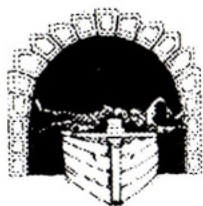


THE PORTAL



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

(Registered Charity Number 1100700)

NUMBER 18

SUMMER 2006



CONTENTS

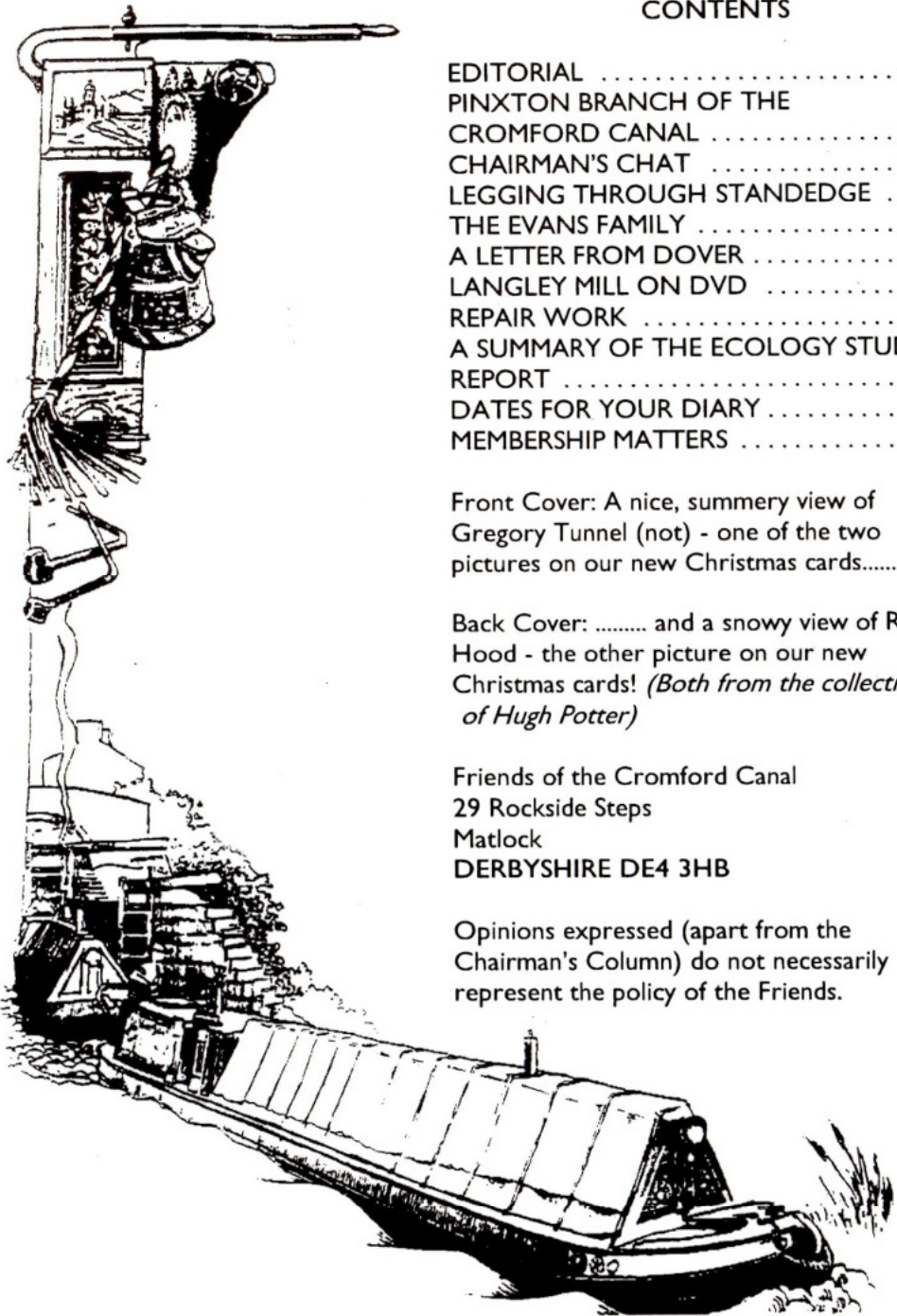
EDITORIAL	5
PINXTON BRANCH OF THE CROMFORD CANAL	6
CHAIRMAN'S CHAT	8
LEGGING THROUGH STANDEGE ..	10
THE EVANS FAMILY	16
A LETTER FROM DOVER	17
LANGLEY MILL ON DVD	18
REPAIR WORK	18
A SUMMARY OF THE ECOLOGY STUDY REPORT	19
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY	21
MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	22

Front Cover: A nice, summery view of Gregory Tunnel (not) - one of the two pictures on our new Christmas cards.....

