

THE WHARFINGER



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

50p
free to members

Edition 35
Summer 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	<i>Roger Morgan</i>
RESTORATION GROUP	Brian Fox, Mike Potts, <i>Ian Reid</i>
SOCIAL EVENTS	Tony Austin-Bailey, <i>S Fitzmaurice</i>
PRESS OFFICER	Nigel Jefferies
FUNDRAISING	David Penny
THE WHARFINGER	Cliff Penny, David Penny
HISTORIAN/ARCHIVIST	James Dunn, Nigel Jefferies
IWA/WATERWAYS LIAISON	Graham Ettles, Ken Goodwin
COMMITTEE MEMBERS [In addition to those listed above]	
Derek Gray, Karen McKay	

Those Council of Management Members in *italics* above are not Directors

THE TRADING COMPANY
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DONATING ALL PROFITS
TO THE CANAL TRUST

David Penny; Liz Connors; Karen McKay; Cliff Penny

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

MEB

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

WELCOME TO THE TRUST !

On behalf of the Managing Council of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust I should like to welcome you, most sincerely, to our new organisation.

I must stress that the formation of the Trust does not mean an instant change in *everything* we do. However, there are some things that *have* to be changed (to comply with the law) and there are others that *need* changing if we are to improve our organisation. In this latter respect things will not happen instantly but I hope you will see some gradual changes that will be of long term benefit.

THE PAST

When the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society was formed, in May 1983, few people in the Red Cross Hall in Hereford would have anticipated the progress that has been made in respect of promoting the mere presence of the Canal - both locally and nationally. I suspect none considered full restoration to be a realistic objective. Not everyone who attended joined - including the writer! Very few would have visualised the near-restored Crews Pitch length as it is today, with the Skew Bridge spanning - once more - the shimmering waters of a six foot deep Canal (*no longer a muddy and unkempt ditch*). Who would have visualised regular work parties in both Counties - and a waiting list of sites?

THE FUTURE

So the Canal Trust has been launched with what must be an air of optimism - even though businesses of all shapes and sizes are finding life particularly difficult at present. However some will say that the rate of progress has been too slow (I would agree!) and that we face daunting obstacles (yet again I agree!). There are also some things where we need to do better. So why the optimism? Because we have *started* to develop a successful organisation that is flourishing in spite of the so called difficult times. What, in 1983, was a very small group of volunteers (or should I say enthusiasts?) has grown to a body - a Charitable Trust - that can be seen to be capable of succeeding. Our rate of progress is increasing each year; as is our Membership, grant aid, national and local support ... with this backing *there is no reason why we should not succeed* - what is your vision of the future - what will the Chairman of the Trust be writing in another 9 years time?

continued on page 2

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS (ii)

THE GOOD NEWS

Although we are unable to go ahead with the Technical Liaison Officer appointment (at present - we shall not give up!) [see page 21] - it is pleasing to see support, in financial terms, coming from a number of new sources in the past month; plus some old friends. Our sincere thanks to the UK2000 Grant Fund - a grant of £2,000 [see page 10] (in addition to the £800 reported in the last issue); £300 from the IWA Gloucestershire Branch and £100 (plus Corporate Membership) from The Worcester and Birmingham Canal Society - PLUS many of our Members making donations when renewing their subscriptions. *To you all; thank you.*

NOT BAD LUCK ?

On page 13 you will find full details of our "Open Weekend", to be held on the 24th and 25th May, at the main Herefordshire restoration site at Crews Pitch, Monkhide. Many months of planning should ensure an interesting day out (or two!); at the time of writing it is some 5 weeks away; this edition of *The Wharfinger* is due to arrive with Members in the week prior to the "Open Weekend". To ensure success we need YOUR help. *Please* volunteer to assist for half a day on one (or both) of the days as we are *exceedingly* short of willing hands. There is something for everyone, you will be made most welcome, gain free entry *and* all volunteers will be invited to our special "helpers only" barbecue on the site on the Sunday evening. Liz Connors would be delighted to hear from you.

££££££££££

Money. We may all be volunteers but our work still costs money! Whilst we do our utmost to limit expenditure and to obtain sponsorship for specific items (such as the printing of *The Wharfinger* by Midlands Electricity plc.) we still need money! Local Authority grant aid has been in decline - but not their policy support for our work - and other grant aid [recent contributions mentioned above] has been welcomed; but we still need money! Our own plant and equipment is slowly increasing [see Plant Fund review on page 10] but we still need to hire in plant - and that costs money! So, as reported on page 13 of the last edition we have the *BIG prize DRAW!* - to raise money! Enclosed with this copy of *The Wharfinger* are some tickets - *please* help swell our funds by selling some to your friends, colleagues at work etc. Details are on page 9. *Thank you.*

Cliff Penny, Chairman/Liaison Officer



Egon Ronay



Corporate Members of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust

An independent family run Hotel offering special discounts to Members of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust and IWA.

Basil and Elizabeth Frost, owners of the recently built narrow boat "Jersey Girl", are the proprietors of the Colwall Park Hotel, and are pleased to offer free facilities for meetings and fund raising activities to the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust and IWA.

Situated in the centre of Colwall Village, on the B4218 between Ledbury and Malvern, the Hotel has twenty en suite bedrooms, Conference Rooms, Ballroom, and a Restaurant specialising in English menu.

**Colwall, Near Malvern, WR13 6QG
Tel:- (0684) 40206 Fax (0684) 40847**

COMMITTEE MATTERS

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

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE

■ Our Honorary Solicitor's comments on the draft papers relating to the formation of the Trading Company were reported as were the final queries in respect of the Charitable Trust.

■ UK2000 had agreed to a grant of £2,000 in respect of the Canal Society Plant Fund. This was additional to the £800 in respect of spoil removal at Monkhide and was warmly welcomed.

■ British Marine Industries Federation and the Colwall Park Hotel had both agreed to donate significant prizes for the raffle to complement the major prize from Black Prince Holidays. [Full raffle details on page 9.]

■ Major Barnes reported that we had been given all the aluminium interlocking components to form the frame for a display tent approximately 18ft. by 12ft. Unfortunately the covering would cost in the region of £1,000. The Committee agreed to view the structure before making a decision in respect of the expenditure.



