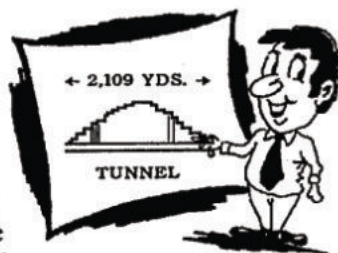
showed some marvellous slides and piloted the audience from the 1700's up to 1960.

This was the cue for our second speaker, Robert Simpson (our intrepid explorer!). He described how, when just a lad in the 1960's, he embarked on a journey through the Oxenhall Tunnel with his late father. Their trip, in two double-seater canoes laden with batteries to power the lighting and a cine camera, was descriptively explained by Robert. He told of the geology of the ground through which the navigators dug the Tunnel

and his own problems in filming in such damp conditions. His colour slides and cine film showed the beautiful shapes and colours of the Tunnel sides now, so long after the last boat passed through. Yes, it has stalactites too! He

showed how they dug their way up, down and through the falls in the tunnel, proving the difficulties [*Ed.- No! No! No! Shame on you Chris, we don't have any difficulties, only challenges!*] of a future restoration.

Mike Potts, our canal restoration expert, continued the story from the 1960's. His slide display described the changes which had brought the total abandonment and dereliction of the Newent to Dymock section to the thriving hotbed it is now! The eager beavers digging out water channels, making the footpaths, burning rubbish etc. was a cheering note to end on.



**FOOTNOTE:-** The promised second showing will be held on Thursday, 26th March, at 7.30pm sharp at The Memorial Hall, at the back of the Old Market Square, Newent, Gloucestershire. There will be seating for 200, so everyone, including those wanting a second showing, will be made most welcome.

# NATIONAL WATERWAYS FESTIVAL THE UP'S & THE DOWN'S

Part 4  
By David R. Penny

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*continued from the last edition...*

The morning of the first day came and we added those final few finishing touches to our display. The public started to arrive and continued to pour in, and just as we thought it couldn't get any busier for the first day (always the slackest), it got busier still! If we thought the first day was busy though we were in for a shock on the second and third - altogether over 380,000 people - the largest attendance at any "National". A fair few of them were enticed by our willing band of "volunteers" (6 on each of the 2 shifts for each of the 3 days) to put their hands in their pockets and, if nothing else, buy a few Bottle Draw tickets.

After the most successful 3 days we had ever had at any event, the Monday night, when we had to strip the display down and carefully pack it all back into the trailer, came as a bit of an anticlimax. The adrenalin that had kept us all going during, and in the lead up to, the event now began to fade away, and we all drifted off our separate ways - all of us tired, but with the satisfying feeling of a job well done.

All the objectives of our presence had been met. Not only had we staged a better display, made more money, and drawn more attention to the Society than ever before, but we had also had the most enjoyable and rewarding presence at a major event (the first year anyone had actually had the chance to look around!) due to the unprecedented number of volunteers working *together* as a *team* to promote the Society at its best.

After the event, once we had time to finally tot up all the figures, we found that it had been a healthy financial success, despite the near £500 cost of attending. The Bottle Draw raised over £900 - all profit thanks to the firms and individuals who donated bottles (see issue 33; page 18) - and in total we took over £1,600 - more than last year (and any other Society). To have succeeded in breaking last years record takings, when we were not on "home ground", is truly a testimony to the teamwork that prevailed.

It was not just about money however, not only did we recruit more Members than at any other event in 1991, we were also seen on the national scene, for the second year running, as only one of two Society's making the commitment of taking a full 20ft square marquee - a presence which is not lost on those who matter. ***So lets try and break all the records again at this years "National" at Wakefield.*** We have plans to try and make it *even more* of an enjoyable event for our volunteers, with our own little "home-from-home" base for all those wishing to stay overnight - so why not become part of 1992's record breaking success? Ring Liz Conners on Hfd (0432) 271657

## LETTERS to the Editor . . .

*[Whilst we welcome letters on any topic relating to our work and the Inland Waterways System, any opinions expressed do not represent the policy of the Canal Society unless specifically stated.]*

Dear Editor,

Are there any members in the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire area who would be prepared to approach their local retailers with a view to persuading them to take copies of *The Wharfinger* on a sale or return basis? We currently have 16 outlets supporting us in this way, and we wish to expand this substantially. You should, of course, emphasise to the retailer the *great* financial advantage to them - *absolutely none!* (The entire cover price of 50p goes to the Canal Society.) They will, however, have the satisfaction of helping, and being seen to help, an entirely voluntary organisation working for the benefit of the community.

Anyone who feels that they can help in this way should first approach the retailer, then Joyce Lynham of the Sales Sub-Committee on Hereford 266931, who will sort out the details and arrange delivery.

