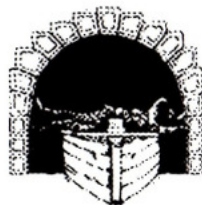


# THE PORTAL



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

(Registered Charity Number 1100700)

NUMBER 20

NEW YEAR 2007

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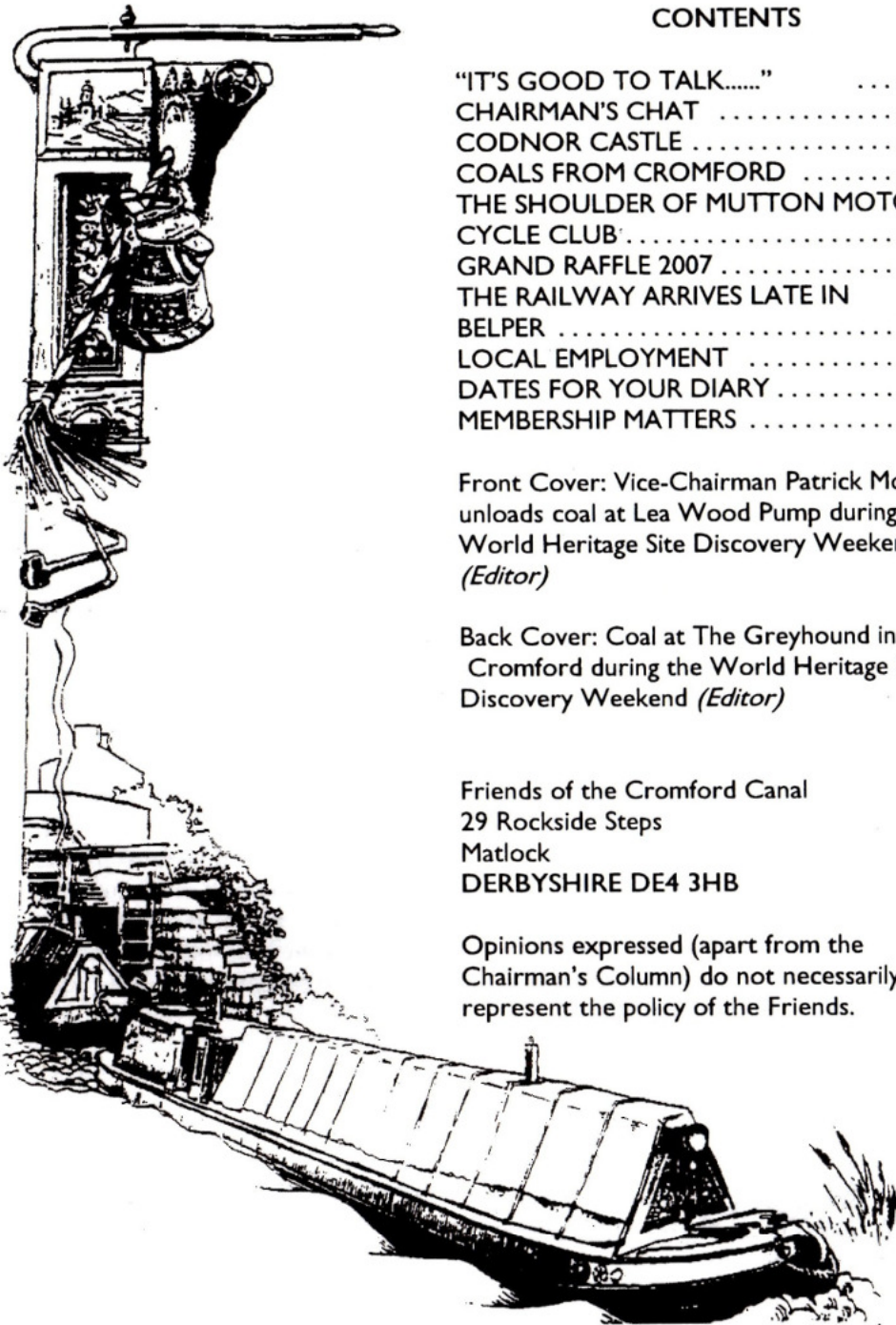
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Front Cover: Vice-Chairman Patrick Morriss unloads coal at Lea Wood Pump during the World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend  
*(Editor)*

Back Cover: Coal at The Greyhound in Cromford during the World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend  
*(Editor)*

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.



## “IT’S GOOD TO TALK.....”



Anybody remember that catchphrase? It was much used by BT in the days before most of us had mobile phones and extolled the virtues of communication. In the FCC we’ve always been heavily into communication: this magazine is the most traditional way we do this, but our Web Site and Mailing List are 21<sup>st</sup> century ways of getting our message across and much of the trustee’s “conversations” are by e-mail rather than by mouth. Incidentally, almost all the contributions to the magazine come down my broadband connection (apart from the Archivist, who’s having problems at the moment,)

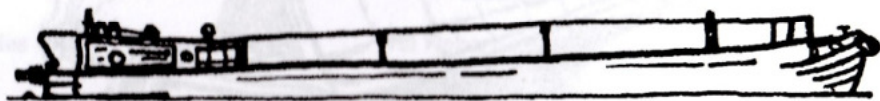
However, we haven’t always been able to talk to the people we’d like to, mainly because they were (and still are) dead against what we’re proposing and therefore we couldn’t even get them around the table to see if we could find some common ground. We found this to be incredibly frustrating and our Chairman expressed this on more than one occasion. As we really do want to work with everybody (indeed we’ve GOT to, if we’re going to succeed in the long term) it’s good to be able to report that at long last, representatives of FCC and

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have sat down round a table and tried to find some common ground.