■ Three members of the Committee had met at Bristol with a senior representative of the Department of Transport, together with their consulting engineers, to discuss the impact of the proposed new A40 link road in the Newent area. The proposals had serious consequences for the restoration of the Canal but the Department were willing to consider proposals from the Canal Society in respect of a scheme for restoration. It was agreed that levels should be taken in the critical areas in order that proposals could be submitted to the DoT.

■ It was agreed that a token donation of £50 be made to the Inland Waterways Association in response to their recent appeal for funds to defray the legal costs of representing waterways interests nationally.

■ A vote of thanks was recorded to Chris Clark for his organisation of the overwhelmingly successful social evening in Dymock. A repeat of the evening was being planned.

■ The Treasurer reported that the bank did not consider Direct Debit to be cost effective for subscription payments until the organisation had grown in size.

continued on page 5

COMMITTEE MATTERS ... (ii)

■ It was decided that it was not advantageous to register either the Trust or the Trading Company for VAT purposes.

■ The purchase of an hydraulically operated tipping trailer for £385, and a £200 budget for refurbishment, was approved.

■ Membership Secretary, Steve Stephens, announced he wished to stand down at the AGM. The Chairman expressed his sincere appreciation for the many years of hard work during a time of unprecedented growth. A Member who had volunteered to assist the Canal Society would be approached with a view to taking over the duties.

■ It was agreed to attend the Herefordshire Tourism and Leisure Fair and the two day Dymock Spring Fare.

■ Progress was reported in respect of the arrangements for the Canal Open Weekend in May.

■ Arrangements for the transport of the boat (donated by Sir John Knill) to Mr John Pinder for fitting out were agreed.

■ A Member had donated a portable hi-fi/CD system to be used for fund raising. The Chairman's letter of appreciation was fully endorsed.

■ Cristie Electronics had donated a Tape Streamer to the Canal Society following a request for assistance from the Chairman. This generous gesture of support from this leading Gloucestershire Company was greatly appreciated.

continued on page 18



MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

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Herefordshire & Gloucestershire
Canal Trust.*

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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. Private Pleasure, Residential, and Commercial - there is no increase in premiums for vintage craft.

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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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Perhaps we should be talking!

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

Tel: (0923) 770425 & 770255
FAX: 721559

RASPBERRY RIPPLE & BOLOGNESE

TUNNEL TALK TAKE TWO *By Velda West*

Just what is it like inside a disused canal tunnel? Damp and dark, I had assumed, with a speck of daylight at each end and the odd patch of green moss along the quaint brick walls.

I went to find out for sure at the Newent Memorial Hall on 26th March. Due to the second capacity turn out for this talk, I found myself at the very back of the long tunnel like room peering at the distant projector screen, which looked itself, once illuminated, not unlike the "light at the end of the tunnel" from where I was sitting. The first few moments of the evening I spent kicking myself for not having brought the opera glasses, but after Cliff Penny's usual friendly welcome to the 200 packing the room, we all settled and our journey began.

First, we were ably conducted along the route of the entire Canal and guided through its history by David Bick, local author and historian. He explained how the waterway between Gloucester and Hereford came to be built - eventually. The route was finally completed in 1845 when the canal boom had virtually ended. This was due to several difficulties, not least of which was a detour to include a coalfield at Newent. Unfortunately, wealth promised from what turned out to be poor quality coal could never have justified the expense of that detour. For, at a cost of £40,000, instead of avoiding the hills, the Canal was taken underground for over a mile by means of a tunnel at Oxenhall.

This introduction paved the way for Bob "Explorer" Simpson and his fascinating slides of his "secret passage" through Oxenhall Tunnel,

unseen by human eyes for 70 years and never before captured on film.

It soon became apparent that the comfort of daylight at either end is not a feature of this particular tunnel. Being so long and having been dug in both directions in various segments outwards from deep excavation shafts, the passage had never ended up quite straight. And as for being damp and dark, the 100% humidity and complete blackness had evidently caused tremendous difficulties with the initial photography. Slides showed the adventurers drifting in dinghies and sitting startled in canoes as great flares of light from flash guns lit the way. We were told how the wetness damaged film and saw how drips like rainfall showered on to the cameras.

All the while, the microphone maintained its background hiss which produced the fitting effect of a distant waterfall cascading. The speakers strapped to a giant pair of stepladders were thoroughly in keeping with the theme of improvisation arising in the slide show. We were shown memorable images detailing racks of adapted headlamps and the literal boatload of battery packs needed to light the way for making the unique cine film we were promised for later on.

Having traversed the Old Red Sandstone length of the tunnel under Bob's capable and enthusiastic guidance, we had reached a fall where the less reliable marl rock had collapsed. To prevent the audience from doing the same, it was time to stop for refreshment half way. Fortified with tea, squash and raffle

RASPBERRY RIPPLE AND BOLOGNESE *continued*

tickets, the second half of the voyage set swiftly under way. Someone had pointed out that, despite the hall being packed, the very front seats which everybody so traditionally avoids as if cursed, were all still free. So I scuttled along there, delighted to have the clearest view possible this time, in remarkable contrast to my disastrous trip to the original Dymock talk. There, I had joined a small but growing overspill of disappointed visitors desperately peering from outside a window at a distant screen thronged with viewers seated and standing. How glad I was going to be of my prime position this time!

In close up, we joined Bob scrambling over and digging through the short length of collapsed marl that blocked the passage. On the far side, the "quaint brick walls" of my imagined tunnel were shown to be bulging and crumbling under immense pressure from the soil above for a short distance beyond the collapsed length. How fortunate it was that the tunnel explorers, in their construction site helmets adorned with miners' lamps, penetrated this unseen realm allowing us to study from the comfort of our seats the wonders that Oxenhall hides.

For now the high point of the evening had arrived: A rare screening of the only cine film of the tunnel that exists that was paid for by the BBC, but never finished or broadcast. In my front seat, I was agape with amazement and now so grateful of my close-up view. No mere tufts of plain green moss were there to be seen, but

features whose description would defy belief were it not for the evidence on screen before us. In places, the walls were encrusted with stunning stalactites, hung in fine ranks of mingled colour. Red of iron and white of calcium carbonate gave rise to dreamy thoughts of raspberry ripple. Hanging from one of the excavation shafts, the formations dripped like spaghetti mingled with dark patches of bolognese. So this is what the inside of a disused canal tunnel can look like! Who would have imagined?