This would both help to spread the word and greatly assist the hard pressed (especially by Him from Sales!) Sales Sub-Committee. It is not just the income from sales of *The Wharfinger* that we benefit from, but hopefully also an increased interest in the Canal and a greater knowledge of the Society's work.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Joyce Lynham, Hereford.  
Tel:- (0432) 266931

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Ed. Further to the letter in the last edition of *The Wharfinger*, and my note with regard to raffle prizes, Mrs Elizabeth Lloyd, of Colwall, has kindly offered to donate a food processor for which she has been collecting TEXACO petrol stamps - but she needs YOUR HELP NOW! She has not got quite enough to claim the gift, so please help by sending your TEXACO petrol stamps to me - David Penny (address inside back cover) and the Canal Society will redeem the cards - thanks to a special deal with Texaco we will not need the full number!

Mr. Michael Jones of Malvern, a disabled Member of the Society, has very generously donated a brand new hi-fi system for us to use in a fund-raising promotion. We are exceedingly grateful to Mr. Jones for his generosity and shall give further details of how we intend to make the most of his gift in a future edition of *The Wharfinger*. *Thank you.*

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

Bromsgrove Boatbuilders, Bromsgrove.  
Wychwood Narrow Boat Co. Ltd., Oxfordshire.

*We greatly appreciate their support - thank you.*

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS who joined since late October

Mr. C.R. Blanchet, Ross on Wye; Mr. & Mrs. Mosse, Yarpole; Mr. Bruton, Newent; Mr. & Mrs. L.A. Lowe, Little Birch, Hfds.; Mr. & Mrs. Marshall, Tupsley, Hereford; Mr. M.N. Howarth, Quedgeley, Glos.; Mr. & Mrs. Wateridge, Yarkhill, Hfds.; Mr. P. Bristow, Bracknell, Berks; Mr. & Mrs. Chalkin, Shipton Oliffe, Cheltenham; Mr. R.W. Evans, Tewkesbury, Glos.; Mr. S. Hayward, Abbeydale, Glos.; Mr. F.N. Hanford, Kingswood, Bristol; Mr. A.H. Shotton, Smethwick, W.Mid.; Mr. I.M. Thompson, Dennington, Oxford; Mr. & Mrs. Compton, Ledbury, Hfds.

*Members joining after late January will appear in a future edition.*

### PLEASE COVENANT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

A very simple way that ALL tax paying Members can assist our finances is to COVENANT their Subscription payment. As soon as the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust is formed (at the AGM of the Canal Society on the 30th April) we will be able to increase the amount of your Subscription by about one third - *at absolutely no extra cost to you!* As a registered Charity we will be able to recover the tax that you have paid without any further action on your part. It really is that simple! A form to covenant your Subscription payment should be included with the renewal reminder enclosed in this edition of The Wharfinger. Alternatively please ask the Membership Secretary for a form. *We stress that your own tax affairs are in no way affected by covenanting your Subscription - YOU have nothing to lose and the Canal Trust benefits significantly provided our Members take the two minutes to complete and return the form!*

## FREE Prompt Payers Draw

Just like any organisation cash flow is important to us. So we are, once again, running our very popular Prompt Payers Draw to encourage Members to renew their Subscriptions promptly. Provided your Subscription has been paid in full to our Membership Secretary by the start of the AGM on 30th April, you will be *automatically* entered into the Draw.

**WIN** A sweatshirt of your choice from our extensive range. Donated by our suppliers, the BeeLine Company - *thank you.*

## THANKS...

The Canal Society wish to thank the following for their assistance...

### CHAPMAN'S OF LEDBURY.

For their donation, and delivery, of a four drawer filing cabinet and suspension pockets.

### UK2000 GRANT FUND.

(Supported by the Department of the Environment) for the £800 grant towards spoil removal at Monkhide.

### MICHAEL JONES OF MALVERN.

A disabled Member of the Society who has donated a brand new hi-fi system to be used in a fund-raising promotion (details to be published in a future issue).

### CHRIS CLARK OF DYMOCK.

(and family/friends) for organising and publicising the biggest ever talk that we have hosted - see pages 18 & 19.

### BLACK PRINCE HOLIDAYS,

### BRITISH MARINE

INDUSTRIES FEDERATION,  
COLWALL PARK HOTEL,

For making our 1992 raffle possible - see page 13.

### MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY PLC.

For sponsoring the production of *The Wharfinger* - see page 24.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS  
TO EVERYONE**

## HELP!

As you will have read in this and earlier issues an increasing number of retail outlets are selling *The Wharfinger*. In many the space for goods is at a premium, so in order to help the proprietors help us we would like to acquire a number of small, clear, acrylic display stands, A5 size (the size of *The Wharfinger*), so that half a dozen copies of the newsletter can be displayed without taking up too much counter space. If you know of a source, please contact Joyce Lynham - see page 21.

We are still looking for a Member to assist the Social Events Team; a very flexible and interesting task. Surely there is someone out there who would be prepared to spend just a few hours each month arranging our different Social Events? Alternatively, if you can think of something different, then why not volunteer to organise and promote it as a "one off" event for the Canal Society - try to beat Chris Clark's record!

