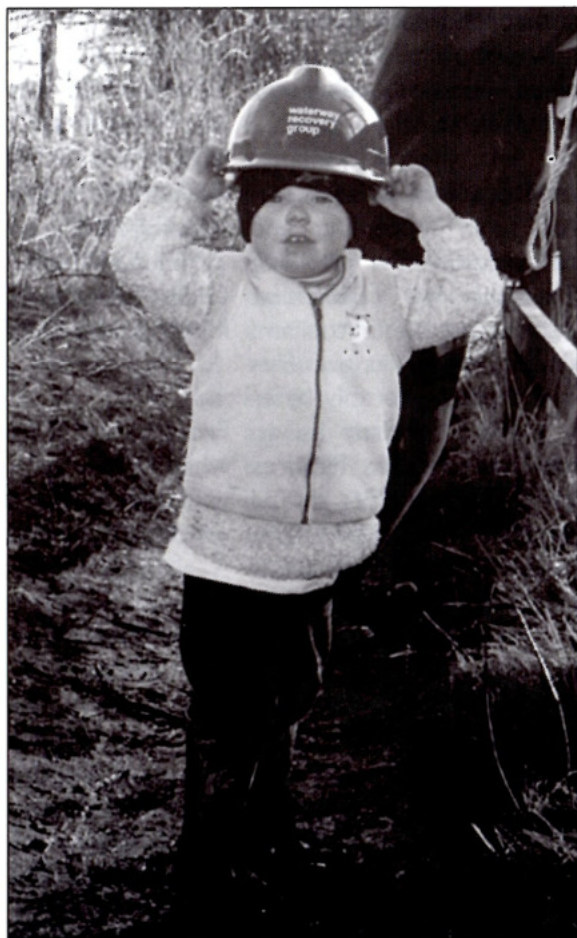
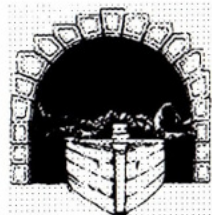


THE PORTAL




THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL
NUMBER 5

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The Portal is the quarterly magazine of the Friends of the Cromford Canal.

The Friends of the Cromford Canal exist to promote the restoration to navigable condition of the whole of the Cromford Canal.

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Last dates for acceptance of articles - end of March, June, September and December, for publication the following month. All articles for publication should be sent direct to the Editor, and can be submitted on paper, as text files on a 3½" diskette or preferably by e-mail to the Editor at: . Pictures for The Portal or the Web Site should be scanned at 200 dpi (dots per inch) and saved to a size of 600 by 400 pixels and may be sent electronically or on disk or CD.

For all the very latest news, plus loads of other information and pictures, don't forget to visit our Web Site: www.cromfordcanal.org.uk

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The friends of the Cromford Canal are Corporate Members of:



CONTENTS

ONE YEAR DOWN.....	3
NEWS UPDATE	4
CHAIRMAN'S CHAT	5
WHAT A DIFFERENCE TWO DAYS MAKE.....	8
ARCHIVIST'S REPORT	11
A PROFILE OF THE (NEW) SECRETARY	13
MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	15
STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR RESTORATION	18
BENJAMIN OUTRAM	20
DERBYSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST STATEMENT	21
TIMES CHANGE	24
OUR FRIENDS ELECTRONIC ...	25
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2002	30

Front cover: "I wanna be a WRGie when I grow up! - our youngest volunteer for Operation Ironville
(Photo by the Editor)

Back cover: What a difference 2 days make! "Before" and "After", taken from Bridge 37 in Ironville
(Photos by the Editor)



And **WHAT** a year! We started off just over a year ago with nothing - see what we've got now! A vibrant organisation which is already achieving great things, both on the ground and in the corridors of power. It isn't going all our way, but I'm sure we'll win through in the end. The trouble is, having hit the ground running fairly fast, we've got to keep on going: a problem as much of what we need to achieve can only be done by a "softly, softly" approach and shouting (and pushing too hard) won't get us anywhere - in fact it could be counterproductive.

In terms of practical things, we are looking at the possibility of another cleanup, possibly in the Sawmills / Ambergate area, on a privately-owned and badly littered and overgrown section of the canal. More firmly, put Sunday 14th September in your diaries, as we're having another Sponsored Walk! We hope this will take much the same form as last year's, with the difference that we want to **TRIPLE**, yes triple the number of participants. This is going to involve a lot more work - are **YOU** willing to help? Contact our new secretary, Pat Morriss, if you can.

Whilst we're talking about new people, can I extend a welcome to Mary Bellamy, who's taken over as Treasurer and thank Sheila for keeping us all in check. Thanks are also due to Yasmin Dowgun, who has stood down as Secretary. I don't think I've ever seen someone writing the minutes of a meeting on a laptop as it happens!

One thing which is currently exercising the minds on the e-mail list is where we should start actual restoration of the waterway, in terms of putting serious spades in the ground. It's generally agreed that in the big picture, the condition of Butterley Tunnel is pivotal to the restoration of the canal as a whole, but where to start elsewhere? The section shouldn't have any current major wildlife issues (so restoration can show an improvement) it should have its own water supplies, have no major engineering problems and be relatively cheap to do. One thought was to start with the Pinxton Arm, but my own suggestion is to restore from the Ironville Car Park up to Golden Valley Bridge. This section only requires tree clearance and digging, it's got its own water supply and restoring it will cure a land drainage problem. What do you think?



On Sunday 23rd March the Friends of the Cromford Canal hosted the quarterly meeting of the Northern Canals Association. The meeting was held at the Ironville Institute, to whom our thanks go for looking after us all. The NCA is an informal group of canal societies from the Midlands and North who meet to discuss topics of mutual interest to further their restorations. Friends Chairman Mike Kelly outlined the progress made in the 12 months since the formation of the FCC and Archivist Hugh Potter gave a slide show taking the group on a historical journey along the canal.

This was followed by a 'real-time' journey in the form of a walk up and down the Ironville Lock Flight on a remarkably sunny and warm day. With less than 2 months having passed since the Operation Ironville work party, it was heartening to see a group of children 'playing' in the canal - but instead of throwing things in, they were clearing them out!