What an education the evening was and what a temptation to want to explore for oneself - but BEWARE, we were officially cautioned by Cliff in his vote of thanks. We must patiently await the day of restoration before venturing into such DANGEROUS places. And that day will come, we were assured with what ought surely to become the Trust motto: *"We have no problems, only challenges!"*

After Mike Potts had briefly updated us with the latest "challenges" to be overcome by the restoration team, there was one more danger to face....the raffle of the umpteen prizes! Vice President Robert Barnes, however, fearlessly commenced the formalities by drawing the first ticket and simultaneously taking first prize. Finally, the only "challenge" remaining was to negotiate such hazards as the sales stand and shifting crowd, prize daffodils or fizzy-pop in hand, and navigate through the suddenly busy streets of Newent to go home.

Chris Clark, the organiser of both of the tunnel talks, gives his account of the evening on page 17. The two talks have been such a success that we hope to hold yet another re-run in the spring of next year at either Ledbury or Hereford - or maybe both!

HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP

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HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP

What is so special that warrants half a page of "HELP" that is not even on page 23? The clues are Monkhide 24/25th May; Dudley 20/21st June; Gloucester 4/5th July; Stretton Grandison 9th August; Wakefield 29/31st August. The Canal Trust display is going to be at our own "Open Weekend"; the opening of Dudley Tunnel; Gloucester Gathering; Herefordshire Country Fair and the National Waterways Festival. *We desperately need help in staffing - for our own "Open Weekend" we need nearly 40 each morning and afternoon in addition to the Committee.* It really is a good day out [see page 20 for an independent testimonial!] so *please* contact Liz Connors NOW to volunteer! *Thank you.*

GOTTA BOTTLE ?

Page 23 of the last edition of The Wharfinger also carried a plea for bottles for the bottle draw. The total donated so far is *exceedingly* disappointing! Last year *each* bottle raised nearly £5 - it really is worthwhile - anyone listed inside the back cover will collect your donations; *thank you.*

HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP HELP

PARISH WATCH

New development; road improvements; tree planting; new/replacement gas, water mains and high voltage cables ... who knows what is happening in their area - usually the people that live there! With a Canal 34 miles long, passing through 5 Local Authority areas and two Counties, it is difficult for your Canal Trust to keep in touch with everything that is going on.

We would like to get at least two Members who would be our "Parish Watch" team for the Canal in their area. All that we would ask is that they advise the appropriate member of the Trust Council (we would give details of who to contact) as soon as the "Parish Watch" team became aware of *anything* that might affect the line of the Canal (and any essential route diversions).

It is essential that we are involved *at the earliest possible stage* if we are to ensure that the future restoration of the Canal is not prejudiced by what might be happening in your area tomorrow! Just take two examples. Perhaps new gas mains are being laid - if one was planned to cross the Canal we could speak to British Gas and (provided we did so early enough) the main could be laid - at minimal extra cost - to allow restoration to proceed without the great expense involved in diverting the main in the future. New golf courses are springing up all over the place. A word (or two) from us at an early stage in the planning of a course could result in the Canal becoming a water feature with that part being effectively restored as part of the golf course development.

Local knowledge is very valuable to us - becoming involved in your Canal Trust as part of a "Parish Watch" team will involve very little work on your part but could prove to be vital to the future of the Canal - so please drop a line (or telephone) the Chairman NOW and become part of your local team. *Thank you.*

The BIG prize DRAW!

Enclosed with this edition of The Wharfinger should be some draw tickets. *Please* take this opportunity to raise, as the Chairman said on page 2, some ££££££!

With increasing frequency we have the opportunity of grant aid for restoration *provided we put forward a similar amount of money* - last year we could have had a grant of £10,000 from the DoE - if we had been able to match it with £10,000 of our own (which must not come from any source where there was already a DoE interest - thus ruling out virtually all of our usual sources of grant aid!). So here is *your* chance to help us build up our restoration fund finances; every pound raised could well be doubled so *please* see if *you* can be our star ticket seller!

We should like to thank, most sincerely, *Black Prince Holidays; British Marine Industries Federation; Colwall Park Hotel and Hoseasons Holidays* for their very substantial support in donating all of the prizes/defraying the greater part of the printing costs. This means that virtually all of the money raised can go straight into the Canal [Ed. I think that could have been better phrased!]. *Thank you* to all concerned.

Nº 000000

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire
Canal Trust Grand Holiday Draw
[Stubs & money to be returned to
Promoter by 22nd August 1992]

Nº 000000

HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST

★ GRAND ★ HOLIDAY ★ DRAW ★

★ FIRST PRIZE ★ NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY FOR 4 ★
ONE WEEK (prior to 1st May 1993) DONATED BY BLACK PRINCE HOLIDAYS

★ 2nd. ★ TWO VIP TICKETS TO THE LONDON
INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW 1993 + TOP HOTEL ★
DONATED BY BRITISH MARINE INDUSTRIES FEDERATION

★ 3rd. ★ TWO DAY BREAK FOR TWO IN MALVERN ★
DONATED BY THE AWARD WINNING COLWALL PARK HOTEL

Tickets 25p Each

Draw to be held at the National Waterways Festival, Wakefield, on 31st August 1992

Promoter: Mrs. E Connors, 16 Stratford Road, Hereford, HR4 9TW.

Reg. with Hereford City Council under Lotteries & Amusements Act 1976 (Sec.5)
Davis Brothers, The Court Yard, School Lane, Leominster, Herts, MK6 8AA

Printing costs partly sponsored by
HOSEASONS HOLIDAYS LTD.

The first tickets were on sale at the AGM at the end of April so we have almost four months in which to sell as many as possible. *Please* support us by selling the enclosed *and* some more . . . (anyone listed on the Contacts page will let you have further supplies!). *Thank you*.

[We appreciate that some Members may, as a matter of principle, not buy (or sell) draw tickets. If this applies to you then we apologise for troubling you - please do not feel obliged to return the small number of tickets enclosed.]

MEMBERSHIP CARDS - YOUR OPINION PLEASE

In recent months two Members have asked if we issue Membership cards. We don't, but should we? What do you think? The initial reaction of your Committee was that it was an unnecessary expense. However, we are always willing to react to Members views so please write to the Membership Secretary and let us know what you think.

