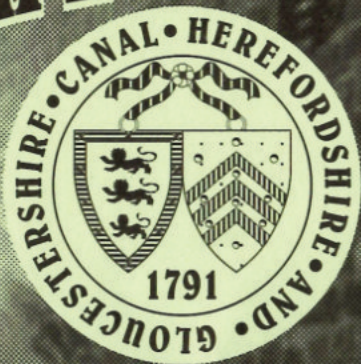


THE WHARFINGER



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

**50p
free to Members**

**Edition 46
Spring 1995**

WHO DOES WHAT...

VICE PRESIDENTS	<i>R. E. Barnes TD, Sir John Knill Bt.</i>
CHAIRMAN	Cliff Penny
VICE CHAIRMAN	Roger Chandler
TREASURER	Liz Connors
RESTORATION GROUP	Roger Chandler, Brian Fox, Simon Hayward, Mike Potts, <i>Ian Reid</i>
PRESS/PUBLICITY OFFICER	Volunteer required !
MEMBERSHIP:- SECRETARY	Nigel Jefferies
COVENANTS	Liz Connors
FUNDRAISING OFFICER	David Penny
SOCIAL EVENTS GROUP	<i>Linda Palmer, Steve Delacourt-Smith</i>
THE WHARFINGER	Cliff Penny, David Penny
MINUTES SECRETARY	Tony Austin-Bailey
TRUST ADMINISTRATOR	Lesley Lowe
TALKS/WALKS	N Jefferies, M Potts
WHARFINGER POSTMASTER	<i>To be appointed</i>

Those in italics are not Directors on the Council of Management

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*H & G
C 89*

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David Penny; Liz Connors; Joyce Lynham; *Steve Hughes*

MALLARD *Ron & Sarah Ashley, Derek Gray, Steve Hughes,*
DIVISION *Joyce Lynham, Ray Moses, David Penny, Pat Skeet.*

Please see CONTACTS, inside back cover, for addresses/phone numbers.

HONORARY POSTS:- AUDITOR Davies, Edwards & Co., Leominster.

SOLICITOR Sue Newbould, GABB & CO., 25 King Street, Hereford.

YOUR COMPANY NAME COULD BE HERE

The Print Sponsor for The Wharfinger is acknowledged on the inside front cover of *each* edition. 1,000 copies are circulated throughout the Country to our Members, Local Authorities, local and national news media, British Waterways, IWA., Government Departments - as well as being sold in the two Counties.

To discuss this excellent opportunity to support our wholly voluntary work, which is of benefit to the environment and the community, please contact the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

A MAGNIFICENT RESPONSE

Enclosed within the last Edition of *The Wharfinger* was a notice giving the very sad news that our "Postman", Bob Fairclough, had suddenly passed away - *[tribute on page 18.]* We asked for volunteers to take over this role and our Trust Administrator, Lesley Lowe, was soon reporting a number of telephone calls; in the end eight Members had volunteered, a magnificent response - *thank you. [see p. 24.]*

The last **HELP !** page also brought excellent results - a suggested "cheap" pontoon (for use as a work boat - yet to be viewed); two Members volunteering to rewire our display lights *[see Thanks, p. 23]* and a Member offering to repair and repaint our award winning display panels. *Without doubt this is the best ever response and is a real encouragement to the Canal Trust Council of Management.* All we need now are some "leads" to locate a couple of large dumpers that are in reasonable condition ...

NO PAY !

Yet again someone has said to me that they were concerned as to how much of our (hard won) funds was spent paying wages to the Officers of the Canal Trust. Let me stress that **EVERYONE** who works for the **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust** is an **UNPAID** volunteer - there are **NO** exceptions. From time to time we will pay for a contractor to undertake certain limited work (for example, until we can purchase a "flail" attachment for our tractor). The only outgoings in respect of any of our volunteers is the payment, *when requested*, of justifiable expenses (backed by receipts) via a claim form which has to be completed and signed to justify each and every item of expenditure. A number of our active volunteers have never claimed a penny from the Canal Trust, others (including myself) regularly claim as postage and similar expenditure can rapidly mount up !

An increasing number of Canal Societies and Trusts *do* employ a full or part time Administrator or Project Officer. Long-standing members will recall that we made a bid for funds for such a purpose a number of years ago. Whilst the **Inland Waterways Association** agreed to fund £3,000 a year for 3 years it was conditional on all (or, at least, most) of the Local Authorities along the line of the Canal also contributing. Most regrettably *none* were prepared to make the commitment and the IWA money was allocated to another Canal Trust.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS . . . (ii)

I do not hesitate to point out that we would be at a more advanced stage with our restoration (and related fund-raising) if a paid Officer had been appointed. There is too much going on (*and needing to go on !*) for the active Council of Management members to fit in with a demanding "day job" - *which does, after all, pay the mortgage*. Whilst the level of support from our Members for the essential "behind the scenes" jobs (such as the "Postman", referred to earlier) is increasing we really must ask the Local Authorities to review the case for each of them to make a modest contribution towards the salary of a full (or part time) Officer *to take the restoration of the Canal forward at the necessary pace*. The pending Local Government reorganisation might muddy the water a little but, equally so, it may present the opportunity that we have been waiting for.

SAUSAGES !

Corporate Members Basil and Elizabeth Frost have gone to considerable lengths to support the Canal Trust over the years. They have arranged the **Bangers and Mash** evening at their **Colwall Park Hotel** on Friday 24th February [*see p. 13*] especially for us. Previous events (for other good causes) at their hotel have raised hundreds of pounds; with *your* support we can do the same - please help to make it a success [special rates apply if you wish to stay overnight] - *come and have a sausage with us !*

NEW "BRIDGE" OVER THE CANAL

Hereford and Worcester County Council have commenced construction of a navigable culvert to permit future Canal restoration at Hereford [photos p.9, details p.10.]. This first major expenditure on the Canal by a Local Authority represents a significant achievement for all concerned. *Thank you.*

ANOTHER YEAR

I am delighted that the Council of Management asked me to be Chairman for another year. I have had to make it very clear that I will not be able to devote as much time as I have in the past to the voluntary activities of the Canal Trust. For a number of years I have had no "spare" time to myself and this has been telling on my health. It is also very bad for the Canal Trust to place too much reliance on one person; when something needs to be done I shall be saying "no" far more frequently than before !