WESTWARD HO! (WELL ACTUALLY NORTH WESTWARD) *(by Patrick Morriss)*

On Thursday 27th March 2003 the Friends of the Cromford Canal held their first open meeting away from the Ironville/Langley Mill southern section

area. A public meeting had been arranged in Sawmills Village Hall for the residents of the Sawmills, Bullbridge and Ambergate areas to address any concerns they may have with regard to the proposals for the restoration of the canal in this particular locality.

The meeting was well supported with 50+ people attending, comprising roughly one-third existing local members and two-thirds local residents and business people. Friend's secretary Patrick Morriss welcomed the guests to the meeting and introduced the speaker for the night, Mike Kelley, chairman of the FCC. Mike spoke of the history of the canal, its current condition and problems before concluding with comments concerning the Friends' plans for restoration emphasising the need for local co-operation and full support for restoration. Mike also put forward a few suggestions as to how the impact of the proposed restoration could be mitigated by slight deviations to the original course utilising disused railway tracks etc.

The reaction from the local population was good with several current owners of parts of the canal bed expressing their support for the restoration. The only voice of protest - not concerning restoration - was that on the last sponsored walk some participants had not followed the accepted right of way, so remember this September stick to

the footpaths! We need the active support of ALL local residents if we are to achieve our aim.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

by Mike Kelley

Just over a year ago there was nothing. No one was looking after the interests of the Cromford Canal. The canal was officially regarded as two separate items; the northern section and the southern section, as though they were not even the same canal. The canal was dead.

Then thirteen of us formed a sub-committee of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association (ECP&DA) to look after the Cromford Canal. Because of the demise of the former Cromford Canal Society we could not go along with that name, so we became the Friends of the Cromford Canal.

There were a number of high points during our first year.

On March 12th. 2002 there were just 13 of us, today there are 550. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal thought they had done well when they had 160 members join during their first year.

The Cromford Canal has reached British Waterway's restoration league, Tranche 4 as they call it. (4th Division, but we are there).

We have managed to get the Cromford Canal into the Amber Valley Borough

Council Local Plan Revision. Which was most important as destruction was still continuing.

We have applied to the Charity Commission for Charitable status. A lot of paper work and meetings went into this.

We have had a Sponsored walk in September - 100 participants - which raised about £2,500. This helped us through the year financially to produce leaflets, car stickers and help with costs of the Portal.

The Cromford is now referred to as 'one' canal and no longer as two separate canals, the northern section and the southern section.

On the Pinxton Branch the Bolsover District Council actively supported our aims.

We have a Patron: I received a most welcome letter from His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, in which he said, "Yes, I should only be too delighted and proud to become Patron of the Friends of the Cromford Canal. I share your view that the Cromford canal has been overlooked, particularly with all the attention the Mill has received."

THE OBSTACLES

No project as large as the restoration of the Cromford Canal can go ahead without meeting obstacles and there have been a number of obstacles we have had to face and deal with:

Someone wrote to the Charity Commission saying they should not give us charity status and the Commission wrote to us to say that unless we could get approval from the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust they would not give us Charity Status. (Where the letter came from we were not informed).

There has been considerable opposition to our proposals from the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. However following two meetings with the DWT we are now getting to know one another a lot better and the Trust are looking at their requirements for an ecological study on the Langley Mill to Ironville section.

When the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, British Waterways, Groundwork Trust and ourselves have come to an arrangement later this year on what we are looking for in an ecological study, this will go out to contract. The cost of the study will be between £5,000 and £10,000. This will not hold the DWT to agree with, or support the restoration, but at least it will give a better idea of how we should progress.

Butterley Engineering has applied for outline Planning Permission to build 120 houses over the line of the Butterley Tunnel, admitting that, 'Development

on the site may impact the structural stability of the tunnel.' Written objections were sent in from British Waterways, The Inland Waterways Association and the Friends of the Cromford Canal. The Butterley Engineering Company protested the objections, stating that the sale of the land was the only way in which to raise sufficient capital to modernise the business and fight off foreign competition. The suggestion being that if planning permission were not granted, the company could close.

One member applied for permission to re-start the horse boat from Cromford, but Derbyshire County Council put so many restrictions on the operation, that he withdrew his proposal. In an Email from this member he said, " We want to run trips on a canal, not on a duck-pond in a Theme Park." This is a great pity and we feel that Derbyshire CC are being rather shortsighted, as a horse boat would have raised the profile of the canal and the FCC.

THE WAY AHEAD

In the short term we need to increase the numbers of Committee positions and are looking for a Publicity Officer and Fund Raising/Sales Officer.

We will continue to pursue Charity Status and hopefully this will soon be obtained, now that we are talking to the Wildlife Trust. A letter from the Director of the DWT was received which she said, "Whatever future position the Trust may take on this particular restoration issue, it is not

opposed in principle or in practice to the Friends becoming a registered charity." We welcome this spirit of cooperation.

We will be working toward the rebuilding of the flight of locks at Ironville and have re-applied for a 'Derbyshire Aggregate Levy Grant' of £31,000 to re-water the Ironville lock flight. Last year the scheme was four times over subscribed and we were deemed to be too far from an aggregate extraction site. (Opencast coal is not "aggregate" as defined by the scheme)

This time we have been advised that smaller grants might be available and we have tailored our application to do one lock by contractors, or several by volunteers. British Waterways are keen to retain more water in the lock flight and to improve the environment and habitat. If the DALGS application fails again we will be looking at the National Lottery, or the East Midlands Development Agency, or even to Europe.

Following the canal clean-up we are talking to British Waterways about increased maintenance of the Ironville Locks section. We will also try and work closely with the DWT. and seek closer ties to Derbyshire CC

On Sunday 14th September a second Sponsored Walk will take place. We

need help in arranging this and more walkers are wanted, we want to aim at 300 WALKERS. So please contact the various groups around the area to increase the numbers of participants.

We are aiming at forming sub-committees to share the load. One sub-committee for Summer Shows, one for Fund Raising and one for Strategic Actions. If you want to see even faster progress then please put your name forward to partake in one of these sub-committees. If everyone leaves it to someone else, progress will be so much slower.

In the summer of 2004 there will be a Cromford Canal Festival, maybe adjacent to the Newlands Inn, Golden Valley. Rather than have this at the Cromford Wharf area, where there is already a great deal of attention around the Mills, we seek to bring attention of the canal in the southern section. We will have trips on the narrow gauge railway, exhibits of canal ware, corn dolly making, clog making, canal artists, brass bands, Morris dancers, children's entertainment, folk singers, barbecue Saturday night and jazz band etc. Add to this The Legger's Beer, and Canal Brew Tea etc., etc. Can you help us to make this a success?

