

# THE PORTAL

**SMOTHERFLY  
GO-AHEAD!**



**THE JOURNAL OF THE  
FRIENDS OF THE  
CROMFORD CANAL**

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**FRONT COVER:** In the summer of 2014, the horse drawn passenger boat has just completed its return trip from Ironville and the horse is being taken to its stable at the Boat Inn at Pinxton.

Photo: 'Visionary' Val Roberts

**BACK COVER:** Lock stoppage at Langley Bridge Lock No.14, March 2008. The first time British Waterways have ever fitted new lock gates on the Cromford Canal. The crane alone must have cost more than the restoration of the lock in 1973. See page 18

Photo: Hugh Potter

## The aims and objectives of the Friends of the Cromford Canal

**THE RESTORATION, RECONSTRUCTION, PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CROMFORD CANAL, ITS ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS, TOWING PATH, STRUCTURES AND CRAFT AND THE CONSERVATION OF ITS NATURAL CHARACTER AS A NAVIGABLE INLAND WATERWAY SYSTEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC**



## EDITORIAL

from Mike Harrison



Welcome to *The Portal* No 25.

As you may have already noticed, this issue is a bit special! Last time I suggested that although there was not a lot to see at the moment, the committee was working hard behind the scenes. Much of this work for the last two years has been on the Smotherfly Project and I am very pleased to be able to say that these efforts have now come to fruition and planning permissions have been granted. I will leave it to the experts in the following pages to explain this scheme because the hurdles which have had to be overcome, both from a practical civil engineering point of view and probably more importantly at this stage, on the political front, have been considerable.

That is why we decided to make this issue a Smotherfly Special and I have tried to give you some idea of the work which has been involved. Our Honorary Consultant Engineer John Boucher has kindly produced a summary of his Design Statement which was submitted to both Amber Valley Borough and Bolsover District Councils as part of the planning applications. Together with the report from our chairman Patrick Morriss, I hope this will help to explain the situation to you all.

I have also included several historic articles about Pinxton to indicate how the Canal helped to develop the area's industrial past, few signs of which now remain. Hopefully this exciting Smotherfly scheme will help to breathe new life into what has become a derelict area and the local residents can again enjoy the benefits of a waterside environment. This is not only for walking, cycling, angling, sailing or canoeing etc but will one day be connected to the national inland waterway system via the main line of the Cromford Canal. Boats from say London, Bristol, Liverpool or York could tie at Pinxton!

We must also not forget the Golden Valley Scheme outlined in the last issue. This could have great benefits to the Pinxton Arm at the Ironville end as well as the main line past Codnor Park Reservoir. Tony Brookes provides an update on page 10.

You will notice in Mike Kelley's Forthcoming Events list on page 9 that since losing the use of Ironville Church Hall, we are trying other venues for our Members' Meetings. Please come and support these events so that we can take advantage of the Smotherfly go-ahead and move the FCC forward. In particular, a good turnout would be appreciated at Pinxton Village Hall on April 24th to get this exciting project off to a good start and encourage the people of the Pinxton area to become involved.

Finally, it was good to see so many of you at the AGM. Thanks must go to those who stepped forward as the new trustees and also to Hugh Potter who gave us another very interesting presentation of historic slides. The favourable comments I received about *The Portal* were very encouraging. I would like repeat my request for any articles, photos or letters to the editor which I will always be pleased to receive.

**Please note the press date for the Summer issue will be July 8th 2008**



## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

from Patrick Morriss



The Trustees of the Friends of Cromford Canal and I make no apology for the distinctive Pinxton bias of this edition of the Portal. An email I sent out a few weeks ago kicked off with the words, 'I'm not sure I can find the right combination of keys on my computer to inform you that planning permission for the Smotherfly/Pinxton canal reinstatement has been granted'. Such was the feeling after a planning application had been on the table for nearly two years and a project that had been first suggested a long time before that.

It was in May 2006 that the planning application was submitted to Amber Valley Borough Council and Bolsover District Council. The process had started well before that, the FCC met with UK COAL in October 2003 to explore the possibility of using the River Erewash diversion channel as a possible replacement canal route. By the summer and autumn of 2005 the FCC were in discussions (and dispute) with local authorities as to who might have jurisdiction over the planning decision, and if the proposal for the canal needed an Environmental Impact Assessment. It has been a very long haul, but if nothing else, it should demonstrate to all and sundry that the FCC have 'staying power'.