Back Cover: and a snowy view of Robin Hood - the other picture on our new Christmas cards! (*Both from the collection of Hugh Potter*)

Friends of the Cromford Canal
29 Rockside Steps
Matlock
DERBYSHIRE DE4 3HB

Opinions expressed (apart from the Chairman's Column) do not necessarily represent the policy of the Friends.



EDITORIAL



Things move on apace: we've applied for Planning Permission for our intended works at the former Smotherfly Opencast Site. We've had lots of support but some opposition, mainly from the wildlife lobby. Most of the objections can be dealt with by adding suitable conditions to the permission and we are likely to carry out additional works to answer some queries which have been raised. It also appears that in at least one instance, one government body doesn't know what it's regional masters have decreed, so some to-ing and fro-ing is going on.

We've also now presented the Report on our Environmental Survey: there's a summary in this issue. This makes difficult reading to the non-specialist such as you or I, but you should see the mass of data presented in the report - that IS heavy going! It's provided us with a line on a map which suggests a route which will cause least environmental impact to the existing wildlife and countryside and which could form the basis of a restoration plan. However, the engineers have yet to take a look at this and it may be that this suggested line might well get modified in the light of what the engineers find. After all, they're the ones who are going to have to rebuild the thing and what might be best for the wildlife might not be possible or desirable in engineering terms.

There are another couple of planning matters I'd like to bring to your attention: the plans for the Multi-User Trail between Golden Valley and Ironville have been

approved, subject to a bat survey if trees are to be felled and there are plans afoot (AVBC's reference is: AVA/2006/0721) to improve the Newlands Inn. This has become badly run-down and the plans to expand the building to provide a restaurant will make this dying pub a viable and thriving business once more. On a personal basis, I'd like to see my local revived, so PLEASE support this application!

Finally on the development front, the Golden Valley Caravan Park has now opened: Web Site at: <http://www.goldenvalleycaravanpark.co.uk>. If you don't live in the area and want to stay, this might just be the place!

I'm involved with the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend on October 28th and 29th and though I say it myself, the Friends seem to be the only people presenting anything to do with the industrial heritage of the area. There's going to be a Sponsored Walk from Ambergate on the Sunday (see the Pre-Registration Form with this issue) and two days of horse-boating for which help will be required. We're also putting on our picture display and sales stand at Cromford Wharf, the rope maker will be there again, as will demonstrations of graining (or scumbling) (the "scratch-combing" which reproduced wood grain in boat cabins and on Victorian and later front door) and the painting of roses and castles, as seen on working boats. There's even more stuff in the pipeline on this....

PINXTON BRANCH OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

from Norman Taylor of the Pinxton & South Normanton Local History Society

May I first congratulate you on the quality content of your Journal. The purpose of my writing is to refer to the article and photographs in last issue of your journal. If there is any doubt left as to the location of the photograph from the film 'Sons and Lovers', depicted on page 13, I enclose photographs of both the bridge and Office Rows situated in the background.

Office Rows, together with Meadow Row and Nether Meadow Road, were built by Pinxton Colliery Company. The name 'Office Row' derived because the Colliery Company had, until the 1890's, its main administrative base there. This was before the company moved its offices to Sleights Farm (later named Longwood Hall) The former offices were then converted to two units of accommodation.



This photograph was taken in the 1960's and depicts the bridge with its flat arch, when it was in relatively good condition.



This photograph shows the former Pinxton Collieries Company headquarters after they had been converted into residential accommodation.



This photograph depicts what were referred to locally as 'Middle Row' and 'Top Row' in the background



This photograph is of Top Row and shows how near it was to the railway line.

Should fellow members compare the image shown in Issue 17 of the Portal with the photographs produced in this issue I am sure they will conclude that the opening scene of Sons and Lovers, was indeed shot at Pinxton Wharf.

I would now like to comment on a further article relating to the Pinxton Branch in a former issue of The Portal. I refer to 'The Old House at Home'.



This photograph was kindly supplied to our Society by former Pinxton resident, Mr Audrey Wass, now of Alfreton Road, South Normanton. This is the only photograph of the building we have in our archives. Should anyone have, or know or further photographs I would be happy to hear from them.

We send our very best wishes for a successful conclusion in the re-establishment of the Pinxton Branch of the canal. It cannot be under-estimated the importance the canal played in the past posterity of Pinxton. In 1796 it allowed Coke and Company to delivery coal to Leicester at a lower price than the Leicestershire coal owners.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Mike Kelly

In the last Portal I stated we had over 220 walkers take part in the Pinxton Push Sponsored Walk this April. Well we raised over £4,000 from this event, which not only is this quite an achievement, it also shows how keen members and local people are to see the Pinxton Branch of the Cromford Canal restored. Yes it was not just our membership who turned out, there were many from the local areas who came along to show their support and help us. (Including several councillors and two of our local MP's) Just a few days before this event I received a letter of complaint from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, (DWT) stating that I had not informed them of this event, even though it was to be held on public footpaths and there was no obligation to inform them anyway. I can only conclude from this that DWT do not like the general public near their reserves, even when on public footpaths!