So let us go forward in the same spirit that has got us so far, so fast.



WHAT A DIFFERENCE TWO DAYS MAKE.....

by The Editor

(This article was written on the evening of Sunday 2nd February)

This weekend has seen the first practical work carried out on the Cromford Canal by the Friends of the Cromford Canal since its formation in March of last year. I've never been involved in waterways restoration in any form whatsoever, so was looking forward to seeing what went on in my rôle as dispassionate observer and recorder of events.

After a trip to take "before" photos, a phone call late on Friday confirmed that the skips for rubbish and portable toilet (waterways restorers for the use of) had been delivered on site, so on Saturday morning I made my way down to the junction of Cinder Bank and Parkside Drive in Ironville - hard by Bridge 36, there to find the most important facility required by restorers, a caravan dispensing hot drinks: FREE to those wearing a Waterways Recovery Group (or WRG - pronounced werg - for short) hard hat! I gather that normally WRG provide this sort of facility at a working weekend (and indeed the kit was on site and available) but it was one job less for a restorer to do and the bacon butties were equally welcome.

The skips were moved from the place

they'd been dropped off and placed strategically by Bridge 37, oddly enough in the same place as the rubbish lorry had been parked in 1976, when the flight was last cleared. The BW gang arrived, complete with Land Rover and Tree Eating Machine, and many hands soon got the latter on the towpath below Pottery Lock, where tree cutting had already started. The Tree Eating Machine (being contracted to work only between Monday and Friday) was most reluctant to work on a Saturday, and refused to start for some minutes. Somebody suggested a squirt of Easy Start, that wondrous aerosol that can persuade even the most reluctant Diesel engine into life, but the threat was enough, the engine kicked into life and we were OFF! Fairly quickly the side of the canal was covered in shredded wood as the Tree Eating Machine lived up to its name and shredded all the stuff that had already been cut for it.

Chain Saw Man was tackling the big stuff (the logs getting stacked to one side for later collection) but these were the only mechanical aids. All other tooling was strictly mandraulic: bow saws, slashers, short stubby single-bladed saws tackled the scrub and bushes and ladders, ropes and grapnels were used to get the rubbish out of the canal bed and lock chambers, then to



A good crowd at Boat Dock Lock on Sunday

(The Editor)



..... and this was only HALF of what came out!

(The Editor)

be transported by wheelbarrow (or in one case, by a "rescued" wheelie bin) up the towpath to the skips where it was sorted into steel, miscellaneous rubbish, tyres and beer kegs (of which there were two: both empty, of course!).

The 40 volunteers (odd, it seemed as if there were a lot more) got themselves well spread out below Pottery Lock as far as Bridge 38 (the railway bridge) and the towpath was fairly humming with people. There was an interesting mixture: Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association stalwarts, most of whom had seen it all before having been here in 1976, WRG volunteers from other parts of the country (I heard Market Harborough, Barnsley and the North West area mentioned) and locals, who mucked in happily with the rest.

By lunch time, two skips were getting full so a third one was positioned and work continued above Pottery Lock up towards Boat Dock Lock, where the ladies of WRG were hard at work clearing undergrowth. By the end of Saturday, we'd got 3 skips well filled and a good two-thirds of the work done: I gather this is more-or-less standard practice, and allows the WRGies to have one hell of a Saturday night!

Sunday morning saw a later start for me: by the time I arrived, work was starting to take place up from Boat Dock Lock towards the site of Top of Flight Lock, long since demolished as part of the ill-starred flood relief scheme of the late 70's. It was only

today that I discovered how this was so badly botched: somebody couldn't read a plan and made everything twice as big as it should have been! I also got the chance to photograph the remains of the top gates of Top of Flight Lock, hidden in the jungle of vegetation opposite the end of the Pinxton Arm and to look at the remains of the arm which came off the Canal above Top of Flight Lock and originally went across what is now Cinder Bank and down to Codnor Park Forge. This arm was cut when Cinder Bank was built, but the remains could be converted into off-line linear moorings in the future.

I also spent a fair bit of time talking to the locals taking their Sunday strolls - most were impressed at the improvement the weekend had brought. The local youngsters, to their credit, wanted to get involved, so once the Tree Eating Machine had been winched down onto the towpath above Boat Dock Lock they were allowed to spread the tree chippings on the towpath: perhaps not strictly allowed but we want to encourage the local people to accept the canal as their own: helping restore it may help them to stop chucking things into it once the work was done.

The Ladies of WRG (once the landowner had told us the offside of Pottery Lock was a public right of way) set to clearing the offside wall of the lock so the stonework (still in remarkably good condition) could be examined in greater detail at a later date. A similar treatment on Boat Dock

Lock saw its copings cleared for the first time in decades. Rubbish from the top section had to be barrowed up the bank navvie-fashion: one person on the barrow, one on a long length or rope to pull and help get the load up. Another couple of skips were filled by the time the BBC cameraman arrived to film the final stages. Two interviews (one short, one long) in the slightly quieter surroundings of Pottery Lock, now almost clear of undergrowth saw things wrapped up, following which I barrowed a load of tools down the flight, there to be initiated into the Mystery of Packing a WRG Trailer.

there's a place for everything (including the fridge/freezer for weekend camps) and everything MUST go in its allotted place, or else it all just doesn't go in! This involved removing some stuff so the front of the trailer could be properly packed, following which the wheelbarrows, rakes (including dung rakes, known better to waterways folks as kebs), West Country spades, flat spades, sledge hammers, mattocks and pickaxes were stacked and strapped in order before the tailgate went up, the Transit hooked up and all headed off, Barnsley-bound.

I've heard much about these, but this was my first close examination of one of the famous red Transits and its accompanying trailer. The instructions on the latter raised a smile: "Ensure lights are connected" "ensure brake is off" "ensure wheel clamp is removed" "ensure brain is in gear"..... Packing the trailer is an art in itself:

By this time the rain had set in: up to this point we'd been blessed with good weather, though the sprinkling of snow on Friday night had caused a small amount of worry on the part of one or two people, one of whom had rung me on Saturday morning, just to confirm it was still on. It was, we did and the top of the Ironville flight looks 100% better!