As you will read in Mike’s column, common ground was found, DWT put forward their case and actions were agreed for the future. This is all good news.

Good publicity came with the World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend in October. The FCC were the **ONLY** group doing anything of a “Heritage” nature - everybody else was doing “arty” things which though interesting and set in the Site didn’t flag up any the historical aspects of it. We expanded on what we’ve done before, with a horse-drawn dray taking coal up into Cromford village and a nominal load of coal being delivered by a refurbished horse-drawn boat to Lea Wood pumphouse. Pictures will be found later in this issue.

The winter schedule of working parties are well under way, and social meeting dates have been set for the year, so here’s hoping we’ll see more of you at our regular meetings - it’s VERY good to talk!





# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Mike Kelly

The Planning Application for the Smotherfly section of the Pinxton Arm of the Cromford Canal is still on the table. This application seeks to have the canal restored along the line of the water channel that was dug to divert the river Erewash. Not only this, but the application also applies for the Smotherfly site to be linked up to the Pinxton Wharf. Long and detailed negotiations are ongoing with various authorities with John Boucher, Rev. Steve Parish and Pat Morriss putting in many hours of work required for this. We are deeply grateful to them. You may recall we were asked to withdraw this application for dubious reasons and declined to do so.

Considerable progress has now been made and things are beginning to look good, but we are not there yet.

One thing we will need to have in place in order to see this project through is a management team to supervise the running of this site. This will be, as the rest of our work is, on a volunteer basis. We have approached people in and around Pinxton, through a local Councillor, but no one as yet has stepped forward. We need approximately three or four people to take this up; so if you would like to offer occasional help please contact one of the committee. (Contact details are in this magazine) I will give the full story of all the activities concerning this planning application, and how we have dealt with it, at the AGM on Monday 26th March at the Church Hall Ironville. (Start time 7:30)

Anthony Darbyshire, our Landscape

Consultant and John Boucher our Engineer Consultant, met with planners from Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and Amber Valley Borough Council (AVBC) on the Smotherfly site just before Christmas. They are close to reaching final agreement on the landscape issues. We have had a professional surveyor check UK-Coal's survey and add details of earthworks, with computer calculations of the earthmoving quantities, as requested at a previous meeting with DCC. Final adjustments to the drawings are now in progress.

In the last edition of the 'Portal' I said we had arranged for a meeting between the executive of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) at the offices of Natural England (The new group made up of the combined Countryside Agency and English Nature) in Bakewell, Derbyshire. So on Wednesday 6th December our meeting was held that lasted for a very quick and pleasant three hours.

I had made in this magazine some strong statements concerning DWT, after over 220 people turned out to raise money from a sponsored walk, that was to finance the Smotherfly planning application, only to find DWT were opposing it. I now regret some of these statements as it is no way to progress issues by throwing rocks at each other. And I can confirm that DWT do not have seven heads, or two horns, as some of our members have indicated to me! No, they were very erudite, well meaning people with the good of our (natural) heritage at heart.



The meeting was very cordial and constructive and I think both sides came away with a better understanding of each other.

Dr. Tom Moat of Natural England (NE) was in the Chair, with Dan Abrahams – NE, Mike Kelley – FCC Chairman, Patrick Morriss – FCC Vice Chairman, John Boucher – FCC Consultant Engineer, Chris Deuchar – Waterways Science Group Nottingham University, Irene Coope – DWT Chief Executive and Jo Brown – DWT Conservation Manager.

Both FCC and DWT described their interest in the Cromford Canal, and detailed any ambitions and concerns.

For the FCC we stated:-

- High importance for industrial heritage
- Cromford important as a very early canal
- A great English engineering marvel
- The north is in a World Heritage Site
- Aim to restore and preserve built heritage
- High educational value
- All derelict sections to be restored
- Connection to canal network very important
- FCC prepared to discuss issues
- Nothing radical proposed for the next few years
- Long Term Vision
- Aim to make the whole length navigable
- Any access to the northern section to be managed (ie: not too much access)

For the DWT they stated:-

- Aim to protect and enhance biodiversity
- DWT form opinions on proposals – and make this opinion known
- Adopt an evidence-based approach
- DWT have an open-minded approach

Endorsed the value of built heritage  
DWT are also involved in the World Heritage Site

Believe that the value of the canal can be recognised without full navigation  
Watered areas have a wildlife value – some of these are SSSI and Wildlife Sites.  
Ecological interest is in the canal bed – plants, insects, animals etc

There are some areas that could be restored – not necessarily to navigation  
In recent years there has been an increase in awareness of built and natural heritage

Evidence on restoration – could be negative and positive impacts on biodiversity

DWT helped FCC develop an ecological brief, but needed to protect their credibility

So it soon became apparent that there was a great deal of common ground between the two organisations, as well as some basic differences. DWT suggested that there was some considerable value that could be realised without full navigation. FCC suggested that to make any restoration sustainable, there would need to be an income from navigation, and potential funders as well as local authorities would require this.