In May we put in for Planning Permission for the Smotherfly Site, with the money raised from the sponsored walk going partly toward these costs. [For new readers Smotherfly was an open cast coal

mining site, that had to have a diversion channel around it for the small brook size, (At least at Smotherfly) Erewash River. This was a well constructed by-pass channel following approximately to the line of the original Pinxton Canal. The land is owned by UK Coal who have an agreement with Derbyshire County Council to fill in this channel, once mining was finished, and to landscape the area. Then our society came along and asked them to hold on, while we produced an alternative, which credit due to both bodies; they did.]

This Planning Permission required considerable amount of work from John Boucher, our Consultant Engineer, the Rev Steve Parish, our Local Authorities Liaison Officer and Pat Morriss, our Vice Chairman. Without their hard work we would not have been able to do this. All the plans for this can be found on our website. www.cromfordcanal.org.uk. We are calling it "The Smotherfly Wide" in order to keep the name of Smotherfly alive and because this part will be wider than a normal canal. In my last article I stated, 'We are hoping it will become a

facility for fishing, canoeing, maybe rowing and also bird watching; with safe level access to the countryside for all, but especially for those in wheelchairs and for mothers with pushchairs." For this we have the support not only of all local councils, MP's and MEP's, but also from 'Disability Now' who are seeking exactly what Smotherfly can offer to the disabled by providing safe level access to the countryside; and also from the government body 'UK Sports' who state that the Smotherfly Wide will supply the local need for paddle sports, something that is currently sadly lacking in the area.

It is in our plans that the majority of the site will be given over to nature conservation, with public access limited to well defined footpaths. I am firmly of the opinion that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is run by decent, honest people who, like us, care greatly for the 'trust' put upon them. With that in mind we have asked DWT to advise us in the matter of nature conservation along and around the canal, but they refused. Then DWT put in an objection to our Planning Permission. When people first hear of this, their mouths drop and for a while they are speechless. 'Surely they should be supporting you?' is the common response, which I hear on a regular basis. From day one of the formation of the FCC we have sought close working ties with DWT but all we seem to get is negativity from them. We have even asked them to advise and take a part in the Ecological Study we have had carried out for the section of canal from Langley Mill to Ironville, but, yet again they refused. Their objections to Smotherfly could possibly lead one to think that they had not actually seen the site and its current condition! Quite a number of FCC members are also DWT

members, so our aims are not so far apart that reasoned agreement cannot be reached. Three or four times I have invited DWT to work with us and to use the canal as a benefit to all our aims, so I offer this to them again.

It is now over a year ago that we commissioned Black & Veatch to conduct an Environmental Study from Langley Mill to Ironville. This was released on July 10th to an invited audience in the Town Hall Ripley. I have seen the draft, which shows alternative routes the canal could take to accommodate most of the concerns of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, even though, as stated, they refused to cooperate with, or advise us in, this project. In fact it is possible the canal could increase the wetland areas and enabling the restored canal to become a barrier adding to the protection for the existing wetlands.

Our application to 'The Big Lottery Fund' in their Living Landmarks projects was turned down. We put forth a request for £50,000,000 which would have gone toward the 'Cromford 3 Valleys Community Link,' linking the Erewash and Amber Valleys to the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site. This project answered most of the requirements for placing a bid, but naturally there was stiff competition and although we did not make it this time the amount of work again required to put this bid together was a good learning curve which will benefit us in the future.

On Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th June we had our sales stand out at the Cromford Wharf for the 'Cromford Festival'. Mike Harrison and Val Roberts were again raising funds for us with their excellent display of our merchandise, they continue

to do a great job for us. We will be there again for the 'Cromford Rally' on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th August and again for the 'World Heritage Weekend' on 28th and 29th October. We hope to have the horse drawn boat there again plus, traditional roses and castles painting, rope making and vintage musical organs. Please

make a date and come along and support us. These occasions are an opportunity to meet and talk to your committee. On the Sunday 29th October we will be having our second sponsored walk this year starting from Ambergate at 10am and walking to Cromford Wharf to join in the fun of the Heritage weekend.

LEGGING THROUGH STANDEDGE

Ron Amner

The Horseboating Society successfully navigated NB Maria all the way from Guide Bridge to Huddersfield and all the way back again.

The legging event on the 7th May was fully crewed from Diggle to Marsden. Sue rang me at very short notice to see if I could stand in for member who had injured her leg, but due to previously arranged hospital examinations on Monday 8th, I had to very reluctantly refuse. The legging crew of eight, working in pairs for twenty minute stretches, completed the tunnel in 2hrs and 52mins. A cracking pace, considering that BW takes 2hrs 30mins when towing conveyes through the tunnel !