PLANT FUND REVIEW

In the Spring 1991 edition of *The Wharfinger* we reported on the launch of our Plant Appeal. The objective was to raise funds to purchase our own (second-hand) heavy plant and equipment as so much of our hard won funds goes on the hire of frequently needed plant. *"Our target is £12,500 by the end of May"* said Cliff Penny. A detailed case was sent to each of the bodies listed below with a "shopping list" that included an excavator, "muck shifting" dumpers/trailers and a sludge pump.

Unfortunately most of the Local Authorities were unable to make a decision within our timescale so our end of May deadline was swiftly extended to the end of our financial year (February of this year) - allowing a generous 12 months for a decision! The final appeal result was:

- Forest of Dean District Council - £ 0
- Gloucester City Council - £ 0
- Gloucestershire County Council - £ 0
- Hereford City Council - £ 300
- Hereford and Worcester County Council - £ 0
- Inland Waterways Association - £ 1,000
- Malvern Hills District Council - £ 0
- South Herefordshire District Council - £ 600
- Tewkesbury Borough Council - £ 100

Britannia Construction, a leading Cheltenham based Company, became aware of our voluntary efforts (thanks to the Dowty Group - one of our Corporate Members). Following a tour of the Canal by a senior member of their staff Britannia Construction generously donated a diesel engined water pump and made available an articulated dumper on extended loan.

As our (greatly revised) deadline was looming representatives of UK2000 visited the Canal and appreciated the case that we were making as it maximised the benefit of our very limited grants. We were encouraged to make an application to them for grant aid. This resulted in a donation of £2,000 to match that already raised.

After very careful consideration of the total funds available (and what was available in the second-hand market) our purchases were:

Heavy duty trailer (with hydraulic tipping mechanism) - £ 385
[Refurbishment is likely to cost c. £200]

Small industrial tractor with loading shovel - £1,950

Articulated dumper with specialist concrete carrying bucket - £2,000

Total expenditure - £4,535 (the balance coming from Canal Society funds.)

Unfortunately, due to the generally poor response, plant hire costs will continue to be more of a drain on our finances than we had hoped. However we have added a number of worthwhile items to our small pool of equipment and we should like to thank, most sincerely, those Councils and organisations that contributed (financially or in kind).

ALL TAPED UP

Any reader who uses a computer will know that it is foolhardy to store a great deal of information without taking an electronic copy - otherwise known as "backing up" your data. A failure of the computer (in any one of a number of ways) can lead to corruption of some or all of the information - possibly irretrievably! The Canal Trust is increasingly utilising computers in its work but to back up the ever increasing amount of correspondence and other information - such as the extensive amount of disk space occupied by just a single issue of The Wharfinger - was taking hours using individual "floppy disks".

Reading a computer magazine one day our Chairman suddenly realised that the leading Tape Streamer manufacturer was based in Gloucestershire. [Tape Streamers are expensive items but they do allow large amounts of data to be recorded on to a single tape therefore "backing up" is simpler and much quicker.] So a letter was soon winging itself to Cristle Electronics at Stonehouse. A number of discussions on the telephone followed and subsequently the Company donated a Tape Streamer in support of our voluntary efforts - *thank you Cristle Electronics - your support is greatly appreciated.* CRP

THAT SINKING FEELING ?

You may have read that the National Rivers Authority have recently published a document that examines a number of ways of transferring water from parts of the country where there are adequate supplies to the so called "drought ridden" south east. One of the suggestions was to utilise canals to transfer the water. Our Chairman spotted this cartoon in the magazine of the Institution of Civil Engineers.



"THANKS, MANCHESTER - IT'S JUST COMING THROUGH NOW!"

Reproduced with the permission of the Editor, New Civil Engineer.

Dates For Your Diary

★ 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"*

*Volunteers needed ! Please contact Liz Connors on Hfd. (0432) 271657
details on the adjacent page.*

Sun 14th June

*Gloucestershire Branch IWA coach outing to the Severn Valley
Railway and Blists Hill Museum at Ironbridge
Contact Des Pinnock on (0452) 856233*

★ Thurs 18th June - 7.30pm

COOMBE HILL: *Coombe Hill Canal walk with Gloucester
Nature Trust. Meet at car park - turn left along track opposite
junction of A4019 with A38 at Coombe Hill, Nr Cheltenham.*

Sat/Sun 4/5th July

GLOUCESTER: *Gloucester Gathering - Gloucester Docks
Come and see our stand - or even help man it !
[We will also be attending several other events - see page 8]*

★ Thurs 16th July - 7.30pm

LEDBURY: *Slide show and video by Dennis Parkhouse
"lost canals of the South West"
Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury.*

★ Advance notice Sun 20th September

GLOUCESTER & SHARPNESS CANAL: *Boat and coach trip
Coach to collect from Hereford, Ledbury, Dymock, and Newent
Boat trip along canal from Gloucester to Sharpness, stopping at
Perton for lunch. Coach will take us back to Gloucester etc.
Contact Tony Austin-Bailey for full details.*

★ A Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society Event

<p>★ For verification of arrangements please contact:- Tony Austin-Bailey on Hereford (0432) 269704</p>
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CANAL OPEN

Sunday 24th & Monday 25th May

WEEKEND

*at Crews Pitch, Monkhide**

Come and see one of the biggest volunteer projects in the two counties, and enjoy a day at our largest ever event!

- ★ visit the main Herefordshire Restoration site ★
- ★ travel under the famous Skew Bridge by boat ★
- ★ Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal display ★
[Maps and photographic display of work in both counties]
- ★ display of vintage fire engines and cars ★
- ★ Canoe demonstration + get afloat in a boat ★
- ★ Craft Show ★ Slide show ★ Horse & Cart rides ★
- ★ Morris Dancing ★ many other attractions ★
- ★ full catering facilities ★

** [THE SITE IS 8 MILES EAST OF HEREFORD, ON THE A4103]*

Something for all the family!