Cliff Penny, Chairman/Liaison Officer

Mike's Trips & Outings

By Mike Potts

Sunday, 14th May

"Tour & Cruise of H & G Canal"

A minibus tour of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal.
Depart Hfd. bus station 9.30am. 2nd bus from Gloc. if enough bookings.
Tickets £7 each

Saturday, 17th June

"Kennet & Avon Canal Cruise"

A coach tour of the Kennet and Avon Canal, with a visit to Devizes (Caen Hill flight of locks) and 2 hour cruise from Bradford-on-Avon
Coach from Hereford, picking up at Dymock, Newent, & Gloucester.
Tickets £9.50 each

Sunday, 9th July

"Coach, rail, and cruise extravaganza"

Coach to Welshpool, 2 hour cruise on the Montgomery Canal
and trip on light railway to Llanfair Caereinion.
Coach from Hfd. bus station 9am. (Leominster/Ludlow if requested)
Tickets £13.50 each

TICKETS FROM:- Mike Potts [see **CONTACTS**] or,
Hereford Camera Centre, The Atrium, Maylord Orchards.

Please book early, payment must be received with bookings.



IWA

The Inland
Waterways
Association

GLOUCESTERSHIRE & HEREFORDSHIRE BRANCH

An Invitation

Tuesday, 14th March, 7.30pm,

The IWA Branch AGM, followed by a Members meeting. To be held at The Tewkesbury Marina Yacht Club, Bredon Road, Tewkesbury.

Friday 7th, Saturday 8th, and Sunday 9th April

South West Region AGM, at The Royal Hotel, Symonds Yat. A full programme of events is planned, including a guided tour of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal. Full details and costs from Derek Bay 01242 620405

Tuesday, 11th April, 7.30pm

A waterways video and talk by Graham Ettles at Tewkesbury Marina.

COMMITTEE MATTERS

Just one Council of Management meeting is reviewed by our Chairman in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date . . .

NOVEMBER COMMITTEE

■ With great sadness the Chairman reported the sudden death of our "Postman" (and active Restoration Group volunteer) Bob Fairclough [tribute on p. 18].

■ Each of the existing Officers of the Canal Trust Council of Management were unanimously re-elected.

■ Arrangements were confirmed for three Directors of the Canal Trust to meet with Major Robert Barnes to establish the basis on which the celebrations (to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first boat arriving in the Hereford City Basin) would proceed in May.



■ It was confirmed that the final signatures had been obtained on the first Land Owner Agreement and that Mrs Oram had been made the first Honorary Life Member of the Canal Trust.

■ There was to be a meeting with Malvern Hills District Council Planning Officers, the National Rivers Authority, the County Council and a landowners professional representative to discuss objections that had been raised to the proposed protection (in the Local Plan) of the essential diversion route for the Canal around Ledbury.

■ Special arrangements were to be made to consider a paper prepared by David Williams (our former Press and Publicity Officer) with regard to the promotion of the Canal.

■ An excellent response had been obtained from Members to the plea (see **HELP!**, p.23 of the last Edition of **The Wharfinger**.) for assistance with rewiring our display panel lights - and the repair/re-painting of the panels. A possible work boat was also under investigation (following information provided by a Member).

■ Budgets were approved for March, April and May expenditure.

■ Following a request from the Inland Waterways Association's head office our Chairman was providing a Canal Society with details regarding establishing a Charitable Trust and Trading Company.

■ It was confirmed that the current cost of publishing and distributing **The Wharfinger** was close to the 50p cover price.

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COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (ii)

Although reducing publication to three issues a year had been considered it was agreed that sufficient funds would be put aside, from members subscriptions, to finance four issues per year.

■ The proceeds from the volunteers Christmas Party would go into general funds and not be used, as suggested, to subsidise catering during restoration canal camps.

■ Following the decision by Major Robert Barnes that he should resign to avoid any possibility of a conflict of interests arising due to family and personal land ownerships involving the Canal the opinion of our Honorary Solicitor had been obtained. It was decided to establish a formal register of Directors interests.

■ Progress at Oxenhall (the main Gloucestershire restoration site) was still severely hampered by the lack of suitable dumpers. A number of possible purchases were being investigated now that limited funds were available.

■ Two new Members, who joined following the undertaking of a theoretical engineering project relating to the Canal as part of their professional studies, had now undertaken a survey and engineering appraisal of the accommodation bridge across the Canal between Skew and Middle Court Bridges on the main Herefordshire restoration site.

COMMITTEE MATTERS . . . (iii)

■ Proposals that the Restoration Group should assist Major Barnes to construct a stop plank narrows, at the limit of his ownership, were referred back to the Group as it was considered that the location was inappropriate.

■ The Council of Management are considering ways of establishing, maintaining and improving liaison with landowners along and adjacent to the Canal.

■ A representative from the Shell Better Britain campaign was due to visit the Oxenhall site in the near future in the hope that a grant would be made towards the materials for the ongoing restoration of the Oxenhall Tunnel portal.

■ The Social Events Group reported the need to transpose the content of the March and April social evenings *[full details on p.12]*.

■ The new Membership Secretary reported significant challenges in respect of the transfer of records to his computer *[see Membership Matters, p.21]*.

■ Our trip boat "Mallard" was still at Neath and proposals for repatriation had met with difficulties but were now in hand. The ongoing assistance of the Neath and Tennant Canal Preservation Society, and the Canals Officer of Neath Borough Council, was greatly appreciated.

■ Yet again complaints were recorded at the apparent lack of discernible action in respect of the deterioration of Oxenhall Lock Cottage and Lock. The Chairman was asked to formally bring this to the attention of the Forest of Dean District Council again.

■ Representatives from the Canal Trust had been invited to attend the Yarkhill Parish Council's celebrations to mark their purchase of the village hall.

■ The Canal Trust was now represented on the Herefordshire Tourism Development Forum by our Fundraising Officer.

■ Consideration would be given to marking the fact that the Canal was first opened to Newent on the 2nd November 1795. CRP



**HELP RESTORE THE
HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL**

In response to requests from Members we now have this smart Car Sticker - black text/crest on a golden yellow background. Only 45p each [*+ a stamp for postage] from H&G Canal Sales, "Coppice", Burley Gate, Hereford, HR1 3QS.