However, Sue was very short of crew for the 14th May, so, me having already opened my mouth, was contacted and press ganged into service! Although Nigel Dix was going to leg the full 3-and-a-half miles solo, Sue needed back up crew, for safety reasons and to take over should Nigel not be able to complete the full distance.

So, on an overcast, but dry sky, found me mooring my Land Rover in the National Trust car park at Marsden Station, for around 1030, from where I duly paid my fare as a 'fly' passenger, aboard the Huddersfield Canal Society trip boat, and enjoyed a rucksack free smooth, effortless journey to Tunnel End.



Maria awaiting departure from Tunnel End

Once on shore again, I was immediately pressed into service to help humping quantities of exhibition materials from the Warehouse to the exhibition and demo sites outside in marquees. Afterwards, I finally arrived at Maria which was moored not far from the tunnel portal.

Waterproofs and safety gear stowed away in the cramped boat cabin, I did a Dr Who, and time warped from the 21stC, into the 19thC. Away with modern polyester and nylon strip, and transformed into cotton cords, collarless shirt, spotted neckerchief, waistcoat, cloth cap and obligatory heavy duty boots! Sue inspected me and hesitantly passed me off as being fit for public gaze at Marsden !

Boat familiarisation followed and getting

used to the layout, setting up planks down the inside length of the boat, learn how to move quickly and safely between different sections in daylight, which would later prove to be a nightmare in the darkness of the tunnel. Worked with Nigel Dix, as he tried different legging points along the top board, then settled for the roomy safety of the cabin roof. Lying on a mattress, he then legged the fresh air at different angles and heights, to study how his leg and calf muscles reacted to their new inverted mode of usage! All good knowledge for Norwood in the not too distant future ????? (I've already tried solo poling through Drakeholes Tunnel, but with no helmsman aboard, the craft fair ricocheted from side to side down the tunnel. Not very healthy for the paint work !!!!!)



Nigel setting out.....

As the 1430 departure time neared, Maria was coaxed across the canal and offered up into the tunnel portal, so that Nigel could try legging for real. A very different tale ensued as the headroom was very low at this point. Then the immediate area instantly flooded with members of the Press photographers, who appeared from nowhere – as they do? Nigel must have walked a mile in those few minutes, as he co-operated with the reporters and photographers! Maria was then stern hauled back to the entrance, where the Lady Mayoress of Huddersfield and her husband, shook hands with all the crew members and wished them all well with their venture into the unknown. Finally, the Town Crier, dressed in all his resplendent flowing robes, complete with large tri-corner hat and his large staff, summoned the public down to the tunnel portal and sent Maria on her way, with the Diggle Brass Band striking up for the departure performance. Once Maria had been engulfed by Standedge Tunnel, Bonnie the boat horse, started her tedious journey along the bridle ways and byways across Marsden Moor, where she would meet up with Maria as she re-emerged from the Diggle Portal.

At first, progress was slow as Nigel experimented to build up a legging rhythm, which was upset by the service cables in the crown of the tunnel. They eventually disappeared, only to be replaced by bigger obstacles in the form of steel girders and brick arches put in as the railway tunnels along side were driven at later periods. As the unlined roof appeared, roof support bolts got in the way and finally, the roof disappeared altogether from legging reach! Nigel then changed over to poling the boat along, by holding one end of a long boat pole in the roof and then

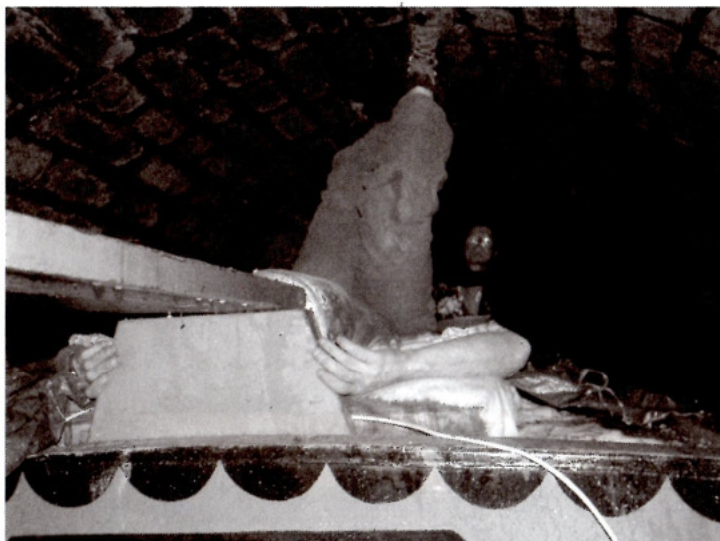
walking back down the length of the boat on the plank way. Crew members guided his feet along as Nigel concentrated on the poling operation. Temporary battery lights were installed inside the length of the boat to improve working visibility and to increase safety conditions. I was pleased that I'd smuggled a pair of Petzl headlights in with me. They were an invaluable aid to surveying the tunnel up ahead, for bends and dangerous rock protrusions etc. (I thought Sapphire had removed all the tunnel wall sides, way back in Sept 2004, judging by the huge piles of rock on the back deck, when she re-appeared at the Marsden Portal!). A modern Picasso would be wanting to buy up the tunnel as an underground gallery, with all the colourful collections of paint scrapes on the walls in the tight sections! I digress yet again!