Members of the FCC and the public have asked why the FCC is 'starting' the restoration on a stretch of canal not connected to the national canal system. The quick and simple answer to that question is to say that the opportunity presented by the unfinished final restoration of the Smotherfly site by UK COAL was too good to miss. Had the Smotherfly restoration scheme gone ahead as planned all traces of the former Pinxton Canal on that site would have been lost forever as the costs involved in coming back to the site, possibly many years hence would have been prohibitive.

What happens next? The planning conditions imposed by the respective councils are slightly different. As far as the Smotherfly site within Amber Valley is concerned, a start has to be made on the project within two years. The time limit within Bolsover is three years. This apparent discrepancy comes about because the Smotherfly planning permission was a variation of a former Mineral Planning agreement between UK COAL and Derbyshire County Council, that did not apply within the Bolsover area as that section was a new planning application. The word 'start' means that substantial work has to take place on site. Before that can happen though, various management plans and timings have to be agreed with regard to ecological issues with the Local Authorities and more importantly at the moment negotiations with UK COAL are required to determine who does what, when and how. UK COAL quite rightly informed the FCC quite early in this process that until planning permission was obtained they would not be able to spend their time and money on a project that might prove abortive.

Having mentioned time and money, it is only right that I take the opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed over the last few years either in monetary terms, time or in both. Sponsored walks, raffles, local events and donations from far and wide have raised the funds



to get this far. Over £13,000 has been spent in 2006 and 2007 on this project alone without any external funding. Countless hours of work have been expended by FCC Trustees and others to deal with all the issues, problems, objections etc. that came our way during the process. Many people have been involved in this project, but I must single out two individuals for praise, without whom the FCC would not have got this far. In strictly alphabetical order, they are John Boucher our Honorary Engineer who has had to deal with a myriad of practical issues. John comes from a long canal pedigree and lives locally at Westwood near Jacksdale. The other is the Rev. Steve Parish of Warrington who rapidly became the FCC planning expert and Local Authority Liaison link. Steve has been associated with canals for a long time, but only stumbled across the Cromford Canal (almost literally) whilst attending a conference at the Hayes in Swanwick and taking a walk one afternoon. Our gratitude to them cannot be measured.

Even amongst the problems of the process, the FCC thanks must also extend to the officers and councillors of Derbyshire County Council who agreed early in the process that DCC would not enforce the original agreed restoration scheme for Smotherfly whilst the FCC planning application was being determined. This decision could have easily resulted in problems for DCC as a result of delaying the final restoration of the Smotherfly site. The FCC also thank DCC officers who have been involved with ecological, rights of way, mineral planning and landscape issues that came about as a result of the planning application.

What happens next? Firstly, agreements must be reached with UK COAL and respective landowners and the order of works agreed to comply with the planning conditions, then physical work on site will commence. In addition, a large amount of money needs to be raised; again, many potential funders would not consider any application from the FCC until planning permission was in place. The urgent work of seeking funds for this project has started. As part of this process, it is essential to demonstrate local support and involvement as many funders consider - quite rightly - local community support to be vital. **A meeting has been organised at Pinxton Village Hall, Kirkstead Road, Pinxton, Nottinghamshire, NG16 6NA at 7.15pm on 24th April 2008.** Please come along and get involved in this project, if any of you would like to be involved in organising table top sales, car boots, raffles or any other event please let us know. No amount of money is too small when it adds up to matched funding or local support.

What about the future? Obviously, the FCC will work towards linking Smotherfly/Pinxton to the rest of the canal network. An obvious first step would be to link that section to the planned works at Golden Valley as part of the Golden Valley project; this is an aspiration of the FCC and would provide a viable length of canal for horse drawn trip boats and possible Inland Waterway Association Trailboat and Campaign Rallies. In addition, the FCC aim is to produce a showpiece restoration incorporating the very latest techniques to enhance the local environment for the benefit of all and act as a beacon for what could be achieved on the rest of the Cromford Canal from Langley Mill to Cromford.

A lot of hard work has been put into this project. A lot of hard work remains to be done. If any readers, members of the FCC or not feel they can contribute in any way, no matter how small, please get in touch. After just over six years of existence the FCC is about to make its first steps into restoration proper, but please do not forget our efforts to protect and enhance the rest of the canal will continue unabated.