Open from 10am to 5pm each day

admission £1.00 (children and senior citizens 50p)

Admission includes FREE car park

RESTORATION UPDATE

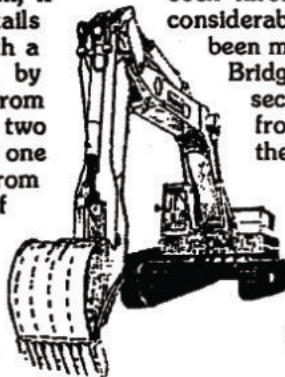
By Brian Fox

It is less than three months since the last report but so much seems to be happening. You will have read in the last Wharfinger that we were in the process of negotiating the purchase of a trailer. Well we are now the proud owners of the trailer which is having a major refit before we can use it. We have also purchased our own dumper and a tractor with a bucket, which will tow the trailer. In case you are wondering where all the money for these purchases came from, it has been donated (for details see report on page 10) with a massive £2,000 donated by UK2000, as well as money from our reserves. We now own two dumpers, in addition to the one on extended loan from Britannia Construction of Cheltenham. By the time you read this we hope to have also arranged collection of a 1½ ton dumper that has been very generously donated to us by a Herefordshire farmer. It has been costing us substantial sums to hire dumpers for our earth moving activities so we shall save a lot of money which can now be channelled elsewhere. Our plant fund is now empty and we are not proposing to replenish it at present as we feel we should now direct our limited resources elsewhere for the immediate future. *[Ed. But we are always on the lookout for more if you, or someone you know, own something that you think may be of use to us and that you would be prepared to lend/give to the Trust!]* Anything else we need (e.g. a JCB or large earth mover) will be hired, as it would not be an economic proposition to purchase any larger items of equipment - the cost is beyond our budget and the repair bills are big if

anything goes wrong. For the number of days in the year that we would use one it is cheaper to hire.

Monkhide Section

Work is now proceeding apace preparing this stretch for the Open Weekend in May. We have put in three full weekends and a couple of Sundays and will need to fit in a few more before the event. A JCB & 2 dumpers have been hired for the weekends and a considerable amount of soil has now been moved from the Middle Court Bridge end of the Canal. This section was originally dredged from the bed of the Canal and the silt dumped on the towpath to dry out. We shall now cease all earth moving operations so that the disturbed ground can dry out and hopefully green over in time for the Open Weekend.



The coping stones under the Middle Court and Accommodation Bridges have now all been re-laid on a rebuilt brick wall and finally back-filled with small stones to recreate a proper towpath again. We even found two old chains in the coping stones which had been long buried. *[Ed. These were originally used to hold timber against the coping stones on the approaches to the bridges so that a boat hitting the bridge would hit these instead of the coping stones.]* The finishing touches were put to the pointing of the bricks and stones by our intrepid bricklayer, Ian Reid, whilst balancing on a boat on the water - it's the only way to do it, he said!

Another boat, belonging to our Vice President, was also used in order to

RESTORATION

gain access to the bank opposite the towpath so that the overhanging vegetation could be trimmed. It made a pleasant change from shifting muck and most of the section to Skew bridge is now clear of branches. You may ask why it is necessary to do this, but if we are anticipating perhaps three or four boats plus a few canoes on our Open Weekend we need plenty of room to pass without fear of getting an eye poked out. We also have to bear in mind the long term and keep nature under control or we will soon be back where we were eight years ago with a clogged up Canal. The more Canal we clear, the more maintenance we shall have to undertake!

The Monkhide site was visited in March by representatives of UK2000 who are so generously donating money to the Trust to pay for much of the work. They were obviously very impressed as the large cheque



UPDATE continued

mentioned above was soon in the post. This was for work done in the last financial year (up to the end of March) and we are hoping to be considered for further help this year.

Oxenhall Section

Work on this site is still progressing although more slowly as some of our volunteers from the Newent/Dymock area have been helping at Monkhide. We hired a JCB in February to construct an access ramp off Cold Harbour Lane down to the towpath level. A large amount of soil was shifted although only pushed further along the towpath for the moment. Once the ramp was complete the JCB was able to drive down and dredge some of the silt out from under the bridge. It would appear that the towpath underneath was cut from solid sandstone and the channel also as no coping stones were found. There may still be something to

RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS APPLY HERE!

In addition to the traditional first Sunday in the month workparty in recent months there have also been workparties on other Sundays, and Saturdays, in addition to the occasional evening workparty! So you can now find the Restoration Team actively engaged *somewhere* on the Canal on several days each month. There is a very wide range of work to be done, from the very heavy, dirtiest digging out wet silt by hand, the more sedately reconstruction of brickwork structures, the clearance of general undergrowth (out of nesting season), to the "manning" of bonfires for a few hours - so if you feel like a day out with a difference why don't you find out WHEN, WHERE, and WHAT the Restoration Team are doing? If you are interested in helping, in any way, then please contact a member of the Restoration Team [during the evening].

CONTACTS: Mike Potts on Hereford (0432) 356392
Ian Reid on Ledbury (0531) 5877
Brian Fox on Hereford (0432) 358628
Roger Chandler on Dymock (053185) 671

RESTORATION

find in the canal bed but we are not in a position yet to shift 5ft of silt to investigate further. That chance may come this summer when we are hoping to start major earth moving but it will be a long term project as we have thousands of tons of soil to move if we are to clear the Canal from Oxenhall to the mouth of the Tunnel.

A visit to this section by Dr. Studholme, the Conservation Officer for the Gloucestershire Nature Trust, took place in March. He was met on site by our Chairman and two members of the Restoration Team and gave us considerable encouragement for our continuing efforts. We shall be liaising closely with him in future and he has agreed to another meeting on site this summer to discuss what further clearance work should be undertaken in order to let more light into the bottom of the cutting thus creating a more pleasant environment for plant growth. We are always conscious of the fact that we have to alter one sort of environment in order to recreate the Canal as it was but it is very gratifying when we can do it in consultation with people like Dr. Studholme and attain an answer acceptable to everyone.

In our last magazine on Page 16 was a reference to the "Dig Deep" programme but it was not explained elsewhere as indicated. I shall now rectify that omission. There will be some who have heard of the WRG (Waterways Recovery Group) and the help they have given us in the past by sending volunteers from all over the country to do work at both our Monkhide and Oxenhall sites. The

UPDATE continued

people who come for a workcamp, however, may never get involved in that particular site again. Well, now *some* of them wish to get more deeply involved in possibly 3 or 4 sites scattered around the country where they will make themselves available for 6 or 7 weekends and one full week totally devoted to those particular sites. They feel that they can benefit from the continuity of employment rather than dashing around from one site to another. The concept has been called "Dig Deep" and societies have been invited to submit a scheme which they consider suitable for such a group to tackle. It was made clear that they did not wish to participate in shifting soil, or tree felling, but something which was more demanding of their skills. Restoration of locks, bridges, aqueducts etc. is their speciality, and it was with this in mind that we offered them a lock on our Canal to tackle.