Then the roof made another big dive down, forcing Nigel back onto his legging mattress to start his legging once again. These situations kept changing throughout the length of the tunnel. The profile is very irregular and erratic, the roof in places was too high to safely pole along, others sections were very narrow, necessitating the use of short side poles in to the tunnel sides, to keep the boat moving and to keep the boat sides away from bulging rocky protrusions that threatened to rip off paint work and cabin sides.

Soon we reached the base of one of the ventilation shafts to the surface. Down this falls a very large column of water, today was no exception! The crew dived for any form of cover to escape the deluge! Maria had a very good power wash! The journey progressed in silence, apart from the odd grunt and bump from Maria as she kissed the tunnel sides. The only other sounds

came from the rumblings of trains passing by in the adjacent railway tunnel, taking only four minutes for their underground journey! The boat journey, in subdued lighting, under our own two legged power unit, in near silence, in intimate contact

with the rock of the tunnel, created an surreal atmospheric experience. Time, distance and years slowly reversed as we all slipped back into the early 19th century.



Nigel hard at it, somewhere beneath the Pennines

At intervals, the British Waterways Safety Service Crew appeared in the cross cut tunnels from the disused railway tunnel and watched Maria go pass them. Once satisfied that all was well, they moved onto the next cross cut and waited for our arrival there. It was comforting to know that there was still contact with the outside world we'd just left behind.

By now, Nigel was becoming wetter and blacker from the debris being dislodged from the tunnel roof above. He wore a full face safety visor for protection from the silt and small stones (and several house brick sized bits as well, which Nigel kept for souvenirs of the day !) falling on him but he still bravely battled on.

Progress became very variable due to the ever changing tunnel profile, including very wide and high sections which had been blasted out as boat passing places, but Nigel kept Maria on the move by legging and poling along the different sections. We negotiated the sharp bends in the centre section, where the original tunnel bores nearly missed each other by 29 feet laterally and nearly 8 feet vertically! A minor deviation of the day, which nearly caused the tunnel to be abandoned before its completion!

Once past the centre section momentary glimpses of the Diggle Portal were seen, then the distant light became a constant tantalising speck! Many more rapidly

changing tunnel profiles followed, until we finally reached the long straight section where the canal tunnel was diverted and extended by the railway companies around 1893. The length made easier working to relieve Nigel's aching and screaming cramping legs. Soon the ethereal strains of Diggle Brass Band came drifting up the tunnel and became louder with each pace along the stone lined roof. The way out of The Styx was in sight at last.

Maria was stripped of all the battery lighting, hard hats and waterproofs removed and hidden, back on with the cloth caps, a frenzy of cleaning up to

restore Maria's pristine condition then she sedately glided out into the light of day amongst tumultuous rounds of cheers, hand claps and hats waving from the excited waiting public, whose enthusiasm drowned out the valiant efforts of the Diggle Brass Band! We had also arrived before our boat horse Bonnie, who was still a short distance away! We had taken 3hrs and 3mins to complete the 3-and-a-half mile journey, a 'little' longer than Mr David Whitehead, who, in 1914, reputedly completed the same journey in 1hr 25mins???????????



Once horse and boat were reunited, we plodded on down the Diggle 9 locks, disturbing several groups of fishermen, who'd set up camps along the way down. They were astonished to see a horse drawn narrowboat travelling down the cut, instead of the usual motor driven pleasure craft. To work the flight, the

boat crew split into different teams, Sue working Bonnie, helmsman and ropeman on Maria, one person walking ahead and setting the locks in advance of us. Another two crew members worked hb Maria down through the locks. This way the Maria was kept moving for most of its time.



Going Down Diggle

It seemed strange at first not having an engine to slow the boat in the lock, so at first I grabbed the front rope and used this to check the boat's progress, until I was shown the technique of using a loop in the stern rope, dropped over the stub on the top lock gate, which acted as a brake and – if you got it right – closed the top gate behind you, all before the boat nudged the bottom lock gates! The towing rope was laid out over the middle of the two bottom mitre gates, then back onto the towpath, so that when the bottom gates were opened, the rope dropped clear of them, ready for the next pull out of the lock. Unfortunately, when the canal was restored, foot bridges were placed over the tails of the locks, fine for an powered boat, but it meant that Sue then had to throw the free end of the tow rope under the bridge and then catch it on the other

side, a task that Sue demonstrated very dextrously and skilfully!