DWT raised the idea of a multi-heritage corridor project encompassing both built and natural heritage. This would be something DWT would support. FCC suggested that there should be an agreement on the approach to funding such as a joint application to fund survey works and explained that due to limited funds, FCC by necessity had to approach

the restoration of the canal as an incremental process, and funds were not available to commission a full survey of the whole length. FCC suggested that there should be an agreement on the approach to funding such as a joint application to fund survey works.

The idea of organising joint work parties between the two organisations was also suggested and agreed to.

Chris Deuchar described the work of the Waterways Science Group. Stating there is a great deal of inconsistency and different perceptions regarding canal restoration and impacts on biodiversity. There is a lack of scientific evidence which is something that WSG hopes to address.

Issues brought up by both FCC & DWT

High importance for industrial heritage/  
both endorsed the value of built heritage  
Aim to restore and preserve built  
heritage

World Heritage Site status/ DWT are  
involved in the World Heritage Site  
High educational value/ In recent years  
there has been an increase in awareness  
of built and natural heritage  
FCC prepared to discuss issues/ DWT  
have an open-minded approach/ DWT  
form opinions on proposals – and make  
this opinion known

The issues which both agreed on were:  
Cromford important as a very early canal  
An engineering marvel  
Nothing radical proposed for the next  
few years  
Adopt an evidence-based approach  
Watered areas have a wildlife value –  
some of these are SSSI and Wildlife Sites.

Ecological interest is in the canal bed –  
plants, insects, animals etc  
DWT helped FCC develop an ecological  
brief, but needed to protect their  
credibility

The area that DWT currently disagree  
on, but are open to change of their views  
depending on evidence, is the aim to  
make the whole length navigable.

Points for further discussion were  
explored in more detail. It was proposed  
that there should be a map-based meeting  
to look at the whole canal and what is  
important about it from a biodiversity and  
heritage perspective. Wildlife sites, SSSI's,  
protected & rare species and listed  
structures etc., should be mapped. Non-  
listed areas of historical importance  
should also be mapped. The map would  
then provide a basis for discussion

Follow-up actions :

Meeting to be set up in the New Year  
DWT to provide base map with wildlife  
features on  
FCC to provide information on features  
of historical importance and their context  
FCC to provide information on the  
current condition of the canal (ie:  
sections in water, sections where canal  
bed no longer in existence etc)  
Jo Brown to liaise with Patrick Morriss

It was explained that separate stretches  
of the canal will have differing biodiversity  
interests, and that the canal acts as a  
corridor for movement of wildlife. FCC  
stated that the canal could be used to  
connect the various wildlife sites along its  
length, thereby allowing for greater  
movement of wildlife, so the canal would  
act as a corridor. DWT needed evidence



on restoration as it could have negative and positive impacts on biodiversity

It was agreed that evidence presented on this issue needed to be relevant to the situation at Cromford. FCC mentioned that there was a recent consultation document from IWAAC regarding the effects of boat traffic on biodiversity, DWT said they will respond to this. Chris Deuchar mentioned that he will be publishing some work on restoration and biodiversity based on the Grand Western Canal.

It was agreed that areas which could be restored would be informed by the desk-top study and meetings, shared understanding of the mechanics and ecological impacts of canal restoration. As an individual project, it was agreed that both parties would organise a site visit to see the 6 locks at Ironville reserve with a view to working together and restoring this feature

There will be a site visit to be set up at Erewash Meadows between DWT and FCC

The connection to the canal network was seen by FCC as a major important element for economic regeneration, and although regeneration could happen without this, it was thought by DWT that there could be limited regeneration without navigation.

FCC reported that the estimate for restoration of the whole canal would be somewhere in the region of £60 million. The Butterley Tunnel was thought to be the major cost, and a second option would be to have two stretches isolated from each other by the Butterley Tunnel. It was agreed that the value of the canal in terms of its natural and built heritage should be promoted together.

### The Long Term Vision

It was agreed that there should be a long term vision, and that both parties would probably agree on a lot of the principles underpinning such a vision, although there was likely to be some disagreement, particularly relating to navigation. FCC mentioned that there was strong support for a long-term vision from the local authorities. DWT suggested that a wider vision encompassing the Erewash Canal ought to be investigated, as this would bring greater opportunities for biodiversity and heritage conservation.

Our great heritage of the unique British canal network system is of world wide importance, for no other event in history has changed the world as much as the Industrial Revolution; and it happened in Britain. While we still can we need to preserve the Cromford Canal for future generations, and if we can preserve the 'built' heritage whilst increasing the 'wildlife' heritage, then so much the better.



# CODNOR CASTLE

*from Gavin Chamberlain*

**C**odnor Castle was founded in about the year 1080 by William Peveril and was of Motte and Bailey construction with deep earth banks and a wooden keep. In the year 1200 Codnor Castle and its lands came under the ownership of Sir Henry De Grey, a very powerful baron in medieval times. It was Henry who started the construction of the stone castle we see at Codnor today. The De Greys' of Codnor resided at the castle and used Codnor Castle as their power base for nearly 300 years, until the last Baron of Codnor died in 1496.