WHY NOT JOIN OUR CELEBRATIONS ?

On the 22nd May 1845, the first boat arrived at Hereford, having travelled 34 miles along the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal from the River Severn. To commemorate this historic occasion we are pleased to present ...

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL 150 ANNIVERSARY

20/21 May 1995

*A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
to be held at Crews Pitch, Monkhide*

Come and see one of the largest voluntary projects in the two counties and enjoy a day out with something for all the family

FULL DETAILS IN THE NEXT EDITION

By kind permission of Major Robert Barnes, Mrs Juliet Oram, Mrs Sylvia Mugeridge and Mrs Patricia Clews.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED: Liz Connors [see *Contacts*] would be delighted to hear from anyone who is willing to assist, in any way, on either of the above days. There is something for everyone; please help to make the event a success. *Thank you.*

EVENTS '95

H&GCS Exhibitions Co-ordinator Steve Hughes has a full bill for us including:-

APRIL:

Sunday 2nd
Gloucester Boat Jumble,
Gloucester Docks.

Friday/Saturday 14/15th
Maylords Orchards Shopping Centre,
Hereford.

Sunday 30th
North Herefordshire Country Fair,
Stoke Prior, Herefordshire.

MAY:

Saturday/Sunday 20/21st
our own Open Weekend, at
Crews Pitch, Monkhide, Herefordshire.

Saturday-Monday 27-29th
Braunston Boat Show, Northamptonshire.

JULY:

Saturday/Sunday 1/2nd
Bromyard Gala, Herefordshire.

Saturday/Sunday 8/9th
Evesham River Festival, Worcestershire.

Saturday/Sunday 29/30th
Upton on Severn Steam Rally, Worcs.

AUGUST:

Sunday 6th
Herefordshire Country Fair,
Much Marcle, Herefordshire.

Saturday-Monday 26th-28th
National Waterways Festival, Chester.

NOVEMBER:

(date to be confirmed) our own/Church
annual Oxenhall Open Day, Glos.

DECEMBER:

Saturday 9th
our own Craft Fair and celebration
of the 200th Anniversary of the Canal
reaching Newent,
Newent Memorial Hall, Gloucestershire.

Some of the events are subject to confirmation; also we have a number of other events which are still under discussion. Volunteers to "man" our display/sales stand will be made very welcome - Liz Connors [see Contacts] would appreciate more volunteers.

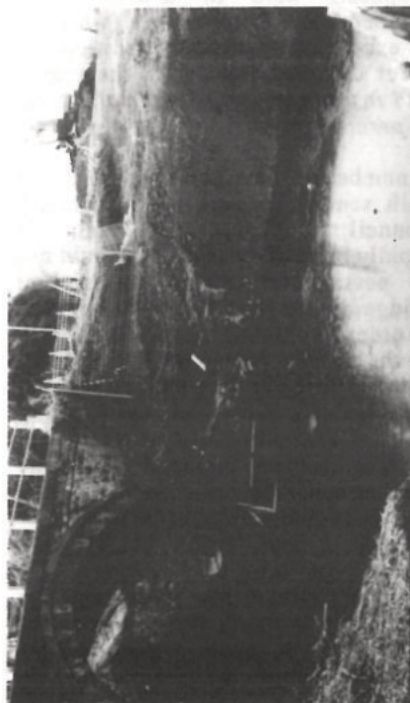
HELP! *extra*

In addition to our regular plea for help on p. 23 we have the following "vacancies" - all are important to our progress.

Volunteers are needed, *please*, to:-

- * *Write a regular report for The Wharfinger on behalf of the Gloucestershire Restoration Group.*
- * *Fold tickets for the Bottle Draw and wrap the prizes for the Lucky Dip.*
- * *Create mini promotional displays to go into hotels and public houses near to the Canal.*
- * *Distribute a "back issue" of The Wharfinger to houses along the line of the Canal in Gloucestershire (we already have some volunteers for Herefordshire) as part of an awareness and new recruitment campaign.*
- * *Take on the important post of Press and Publicity Officer.*
- * *Help set up and take down our display/sales stand at promotional events.*
- * *Assist with the many jobs relating to the Open Weekend.*

Please contact Lesley Lowe [see Contacts] for all but the last two - in respect of these please contact Liz Connors. *Thank you.*



Work gets under way on the Hereford and Worcester County Council A 4103 Roman Road Canal Bridge Contract - see page 10.
[Photographs - Hereford and Worcester County Council.]



This historical photograph, brought to the attention of the Canal Trust by Hereford City Councillor Basil Baldwin, is believed to be of a lock (and lock keepers cottage) on the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal.

It has also been the subject of a painting by local artist Eric Bottomley. Can anyone positively identify the location? The clues are the buildings alongside the lock, the towpath being on the right, with the lock taking the Canal down and under the bridge beyond.

David Penny [see *Contacts*] would like to hear from anyone who can locate the lock.



MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES

*Corporate Members of the
Herefordshire & Gloucestershire
Canal Trust, and IWA*

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ROMAN ROAD BRIDGE

Thank you to the two Members who telephoned to say that the Hereford and Worcester County Council had started a contract on the A4103 Roman Road, at Hereford, and the sign said that it was to replace the Canal Bridge. We have in fact been discreetly telling you about this [eg. see Committee Matters, p.4 of the last Edition of *The Wharfinger*] but have not "counted our chickens until they were hatched!"

A number of years ago it became clear that the County Council intended to undertake major improvements to the A4103 Roman Road which was more of a "B" road standard yet was increasingly acting as a east/west bypass for Hereford. Since then a phased improvement scheme has been implemented as funds became available. The original proposals were to demolish the humped back Canal Bridge (which is in excellent structural condition) in order to lower and widen the road - *and insert only an 18" diameter pipe to permit land drainage.*

A number of meetings have been held with senior Officers of the County Council to discuss the Canal. It rapidly became clear that it would not be possible to retain the original bridge as the road has to be lowered in order to obtain a suitable approach to the nearby Aylestone Roundabout. We therefore concentrated on seeking a navigable culvert (one way working on the Canal plus a towpath) and that is what has been included within the current contract.

This is a considerable achievement bearing in mind the fact that the County Council are providing for navigation at a very early stage in our restoration. *A more detailed report and photographs will appear in the next Edition.* **CRP**

The BIG prize DRAW!