From Wool Road Transhipment Warehouses, the towpath disappeared for a distance, (where the local council had thoughtfully provided a car park and public slip way, along with the usual herbaceous obstructions to boat tow ropes!), so Bonnie put on a spurt to accelerate Maria, the towrope was then cast off from the swingletree, allowing the Maria to cruise on her own, until the next section of towpath was reached, where the rope could be re - attached to Bonnie. We then tackled the next two locks either side of the impressive towering Saddleworth railway viaduct and then down into Uppermill, which marked the end of this very exhilarating day's travelling. Bonnie was retired to a pre - booked luxury

paddock for the night and Maria was tied up nearby. The following day, saw the final run down to Guide Bridge, via

Stalybridge and Ashton-under-Lyme and back to Guide Bridge, in non – stop rain, finishing there for around 2200.

THE EVANS FAMILY

Mike Kelley

What do Darley Park in Derby and the Cromford Canal have in common? The answer is the Evans family. At the Annual General Assembly of the Cromford Canal Company held at the Blackamoors Head Inn in Nottingham on Tuesday the 27th day of May 1795, there were a great many of the Evans family there in person, or represented, as Proprietors of the newly formed Cromford Canal Company.

Thomas Evans, (1723 to 1814) had a family bank called Crompton-Evans bank based in Iron Gate, Derby. (This is now The Standing Order Wine Bar) Thomas Evans, through this bank financed Arkwright and Strutt, and funded the Cromford, Belper and Darley Abbey Cotton Mills. The Evans family house became Darley Hall, built in 1758 but pulled down in 1962. (Oh! Those short sighted people of the 1960's!) All that is left there now is the terrace and tea rooms built on the foundations of the hall, even so the park is still lovely and a favourite childhood haunt of mine, which holds many fine memories for me.

Thomas Evans's mother was Rebecca Gell. The Gells were a prominent family in the obtaining the Act of Parliament to build the Cromford Canal. Philip Gell of Hopton Hall and his brother Captain John Gell of Crich & Wimpole Street London, were so much in control of getting this Act passed that in London and Parliament it became known as Gell's Canal.

Thomas's son William married Elizabeth Strutt, then, when William died early, she married his elder brother Walter Evans. Another son of Thomas, George married Anne Nightingale, they had a daughter Mary who married William Nightingale who were the great grand-parents of Florence Nightingale.

So next time you are in the Standing Order Wine Bar have a drink to the Evans family and their foresight in funding the Cromford Canal.



A LETTER FROM DOVER

Neil Turns

You may at first find it rather surprising that a Dovrian (inhabitant of Dover) should be interested in the restoration of the Cromford canal. In fact, my interest dates back to the late 50s when I lived for a couple of years at Lenton in Nottingham, not far from the abandoned flight of locks on the upper Nottingham Canal. Later I moved to Derby, where the remains of the Derby Canal were all too evident, especially alongside Nottingham Road.

A few years afterwards, with a group of friends, I hired "White Swan" from Swan Line at Fradley Junction with a view to descending the Trent, including the lower section of the Nottingham Canal. This we achieved, but we turned back at Newark due to the continued heavy rain which made navigation on the river uncomfortable, if not dangerous.

However, having arrived back at Trent Lock, the rain had stopped and we still had a couple of days in hand before we needed to return to Fradley. We therefore enquired about the possibility of going up the Erewash Navigation. The lock-keeper attempted to dissuade us: no boats had been up for over a year, the locks were in disrepair, the local inhabitants were hostile (*where have I heard THAT before? Ed*) and the rain had caused flooding and strong head-currants.

Nevertheless, we took our lives in our hands and proceeded through Long Eaton. We had some problems with the locks, mainly because the swollen waters in each pound were overflowing the top gates

which have an aperture below the balance beams to allow such flows (*and which takes the place of the more normal weir and bywash seen on most canals nowadays*). It was necessary to develop a technique of "bouncing" the balance beam on one of the gates until it had opened sufficiently to permit water to flow between the two gates, thus equalising the level in the lock with the pound above.

After passing Ilkeston we saw some local youths on the towpath, who seemed astounded to encounter a boat, but not unduly hostile. We moored overnight just below the lock at Langley Mill.

The next morning we entered the lock, but were unable to fill it due to serious leaks through the bottom gates, so we didn't manage to get onto the Cromford canal on that occasion. We heard later that a rally had been held at Langley Mill, and the lock had been operated by means of draping canvas over the leaking gates.

On our way down the Erewash we met the local inhabitants again, but disarmed their possible stone-throwing intentions by offering about half-a-dozen of the younger ones a ride between the two locks. Then the sun came out and we were at last able to dry out our clothes and bedding by spreading them on the cabin roof.