Those of you who know the Oxenhall stretch which has been cleared by the farmer who owns it, Mr. Elgie, may recall that the Canal now finishes about 50 yards north of the road down from Oxenhall church, where a large earth dam has been constructed to hold the water back. Somewhere between the dam and the road was the "Top Lock" and it is this one which we have submitted for consideration by WRG as a restoration scheme. The competition from other canal societies will no doubt be fierce, but we believe we can offer a very challenging project, in beautiful countryside, and just a short walk from the accommodation of the cosy Oxenhall church hall. We will have to wait and see, but let's hope that we are a cut ahead of the rest!

MEMORIES OF GRANDAD ...

One of our Members recalls memories of the past ... of a boating Grandfather - in the next edition of The Wharfinger.

CANAL FEVER - DYMOCK STYLE !

PART 2

By Chris Clark

Remember Dymock's "Canal Fever" in January? The scores of people turned away were promised a second showing of the event, which duly took place on 26th March.

The dilemma facing the organisers was not when to hold the meeting, but where? The hall in Dymock holds 125 people, surely we wouldn't exceed that number on a re-run? But wouldn't it be awful if people had to be turned away again?! With that spectre at the forefront of our minds, we opted to use the 200-seater Memorial Hall at Newent.

Any doubts that the attendance would do justice to our three eminent speakers were quickly dispelled, as people started to arrive 40 minutes before kick-off. As before, admission was free, which prompted many to spontaneously drop money into the donation bin, including one kind gentleman who generously donated £10.00. By 7.30pm, the crowd had risen substantially, a quick count-up showed that just under 200 people had come to hear the talk on the Herefordshire to

Gloucestershire Canal - not bad for a second showing!

The meeting itself followed the previous pattern - Cliff Penny introduced the speakers: David Bick, who spoke on the history of the Canal, Bob Simpson, who told of the exploration of the Oxenhall Tunnel and Mike Potts, who detailed the work presently being undertaken.

The audience obviously enjoyed the evening, and left clutching their membership forms (soon to be completed, I hope!). We were left to ponder on the success of the evening and hope that the Canal Trust has gained many new friends.

Many thanks to Duncan Williams, the milkman for Dymock and surrounding district, who donated the milk for refreshments, and also to Phil Fisher of Pat-A-Cake Bakery, Dymock, for providing cut-price biscuits. My personal thanks also go to Roger Chandler, Alan Chester, Andy and John Warren, Mary Duncan (tea-lady extraordinaire!) and, of course, my long-suffering family!

Velda West gives her account of the evening on page 6

Mr TOM BARNES

It is with great sadness that we heard, just as this edition was about to go to the printers, of the death of Mr Tom Barnes (the Father of our Vice President Major Robert Barnes). Born in Herefordshire 81 years ago he played a prominent role in the county until he and his Wife moved to Australia in 1982.

He farmed at Showle Court, Yarkhill, and his family are the owners of our main restoration site at Crews Pitch. My Wife and I had the opportunity to meet him when he last visited his home county in the autumn of last year; a most interesting gentleman who took a genuine interest - even when in Australia - in the achievements and aspirations of the Canal Society/Trust.

CRP

THEY'RE CUTTING DOWN THE RAILINGS !



Within a few hundred yards of the original Canal Terminus in Hereford City is Widemarsh Bridge. One of the original Canal Bridges - minus Canal at present! [The line of the Canal is not obstructed (other than by temporary garage structures) and we have submitted preliminary details to Hereford City Council for the ultimate restoration - to within a few yards of the original Canal Basins.]

On the south side the original bridge railings were removed some years ago (parts were rescued by the Canal Society) to be replaced with hideous galvanised tubes and mesh. The sketches showing the north railings, by Miss Carola Morton, were first published in edition No. 9 of *The Wharfinger* and depict the railings as they were in 1985.

Whilst, from a quick glance the railings have no special merit, closer examination reveals a great deal of interest. *continued on page 19*

COMMITTEE MATTERS (iii)

MARCH COMMITTEE

■ The Chairman reported, with pleasure, that Mr Ken Goodwin (past National Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association and current Vice Chairman of the IWA Restoration Committee) had accepted the nomination to serve as a Director of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

■ The initial funding of the Trading Company was agreed.

■ Hoseasons Holidays, a Corporate Member of the Canal Society, had agreed to bear part of the costs of printing the raffle tickets. This was greatly appreciated.

■ Having inspected the aluminium frame for a display tent it was agreed that a covering should be purchased once funds permitted.

■ The Vice Chairman reported on the great interest in the Canal; in the previous month he had given in excess of one talk a week.

■ Until alignment of the proposed A40 link road has been decided it was agreed that the Canal Society should not be involved with remedial works to the Ell Brook Aqueduct. *continued on page 19*

The main pillars have a scroll support to the base, at the rear, and have the name "Ladmore" cast vertically on the upper part. Our Historian, Nigel Jefferies, researched this for edition number 9 and he wrote "*Slater's 1850 Directory of Herefordshire listed under 'Brass and Iron Founders' - 'LADMORE JOB, WIDEMARSH STREET'. An iron foundry was established in Hereford, in Friar Street in 1827 but the foundry was not very successful and appears to have closed in 1850. Job was undoubtedly an agent.*"



Last year our Chairman wrote to Hereford and Worcester County Council pointing out that the more slender sections of the railings were rusting right away and (as can be seen from the sketch) had been damaged. He requested that they repair the original railings "in order that a small part of the history of the area remain for the benefit of future generations". That is why we were not concerned when we were told that workmen were cutting down part of the railings! Take a look for yourself if you are in the area.

Thank you, Hereford and Worcester County Council; a job well done.
Perhaps we should seek to reinstate the other side? CRP

COMMITTEE MATTERS (iv)

- The facility to pay Membership Subscriptions by Standing Order and a Credit Card facility for Memberships and sales was agreed.

- The Restoration Team reported on extensive works that were progressing in both Counties. [Restoration Report - page 14.]

- Details of the change in Membership Secretary were agreed.

- It was agreed, following a query from a new Member, to canvass the opinion of the Membership via The Wharfinger on the issue of Membership Cards [see page 9].

- It was reported that the dredger (referred to in the November Committee report) had attracted an offer well in excess of that anticipated. Therefore the Council that owned it could not, after all, consider donating it to the Canal Society as originally intended.

- The current WRG "Dig Deep Project" situation was reported.