Enclosed with this edition of The Wharfinger should be some **Grand Holiday Draw** tickets. In each of the past three years we have raised over £2,000 thanks to the generosity of our prize donors **and** the efforts of many of our Members who bought (and sold) tickets. **Please** help us to beat the magnificent total this year.

Every pound raised is critical to us as this is now one of our largest sources of **regular** income, so please see if **you** can be our star ticket seller! [For more tickets please write to our Treasurer (and official Promoter of the **Grand Holiday Draw**) Liz Connors [see **Contacts**] - a stamped addressed envelope would be greatly appreciated. **Thank you.**

No 000000 H&GCS Grand Holiday Draw (Stubs and money to be returned to Promoter by 19th August 1995) [No coins sent by post please] Name _____ Telephone _____	Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust - H. & G. C. S. GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW =====
	★ 1st Prize - NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY FOR 3/5 ★ One Week (April/May 1996) Donated by STARLINE NARROWBOATS 2nd - LUXURY COTSWOLDS COTTAGE Mini break donated by MICHAEL HANDFORD ESQ 3rd - TWO NIGHTS B&B FOR TWO IN MALVERN Donated by THE AWARD WINNING COLWALL PARK HOTEL =====
	[All prizes exclude Bank Holidays and are subject to availability] Draw to be held at the National Waterways Festival, Chester, on Monday 28th August, 1995 - TICKETS 25p EACH -

We should like to thank, **most sincerely, Ian and Pauline Cundy of Starline Narrowboats; Michael Handford Esq; and Basil and Elizabeth Frost of the Colwall Park Hotel** for their very substantial support in donating all of the prizes. Without their generous actions we would not be able to proceed with this, one of our major fund raising activities, so please do support their businesses in any way that you can. Thank you, to all concerned; ***your support is not taken for granted.***

We **guarantee** that every pound raised (after we have paid for the printing) will be spent on the physical restoration of the Canal. This is **YOUR** opportunity to directly influence our rate of progress so **please** support us by selling all of the enclosed **Grand Holiday Draw** tickets and, if at all possible, even some more! **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.]



Have you been collecting **TEXACO paper Stars**? By the time you read this they will be worthless **to you** as the **paper Stars** offer closed at the end of January. However, please send them to us as special arrangements exist to allow Registered Charities a longer period in which to transfer them to the replacement "electronic" Stars. As these special arrangements only apply for a short time. **Please** post any Stars to David Penny [see **Contacts**] immediately.

Dates For Your Diary

By Linda Palmer & Steve Delacourt-Smith

Social evenings in 1995 will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the
Cavern Bar of the Royal Oak, The Southend, Ledbury.

There will be a raffle, sales stand, and plenty of time for a chat. We hope that these Social Events will also provide a time and place for the dissemination of the latest news from the Trust. Please contact either of us if you have any queries, or ideas for Social Events [*see Contacts*].

Tuesday 21st February - 7.30pm

"Severn and Canal Boatmen"

Mr Hugh Conway-Jones, of the Friends of the National Waterways Museum, will give an illustrated talk about the lives of the boatmen who worked barges from Bristol to Gloucester and the canal boats from Gloucester to Birmingham.

Friday 24th February - 7.30pm for 8pm

"Bangers & Mash" [see page 13]

Tuesday 21st March - 7.30pm

"Erewash Canal and Langley Mill"

Mick and Carole Golds will talk and show slides of 25 years of restoration of this canal near Nottingham. Mick is known nationally as "Mick the Brick" and the Golds have recently built a lock on the Chesterfield Canal (p.35, October '94, *Waterways World*). They are coming a long way so please show our appreciation by attending.

Tuesday 18th April- 7.30pm

"Quiz night"

Fun for everyone - why not join us ?

Tuesday 16th May - 7.30pm

"Cotswold Canals Trust"

By Richard Attwood who is the Field Officer of this organisation which is actively restoring these two local canals. These were on the "pipedream and impossible" list a few years ago. Very few would have them on this list now as great progress is being made, with 32 current work sites in operation.

20th & 21st May

"Open Weekend '95"

At Crews Pitch, Monkhide [*see page 7*]. Full details in next Edition.
A 150th anniversary celebration of the Canal reaching Hereford.

Bangers H&G & Mash

A fundraising event in support of
the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire
Canal Trust, hosted and sponsored by:-

The Colwall Park Hotel

with Disco (free by courtesy of Partyman)

Very informal dress + a raffle prize please.

£5 each (£3.50 donated to Trust) + that raffle prize !

[By advance ticket only]

Star raffle prize of 2 nights free accommodation for
two in a small country hotel in Rutland.

At 7.30pm for 8pm - 'till midnight

ON FRIDAY 24TH FEBRUARY

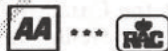
Tickets available from the Hotel or David Penny

[see Contacts] - please book early !



Egon Ronay

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RESTORATION UPDATE HEREFORDSHIRE

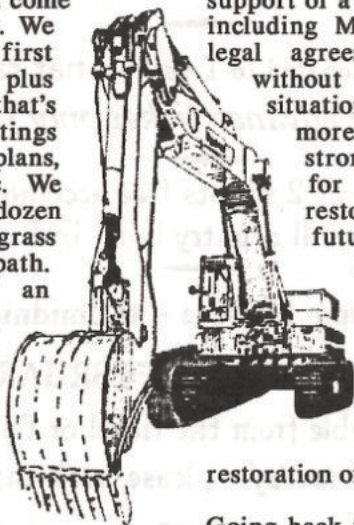
By Brian Fox

After our September workcamp, which was reported in the last Edition, it was back to paid work for most of our volunteers and a pronounced lack of activity on our current restoration site at Yarkhill. It can be very frustrating after seeing what can be done when all the planning comes together - the permissions, volunteers, the finance, the equipment, and of course a reasonable period of good weather, which can't be planned.

But restoration has not come to a complete standstill. We are still working the first Sunday in each month plus the odd extra day and that's not counting the meetings held to discuss future plans, budgets, open days, etc. We have planted about a dozen trees and sown some grass seed along the towpath. The construction of an overflow channel at Barrs Lock, to take any surplus water when the new section is finally filled, has also been finished. We have almost completed the final cutting of about a 1000 yards of ditch to the south of the Canal helping drainage of adjacent fields, the surplus soil being spread on the adjacent fields ready for ploughing and planting in the Spring.