The De Greys of Codnor held many prominent powerful positions in medieval society such as Archbishop of York and Governor of the islands of Guernsey and Jersey and Sheriff of Northumberland. Richard De Grey was a Knight of the Garter and Lord Treasurer of England, he held the office of Constable of Nottingham Castle and Chief Ranger of Sherwood Forest. Sir Richard also took with him a company of Codnor men to France in 1415, which consisted of 162 Archers and 68 Lancers, who later took part in the Battle of Agincourt.

In 1496 Codnor Castle and its lands came under the ownership of Sir John Zouch who had married Elizabeth Grey. Codnor Castle and grounds were eventually sold to Dr. Neile, Archbishop of York. It was again sold in 1692 to Sir Strenysham Masters and

it remained in these hands till the beginning of the 19th Century, when it was sold to Messrs Jessop and Co. who wanted access to the minerals under the park. The castle is now owned by UK Coal Mining Ltd.

The Codnor Castle Preservation Society was set up to ensure that this priceless piece of our local heritage is preserved and maintained, as it is one of only two medieval castles with its original architecture left in the whole of Derbyshire. When visiting Codnor Castle today it is easy to let the imagination run wild and print a picture of what the castle was like in medieval times. The main goal of the Codnor Castle Preservation Society is for the castle to be reopened to the public, so that visitors can once again walk among the walls of the castle safely and to develop the castle and grounds into a local heritage site. If you would like more information on becoming a member or would like to get involved in the society, contact Gavin Chamberlain on the address below.

Gavin Chamberlain  
Chairman  
Codnor Castle Preservation Society  
2 Norman Road  
Ripley, Derbyshire  
DE5 3GL  
01773 746902





# COALS FROM CROMFORD

*from the Editor & Patrick Morriss*

**A**s part of the World heritage Site Discovery Weekend in October, the FCC were involved in operating the horse-drawn boat from Cromford Wharf to Lea Wood Pump, but with an "added feature": we delivered a nominal ton of coal from Cromford, having taken it up into the village by horse-drawn dray - something we'll be repeating!



"I didn't know this thing had reverse gear!" The coal arriving back at the Wharf



The refurbished boat looked considerably better!



A steerer's eye view of the swing bridge





Approaching Bridge I



Rope making on the Wharf.....

# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal will be held on Monday, March 26th. 2007 at the Church Hall, Ironville commencing at 7.30pm.

## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Fourth Annual General Meeting on 27th March 2006.
3. Matters arising.
4. Report of the Chairman.
5. Report of the Treasurer and presentation of accounts for 2006.
6. Adoption of the accounts.
8. Election of Trustees.
9. Reports by Officers
10. Any other business.

Minutes of the Fourth AGM follow. The accounts for 2006 will be available at the meeting.

**NOTE.** The following Trustees retire by rotation: Brian Dominic, Hugh Potter and Valerie Roberts and are willing to stand for a further term of three years.

In total there are three vacancies, nominations must be submitted in writing to Pat Morriss before March 11th. The nomination must be signed by the proposer, seconder and the nominee who must all be FCC members.

Pat Morriss, Vice Chairman.

## **FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL**

The Minutes of the Fourth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Cromford Canal held at 7.30pm on Monday, 27th March 2006 at the Church Hall Ironville.

1. Present: Mike Kelley (Chairman) John Baylis, Pat Morriss, Hugh Potter, Brian Dominic, Yvonne Shattower, Mike Harrison and Val Roberts (Trustees) John Boucher (Honorary Consulting Engineer), Howard Smith (ECP&DA representative) and over 60 members.

### **2. Introduction**

Mike Kelley Chairman of the Friends of Cromford Canal welcomed members and prospective members to the meeting, and went on to outline the evening agenda

### **3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Holmes, Sheila Smith and Chris Stone on the evening plus others received beforehand.



## Minutes of previous AGM

The minutes of the Third Annual General meeting held on 17th March 2005 had been circulated earlier. Their adoption was proposed by Patrick Morriss, seconded by Brian Dominic, and was carried unanimously.

## Matters Arising (not covered by the agenda)

There were no matters arising.

## Chairman's Report

This last year has been an extremely busy one. We managed to get the first boat to Cromford for many a year, but to do this it entailed a great deal of hard work in preparation. The cutting of overhanging trees, and the initial bow-hauling of the boat were just two of the tasks that beset us prior the very successful World Heritage Day in October. Our sales team of Mike Harrison and Val Roberts had a very successful day there and our sales are now bringing in a regular source of income. This along with our photographic exhibition has been a major tool for our contact with the general public. We have also held displays at the Inland Waterways Association National Festival, Cromford Village Festival, and on several other occasions at Cromford Wharf.

We had our first business sponsorship from Hardys and Hansons brewery with the presentation of a cheque for £1,500, some of which went towards our new handout leaflets that had been very ably designed by Val Roberts. We have very quickly distributed most of the first print through shows and public houses along the line of the canal. We have held nearly all of our committee meetings since last summer in various Hardys and Hansons public houses. Several new FCC notice boards have been installed along the canal, these were made by Burt Crump and stocked regularly by David Ratner.