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

by Hugh Potter

TROUBLE AT t'TUNNEL

Friend Brian Key discovered the following cutting from an unnamed newspaper dated 12th November 1868.

"HEANOR PETTY SESSIONS. MONDAY Nov. 9th (Before R. S. W. Sitwell and J. K. Fitzherbert Esqs.)

OBSTRUCTING THE CROMFORD CANAL - James Rodgers, of Crich, was charged by Henry Herbert Loveday, of Derby, with having on the 10th September, at the township of Pentrich, placed and suffered a boat to remain upon the Cromford Canal at the Butterley tunnel mouth, so as to obstruct the navigation of the said canal, and failed immediately upon request made, and for five hours and

more thereafter, to remove such boat. Mr. Heathcote of Nottingham appeared for defendant. The hearing of this case occupied a considerable time.

About five o'clock in the afternoon of the day in question, defendant had the care of a boat passing upon the Cromford canal. On arriving at the west end of Butterley tunnel which is a mile and three quarters long, and only admits of the passage of one boat, he was not only told not to enter it, but to remove back, as there were boats from the east end about to emerge. Defendant, notwithstanding, persisted

in going into the tunnel and so stopped the navigation, and did not remove his boat back till some hours afterwards, when upwards of 20 boats were waiting to get through the tunnel.

In cross-examination it was elicited that the boats from the east end of the tunnel had started at an hour at variance with the rules of the canal. Defendant was fined 1s. and 10s. 6d. costs. Mr. Heathcote asked the magistrates to grant him a case, which they did, on account of a breach of the rules in question."

NOTICE.

EXTRACT FROM THE RULES, BYELAWS AND ORDERS MADE BY THE CROMFORD CANAL COMPANY: 30TH MAY 1804

NO BOAT SHALL ENTER BUTTERLEY TUNNEL AT THE EAST END EXCEPT BETWEEN THE HOURS OF FIVE AND SIX IN THE MORNING, ONE AND TWO IN THE AFTERNOON AND NINE AND TEN AT NIGHT AND NO BOAT SHALL ENTER THE WEST END THEREOF, EXCEPT BETWEEN THE HOURS OF ONE AND TWO IN THE MORNING, NINE AND TEN IN THE FORENOON AND FIVE AND SIX AT NIGHT, AND EVERY BOAT SHALL MAKE ITS PASSAGE THROUGH THE SAME WITH ALL POSSIBLE DESPATCH AND ON NO ACCOUNT EXCEED THREE HOURS AFTER SUCH ENTRY. AND IF ANY PERSON OR PERSONS HAVING THE CARE OF ANY BOAT, SHALL OFFEND IN ANY OF THE PARTICULARS AFORESAID, HE OR THEY SHALL FORFEIT FOR EVERY SUCH OFFENCE FORTY SHILLINGS AND SHALL ALSO TURN BACK ON MEETING ANOTHER BOAT IN THE SAID TUNNEL.



A re-creation by our Archivist of the board that was displayed over the entrance to each end of Butterley Tunnel. One wonders how many boatmen could actually read it.

If we look at the times of permitted entry as displayed on the board at each end we can see that at 5pm James Rodgers was within his rights as far as

time went, but it presumably the company man had told him not to enter as he knew that boats were coming through late the other way. Hence perhaps the nominal fine, but the costs were still considerable.

The newspaper continues:

"ANOTHER OBSTRUCTION CHARGE. - George Key, of Crich, was next charged with obstructing the canal on the 11th September. Mr Heathcote again appeared. It appeared that defendant had placed his boat in such a position in the tunnel that another boat could not get out of it. The magistrates remarked that the defendant had committed a wilful obstruction, and imposed a penalty of 5s. and 19s. 6d. costs. - James Strutt and Elizabeth Bradley were also charged with obstructing the canal, but the charge in each case was withdrawn."

(Editor's note: 5s - five shillings - 25p:

19s. 6d - nineteen shillings and sixpence - 98p)

George Key gets a higher fine, possibly because he was totally out of line (and time) but we are not told.

What is interesting is that these two cases happened on two consecutive days and were worthy of reporting in the paper. So, was this an everyday occurrence? Was the newspaper short of copy? Whichever, it suggests that further research into newspapers of the time for the Ripley area might reveal some more stories of the canal and its traffic. Any volunteers?

If you come across any interesting historic tit-bits, gossip or rumours about life on or by the Cromford Canal, please get in touch with our Archivist Hugh Potter (contact details on back page) who will happy to pass it on to a much wider audience!

A PROFILE OF THE (NEW) SECRETARY

by Patrick Morriss

Patrick (Pat) Morriss was born in Holbrook Maternity Home on St. Patrick's Day (17th March for those who can not remember) 1958, and having unaccountably failed his 11 plus was educated at Benjamin Outram School Ripley, not that he learnt much about the engineer at that time. His

parents have owned the old wharf house at what was Pentrich Wharf since the early 1950's. The 100-year-old photograph of a barge being hand loaded with coal at this location has become a classic.

His first experience of a canal that was

usable and not for messing about in or near was on his uncle's boat moored at Trent Lock, this was not a canal boat but a small sailing boat (with the mast permanently lowered!). After his uncle moved this and subsequent boats down to South Devon Pat became seduced by things like tides, large waves and rocky headlands, the sorts of things not associated with the Erewash.

He trained as a Work Study Engineer before moving into production management in the pre-cast concrete industry where he stayed for 16 years before moving to an agricultural building contractor. Of course what he really wants to do is make his living as an antique dealer and restorer, but at least he manages to turn up a few old canal postcards and old books/documents.

At the age of 35 Pat took a year out and studied for a Masters Degree in Business Administration at the University of Derby (which might explain why he ends up with an admin. task for the FCC!)

As Pat points out, he is not a trained engineer but he does know which way is "up" on architects' plans and knows a bit about pre-cast and reinforced concrete. As such he intends to find the time to take an active role in the

restoration sub committee of the Friends which should have had its first meeting by the time you all read this. He also has to find the time to finish the restoration of his two-hundred-year-old property in Holbrook which he will get around too eventually.

He readily admits that he is not a canal "anorak" but is driven by a wider interest in industrial archaeology including the early tramroads etc associated with the Cromford canal. This is coupled with a desire to see the Cromford become a wildlife corridor between the Erewash, Amber and Derwent valleys as he remembers the canal in the 1960's before Nitrate run off and Glyceria swamped all other life forms!