Those of you who came to the AGM in Ledbury will be aware that we now have a legal agreement to work on the section described above, which is owned by Mrs. Oram. It has taken about 18 months of

detailed negotiation between the Trust and the two Solicitors representing us and Mrs. Oram [our *Honorary Solicitor representing the Trust free of charge - Ed.*], but hopefully we now have a legal document which has been thoroughly scrutinised by professionals and will be a catalyst for other landowners whom have been approached in the past, and others who we are now approaching. All our work up to now has been done with the whole hearted support of a number of landowners, including Mrs. Oram, but with a legal agreement we can work without fear of changing situations or ownerships, and more importantly, we have a stronger case when bidding for Grant Aid on restoration projects. In future we hope to have agreements signed before any work is commenced and with this in mind we shall be approaching owners of the Canal in the near future, to discuss our plans for restoration of their sections.



Going back to the Yarkhill Project site, it is not yet completely restored but it was decided to take advantage of heavy rain in December and partially fill it with water. Major Barnes kindly agreed that we could block off the channel which was taking the surplus water into one of the parallel ditches. A river of muddy water began to flow into the Yarkhill Project site creating over $\frac{1}{4}$ a mile of Canal which had been dry for many years and unnavigated for over a hundred. We were amazed

RESTORATION UPDATE HEREFORDSHIRE ... continued

when it was about 4 ft deep within only a week. That's about 1,800,000 gallons if my sums are correct and just shows how much run off there is from the field drains along the mile or so of Canal already restored. It would have been great to launch a boat but unfortunately none were available but we did construct a temporary dam to see

how efficient the old puddle clay was at holding the water. Our worst fears were confirmed when most of the water had disappeared by the end of December and it is now back to the

November level with just a few puddles along the entire length. A close survey of the banks is now taking place but we can find no evidence of major leaks and we suspect that most of the water has been soaked up by the puddle clay which has been dry for a hundred years and that it may take time to stabilise again. We shall of course continue to work on this section and hopefully have another attempt at filling it later this winter so that it is there for all to see in its full glory next May when we have our Monkhide Open Weekend.

Two of our new Members have just completed a structural survey of the Accommodation Bridge in the middle of Monkhide with recommendations on the remedial

work necessary to bring it back to A1 condition. It is not in any danger of collapsing at the moment but needs repointing and replacement of bricks which have fallen away over the years to ensure its survival. We hope to proceed as soon as the necessary permission is obtained from the landowner. It will make a

pleasant change from jungle bashing and muck shifting and there are a number of our volunteers eager to start, including experienced brick layers.

I hope everyone enjoyed the

Christmas Party at Yarkhill. Over 70 Members attended, far more than expected, and I think Mike and Patricia Booth, who did the catering, coped remarkably well considering the size of the kitchen. Many thanks to them and all the others who helped in organising a very successful event. It is only three years ago that the Christmas Party was held in the Leggers Cave by Oxenhall Tunnel, and we all did a morning's work before we could eat in those days! Things have certainly progressed and Mike is wondering whether he should hire the Shire Hall next year to cope with the growing demand for seats.

A Happy New Year to all our readers and to the volunteers - *keep up the good work!*

WANT TO GET INVOLVED ?

Volunteers to assist in our restoration (and maintenance) work are always welcome. Please telephone:-

Roger Chandler, Dymock (01531) 890671;

Brian Fox, Hereford (01432) 358628;

Mike Potts, Hereford (01432) 356392;

Simon Hayward, Glocs. (01452) 305572

or Ian Reid, Ledbury (01531) 635877.

All of our restoration work costs money - even when we are using our own excavators and our other plant and equipment, it all needs fuel, oil and spares! Even if you are not directly involved with our restoration efforts there are a number of ways in which you can help us to make progress:-

- * Join the Canal Trust (and pay your subscription on time!).
- * Encourage friends, neighbours and colleagues at work to join.
- * Support fund raising events such as *Bangers and Mash*.
- * Buy (and sell!) *Grand Holiday Draw* Tickets - each year at least one Member has won!

THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G CANAL [SALES]

H & G

DONATING ALL PROFITS
TO THE CANAL TRUST

Now that we have a regular venue for the monthly Social Evenings [p.12] we have a regular Sales presence too ! BUT it is not possible to take *everything* along, especially clothing, so why not place an "order" over the telephone a few days before ? *There is no obligation to purchase* but it will ensure that your choice of sweatshirt etc. is there, *in your size*, for you to see and try on ! The same applies to anything else on our Sales '95 list (enclosed with the last Edition) - just telephone David Penny [Hereford (01432) 820420] at least two days before and he will do the rest.

SWEATSHIRTS "Original Style":- Black with large yellow text:- £14.95

"Angela's Design":- Yellow with small black crest:- £15.95

"Nigel's Design":- Black with small yellow crest:- £15.95

T-SHIRTS "Original Style":- Black with large yellow text:- £8.00

"Angela's Design":- Yellow with small black crest:- £9.00

"Nigel's Design":- Black with small yellow crest:- £9.00

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*When in Ross-on-Wye
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Home telephone:- (01989) 768750

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TIME . . .

Trading Company Chairman David Penny swiftly overcame an unexpected difficulty when he was returning our trip boat "Mallard" to her overnight moorings during our spell at the **Welsh National Eisteddfod** last Summer. Due to the persistent rain the canal water levels were well above normal and the canopy of the boat would not pass under the lowest bridge on the **Neath Canal**.

Ever resourceful David stopped the boat and walked the short distance to the nearest road where he promptly flagged down the first car that he saw. He persuaded a rather worried couple

that they should abandon their (warm and dry) car at the side of the road and follow him down the narrow track to the Canal where they would make ideal ballast. Unfortunately they were not quite heavy enough and David had to make a second trip to the road. This time he managed to stop a motorcycle Policeman!

The appearance of the Policeman, complete with full leathers and Police helmet, appeared to pacify the rather worried couple *and* the additional weight did the trick. They did not seem too worried that their free boat trip had only taken them about 12 yards!