Other areas of news this quarter are also encouraging. The planning application for the new stretch of canal at Golden Valley as part of the Golden Valley Project has been submitted and various works have been carried out on the Ambergate to Cromford section by DCC. Those of you who walk the Ironville – Codnor Park area of the canal will also have seen the sterling work done by FCC work parties with Waterway Recovery Group and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust input. Our thanks to Dave Tinkler and all those who have helped this winter.



# SMOTHERFLY AND PINXTON PROJECT

## A Summary of the Design Statement

by John Boucher - FCC Honorary Consultant Engineer

The planning application to the two Councils (Amber Valley and Bolsover) contained a design statement as an essential part of the application. The original ran to nearly thirty pages, plus several sheets of drawings (which can be viewed on the website). The following is a summary which encapsulates our aims and objectives for the project.

Although the canal was officially abandoned in 1944, most of the course remains largely intact and protected as a route in the strategic plans of the two districts. The well recognised benefits of canal restoration are noted, and support to that is given by the Government document 'Waterways for Tomorrow'. All the important regeneration issues are very relevant to the Erewash valley.

The length of the Pinxton Canal which formed the applications amounts to 1.8 km, 1.1 km of which comprises the section within the Smotherfly opencast coal site, where, until recently, the River Erewash was diverted through a temporary channel excavated along the west side of the site. The river has now been returned to its original course and the redundant diversion channel is suitable for modification and re-use as a canal. The remaining 0.7 km comprises the existing section of canal to the terminus at Pinxton Wharf.

The section of canal covered by the application will, it is hoped, eventually be linked back to the national waterway network, via the main line of the Cromford Canal from Ironville to Langley Mill – which is currently the subject of further investigations and feasibility studies. When it happens, the eventual connection of this section of canal to the national waterway network will 'put Pye Bridge and Pinxton on the map', attract tourists, and facilitate further employment and training (e.g. boat building and maintenance – for which the communities are well equipped). The restoration of the opencast coal site itself presented an immediate and unrepeatable opportunity to restore a section of the canal during the final stages of the site restoration works. Even in its current isolated form it is considered that the potential benefits to be accrued to the local communities and districts of Amber Valley and Bolsover are considerable.

### **Smotherfly : Landscaping and Ecology**

The Smotherfly section of the application covered the land between the original line of the canal, which has become footpath 61, the railway boundary to the west, and the Amber Valley Borough boundary to the north. This area in fact amounts to less than 8% of the original Smotherfly Opencast Site.

Landscaping envisages the establishment of a range of appropriate habitats that are declining or have already become scarce in the Erewash valley, developed with the Derbyshire County Council during the negotiations. The river diversion channel will be retained, but the bottom will be filled in keeping a depth of 1.6 metres to a normal water surface level of 82.6 m AOD. Elsewhere within the block the ground generally will be slightly raised to a carefully prepared landscape plan to accommodate the surplus backfill originally intended to fill the channel, but the finished ground profiles will look very similar to those previously proposed.



The main visible impact will be the creation of a body of water along the west side of the site, adjacent to the existing Pinxton branch railway line. For a length of 800 metres along the west side of the canal (the railway boundary) a soft earth bed will be constructed beneath or just above the normal water level to provide a wet planting area amounting to approximately 2000 sq metres. This will enable any vegetation displaced from other parts to find a new home, and provide a haven for water voles and other creatures – in fact, provide a much greater eco-friendly habitat than exists at present.

The ponds already constructed around the Birchwood Brook will be retained as existing, and a third pond created. Footpath number 28, coming in under the railway alongside the Birchwood Brook, will be restored to its historic routing along the north-west bank of the Canal, in a north-easterly direction as far as Colliery Office Bridge, where it will cross the bridge and join footpath nos. 15 and 61.