We became partners in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, along with the Amber Valley Partnership, which includes the 'Renaissance Ironville' and the Heanor 'Me & U' projects, as announced last year. We have held regular social events throughout the year, with guest speakers and a very nice trip organised by Shelia Smith to Dudley Tunnel and Industrial Museum. During the last year a total of 15 talks were delivered throughout the district and further a field by several members of the Committee. Membership secretary, Yvonne Shattower has once again done an excellent job in handling all the administration work that over 700 members requires.

During the year we have made good political contacts, with meetings with Jeff Hoon MP, Leader of the House of Commons and Judy Mallaber MP. We have also had telephone calls and letters of support from Dennis Skinner MP and Patrick McLoughlin. We were very saddened to hear of the death of Philip Whitehead MEP, for it was only a few days before he died that he sent me a hand written note expressing his support for the canal and wishing us well. Since his death, his successor Glenis Willmott MEP has written of letter of support to us. Along with national government we have had meetings and communications with County, District and Parish Councils.

At Christmas, John Baylis organised the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) to spend their Christmas on the Cromford for the second year in succession. The trees on the Codnor Park

Reservoir dam were dangerously growing into this structure and the canal along this stretch could not be seen; what a difference there is now. Several work parties have been held around Cromford and Whatstandwell, where work was carried out in conjunction the Derbyshire County Council's Ranger Service. We now have a Work Party Organiser, David Tinkler, who has organised these work parties for us very well.

Throughout the year we have been building links with businesses and groups with common interests. For example; the inaugural meeting of the East Derbyshire Regeneration Initiative looking at development between the canal and the railway near Codnor Park Reservoir. We are negotiating with British Waterways to re-water part of the Ironville lock flight; John Baylis is leading this project. This last year also saw several planning issues that we had to deal with, for which a great deal of thanks must go to Steve Parish, even though Steve lives at Warrington, along with Pat Morriss and John Boucher, such as the housing development over the Butterley Tunnel. We have also looked at applications for Hall Road housing development at Langley Mill and a Derbyshire Wildlife Trust application for the Brinsley Flashes Nature Reserve.

We have had several professional studies undertaken:

Halcrow Group for 'Pre-Feasibility Study on Codnor Park Reservoir and Ironville Locks'

Halcrow Group for a Flood Risk Assessment of the Pinxton Arm at Smotherfly.

Black & Veatch for an Environmental Study from Langley Mill to Ironville; for this . we had funding from Derby & Derbyshire Economic Partnership and IWA.

A year ago UK-Coal were about to fill in the River Erewash diversion on earlier planning that did not allow for the canal; so we lobbied and so far it has not been filled in. Talks and meetings with UK-Coal and Derbyshire County Council were long and drawn out, and I thank once again Steve, Pat and John. The new plan will see a new stretch of water that will be wider than the average canal, so we are calling it The Smotherfly Wide. 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. To raise money for this venture we organised 'The Pinxton Push' sponsored walk from Langley Mill to Pinxton Wharf.

As mentioned £1,500 was donated by Hardys and Hansons, and there have been two individual members who donated money to the FCC with a combined total of around £3,000. A bid has been prepared for £66,000 from Derby & Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP) for the cost of managing, planting and maintaining the Smotherfly Wide.

Treasurer's report

Thanks were offered to Terry Miles, who has audited the accounts and found them satisfactory.

A copy of the balance sheet for financial year ending 31st December 2004 was circulated at the meeting and is attached to these Minutes. Bob Bullock explained the accounts and their adoption was proposed by Hugh Potter, seconded by Peter Stone, and carried unanimously.



## 8. The Election of Trustees

In order to meet the rolling Trustee structure to comply with the Constitution Mike Kelley, John Baylis, Patrick Morriss and Mike Harrison retired by rotation, being eligible they all offered themselves for re-election. Derek Dixon retired for personal reasons and was thanked for his past efforts. In addition Bob Bullock and Anne Smith stood for election as Trustees. A proposal was made that those eligible for re-election and that those nominated should be elected on bloc for a period of three years. This was proposed by Howard Smith, seconded by David Ratner, and carried unanimously.

## 9. Membership Report

Yvonne Shattower reported that we had enrolled our 900th member and 124 new members had joined during the year, however 69 members failed to renew. We now have 653 members, 46 life members and 10 corporate members who were paid up. Yvonne expressed concern at the number of members who were not renewing their membership or who had moved and did not respond.

## 10 Archivist's Report (Hugh Potter)

The Archives continue to grow, with donations, loans and discoveries. An exciting new 'treasure trove' of photographs of the canal from end to end, taken in the early 1960s – before much was destroyed by opencast coal mining – has been discovered. These show features such as the Erewash Aqueduct that we had never previously seen photographed. I have been scanning the negatives on behalf of Derbyshire Local Studies Library with a view to them being made available on the Picture the Past website in the not too distant future, and the possibility of them being produced in book format. Meanwhile, a small selection of these is on display at this meeting.

The transcriptions of the Cromford Canal Company minutes is virtually complete, and needs final editing prior to publication. This year the Archives have been put to use in several different and unexpected ways. One is to help design the new Birchwood overflow weir on the restored Smotherfly opencast site on the Pinxton Arm, based on some 1920 drawings. The second is to show what the canal maintenance used to be like as an aid to future restoration and management. And the third, to my surprise, is to make money! Photographs have been printed for Friends and published in various books and journals, which has resulted in welcome income for FCC, as well as sales at and donations from some of the talks that I give.