- A report was received on estimates for the removal of the spoil heap at Crews Pitch by contractor. It was agreed to seek a more competitive quotation. CRP

DALLYING AMONGST THE DAFFODILS

By Velda West

At least, that's what I thought we would be doing. However, it turned out that the Dymock Spring Fare of the weekend 11-12th April this year was a very homely affair. So homely, in fact, that it was held indoors, despite the bright sunshine which everybody hopes for but never dares expect for such events.

By the time Peter Miles and myself arrived for the last shift on Sunday afternoon, quite a breeze was stirring outside. Despite the wind chill factor, everybody was evidently off doing their dallying amidst the daffodils. Left behind them was a very domestic scene of ladies preparing rows of tea cups and keeping an eye on tables full of cakes for sale.

Looking commendably alert during this lull between batches of walkers heading off and returning from the Daffodil Walks, were Cliff and David Penny. Dominating a whole corner by the entrance, standing magnificent beside the humble table of jumble, the bits of bric-a-brac, and the hand-knitting for the kittens of the Cats Protection league, the Canal display was the only stand not in keeping with the country-kitchen-coffee-morning ambiance. Hence it was extremely effective in drawing people over when they did appear from time to time. This kept Cliff and David sufficiently on their toes and off the cream teas!

Tony Austin-Bailey, they reported, had been given leave to do some dallying, amongst the daffodils, so Peter and I set about some of our own within the hall during the everlasting quiet spell.

Whilst I rummaged, Peter headed straight for the guarded cakes undaunted by the motherly warders and completely unabashed about returning to his seat with the fullest selection of home baking obtainable. Dundee cake and caramel slices jostled with each other to keep a grip within the tower of carbohydrate.

He should have waited until the end, when the unsold cakes which had survived his onslaught were offered in batches at reduced prices. The money that would have been saved could have been donated to Canal funds! Tony, back from his walk and finding himself in possession of two strips of raffle tickets since his wife had purchased some in his absence, was fortunate enough to have the sting taken out of this error when he won a prize in the Fare raffle. It was equally fortunate that a member of the public did actually win something in the bottle draw right at the last moment, much to the relief of David who, for some reason, had been greatly fearing accusations of rigging...

So, raffle drawn, a few new members signed and Canal profile raised once again, it was time to pack up the stalls. Even when the last tea cup had been wiped and put away, our hi-tech display stand was still going under protective cover ready for transit and the abundant goods of the sales stall were being neatly stowed away.

Catching a glimpse of distant fields full of daffodils over the stile, we dilly-dallied just a little outside the hall before finally wending our way home.



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,

I have just received the Spring, 1992 edition of "The Wharfinger" and would like to take this opportunity of congratulating you on presenting an excellent little magazine. Comparing it with other similar canal related magazines I receive is akin to comparing chalk with cheese. Very well done! I may even make the memorable 1992 AGM to thank you in person...

Meanwhile, keep up your excellent work on the members' behalf.

Yours sincerely,

[Name withheld by the editor]
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

TECHNICAL LIAISON OFFICER

Through The Wharfinger we have kept you informed of the progress in raising grant aid to enable us to take up the generous £3,000 per year contribution negotiated with the Inland Waterways Association. This was conditional on each of the local authorities, along the 34 mile length of the Canal, paying their share of the costs of making such an important appointment. We knew from the outset that to persuade all of the five District and two County Councils along the route of the Canal (we also approached Gloucester City as they had suggested a willingness to support our voluntary efforts) to pay their share would be difficult. If this proved to be the case the IWA were willing to be flexible.

The current position, a year after the detailed case was submitted for grant aid, is that *not one single Local Authority has been prepared to contribute* towards the costs of this post. [Hereford City Council have, however, promised £200 towards our general expenditure.]

Leisure and recreation are going to become even greater issues for local authorities over ensuing years;

there is already massive investment from both the private and public sectors and this is likely to increase. Tourism is a vital part of the local economy in both Counties. Each of the Local Authorities, without exception, are supporting us by protecting the line of the Canal from adverse development (some with very positive Planning Policies).

How sad it is that the very local authorities that encourage us to restore the Canal, *as hard working unpaid VOLUNTEERS*, are so reluctant to invest (very modest amounts) in what is clearly acknowledged as a most important appointment.

As with everything we do we shall not let this obstacle to progress defeat us. However, the Local Authorities cannot expect to see a sustained rate of progress without such an appointment. Most of us have demanding full time "day jobs" and any additional commitment to the restoration of the Canal is out of the question - the Canal Trust does not pay the mortgage! Let us hope that each Council will review the position in the not too distant future; we will be requesting that they do so.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

Cristie Electronics Ltd., Stonehouse, Gloucs.

E B Hayward & Co., Sheetmetal Works,
Ashleworth, Gloucs.

Midlands Electricity plc., Halesowen,
West Midlands.

Worcester and Birmingham Canal Society.

We greatly appreciate their support - thank you.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY CHANGES

As reported in *Committee Matters*, our Membership Secretary, "Steve" Stephens has decided to retire after steering us through a period of unprecedented growth. The Committee recorded their very great appreciation for the hard work that Steve put in over the years - our Chairman remarked that it was one of those essential parts of the organisation where it was very easy to take what was going on (most of it behind the scenes) for granted.

Our new Membership Secretary is Roger Morgan who has ongoing family links and knows the area very well - even though he now lives in Cheshire! The Committee felt that it might be less confusing to prospective Members if a local address continued to be used for Membership correspondence, and we greatly appreciate the offer from James Dunn that we may use his home address (in Castle Street, Hereford) for Membership correspondence.

Although the change was originally planned to take place at the AGM it actually took place a few weeks earlier - to suit both the new and retiring post holder. We wish Steve a long and happy retirement (and thank him for agreeing to continue the substantial task of dispatch of The Wharfinger) and wish Roger a long and equally happy term of office in this critical post with the Trust.

DONATIONS GENEROSITY

At the time of writing nearly half the Membership renewals have been accompanied by a donation. We thank everyone who has so generously supported us in this way, especially in the current financial climate; *Thank you.*

PLEASE COVENANT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

In the last edition we asked Members to Covenant their subscriptions in order that the Canal Trust could reclaim the tax. This has the potential to substantially increase the income of the Trust *at no additional cost to you.* *Thank you* to the considerable number of Members who, on renewal of their subscriptions, did complete the Covenant form. If you forgot (or have changed your mind and now wish to) forms are available from the Membership Secretary.