Footpath no. 61 has already been partly constructed along the line of the original towing path, and will be completed as previously planned. Path 15 will be arranged to run alongside the canal and form the new towpath. It is anticipated that, in practice, users will prefer to use the water-side route and this it will become the main through route, eventually being developed as a Derbyshire Greenway. Being sited further away from the River Erewash this will have the benefit of moving any disturbance – due to humans, dogs etc. – further away from the ecologically sensitive riverside

### **Pinxton Wharf**

The Pinxton Section between the Smotherfly site and the terminus at Pinxton Wharf, lies within Bolsover District. Most of the channel already exists and is in water, apart from a short length at the District boundary. The work proposed consists of enhanced maintenance work to the existing section, involving cleaning the channel and where necessary dredging to provide a navigational depth of 1.4 metres, and width of 5 metres, taking care to do this in easy stages to avoid undue disturbance to the existing water voles and fish. The dredged material from Pinxton, which will be rich in local species of plant material, will be excellent for the seeding of the Smotherfly wet planting area beds. Waterborne transport will be used as far as possible for the movement of material between the two areas.

A number of small trees which have self set on the canal bed adjacent to the former colliery loading basins will be removed. The short section up to the District boundary which has been filled in will be re-excavated to its original dimensions.

Trial excavations have located the foundations of the former Colliery Office Bridge no. 11, but these are no longer complete and unsuitable for re-use. A new lift bridge will therefore be constructed on an adjacent site to accommodate local farm traffic, and maintain the existing access to the adjacent truck breaker's yard. The original Pinxton Colliery loading basin, which has been partially filled in but retains its original stone side walls, will be re-excavated so that it can be used as a mooring basin in the future. A sewer which crosses the canal line at shallow depth in this section will be diverted.

The terminal basin at Pinxton wharf has previously been enlarged into what are now known locally as Pinxton Ponds, which are relatively shallow in depth and used extensively for fishing. These will be retained, but that part which formed the original terminal basin will be dredged to provide some future visitor moorings, and to form a “winding hole” for turning boats. The modern footbridge at the entrance to the basin will be provided with a pivoting section to enable it to be opened for the passage of boats.



## Archaeology

Although the land comprising the Smotherfly site was rich in industrial archaeology it has been completely disturbed by the opencasting works and no features of archaeological importance remain, although a number of early tramways led down to a former basin adjacent to the Birchwood brook. The Pinxton section retains much more, including the remains of the canal side walls and the coal loading basin of Pinxton colliery. Unfortunately the original side basin at the wharf used for goods transfer to the Mansfield and Pinxton Tramway has been filled in, and a number of former rows of workers cottages have been demolished. The Pinxton Pottery site at the end of the canal has been largely demolished, as has the former gasworks at the canal basin, but the Boat Inn remains. This is a public house dating from the construction of the canal, and is reputed to have sold tickets for the Mansfield and Pinxton Tramway, which gives it a claim to be the oldest railway booking office in the world. The Palmerston Swing Bridge, bridge no.13, situated about 300 metres from the end of the canal is a particularly interesting cast iron swing bridge and will be fully restored and interpreted.

Pinxton Wharf will benefit from the improvements to the canal and the enhancement of its recreational facilities, and will provide a generator for further social and economic development of the surrounding area, and will tie in with the development of the former Pinxton Pottery site, which has been independently suggested by others.

## Engineering

Detailed design will conform to British Waterways' engineering standards to permit possible incorporation at a future date into the main canal system. Flood relief at Pinxton has been a major consideration, and under maximum flood conditions, the water level will be allowed to increase by up to ten inches – providing a good flood storage capacity.

The site is largely of undisturbed clay material of good impermeability. The lower part of the diversion channel was lined, for added security, with an impermeable membrane, which will be retained. Where necessary permeable sections will be lined with traditional clay puddling or geotextile membrane. In general the waterway is cut through virgin ground with no stability problems. The cut-off embankment at the south end of the diversion channel will be subject to detailed geotechnical design. Bank protection will be by environmentally friendly bio-engineered methods, supplemented by timber or lightweight galvanised sheet piling where more severe engineering considerations dictate.

The existing canal at Pinxton is fed by two small streams, entering from the higher ground to the north and east. The Birchwood Brook will feed into the Smotherfly section. The Birchwood Weir will be designed with sufficient capacity to release flood flows from the canal and alleviate flooding problems at Pinxton Wharf, and a small compensation flow will be provided to maintain water to the landscaped ponds downstream of the canal. It will be constructed in reinforced concrete, timber and reinforced grass, and be carefully designed to release excess water in a controlled manner, to mitigate flooding in the River Erewash downstream of the site.

There will be a drawdown valve at the Pye Bridge end of the canal which can be used to assist the circulation of water and for lowering the water in the canal for maintenance purposes. The existing weir at the end of the Pinxton Wharf section will be removed as part of the connection to the Smotherfly section.