## 11 Portal/Webmasters Report (Brian Dominic)

Four editions of The Portal have been published in the past year.

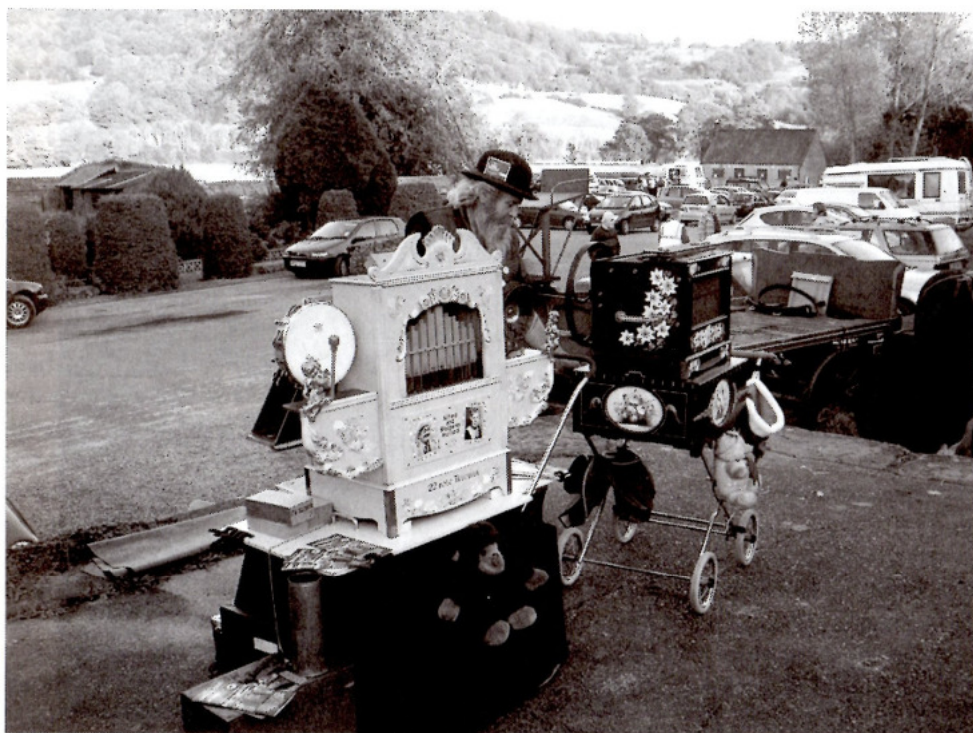
## 12 Any other business

Howard Smith updated the meeting regarding the progress at Langley Mill by the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association.

Concern was expressed by a local member regarding the state of the canal and towpath at Lower Hartshay. Cllr Jack Brown raised the issue of car parking for Ironville in the event of the Pinxton Arm being restored. There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.50.



..... was joined by canal painting.....



..... all with a musical accompaniment.





Erecting the Super Gazebo on Sunday was "fun" .....



Crowds on the Wharf - what we wanted to see,

# **EYAM - A NEW LOOK AT THE PLAGUE**

*from Mike Kelley*

In the spring of 2005 I was privileged to deliver a talk about the Friends of the Cromford Canal to the people of Eyam in their village hall. Now John Clifford is coming from Eyam to deliver a talk to us of the FCC on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February in Ironville Church Hall at 7:30. The title of his talk is called, 'A New Look At The Eyam Plague.' A lot of research has gone into this talk so please come and support it.

Your committee goes to a great deal of effort to find speakers and events for us to have a 'social' evening for members and non-members alike. In this way we can get to know you, and you us. I have been very disappointed at the number of people who turn out for such events. On December 4<sup>th</sup> we had a very enjoyable and entertaining quiz night, and everyone who came along said how good it was – so where were you?

Please come along on 5<sup>th</sup> February, for just in case you do not know; and as the excellent Eyam website says:-

"Eyam is a beautiful small village set in the centre of the Peak District, in Derbyshire, England. The village is famous for having gone into quarantine to avoid spreading the Bubonic Plague in 1665-6. It is one of the best-preserved villages in the vicinity and many of the houses have plaques giving details of their history and the part their inhabitants played in the Plague saga.

The story of how Eyam was infected with

the bubonic plague and chose to go into quarantine rather than spread the infection to the surrounding area is an epic tale of self-sacrifice. The village has a small museum and you can follow a signed trail around the village to see the major buildings and sites linked with the Plague.

George Viccars, a tailor who lived in a cottage near Eyam church (now known as Plague Cottage) was sent some cloth from London in September 1665, but the cloth was infected and Viccars died within four days. The Plague spread through the village and the young Rector, William Mompesson, with his predecessor Thomas Stanley, persuaded the villagers to stay in the village and seal themselves off to avoid spreading the infection to the surrounding area. Though a few villagers left, most stayed, and 257 died (of a total population of perhaps 350) before the Plague died out in October 1666. In August 1666 alone, 78 people died including Mompesson's wife Catherine, who is buried in the churchyard.

During the period of isolation, food was left for the villagers at Mompesson's well, on the parish boundary high up on the hill above the village, and paid for by coins which were dipped in vinegar to disinfect them. The grim task of burying the dead fell to the village sexton and the victims were often buried hurriedly in graves which were scattered around the village. Usually there was no funeral service, for gatherings of people were discouraged for fear of spreading the infection.