LANDOWNERS AS DIRECTORS

In the Autumn Edition of **The Wharfinger** we reported that the Canal Trust Council of Management were considering the suggestion, made by one of our Vice Presidents, Major Robert Barnes, that landowners (*and those who might represent landowner interests*) should not serve as a Director of the Canal Trust otherwise a conflict of interest might occur. [See *Chairman's Comments*, page 2, Edition 44.]

The matter was referred to our Honorary Solicitor for advice. Whilst it was considered possible, subject to Charity Commission approval, to alter our Articles of Association to specifically exclude landowners (and others who had any sort of interest in the Canal) from serving as a Director it would be exceedingly complex to word in order to exclude all possible interests.

Having given the matter careful consideration the Canal Trust

Council of Management do not consider that it is at all appropriate to seek to exclude landowners (or those acting for them) from serving as a Director of the Canal Trust. Instead it was agreed that (*as obliged by company legislation*) all Directors will be required to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position where there is conflict (actual or potential) between their personal interests and their duties to the Canal Trust. All Directors will be required to declare any possible interest and a register of such interests will be maintained. When any issue arises where such a conflict might arise the specific Director/s will not be permitted to vote on the issue and, in exceptional circumstances, may be asked to leave the meeting.

The Council of Management also agreed to give consideration to ways of establishing, improving and maintaining contact with landowners. **CRP**

BOB FAIRCLOUGH

When I first met Bob, some years ago, he was walking along the towpath of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal near Skew Bridge, Monkhide. It was obvious that he was interested in the Canal and we soon struck up a conversation during which I asked was he interested in getting involved with the restoration. *A Membership form just happened to be in my pocket!*

A few months later, when visiting one of our restoration work parties, I noticed that Bob was active with bush saw - I am sure that his family won't mind me saying that he stood out from the crowd as he was so tall and slim. Not all of the people who promise to join do so, and not all of those who join get actively involved, so the fact that Bob was one of those who not only did what he said, but also quietly got on with it, was particularly appreciated.

I remember being on site when we were preparing for our Open Weekend in 1992; there was a discussion as to how we were going to get the temporary water supply pipe from one side to the other of the A4103 Hereford to Worcester road. It was decided to thread it through a drainage culvert that passed under the road but it was only about 3'-6" in diameter. A couple of volunteers were talking about getting someone to crawl through with a line so that the alkathene water pipe could then be dragged through. Whilst this conversation was taking place Bob was already into the culvert dragging the pipe behind him! Only then did I learn that caving was his other major pastime.

If my memory serves me right it was in the Spring of 1993 when Bob just happened to mention his "early retirement" - and that he would have a bit of spare time - *music to the ears of any Chairman!* Within a few days we were discussing the possibility of Bob becoming our first "Postman", putting The Wharfinger into envelopes and adding the labels and stamps. Perhaps not the most obvious role for someone who was so physically active but his resourcefulness and reliability were key elements in my thinking. After initial hesitation about taking on this outwardly "indoor" role Bob was soon masterminding the prompt dispatch of The Wharfinger. Within months he was sorting out a local delivery round and many pounds were saved thanks to Bob.

On November 20th Bob was with his caving colleagues exploring a mine in Gloucestershire when he suffered a heart attack, and died instantly, some 400 feet from the surface. He had been exceedingly fit and his sudden death, in his early 50's, came as a huge shock to all who knew him. His family asked that all donations in memory of Bob should be divided between The Gloucester Cave Rescue Group and the Canal Trust. A cheque for £177.50 has just been received *"to be used in the most appropriate way to encourage the continued restoration of the Canal"*. After the Canal Trust Council of Management have considered the matter, and discussed it with Bob's family, an announcement will be made in a future Edition of The Wharfinger.

CRP

SIZING UP THE LOCKS

A personal view, by David Williams

The above article appeared in the last Edition of *The Wharfinger*. As we stated it was a personal view by David Williams (a former Director); we invited comments as the matter is being debated by the Restoration Group and our Council of Management.

Three letters were received; one (below) was a constructive response to the issues raised by David Williams, the other two were strong complaints as to the Editorial handling of the article. On re-reading the article (as published) your joint Editors have no hesitation in accepting the criticism. One letter of complaint summed up the feelings, that the Editorial comments were no different to constant interruptions to a speaker - not something the Trust would encourage.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, and we accept that there are different ways of handling an issue, and in this instance, we chose the least acceptable. An apology has been sent to David Williams and we will consider items more carefully in future before publication. These apologies also extend to any other readers who held similar adverse feelings to the Editorial interjections.

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 Trust unless specifically stated.]

Dear Editor,

Enthused by another issue The Wharfinger I was alarmed to read the article Sizing Up The Locks but as you asked for comment perhaps you would be good enough to give my proposals some consideration as this matter is very dear to my heart.

In 25 years of being involved in and out of waterways restoration I consider that the most serious mistake that I made was that on day one of promoting the restoration of the Stroudwater and Thames and Severn Canals I did not have the foresight to suggest that any restoration would be at the seven foot gauge. Such vision would I believe have cut about six million pounds off the current restoration costs and had about twice as much canal open yet have denied a total of about three boats from using the waterway. This mistake could lead to the canals never being used on both restoration costs and water supply grounds as it is now the largest gauge in the country and hence the most costly restoration project in being.

Canal rebirth is about two paths, one is to rebuild the previous to its former glory down to the last rivet and detail and end up with a magnificent, highly expensive, replica of a possibly badly engineered original. The other path is to draw a line on a map and say we will build an exciting well engineered low cost easily maintained waterway which will be highly used by the majority of boats well through the

SIZING UP THE LOCKS . . . LETTERS

next century which may use bits of the original where it is expedient or interesting.

As a Member may I beg your Committee not to debate longer than two minutes the noble virtues of Welsh boats and 8ft. wide canals. The serious business for me as a supporter is to get the vast majority of canal craft from the inland waterways system to Hereford by any means possible, cheat, improvise, use Plastic Padding, cut corners but never lose sight of the objective for me is a narrow boat with 30 tonnes of Midlands coal at Hereford. If you can achieve that then hire cruisers, day boats, family long boats, Dawncrafts, tom pudding replica's and 90% plus of the boats in Waterways World and Canal and Riverboat can follow.