The time of year is fast approaching when the promotion of our work at various events commences - see page 12. PLEASE volunteer to staff our display, it makes an interesting day out! Contact Liz Connors NOW (Hereford 271657). *Thank you.*

It is also the time when we start talking about the bottle stall! Last year it produced nearly £900 of clear profit at the National Waterways Festival. This year we plan to take it to more events BUT that does, of course, mean more bottles - *please!* Contact the nearest Member of the Committee to arrange collection - *thank you.*

# THE WHARFINGER

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On this page in the last (Winter) edition we explained that H P Bulmer Ltd had printed The Wharfinger for us but we were not sure who would be folding and stapling it! In the end it proved possible for them to sponsor the complete production of the last issue - *thank you*.

As you will have seen, from the inside front cover and the Chairman's Comments on page 1, Midlands Electricity plc. have kindly agreed to sponsor the production of The Wharfinger for us throughout 1992. This support, from such a major regional Company, is yet another example of the increasing confidence that is being expressed in our wholly voluntary work. Not only does it help us to keep our hard won funds for use in physical restoration but it also means that, for yet another year, our Membership subscriptions do not have to increase - *thank you*.

Another area of significant expenditure is the cost of envelopes, labels and postage in distributing the increasing number of copies of The Wharfinger. It will come as no surprise to readers that we have ideas for reducing (or even eliminating) these costs; however, if *you* have a suggestion ...

You will see a plea from Joyce Lynham (on page 21) to let her know of "retail outlets", in Herefordshire or Gloucestershire, who may be willing to sell The Wharfinger. Please have a word with your local shop, garage etc., as this is proving to be a very good way of publicising our activities whilst making a small (but very welcome) *regular* contribution to our funds.

One of our new contributors to this edition, Velda West, has also volunteered to help with the typing (proving that the many requests for help actually produce results!) - *thank you very much Velda*.

In the next edition of The Wharfinger we hope to bring you further news regarding the appointment of the Technical/Liaison Officer (held over from this edition as some negotiations are at a critical stage); a report on the Annual General Meeting (for arrangements see page 12) and, of course, the inauguration of The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust. Further details will also be given about our two day "Open Weekend" (see page 13).

*Please don't miss it by forgetting to renew your Membership!*

**COPY DEADLINE** for the Summer Edition of The Wharfinger is Saturday, 28th March, 1992 - this is the **LATEST** date, **PLEASE** submit copy earlier if at all possible - *thank you*.

**COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS SATURDAY 28th MARCH**

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

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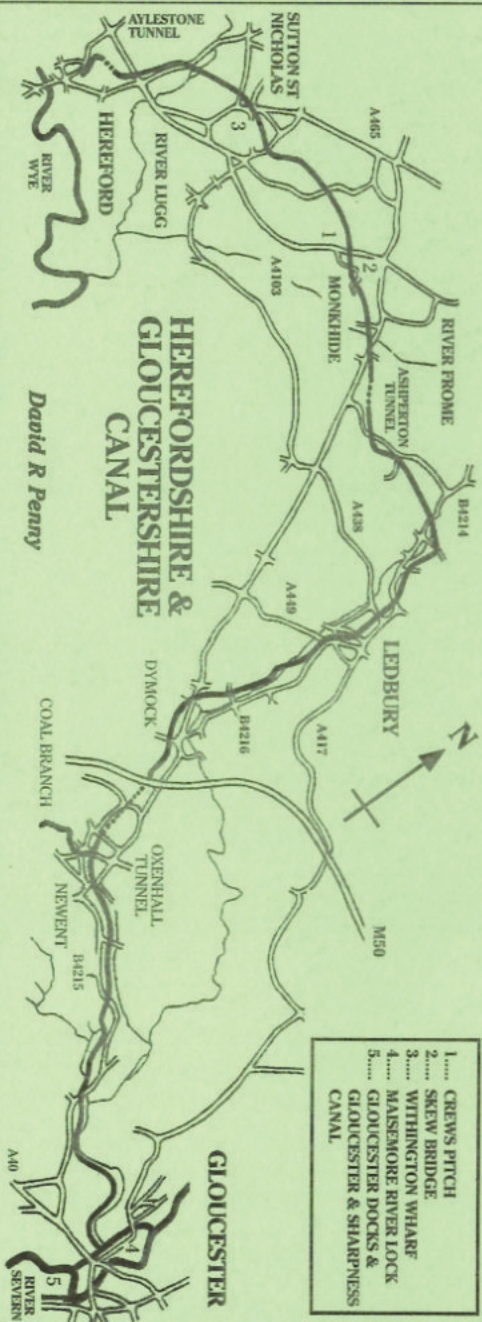
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Whilst we try to ensure that dates are correct please verify specific arrangements with the relevant Organiser.

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



*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.