Pat does not have an ambition to own a narrow boat but would like a steam driven Windermere type launch as long as he can get it through the Butterley tunnel and other pinch points and did not have too deeper draught. Talking of draught it would also be useful if it could get alongside the Cromford canal side pubs. In the meantime he intends to do what he can to ensure the re-opening of the entire Cromford Canal including the Pinxton Branch and associated canal side features.



GET ALL STEAMED UP!

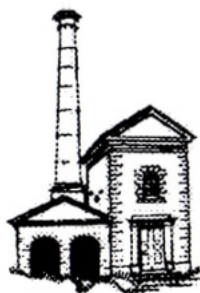
Leawood Pump will be in steam on the following dates for 2003, usually from around noon to 5pm

Sunday & Monday 20th & 21st April
Sunday & Monday 4th & 5th May
Saturday & Sunday 7th & 8th June
Saturday & Sunday 5th & 6th July
Saturday & Sunday 2nd & 3rd August
Sunday & Monday 24th & 25th August
Saturday & Sunday 4th & 5th October

Entry is free but donations are welcomed

If you have never seen this wonderful machine in steam, you've missed a treat!

Put the dates in your diaries now!



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

by Yvonne Shattower

As we enter the second year of the Friends of the Cromford Canal, it is exciting to know that we have His Grace the Duke of Devonshire as our Patron. He is very keen to follow our progress and his patronage will, I am sure, be a tremendous asset in the furtherance of our aims.

At the Annual General Meeting at Ironville on Thursday 19 March I was able to announce that we had 550 Members. Since then I have added a few more names to the list, and at the time of writing our membership stands at 570. What an incredible total for our first year!

During AGM, the members present



You can tell it's a **REAL** canal restoration if you get a Waterways Recovery Group Transit and trailer in attendance *(The Editor)*



Hot food and drink were most welcome! *(The Editor)*



John Baylis guiding the next generation of restorers

(The Editor)



Shifting rubbish with a wheelbarrow, navy-style!

(The Editor)

agreed that the membership fees should be increased by £1 to make single membership £6 and couples £9. We will also be introducing a life membership when our Charity Status is confirmed. This will be £100 for single membership and £150 for couples. I explained during the meeting that when the fees were fixed we did not know how many members we would attract, what they would expect, or what we could offer them. As things have turned out, we have been able to offer much more than we thought we could in the first year. We produce a quarterly magazine, have published a Walker's Guide, (see details elsewhere) organised a 'Clean Up' and held meetings. To do all this we needed money, and your Committee felt that reluctantly we would have to ask for an increase in the membership fees to support our future development. We hope that you agree that the increase is justified.

In the last magazine, I sent out our first notices for renewal subscriptions, and I would like to thank all the members

who paid so promptly, but I am afraid that, for some of you, this could be your last edition of the 'Portal' because you have failed to send me your subscription. You will find a separate notice in this magazine if this applies to you. It is not too late, however, so **PLEASE** send your money in **NOW**. If your renewal is not received, you will not be sent any more editions of the Portal, and if you have an e mail address it will be removed from the Cromford Mailing list. Those members who joined us in April, May or June last year will find a yellow form to send me your renewal subscription. Cheques or Postal Orders payable to Friends of the Cromford Canal, please.

Sadly we seem to have lost a few members who have moved away and not left a forwarding address so the Post Office has returned their magazines to me. This is a great shame, as we do not like to lose touch with you. If you change your address, E mail details, or unsubscribe from the Cromford Canal Mailing List let me know. We don't want to lose you!

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR RESTORATION

by John Boucher

The restoration of the Cromford is likely to cost a lot of money, even if a proportion is done by volunteers. To get a lot of money, the people we hope to get it from will first demand a well prepared, well argued

case for giving it to us. This takes time. British Waterways have suggested, perhaps tongue in cheek, that we should be looking at a 2020 opening. This is probably as good a guess as any.

So how do we get there? The animated discussions on the FCC Mailing List have brought forward a number of useful ideas as to what we should aim to start first. One school thinks that the Butterley Tunnel should be tackled first, another that the only place to start is Langley Mill, and that we should work progressive upwards. This school has been subdued of late, with the realisation that the wildlife conflicts may take some time to resolve. A late starter is that we should first start on the Pinxton arm which is level, relatively unobstructed, and could be set up as a showpiece of what can be done.

The truth is that these are all possibilities, but they will have to be taken apart and analysed by means of the three E's: Engineering, Environmental and Economic studies, at the same time as demonstrating their importance to our Historical Heritage. Each consideration will have to be weighted and points given; at the end of the day, the option with the highest score of points will be the starting point. It is unlikely that we will be able to obtain finance to reconstruct the whole canal at one go, so an order of practical priorities will have to be established. However, having said this, unexpected opportunities do sometimes arise, and we must maintain flexibility to enable us to grasp them when they do.

We already have a preliminary study, "The Binnie Report", for the Langley Mill to Ironville section, which is a useful starting point, but needs updating

and developing, and extending to cover the whole canal. At the end of the day, we shall probably end up with several volumes each the size of the Binnie Report. Detailed surveys and designs, accurate cost estimates, and a business plan taking in commercial opportunities and highlighting sources of future income will be essential. We shall have to be clear about who will own the canal and maintain it once it is restored, and where will they obtain the income to do this properly? And this is all before we can start actual construction.

So where do we go from here? At the present time, the Heritage Lottery Fund is the main source of funding for our type of project. But even by HLF standards, ours will be a large project, and other sources will have to be found along the way. The starting point is to apply for a grant to appoint a Project Coordinator and undertake the studies.

Before we can even talk to the HLF we need to get a few basic ideas sorted, and prepare an outline of what we are hoping to do eventually. To this end, a small working party has met and been given tasks to establish such things as who actually owns the canal bed, prepare a concise but accurate history of the canal, and summarise the archaeological remains. We shall also look at potential commercial opportunities along the line, and start on a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) for each alternative. Wildlife studies are being handled by a separate working party, but we shall maintain close liaison

with them.

These tasks will enable us to put together a short preliminary project report which we shall take along to the HLF to discuss the project in a meaningful way, and apply for our first grant, to undertake the detailed studies. It all takes time, and summer distractions are likely to interrupt the

process, but we hope to be in a position to meet the HLF by early Autumn. And remember, an HLF grant would only cover 75% of the cost, so keep up the fundraising in the meantime!