Please accompany me down the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and look at some of your potential customers of which 164 craft (71%) are below 2.4m air draft and therefore small enough to go under canal bridges. Of these 164 craft I estimate that only 5 fit in the over 7ft. yet under 8ft. category and these are all over twenty years old and geared for estuary cruising. I wager that 99.993% of boat owners wanting to explore the delights of the H&G Canal are already 7ft. beam. Taking the additional cost of that extra foot on every structure it is to say £400,000-£500,000 that has to be raised only to satisfy the purists. On water usage in round figures it means that you are able to deal with an extra 15% more lock users for the same amount of water.

To help convince your Committee please have a look at the British Waterways guide on recommended dimensions for craft and you will see that even wide waterways like the Grand Union and the Kennet and Avon the maximum dimensions are 2.13m (7ft.) at 70ft. The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal has one of the best potentials of any of the emerging restoration projects please don't fudge it with debates on Welsh boats and rivet counting. The demand of the next century is, I believe, high volume pleasure traffic and year on year the growing dimension chosen by the industry is 7ft. Please make sure that your waterway is geared to that demand and hopefully the mistakes that are now costing other restoration schemes serious money are not repeated on the H&G for the insistence on the extra dimensions.

Michael Ayland.

This is YOUR chance to comment on the future ! David Williams started the debate and now Michael Ayland has taken the time and trouble to put his thoughts into the arena; we would welcome other views from our Members and supporters. The Canal Trust Council of Management will need to make a policy decision, over the next few months, that will determine the specification for the restoration/replacement of future structures on the Canal. Further contributions, to the Editors, on this topic will be welcomed.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Our new Membership Secretary, as observant Members will already know, is long-standing Committee Member/Council of Management Director, Nigel Jefferies. Together with our Treasurer, Liz Connors, Nigel has spent a considerable amount of time over the past couple of months in transferring records on to his computer.

With such a large number of records it is perhaps inevitable that there will be queries and a number of Members have responded to Nigel's plea to bring Subscriptions up to date. *Thank you.* In a small number of cases the records were incorrect; if you were troubled then our sincere apologies but please do remember that we *are* all unpaid volunteers and even the largest of businesses make the occasional error!



Quite a large number of Members who have been reminded by Nigel that their Membership Subscription is overdue have not (yet) paid *[and this applies to three of our valuable Corporate Members too]*. If you fall into this category PLEASE pay now - preferably by Bankers (Standing Order - before you forget again! Every Member is very important so PLEASE justify all the *voluntary* time and effort by renewing NOW! *Thank you.*

MONEY SAVER !

Now is the time to transfer to Life Membership and SAVE MONEY - *up to £60!* The new Membership rates come into force on the 1st March 1995 following their endorsement at the AGM [this is the first increase since April 1990]. However, if you transfer to Life Membership *prior* to the 1st March then the existing rates apply; Senior Citizen £50; Joint Senior Citizen £80; Individual Life £100; Joint Life £140.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

Belmont Medical Centre, Hereford
Middlewich Narrowboats, Cheshire

We greatly appreciate their support - thank you.

COVENANT SUCCESS

If you have signed a Covenant Form (so that the Canal Trust, as a Registered Charity, can reclaim the tax that you have paid on that money) you should have received a letter from our Treasurer asking you to complete the necessary Inland Revenue Form as the final stage in the system. *If you have not heard from Liz please get in touch [see Contacts].*

We are very pleased that so many Members have promptly returned the Inland Revenue Form to Liz (over 80% - a magnificent return) - *thank you.* However, if you are one of the few who have not then please return it as soon as possible as we cannot reclaim the tax without it.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS ... (ii)

ACTION REQUIRED, PLEASE ...

As stated earlier, regrettably Membership Subscriptions have to increase as from the 1st March 1995. A special Bankers (Standing) Order Form is enclosed with this Edition of *The Wharfinger*. If you already pay by this (much preferred) method - or wish to start paying this way - **PLEASE complete it NOW***, regardless of your actual renewal date, and return it as soon as possible to one of our two published addresses. *We undertake not to process it until the Membership Subscription is due. By dealing with this matter now (before you forget!) you will save the Canal Trust time and money. *Thank you.*

REWARD FOR PROMPT ACTION !

EVERY Member (*except Life Members*) is asked to take action NOW in respect of their Membership Subscription - *please see the letter enclosed with this Edition of The Wharfinger*. Return a fully completed Bankers Order Form (or continuous Credit Card Authorisation) prior to the end of March, and tick the box on the form, and you will be sent a FREE Car Sticker* to thank you for updating your instructions to your bank/saving us having to issue reminders. ** stamp for return postage required, please.*

REVISED SUBSCRIPTIONS

The revised Membership rates that apply from the 1st March are:-

Senior Citizen: £5	Joint Senior Citizen: £7
Individual: £7.50	Joint/Family: £10
Corporate: £20	

[Please note that Covenants automatically adjust to take account of increases in the annual Membership Subscription and no action is required.]

Life Memberships *[The resolution proposed a staged introduction of the increase and the amounts below have included the 20% reduction that applies for the remainder of 1995]:-*

Senior Citizen: £64	Joint Senior Citizen: £88
Individual: £120	Joint/Family: £160
Corporate: £320	

[Transfers to Life Membership before the end of February are at the old rate.]

WHEN IS MY RENEWAL DUE ?

We appreciate that some Members will have forgotten when their Membership Subscription is due - and some even forget their class of Membership ! The bottom line of the label will, *we hope*, now contain abbreviated details - we have used a window envelope for this Edition so that the label is to hand and you don't even have to write your name and address on the Bankers Order or Credit Card authorisation form !

PLEASE note that this system is still being developed so don't write threatening to shoot the volunteers running the system just yet! Any queries would be appreciated, in writing, to either of our published addresses. *Thank you.*

THANKS...

to the following for their greatly appreciated support:-

McALPINE CONSTRUCTION Ltd.,

for again providing a crane to put "Mallard" onto a lorry at Resolven Basin, near Neath, for the return trip to the Canal at Monkhide, near Hereford.

NEATH AND TENNANT C.P. SOCIETY

and NEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL,
who also assisted us, once more, with "Mallard's" return journey.

PETER BALL ESQ.,

for providing the excavator and offloading "Mallard" at Monkhide.

STARLINE NARROWBOATS,

MICHAEL HANDFORD ESQ.,

COLWALL PARK HOTEL,
who donated all of the holidays to make our Grand Holiday Draw possible.