JKGB 10.4.08





## **FCC NEWS UPDATE** **- so what *is* happening**

from Mike Kelley



It seems that my first attempt to give a news update of things and events which have been happening between publication dates, was appreciated. Thanks to all those who sent in favourable comments on this. This time we have had major news to report as you will see throughout this magazine.

- 9th February 2008: A Work Party took place, clearing out the tree growth and countless rubbish along the lower part of the Ironville flight of locks. This has been a big task, as the condition was simply appalling before Dave Tinkler and his hard working team got to grips with it. This clear-out has been in conjunction with the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust who have also sent out their own groups to the same area.

- 19th February 2008: A special meeting was held at our consultant engineer's house, Mr John Boucher, to discuss our course of action on our plans and future action regarding the Smotherfly site.

- 23rd February 2008: A day to remember. After two years of intense and detailed hard work, we finally received planning permission for the Smotherfly project from Amber Valley Borough Council. The Rev. Steve Parish had been amazing in his help and fortitude in pursuing the planning laws and regulations for two solid years; almost on a daily basis. John Boucher similarly put in many hours drawing up the plans and calculations for this application with Pat Morriss and myself giving support where we could.

- 3rd March 2008: The official announcement was made by the FCC concerning the planning permission for Smotherfly. Dozens of emails and letters were sent to interested bodies and stake holders, even though we still had no news from Bolsover District Council.

- 4th March 2008: Hugh Potter reported to British Waterways the damage to the canal infrastructure at Ironville. This damage is partly through neglect and partly due to vandalism. British Waterways responded saying the damage will be repaired.

- 6 – 8th March 2008: A long weekend at Morrison's Supermarket Eastwood. The FCC held a publicity and sales stand at this supermarket during which Yvonne Shattower, Meg Tarlton, Val Roberts and Mike Harrison gave out leaflets and had excellent results both from sales and donations from the shopping public. Many of the passing shoppers stopped to relate their memories of the canal. It was so successful that another one will be held in the summer at Alfreton Tesco Supermarket. (Volunteers always welcome)



- 8 - 9th March – The Work Party continued at Ironville. This time the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) came to help and good progress was made. See page 31.
- 12th March 2008: Bolsover District Council gave Planning Permission for their section of the Smotherfly project. This consent was for the section of the canal from Pinxton Wharf up to the Smotherfly area. So you see we had two local councils to deal with and also Derbyshire County Council, which took a long time, but all came together well in the end.
- 17th March 2008: One of our regular Social Evenings was held, which was a talk by Geraint Coles of the Chesterfield Canal Society of how they obtained funding for their successful restoration programme. This was held in the smaller Anvil Room at Ironville Church Hall, where unfortunately the main hall is no longer available to us as weekly groups have priority. The small room proved to be unsuitable so we are now looking for another venue.
- 7th April 2008: The sixth AGM was held at Ironville Church Hall. We have come a long way in this time. Fifty were in attendance to hear our Chairman Pat Morriss inform us of all the events over twelve months. He pointed out the major movements which had taken place and gave thanks to all who had helped in this. He emphasised we will need more active members, especially to help with the Smotherfly project. If you would like to help, even from home, please call Mike on 01773 833425. The evening concluded with a very interesting set of slides, presented by Hugh Potter, of the canal as it was in the 1960's. This was part of a large collection taken by Reg Baker which Hugh has recently acquired. Some of the photos of the lower locks and the Erewash Aqueduct were unique.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 24th April: Public Meeting at 7.15 at Pinxton Village Hall, 3 Kirkstead Road, Pinxton, Notts. NG16 6NA. Come along to hear about the Smotherfly project, join in the discussion and hopefully help to form a local project support group.
- 10th-11th May: Chesterfield Canal Society event at Tapton Lock, Chesterfield.
- 19th May: Members meeting at South Normanton Community Centre, Market Street, South Normanton. DE55 2DJ. Bill Allen will give a talk entitled 'Seaside Skeggy and the Hand Knitted Bathing Costume' £1 entrance fee. Start 7.15. Bar available.
- 23rd-26th May: Erewash Boat Rally, Langley Mill. See page 25.
- 7th-8th June: Belper Steam and Vintage Event will be held at Eyes Meadow, Donald Hawley Way, Duffield.
- 15th June: Brinsley Carnival will take place on the recreation ground at the junction of Broad Lane and Cordy Lane.
- 16th June: Members meeting at Pinxton Village Hall, as above. Tim Boddington will give an extensively illustrated talk about a boat trip from Amsterdam to Vienna along the Rivers Rhine, Main and Danube.
- 27th-29th June: "Celebrating Cromford" Festival.
- 4th-5th July: Tesco, Alfreton. FCC will have a publicity and sales stall in the foyer.
- 27th July: Chesterfield's Canal Capers at Tapton Lock, Chesterfield.
- 2nd-3rd August: Cromford Steam Rally, High Acres Farm, Dewey Lane, Brackfield.
- 23rd-25th August: IWA National Waterways Festival, Wolverhampton.
- 23rd-25th August: Midland Railway Butterley Open Day.



