

Sharpness' Scuppered Ships

The Sharpness Ships Graveyard

**Winner of the Nautical Archaeological Societies converted award: *Adopt A Wreck 2007*
& *The Forest of Dean Local History Societies: Scott-Garrett Award 2008***



Billed as the eagerly awaited last instalment of the hulks trilogy and hue of rock and iron, you are cordially invited to accompany local maritime historian Paul Barnett on a pictorial journey through the scattered maritime remains which litter the regions windswept foreshore, adjacent to the turbulent waters of the mighty River Severn.

Entitled *Sharpness ' Scuppered Fleet the Sharpness Ships Graveyard*, this 45 minute -1hour slide presentation effectively secures closure on long lost maritime memories of this industrious region by the authors skilful and now familiar format of using rare and historic images to catalogue the history of the thirty eight vessels, which make up this fascinating collection. Stretching from the foot of round house of old *Severn & Wye Railway Bridge*, the viewer is taken of on a riverside pictorial journey southwards, skirting the *Sharpness to Gloucester Old Arm* only to arrive safely at the foot of the Sharpness Entrance North Pier.

Originally beached in 1968 at the behest of former canal Superintendent Donald Fowler to prevent scour and the continued formation of the '*Gutter*' The Sharpness Ship Graveyard is now known to be the last resting place of the Appledore built '*Village Fleet*' including amongst others the *Cam, Tuffley, Barnwood and Cranham*.

Positioned forward and almost totally obscured by vegetation and years of deposition, lie the affectionately named Bird Class Barges the *Severn Falcon, Severn Hawk and Severn Eagle* who as you will see are deemed to fly no more and yet remain of great industrial importance.

Further a field, the Sharpness foreshore once hummed to the hammers of destruction as famous vessels such as the Bridgwater Schooner *C & F Nurse*, the mighty crane elevator *Cardiff* and the Aust ferry *Severn King* all gave up their strength as they were broken and carted from the waters of the river for salvage.

As with *Fore & Aft*, and *Lydney's Lost Fleet*, the viewer is assured of an informative look at the Severn' maritime past though anecdotal memories, light hearted nautical banter and welcome audience participation throughout. Further *Sharpness' Scuppered Ships* attempts to highlight a forgotten chapter of this hugely successful country dock and its resilient maritime community

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