MARGARET AND DEREK GRAY,

for acting as "Postman", at very short notice, to get the last Edition of The Wharfinger to you on time.

MEMBERS P JOHNSON AND S PRICE,

for preparing a detailed report on the Accommodation Bridge at Monkhide, together with costings, to form the basis of further discussions with the owner and for Grant Aid applications.

MARTIN LUTHER Esq.,

who answered our plea to completely rewire our display lights and who has also constructed a control panel for the lights complete with a donated residual current safety device.

SAINSBURY'S, HEREFORD,

we asked for a few hundred plain white bags for our sales counter and were given 5,000!

**OUR SINCERE THANKS
TO EVERYONE**

HELP!

In this Edition of **The Wharfinger** we announce [p.7] our very special celebration Open Weekend (20th & 21st May) to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first canal boat arriving at Hereford. Meetings are already taking place to organise this major event. Every single Member who is free on those days (*and/or the day or so before and after*) is asked to contact Liz Connors [*see Contacts*] so that we can spread the load amongst as many volunteers as possible. *Please* help if you can - we are confident of finding you something that suits and lots of volunteers will enable us to promise you a reasonable amount of time to enjoy the event!

Our trip boat "Mallard" has, until now, relied upon an inboard diesel engine. We are now anxious to obtain (or borrow on extended loan!) an outboard motor of around 10 hp. to replace this for April and May - or permanently if possible - please contact Ray Moses on (01989) 780325.

On page 8 you will see another plea for help - this time for assistance in setting up/down our promotional event display and for assistance at the various events. There are dates to suit every diary and locations so varied as to ensure a good tour of the country! An increasing number of our Members have found it to be a very enjoyable day out but the increasing number of events means that we need even more of you to help, *please*.

Finally, no recent Edition of **The Wharfinger** would be complete without the repeated plea for you to help us to find some large dumpers (4/6 tonnes) - no more sightings of 1 and 2 tonners please! Roger Chandler [*see Contacts*] would be grateful for any leads. *Thank you.*

THE WHARFINGER

As stated in **Chairman's Comments** we had a truly magnificent response to the request for volunteers to take on the post of "Postman" for **The Wharfinger**. As seven Members contacted Trust Administrator Lesley Lowe it was decided to review the various tasks and to split the duties in a number of ways - hopefully spreading the load and giving us holiday and sickness cover.

In addition we are also expanding the work to include establishing a list of Parish and Local Authority Councillors. Another idea to ensure that volunteers are used to good effect is to organise the delivery of a "back issue" of **The Wharfinger** to houses close to the route of the Canal as part of a long-term recruitment drive. As the original "Postman" request was specifically directed to Hereford Members we would like to hear from Members living in Gloucestershire who are willing to become part of this recruitment/distribution team. It makes an excellent chance to explore the towns and countryside close to the Canal and (within reason) can be undertaken at your own pace. We hope to have a co-ordinator established by the next Edition of **The Wharfinger** when further details will be published. Until then our thanks to all who volunteered to help.

It would be quite wrong to leave this topic without expressing great appreciation for the fact that Margaret and Derek Gray were prepared to temporarily take on the mailing duties, at an hours notice, in order to get the last Edition on its way. *Thank you.*

The Wharfinger has become famous - we received a statutory notice requiring the Canal Trust to deliver two copies of each Edition of **The Wharfinger** to an agent acting for the Libraries of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the National Library of Scotland, the Library of Trinity College, Dublin and the National Library of Wales pursuant to the Copyright Act, 1911. *Will it be 10 Downing Street requesting copies next?*

As well as an article about the construction of the new Roman Road "Bridge" (plus photographs taken during construction) in the next Edition of **The Wharfinger** we will also include further details of the many events - locally and further afield that the Trading Company will be attending to promote our work and raise funds - and full details of the Open Weekend...

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS SATURDAY 1st APRIL

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Whilst we try to ensure dates are correct please verify them with a relevant Organiser.

Cover:- Thanks to Sandy Wooldridge, Creative Labels Ltd., Rotherwas, Hereford.

Membership records are computerised. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1984, your entry is available for inspection if you send a SAE to the Membership Secretary.

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ALL MEMBERSHIP QUERIES

Contact The H&G Canal Trust,

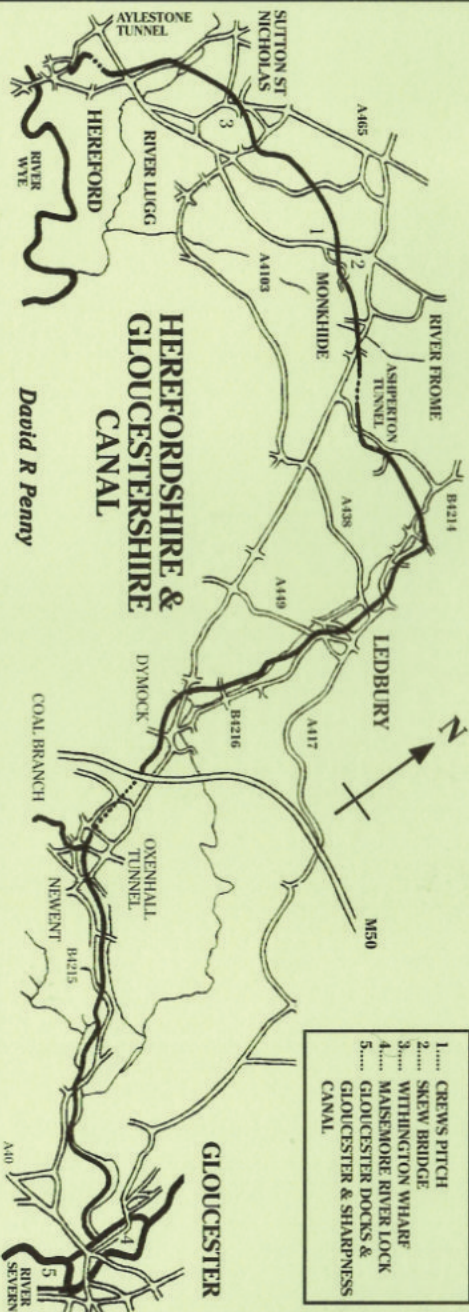
OR

8, Bloomfield Road, Gloucester, GL1 5BL

6, Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

(sae please)

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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.