Particularly notable are the Riley Graves which are situated just off the Grindleford road approximately 1km from the village centre. Here a Mrs Hancock buried six of her family within the space of a few days."

Yes Derbyshire is full of wonderful history, and many of the people who made history came from Derbyshire, James Brindley and Benjamin Outram, to name but two! So see you at Ironville on the 5th February.

## **THE SHOULDER OF MUTTON MOTOR CYCLE CLUB**

*from Val Kelley*

**T**he Shoulder of Mutton Motor Cycle Club (SOMMCC) are keen to support the restoration of the Cromford Canal. They held a raffle at a recent motor cycle rally and donated the proceeds to the FCC. The raffle could not operate without the kind donations of prizes from John Carr, Motor Cycle Shop Alfreton, Derbyshire. They regularly, once a year, make such donations to local charities and this year it fell to us at the FCC to receive their kind donation of £300. Mr. Bill Bott kindly invited a representative from the FCC to collect the large cheque on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October at the Black Horse Inn at Sommercotes. The only problem with that date was it was the same day as the

events at Cromford Wharf and HPJ for the World Heritage weekend celebrations, this meant that most of the committee were already very busy and so I volunteered to go and receive the cheque by myself.

The event was a Halloween Party and so most were dressed accordingly! Good food was provided and two very good bands supplied the entertainment. I was made most welcome, so all-in-all a very enjoyable evening.

Thank you to all at the SOMMCC.

PS: Can you guess which one is me in the photograph? (See next page)





## **GRAND RAFFLE 2007**

**F**irstly, may I wish all our members, readers and friends a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

This year, for the first time ever, the Friends of the Cromford Canal intend to hold a Grand Raffle to be launched at our AGM in March and drawn at the now traditional end of October event as part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site weekend. Tickets will be available from the end of March and will be included in the next addition of the Portal. This time frame will give us the

*Patrick Morriss*

best chance of selling tickets this summer at the Trail Boat Rally on the Grantham, National event at Saint Ives, Steam Fairs, Cromford Festival and the World Heritage event itself.

2007 is going to be an expensive year for the FCC. Hopefully the long drawn out campaign for planning permission concerning the Smotherfly site and the Pinxton basin link up will be successful. The attractions of rewatering part of the Ironville flight are apparent to many and will require a substantial amount of



money to be raised by the FCC just to pursue the necessary and inevitable studies before this project can be approved. In addition to this the FCC will need to pursue the engineering and other issues raised by the Ecology Study published in 2006 for the Langley Mill to Ironville section, so an expensive year in prospect!

The FCC already has a number of prizes for this raffle. Back in October Sue donated a painted canal stool that she had worked on during the 2006 World Heritage Site event. In addition Brian Dominic has organised the donation of a

Footplate Day at the Midland Railway Centre, and is attempting to obtain some sort of Land Rover experience and a canal boat short break as well. These are the kinds of event that will attract a wide range of potential purchasers and raise our profile as well.

If any of you have the contacts to organise additional prizes, or ideas for any other prizes please get in contact with me by Email or post. If we each sell an average of ten tickets, plus the sales at events we should be able to raise £10,000+ at a £1 a ticket after expenses, so let's give it our best shot!



## **THE RAILWAY ARRIVES LATE IN BELPER**

*from Hugh Potter*

Today we don't consider Belper as a town directly associated with the Cromford Canal, but it might have been if early plans had come about. The Minutes of the Cromford Canal Co reveal that in 1801 Mr G.B. Strutt wrote to the Cromford Canal Company proposing a railway from Bullbridge to Blackbrook, near Belper, to provide the town with coal. He estimated the cost at £6,000 to £7,000, and enclosed a plan of the intended railway. Unfortunately, the whereabouts of this plan is unknown. He

estimated that the annual trade would be between 10,000 and 20,000 tons. The Cromford Canal Co committee approved this idea and agreed to reduce the charge for goods passing on their canal to the railway. However, the minutes have nothing more to say about the railway after 1802, so we must assume that Mr Strutt dropped his idea. And so Belper had to wait almost forty years for the arrival of its railway, when George Stevenson drove his line through from Derby to Leeds.

# LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

from Hugh Potter

Almost exactly 100 years to the day after it was written, a copy of a document was donated to the FCC Archives which lists regular staff on the Cromford Canal employed by the Midland Railway and paid by their Engineering Depot. It is dated 3rd January 1907 at Derby.

At that time 22 people worked on the canal, namely one inspector, 4 gangers, 14 labourers, a bricklayer, a lock keeper and a carpenter. Repairs to the towing path were occupying 2 gangers and 10 labourers, whilst 2 gangers and 3

labourers were doing "extra work, dredging etc".

The Canal Inspector received £1 16s per week, the labourers and lock keeper received between 2s 10d and 3s 4d per day, the gangers between 3s 6d and 4s, whilst the carpenter earned 4s 6d and the brickie 5s per day. The total weekly wage bill was £22 8s which equated to £1165 per annum. Interestingly it shows that lock keepers were only paid at the same rate as labourers and that a 6-day working week was standard.