We shall keep you informed of progress via future Portals.

BENJAMIN OUTRAM (by Prof. R.B. Schofield)

Book Review by Patrick Morriss

Following Prof. Schofield's membership of the Friends of Cromford Canal, this seemed a good opportunity to review this title published by Merton Priory Press of Cardiff.

Although not a new publication (it was first published in 2000) the formation of the Friends of Cromford Canal and Prof. Schofield's membership will probably create renewed interest in this book. Of the seventeen chapters roughly two thirds concern local canals, tramroads and railways, Benjamin Outram's family background and the Butterley Company. The promotion and construction of the Cromford Canal alone account for two chapters with interesting revelations as to the role (or lack of one) of Richard Arkwright in the promotion of the canal.

Other local canal projects with chapters in their own right include the

Nottingham and Nutbrook Canals, the Derby Canal, the Peak Forest Canal and the Ashby Canal.

All of the chapters explore the use of what were then new and radical technologies. It must be remembered that the profession of civil engineering was in its infancy and Benjamin Outram was still only 25 years of age when he was carrying out a major share of the design and construction of the Cromford Canal. The failure of the Derwent aqueduct is very well documented including blaming the use of Crich lime in its construction which "had not set at all" in fact the structure was on the limit of then current knowledge, modern engineers should perhaps note Jessop's offer of paying the rebuilding costs out of his own pocket!

For those of us who have an interest in industrial archaeology in general the chapters on early horse drawn

tramways and railways are fascinating. These include a chapter devoted to the railways associated with the Cromford Canal itself and demonstrate that even very early in the nineteenth century the new civil engineers recognised that they may one day supplant canals as the means of bulk transport.

The chapter concerning the establishment and early years of Benjamin Outram & Co., later to become the Butterley Company deal with issues involving the recruitment and retention (and poaching!) of skilled labour and early business administration and management. This history demonstrates that it was not just the engineering practicalities that were

pushing the limits of known techniques managers were as well.

Outram's tragically early death at 41 ended what would have been a much longer involvement with the emerging railway industry and also plunged his widow Margaret and five children into long lasting financial difficulties caused by having mixed private and company financial matters.

I received this book as a Christmas present and read it rapidly, but because of the topic based chapter layout it makes a very good reference work that can be re-read at will. Well worth acquiring a copy quote ISBN 1 898937 42 7

DERBYSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST STATEMENT

THE PROPOSED RESTORATION OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust supports in principle the restoration of disused canals where this will benefit local communities and wildlife. Where a canal has limited existing ecological value, sensitive restoration can bring benefits for nature conservation.

In the case of the Cromford Canal, however, we are concerned that the idea of restoration is being pursued

without any informed consideration of the environmental, social or economic costs and benefits. We believe that the national, regional and local ecological importance of the canal corridor as it is at present is very likely to outweigh the potential benefits of restoring it for recreation. However despite making every effort to enter into constructive dialogue with the Friends of Cromford Canal, our concerns, and those of other environmentally-minded groups and

Canal, our concerns, and those of other environmentally-minded groups and individuals, are being referred to as those of the 'wildlife lobby' and appear to be given little heed. We have therefore produced this statement in order to outline our main concerns to senior people in key organisations, and to set out our position on the proposals as they currently stand.

We understand that the current proposal is to restore the canal from Langley Mill to Cromford along its original route. Laying aside the tremendous practical difficulties presented by this plan, there is substantial ecological interest along the route that would in itself present a constraint to development:

Ecological Impacts of Restoration

There is significant biodiversity value along the entire length of the canal, including 14 County Wildlife Sites, 3 DWT Nature Reserves (Cromford Canal, Derwentside and Erewash Meadows) and 1 nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest. Many of these sites are designated entirely or partly because of the importance of the wildlife of the canal itself. There are also a large number of legally protected and nationally or locally rare plants and animals that have been recorded on or near the canal. The legal protection afforded to these species, and to the SSSI, would be likely to place restrictions on the restoration and future use of the canal. As well as being important for its ecology, the canal and

its surroundings provide a valuable opportunity for local people and visitors to enjoy wildlife through quiet recreation.

It is probable that some sites and species would tolerate restoration of the canal for navigation, providing appropriate mitigation measures were put in place during construction and within the design. However many of the plants and animals for which the above sites are designated would be unable to survive the substantial engineering works that would be required for restoration, or to adapt to the new habitat conditions it would create. Restoration would replace the current shallow water or marsh habitat (where this exists) with a very different habitat subject to disturbance both from boats and from increased numbers of people using the towpath. This disturbance would also affect species in adjacent Wildlife Sites.

It is true that even heavily used canals can be of some value to wildlife - harbouring species which can tolerate a fairly high degree of disturbance. However when compared to the current value of the canal corridor, restoration for boat traffic would in our opinion be likely to result in a much poorer habitat and a significant net loss of biodiversity. This has been the outcome of many canal restorations elsewhere, some of which have resulted in severe ecological damage.

Erewash Meadows Nature Reserve

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trusts bought this nature reserve jointly in 1996 with the sole intention of conserving its wildlife interest. The site is of regional importance for its wetland birds, as well as being of county importance for plants, invertebrates and mammals. It also includes a mile length of the disused Cromford Canal, as well as part of the southernmost section (now filled in) which linked it to the River Erewash at Langley Mill.

In our opinion the reinstatement of this section of canal would cause severe damage to the wildlife interest for which the Reserve was designated. We also consider that increased use of the restored canal for boating, walking and cycling would be incompatible with maintaining the wildlife value of the Reserve. Our main concerns are:

- the direct loss of habitat to engineering works;
- the potential impact of restoration on the hydrology of the wetland habitats, which currently receive their water both from the canal and from drains which cross the proposed route;
- ongoing disturbance to breeding and wintering birds and other wildlife from increased use of the canal for recreational purposes.

We are therefore highly unlikely to allow restoration to proceed on the section of the canal which we own, unless it was demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that mitigation

measures could be put in place to ensure that the above negative impacts would be negligible. Indeed, to justify allowing the works to our members, and to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which funded the purchase, we would need to demonstrate a benefit to the reserve. From our knowledge of the site and its wildlife we believe this to be highly unlikely.