I look forward to the day when I'm able to navigate on the Cromford Canal itself, as least as far as Butterley tunnel, and hopefully without any risk of hostilities by the locals!

LANGLEY MILL ON DVD

from the Sales Team

A new 50 minute DVD entitled *A Walk Through The Mill* follows a leisurely stroll by three "Last of the Summer Wine" locals, who reminisce on the area's history, assisted by modern filming and old photographs. Appropriately they start and finish at the point where the Erewash, Nottingham and Cromford canals meet and whose presence began the growth of Langley Mill. Although there is only a small amount about the canals, the DVD will be of interest to Friends who would like to learn more about the town at the southern terminus of their canal. DVD £12.99 from the stand or by post £13.99. VHS copies can also be supplied and these are £14.99 inc postage.

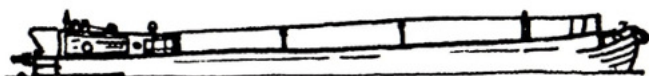
REPAIR WORK

from Hugh Potter



To repair a long-standing leak in the canal embankment just south of Chase Bridge (14) between Whatstandwell and Ambergate, Derbyshire County Council brought in local contractors J.C. Balls to dig a 6ft trench along some 10 yards of canal and fill it with 20 tons of puddle clay before reinstating the top soil. As the canal is an

SSSI, permission had first to be obtained from English Nature. Whilst digging out the trench evidence of previous repair with clay was discovered, along with an area through which water was leaking. It is hoped that this latest work will cure the problem, but only time will tell.



A SUMMARY OF THE ECOLOGY STUDY REPORT

from Patrick Morrisl

A feasibility report, by Binnie and Partners (1994), on the restoration of the Cromford Canal examined engineering aspects of restoration and included a limited environmental appraisal. The section between Langley Mill and Ironville has been identified as being particularly sensitive, and so is being progressed before the full appraisal is undertaken. Black & Veatch Ltd (BVL) were commissioned, by the Friends of Cromford Canal (FCC), to undertake a range of ecological surveys and an ecological impact appraisal of the route corridors between Ironville and Langley Mill.

The study area is defined by the valley corridor of the former Cromford Canal between the Codnor Reservoir overspill in the north and the upstream end of the Erewash Canal in Langley Mill to the south. The study boundary is the Erewash Valley Railway line to the west and the line of the Great Northern Railway to the east; though detailed survey work focused on the actual routes and their environs.

This report presents the survey methodologies, baseline data, key constraints and opportunities, ecological impact assessments, option comparison and recommended mitigation measures for the alternative canal restoration routes. It also includes recommendations for further surveys, studies or monitoring that may be required to progress the project. A number of enhancement and partnership

opportunities are also highlighted in the report.

Historical baseline data was obtained on designated habitats, flora and fauna, archaeology, land uses, recreation, hydrology, geology, planning policies and contaminated land. The non-ecological data was collated to identify additional environmental constraints or enhancement opportunities, but the impact assessment only considered the ecological impacts.

The archaeological and ecological value of the area is indicated by the large number of Listed Buildings, archaeological records and wildlife designations within the area. Over 50 locally designated sites lie within 2km of the routes, of which 8 Derbyshire Wildlife Sites and 15 Nottinghamshire County SINC sites that lie on the line of the proposed routes. Ashfield District Council is also proposing that Jacksdale Meadows be designated a Local Nature Reserve.

Between March and September 2005 BVL ecologists undertook the following surveys of the habitats, protected species and assemblages of species:

- phase I habitat survey,
- river corridor survey,
- badgers,
- bats,
- water voles and otters,
- ornithology,
- great crested newts,

- white clawed crayfish,
- aquatic invertebrates,
- botanical survey of aquatic and marginal flora,
- trees, and
- hedgerows.

The ecological appraisal identified three key objectives for consideration when selecting the recommended route on ecological grounds:

- the need to minimise risk of disturbance to birds using the flashes;
- the need to minimise loss of protected habitats for protected species, where there are uncertainties as to the ability to provide compensatory habitat; and
- the need to minimise direct and indirect losses of habitats within designated Wildlife Sites and SINCS

The following are the additional studies, beyond the scope of this study, identified and recommended to assist the justification for and detailed design of restoring the Cromford Canal between Codnor Reservoir and Langley Mill:

- hydrological study to identify the groundwater and surface water mechanisms, to clarify the impacts of the canal routes and to identify suitable mitigation measures;
- investigations into potential sites for providing opportunities to create compensatory habitats;
- full badger, bat and great crested newt surveys, in accordance with English Nature guidelines, surveys to fully understand the magnitude and significance of the effect of the canal restoration on the habitats for these species, especially the severance effect;
- assessment of the ecological effects of

restoring the Cromford Canal on Butterley Reservoir;

- assessment of the ecological effects of raising the outlet of Codnor Park reservoir;
- a broader Environmental Statement/Report to support any planning application for the restoration of the canal;
- engineering investigations, including geotechnical investigation and structural assessment of existing structures; and
- a flood risk assessment to support any planning application for the restoration of the canal.