THANKS...

to the following for their greatly appreciated support:-

UK2000 GRANT FUND.

(Supported by the Department of the Environment), £2,000 grant to our Plant Fund - see page 10.

CRISTIE ELECTRONICS.

For the tape streamer to secure our electronic data - see page 11.

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOC'N (GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH).

Who donated £300 to pay for the formation of our Trading Company.

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL.

A donation of £200.

HOSEASONS HOLIDAYS.

£150 towards the costs of printing our draw tickets.

WORCESTER & BIRMINGHAM CANAL SOCIETY.

A donation of £100.

Mrs. LLOYD OF MALVERN.

Texaco stamps to purchase a food processor as a raffle prize and regular support with draw prizes.

"TALK SUPPORT" including

Duncan Williams (dairyman) and Phil Fisher (baker) for some of the refreshments at the *Tunnel Talks*.

Mr & Mrs JONES.

Who farm near Dymock, for loaning a tractor and trailer for the day to our local workshop.

**OUR SINCERE THANKS
TO EVERYONE**

HELP!

Alongside our very full "Thanks" column comes a moan - not a single response to our plea for "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." Surely someone reading this knows of someone who can provide us with these small items? A couple of our retail outlets have run out of room and we need these display stands to persuade them to carry on stocking *The Wharfinger* AND we are confident that these stands will boost sales too!

Success! Following our request for a volunteer to assist Tony Austin Bailey with "Events" Stephen Fitzmaurice has volunteered; however we would have hoped for some "new blood" from outside the Committee [Ed. - *he's moaning again!*]. Our request for someone to organise a "one off" event - and to challenge the double success of the legendary Chris Clark (of "Tunnel Talk" fame) - still stands!

Can it be true that the *only* Members with a caravan (or tent) are Angela and Adrian of Swindon? In previous editions of *The Wharfinger* we have offered pitches at the National Waterways Festival 1992 (at Wakefield) - they are already booked - *and* hinted at a special "end of day" social event for supporters; so *please* volunteer for duty and claim your *free* pitch NOW - Liz Connors is the contact.

HELP! HELP! HELP! HELP!
URGENTLY needed for the
OPEN WEEKEND - page 8.

THE WHARFINGER

As regular readers will know, the outside covers of *The Wharfinger* were designed (and the artwork prepared) for us by Sandy Wooldridge of Creative Labels at Hereford some 7 editions ago. Sandy was given a rather poor colour photograph of Skew Bridge - complete with the odd scaffold tube and boards in shot - and made a very good job from a rather poor print. [I can criticise - it was an Editorial Team photograph]

As a person with pride in his work Sandy wants to produce an even better cover for *The Wharfinger* - so we have decided to run a small competition to see if one of our readers can improve on the photograph! There are no lengthy rules (to match the fact that there is no lengthy prize list!). Black & white photographs are preferred but sharp contrast colour will do - in either case *prints only* please. Do remember the proportions of the cover and that we want to try and depict just how *skew* Skew Bridge is. Entries to David Penny (see Contacts) by 1st August please. The winner will be selected by means yet to be decided (to match the prize also not having been decided...) See your handiwork in print and help us to improve the standard of *your* newsletter.

In the last Edition of *The Wharfinger* there was 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*. As a result Joyce had several phone calls which resulted in 3 more shops agreeing to sell *The Wharfinger* on our behalf. So if you have not already done so 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. Please contact Joyce on Hereford (0432) 266931.

Our thanks, once again, to Velda West for typing some of the copy for this edition of *The Wharfinger*.

In the next edition of *The Wharfinger* we hope to bring you a full report on the AGM; the inauguration of *The Trust*, and a major report on our two day "Open Weekend" (see page 13 & 8). If you have not already renewed your Membership (thank you to the majority who have) then please don't forget - do so today! We will not, in all fairness to those who have paid, be able to send the next edition of *The Wharfinger* to anyone who has not renewed - so please do not miss out, *renew today!*

COPY DEADLINE for the Autumn edition of *The Wharfinger* is Saturday, 6th June, 1992 - this is the **LATEST** date, **PLEASE** submit copy earlier if at all possible - *thank you*.

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS SATURDAY 6th JUNE

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

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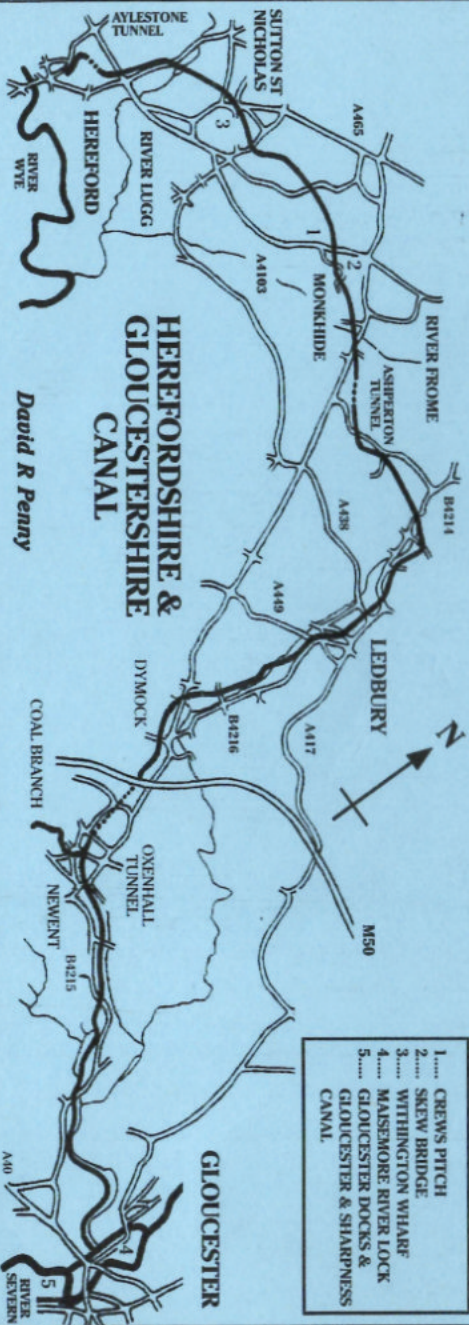
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Whilst we try to ensure that dates are correct please verify specific arrangements with the relevant Organiser.

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

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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.