Midland Railway  
Regular Staff employed on Cromford Canal & paid by the Engineering Dept

Nr of men	Grade	Present and pending	Amount per week	Description of work
1	Canal Inspector	-	£ 1 . 16 . 0	Supervision
1	Ganger	2/6	1 . 1 . 0	Repairs to towing path
1	... Ganger	2/6	1 . 2 . 0	
10	Labourers	2/6	8 . 10 . 0	Extra work, Dredging
2	Gangers	4/-	2 . 8 . 0	
3	Labourers	2/6	3 . 0 . 0	Repairs to Lockworks
1	Bricklayer	5/-	1 . 10 . 0	
1	Labourer	2/6	17 . 0 . 0	Repairs to Tools etc
1	Lock keeper	2/6	17 . 0 . 0	
1	Carpenter	4/6	1 . 7 . 0	£ 22 . 8 . 0 = £ 1165 per annum
22			£ 22 . 8 . 0	

Derby 3rd Jan 1907



It is hard to imagine that number of staff working on just 17 miles of canal today. If one extrapolated to the entire British Waterways system of 2,200+ miles, that would mean some 2,850 staff employed on the actual waterways, not counting those in the offices! The total number of

BW employees in 2004/5 was 1935.

For those of a non-pre-decimal disposition, 1s or one shilling is now 5p and there were 12d (12 old pennies) to the shilling.

## ***DATES FOR YOUR DIARY***

- 5<sup>th</sup> February Social Meeting at Ironville Church Hall An illustrated talk featuring new research, to be given by John Clifford of Eyam Village and entitled "Eyam - A New Look at the Plague" Ironville Church Hall Start 7:30pm
- 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> March Working Party at Cromford - contact Dave Tinkler on 0115 963 5113 or email to [dtink@supanet.com](mailto:dtink@supanet.com) (We are restricted to 12 volunteers.)
- 26<sup>th</sup> March ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - IRONVILLE CHURCH HALL - STARTS 7-30 PM
- 21<sup>st</sup> May Social Meeting - venue and entertainment to be announced.
- 16<sup>th</sup> July Social Meeting - venue and entertainment to be announced.
- 17<sup>th</sup> September Social Meeting - venue and entertainment to be announced.
- 19<sup>th</sup> November Social Meeting - venue and entertainment to be announced.



# MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

*Yvonne Shattower*

I hope all of our Members had a good Christmas and managed to avoid all the various 'germs' that seem to be around at this time of the year.

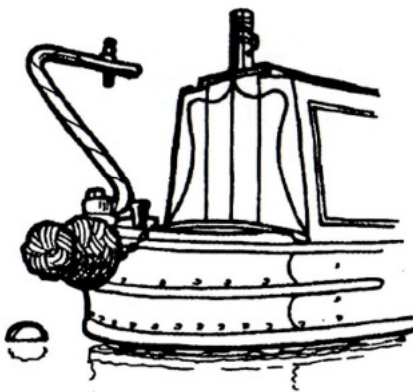
This has been a fairly quiet three months regarding new membership, but we are already planning our attendances at various rallies and steam fairs, locally as well as nationally, for 2007, so I am hoping that these will bring in more work for me to do. If you want any information sent to friends or neighbours, please contact me or any of the Friends' Officers, and we will get the wheels in motion. Also, don't forget that our membership forms and full information can be downloaded from our excellent web site. There are still quite a few Membership subscriptions outstanding from December, if you have recently received a reminder, please pay as soon as possible. I know it is all too easy to put these aside and overlook them, especially at Christmas.

You will see elsewhere in this issue, that we have arranged a series of dates for

social evenings and talks, these will in future be held every two months, and we hope that we will be presenting topics of interest to you. Although we haven't yet arranged the speakers for these evenings, please mark the dates in your diaries **NOW!** If you know of any speakers who you think would be able to give an appropriate presentation please pass on their names. We do want to give you an enjoyable programme, so let us know if there are any topics you would like us to feature. At these meetings, we shall also be giving updates on our progress on the various projects that the FCC is involved with.

Due to various family 'upheavals' I'm afraid that FCC matters have rather been pushed to the background during the last couple of months, so I extend my apologies to any members whose correspondence has been delayed. Hopefully I am now getting back on track.

With very best wishes for a Prosperous 2007.





# NEW MEMBERS

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

Mrs V S Clark, NOTTINGHAM

Mr M Woodland, LOUGHBOROUGH

Mrs E Nunn, ALFRETON

Mr & Mrs B Durham, RIPLEY

Mrs A Conibear, RIPLEY

Mr & Mrs C Underwood, CAMBRIDGE

Mr & Mrs P Taylor, READING

Mr & Mrs J P Carberry, NOTTINGHAM

Mr & Mrs W G Harwood, ALFRETON

Mr & Mrs M Bradbury, DERBY

Mr C Daniels & Ms C Cooper, BURTON ON TRENT

Mr & Mrs M Cordon, NOTTINGHAM

Mr R Grasar, RIPLEY

Mr & Mrs F A Brewer, WORCESTER

Mr G D Lynam, BELPER

Madeleine King & Ben Smith, RIPLEY

Mr G Chamberlain, RIPLEY

Mrs A V Farnsworth, RIPLEY

Mr A Slaymaker, NOTTINGHAM

Mrs C Gott, NOTTINGHAM

Mr P R Binks, MATLOCK





Dave Tinkler steers the refurbished boat away from High Peak Junction