In addition to creating new habitats as mitigation for those lost, it is also recommended that, during the detailed design, additional ecological enhancement measures are investigated. For example:

- Incorporation of protected and BAP species habitats within the new canal design;
- Provision of additional bat roosts by 'bat bricks' and other techniques in new structures associated with the canal and bat boxes affixed to mature trees and other suitable structures;
- ensure any planting is of native, local provenance;
- support the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire BAP habitat and species targets; and
- consultation with the Broxtowe Borough Council Barn Owl project for advice on providing Barn Owl boxes or other habitat management opportunities within the study area.

Several opportunities for partnerships or support were identified: developers in Langley Mill alongside the potential canal restoration route; with Sustrans (the sustainable transport charity) if the canal

incorporated with national cycleways; or the local councils where the restoration supports their aspirations for the area.

9.7 Ecologically Recommended Route

The appraisal has identified three key objectives for consideration when selecting the recommended route on ecological grounds:

- the need to minimise risk of disturbance to birds using the flashes;
- the need to minimise loss of protected habitats for protected species, where there are uncertainties as to the ability to provide compensatory habitat; and
- the need to minimise direct and indirect

losses of habitats within designated Wildlife Sites and SINCS.

It is considered that a combination of orange route 1, red route 1 and blue route 3 would provide the maximum achievement of these objectives; see Figure 2b.

Further studies are required to assist the justification of the recommended alignment and guide the detailed design of restoring the canal. The requirement for the complex hydrological and compensatory habitat mitigation measures could also add significant additional costs to the scheme and impose long term economic and physical maintenance implications.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

5 th & 6 th August	Steaming days at Lea Wood Pumping House - engine running 1200 - 1700
27 th & 28 th August	Steaming days at Lea Wood Pumping House - engine running 1200 - 1700
11 th September	Member's Meeting at Ironville Church Hall, starting at 1930 - speaker will be Peter Keating on Stationary Engines.
2 nd October	Member's Meeting at The Red Lion, National Tramway Museum, Crich, starting at 1930 - speaker will be Roger Webster on the history of the Museum..
7 th & 8 th October	Steaming days at Lea Wood Pumping House - engine running 1200 - 1700
28 th & 29 th October	World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend - display at the Gothic Warehouse at Cromford Wharf, horse-drawn boat between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction - hand-wound street organs at Cromford.
29 th October	Sponsored Walk from Ambergate to Cromford - 1000 from Ambergate.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Yvonne Shattower

This time of year is usually fairly quiet for canal restoration societies, and we have had only sixteen new names added to our membership list since our last edition of the Portal. With this edition of the 'Portal' you will find a copy of our publicity leaflet, please use it to enrol a friend or relative as a Friend of the Cromford Canal. If you would like further copies, just ask! As always, our thanks go to members who take our leaflets round to various venues and get our name known.

The payment of subscriptions by standing order seems to be working fairly well, although there have been one or two 'hiccups'. If you think that your payment is not correct in any way, please contact me so that it can be amended in time for next year. This system will save us money in postage and printing costs so please do consider choosing this method of paying your membership fees. It is also easier and cheaper for you as well, as you do not have to fill in the yellow form and send it back to me each year!

The FCC Committee has decided not to attend the Inland Waterways Festival at

this year, as we were unable to put together a sufficiently strong team; however, we will be at Cromford over the August Bank Holiday week end, so do please come along and see us. Looking ahead to future events, we are again attending the World Heritage Site weekend at Cromford on 28/29 October, and will be holding a short sponsored walk from Ambergate to Cromford. This will be a much easier walk than the previous ones, as it is along well made tow paths. The pre- registration form is in the centre of your 'Portal' - send this in to get full details of the starting point and a sponsor form. Do come along and support us.

There are still quite a few Membership renewals outstanding from April, and I would appeal to those members who have received a notice recently to please put a cheque or standing order in the post - we do need to keep you with us. This will definitely be your last copy of the Portal if we don't hear from you.

I hope you will all have a good summer break.



We extend a warm welcome to these new members who have joined us.

Mr N Lowe, ALFRETON

Mr R Connor, NOTTINGHAM

Mrs S Downing, MATLOCK

Mr J B Shaw, SHEFFIELD

Ms C Johnstone, WAKEFIELD

Mr & Mrs C Merrett, CHURCHSTOKE

Mr & Mrs J G Evans, BELPER

Mr & Mrs M C Kitson,

Mr S J Hannath, MATLOCK

Ms C Fowler, Ironville

Mr J C Dennis, DERBY

Mr K Sumerfield, MATLOCK

Mr M Pilling, ALFRETON