The Friends of Cromford Canal have stated to us that the Trust agreed in principle to the restoration of the canal at the time we purchased the reserve. The Trust did not give any such assurance.

Conclusion

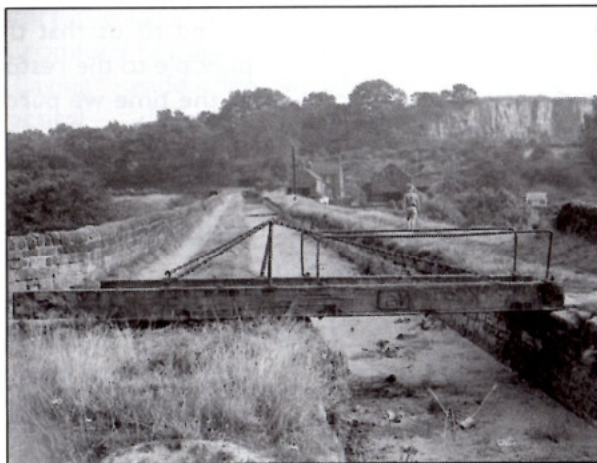
For the above reasons, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust believes that the negative environmental impacts of restoring the Cromford Canal would be substantial and very likely to outweigh any purported benefits. We therefore cannot at this time support the proposal, but would be prepared to reconsider this position in the light of a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment and mitigation plan, which demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the wildlife interest of the canal corridor would benefit from restoration. We also consider that a detailed impartial assessment of the environmental, social and economic costs and benefits should be undertaken, which would allow an informed decision by the relevant authorities on whether to undertake a restoration scheme.

We strongly urge you not to support this proposal until the information which would enable an informed decision is available.

Editor's Note: needless to say, this has provoked much discussion on the Mailing List.

TIMES CHANGE

Hugh Potter reflects on changing times and work practices



The view across Bullbridge Aqueduct towards Sawmills photographed by Frank Rodgers in the 1960's when it was still intact, if somewhat devoid of water.



... and again in the 1970's photographed by Len Waller: Mind the Gap! How long before it is reinstated?

In these days of modern equipment Saturday 2nd March 1839, the parts and technology, British Waterways were assembled in the nearby lime kilns had to close an aqueduct on the New basin, floated into position and sunk Junction Canal, still a freight carrying into place. Within 24 hours the canal waterway, for no less than six weeks in was open again and, as it was always summer 2002 simply to repaint it! Now, closed on Sundays anyway, traffic on in the good old days, they used to build the canal was not disrupted. The bridge them in a day! You don't believe me? for the railway was subsequently dug Well, read on . . . out beneath the trough.

In 1839 at Bullbridge, George Stevenson How's that for progress? needed to get his Derby to Sheffield railway (the North Midland) under the Interestingly, having saved maintenance Cromford Canal at Bull Bridge. As the costs by demolishing the railway canal was there first, the Canal aqueduct, along with the adjacent A610 Company could dictate the terms for the aqueduct, in 1968, Railtrack (or construction of the railway, and whatever they are called today) are stipulated that canal traffic should not be having to go to the cost of putting a delayed. The railway company had footbridge over the railway where the Butterley iron works produce a cast iron canal used to cross, as part of their tank 150 feet long, 9 feet wide and 6 feet works to upgrade the line from 100 to deep. It was conveyed to Bullbridge, 125 mph running. It would be nice to presumably floating in the canal, in five think that the canal is still getting its parts and, starting at midnight on own back!

OUR FRIENDS ELECTRONIC

compiled by The Editor

The DWT statement caused a for society's detritus. By no sense of good deal of discussion. Chris the word are they "valuable nature Morriss responded: reserves". Let me give you an example. 35 years ago I knew the stretch between the western mouth of Butterley tunnel and Sawmills like the annoyed me. Who are they fooling? back of my hand. This stretch was still Apart from the section between in water, but had not been used since Ambergate and Cromford, the other 1940 or so. In spite of this it was still parts of the canal where the bed is still home to Water Plantain, Branching extant are little more than linear dumps Bur-Reed, Arrowhead and Frog-Bit,

among many other plants which I'm sure are dear to the hearts of the DWT. There were roach and pike in the water, as well as flourishing numbers of Water Vole, and even the occasional Great Crested Newt. Just walk this stretch now and find how many of those plants and animals you will find.

Why is this? It's because the canal was kept dredged and dragged so that a clean water channel was open, and aggressive species such as the Common Reed were kept in check. The result was a diverse ecosystem. What do we have now? An acidic fetid mass of decaying Common Reed, crowding out everything else and not allowing any food plants to grow for the desired diverse fauna. The Water Vole on this section is now rarer than Unicorns in spite of the mythology of the DWT. (Do they ever get out and look at their reserves?) A restored canal will have an open channel, together with a slight flow from West to East providing a natural cleaning and seed dispersal route. The banks in the most part can remain natural. A speed limit of 3 knots or so will be adequate to prevent bank damage.

I am surprised that the DWT are not able to see beyond their decidedly rose-tinted contact lenses."

Dave Ratner said:

"What about a little balance here? I'm all for the preserving of our wildlife heritage and I wouldn't like to see any flora or fauna harried out of existence. But, whilst housing needs reduce the

amount of countryside by enormous quantities every day and seemingly without a whimper, surely reinstating and preserving a canal gives both wildlife and humans a bit of space?

As humans, we have to adapt to the loss of OUR habitat, as that view we cherish disappears behind a housing estate. Come on, we humans should have a little priority here. I would much prefer to walk along a canal and see limited wild life than walk through an waste and see none. 'Cos don't kid yourselves, Green Belt just means holding out till the price is right!

Tim Boddington said:

"None of us should be surprised to see a statement like this; in fact I am only surprised that they took so long.

We have to face reality and accept that our, or any other, restoration project can only proceed along established lines with many pre-restoration projects of the kind requested in the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust statement - Environmental Impact Assessment and mitigation plan Assessment of the environmental, social and economic costs and benefits

No restoration of this kind can proceed these days without such projects and we must plan for them. I have no doubt that there is now plenty of valuable experience around that will enable our case for restoration to be carried.

The statement is notable for its open

The statement is notable for its open other newsgroups I contribute to. doors - they express their concerns, all However, my contributions here are quite reasonable matters to consider - made purely from a personal point of and they "... would be prepared to view for the time being, rather than in reconsider this position [against my BW capacity. Naturally my restoration] ... which would allow an contributions will be influenced by my informed decision by the relevant experiences and work with BW, but in authorities on whether to undertake a no way (for the time being at least) restoration scheme." You can't say fairer should they be considered the 'official' than that. views of BW.

Don't slam the doors. It is up to us to On the matter of DWT's statement. show the overwhelming benefits and our I'm a great believer in using examples to case will be won. And the wildlife fans convince those who doubt something - will benefit too. And with restoration below are some suggestions of how those benefits will be shared by a much FCC can conquer DWT's views in an wider audience, an audience that will amicable and positive way.

come to enjoy the wildlife environment offered by the canal - something they I) Much is made in the statement of the don't yet know that they are missing. number of different wildlife sites and the various species these support. A

I chimed in:

"I'm inclined to agree. At the moment, all Cromford's environs (types and we've said is that we want to see the numbers of different species/number of Canal restored: no "how", no "when". SSSI's, nature reserves and county We've got to do a lot of work to answer wildlife sites) with those environs those questions and show that there are where waterways have already been tangible benefits to set against the restored - the Rochdale, the Millennium perceived "harm" to the wildlife. Chris's Link (particularly at Kilsyth), the comments are also valid - we will need Huddersfield Narrow and the K&A. to carry out a projection of how This will hopefully show that the restoring the canal will IMPROVE the Cromford's environs are nothing special habitat - something DWT seem to have - indeed waterways elsewhere have difficulty in grasping at the moment." been restored where the 'wildlife stakes' were far higher than on the

We then had some most valuable input Cromford. I have the Rochdale in from Eugene Baston, of BW's Head particular in mind here.

Office:

2) Reinforcing a point made already by others, it should be demonstrated to participate in this group along with the DWT that a thorough approach to

these matters is undertaken by BW, The jobs, economic uplift, recreational Waterways Trust, FCC, English Nature opportunities and improved community and others as part of an overall feasibility spirit. It's a slightly depressing fact of study into possible restoration. life that money, jobs and re-election are Impartial studies, full consultation, cost more important to this audience than benefit analysis to determine flora and fauna.

sustainability, EIA's - all of these are

pre-requisites to any consideration a full funding bid to aid full restoration.

6) Finally....challenge the statement "the outcome of many canal restorations.....have resulted in severe

3) Produce a document of case studies featuring restored waterways and the mitigating measures put in place to protect and enhance wildlife and habitat on these canals, both during works and after. I'm thinking of white clawed crayfish, water voles (of course!), floating plants, great crested newts, otters, etc, etc. These case studies can be backed-up by third party quotes from those partners involved.

ecological damage". DWT has a duty to prove this statement, just as FCC has the opportunity to show how restoration elsewhere has provided unarguably a far better wildlife environment than before."

Jeremy Ford contributed his first ever email:

be backed-up by third party quotes from those partners involved.

"I have not posted to this group before, but I second a lot of what Eugene has to say. My business experience,

4) Propose a site visit for DWT members to a restored waterway (via TWT), to show the positive results of restoration for navigation. Again the Rochdale appears to be the best in my opinion; this waterway also has the 'channel divided' features, where navigation issted to one side of the canal and special measures to protect wildlife are in place on the other side of the channel.

although in a very different (marketing consultancy) context, frequently involves working with organisations that are divided as to the way forward, with me as the consultant having to work against entrenched interests in the part of the organisation that doesn't want what I have been tasked to do by the hierarchy that hired me.

5) I suspect the area through which the Canal passes is more in need of job opportunities and general community uplift than other waterways vying for restoration. Gain the support of local and county councillors and MP's for a restored waterway that will provide

Almost exclusively, when the side that has hired me builds a case-study case for what they want to do, and portrays themselves as the good guys, always cooperative, always measured, always reasonable (and most importantly publicly so), relying on fact rather than opinion (but of course facts chosen by themselves to support their view), they

prevail.

The only failures I have had have been when I was called in (as it turned out often as a last resort) to try and bring warring factions together.

"Is it possible for the FOCC to do a dinghy dawdle on the (dare I say it) on the northern section to highlight our cause?"

Pat Morris responded:

I would therefore see positives for us in DWT's approach. If they want to take an antagonistic approach, without reference to impartial studies of similar situations elsewhere, and without reference to impartial evaluations of likely impact on the Cromford, so long as we always counter with vigorous but measured rational argument, backed up by fact, both in the public domain and ultimately more importantly, to the key influencers of policy, we will win."

"OK then as I'm uninitiated what's a dinghy dawdle? If it's on the northern section and is not indecent, illegal or immoral I'm probably all in favour!"

Dave came back:

"A dinghy dawdle is where we put dinghies, canoes, row boats, electric driven boats or any portable boat in the water and show the public what a canal is used for. They do it annually on the Montgomery Canal then why not us?"

"A dinghy dawdle is where we put dinghies, canoes, row boats, electric driven boats or any portable boat in the water and show the public what a canal is used for. They do it annually on the Montgomery Canal then why not us?"

Finally, Dave Tinkler suggested:

Perhaps an idea for the future.....

There's a Boat Rally at Langley Mill

on

2nd - 5th May

to celebrate

the 30th anniversary

of the

RESTORATION

of the

BASIN

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2002

Balance at March 13th. 2002	0.00
Surplus/Deficit for year	3,885.00
Balance at 31st. December 2003	3,885.00

Represented by:	- Deposit Account	
	- Current Account	3,881.33
	- Cash in hand	<u>3.17</u>
Total		3,885.00

INCOME

Memberships	2,153.00
Donations	431.25
Pie & Pea Supper	88.70
Raffles	99.50
Sales	181.49
Sponsored Walk	2,667.17
Interest	<u>1.22</u>
Total	5,622.33

EXPENDITURE

IWA Corporate membership	35.00
Insurance	65.63
Hire of halls	57.00
Portal - Printing	370.00
- Postage	142.69
- Stationary	31.96
Membership cards	25.00
Sponsored walk	202.40
Car window stickers	213.10
Leaflets	350.00
Raffle	18.76
Postage	46.21
Stationary	73.75
Photocopies	26.84
Travel expenses	64.00
Web site	9.99
Motor	<u>5.00</u>
Total	1,737.33

SURPLUS for year	3,885.00
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DON'T FORGET OUR WEB SITE www.cromfordcanal.org.uk