# THE GOLDEN VALLEY PROJECT

- an update by Tony Brookes

In the last edition of the Portal, I suggested that the application for planning permission was due to be submitted by the end of January. In fact it is now shown on the Amber Valley Borough Council website as "Planning Application AVA/2008/0277 - Land Off Golden Valley, Golden Valley, Riddings, Alfreton, Derbyshire. Dated 6th March 2008". With the following details. "Outline planning permission for new canal cut, construction of East Derbyshire Cultural Centre, livery stables, equestrian centre and training and experience centre". The status of the application is shown as "A decision is anticipated on 27th May 2008 under the Delegated Powers". All the plans are there, so point your browser at <http://www.ambervalley.gov.uk/> and select Planning Applications shown under consultations and rummage amongst the plans, reports and other documents.

Whilst I'd like to suggest our involvement is part of some grand master plan the committee has, it isn't. (I wish, but that's what our bid to EMDA was for last year and that unfortunately failed to be supported). Our involvement is as one of the many local groups in the area offering a small amount of specialist advice and support for one small part of the scheme. The developer is in charge and will make their own decisions without reference to us. Similarly the co-incidence of this scheme and the Smotherfly project are not linked: as if we could juggle things to happen together. Mind you it's very tempting to look at the map and want to "join the dots" as it were.

One article in the local paper reported the Golden Valley Project as costing in the region of £20 Million. The project is being developed by Griffiths Superior Homes Ltd. I don't think everything is expected to be completed by 2012, though obviously enough of the Equestrian Centre and related facilities needs to be. From what I remember of the public meeting, I think the canal work should be completed by then as the soil is part of the Equestrian Centre build.

One thing to understand is that the Golden Valley planning application is at outline application stage only. There will be at least one more detailed planning application, possibly (and hence permission(s)) more depending upon how the developer and council decide they want to manage this process.

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Tony also sends the following regarding the proposed lecture by our patron Julian Richards

## **Julian's Lecture: cancelled, or the best laid plans of...**

In the last Portal, I reported that I was just about to organise a fundraising lecture, by our Patron, Julian Richards, probably at the University Of Derby's campus at Buxton. I'm sorry to announce that there will not now be one, as I simply ran out of time to carry out the publicity work in the time that was left. If anyone would like to help with the publicity and organisation of this event then please let me know and we'll have another go possibly next year. With the news on Smotherfly, substantial finance will be needed in the not too distant future. Any means of fundraising is therefore more important than ever and any help in that direction will be greatly appreciated.



# PINXTON PRE-EMINENT

by Patrick Morriss

At first glance, many people could be forgiven for asking 'Why spend all this time and money restoring the Pinxton Canal when the main canal line ran from Langley Mill to Cromford?' Well, apart from all the twenty first century reasons mentioned elsewhere, the Pinxton Canal had along its banks some major historical developments that made the area as up to date and cutting edge in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the university science parks and silicon valleys and glens are today. Never again will 214,618 tons of coal be carried on the Cromford canal as it was in the year 1839/1840. This article will be followed by at least one more (the world's first oil refinery) in the next edition of the Portal. This month the story is of a famous china factory at the very end of the canal.

## Pinxton Porcelain

Close by junction 28 of the M1 motorway in the heavily industrialised Erewash Valley corridor of the Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire border, the former mining village of Pinxton is hardly the kind of place that you would normally associate with fine ceramics. Nevertheless, the motorway cuts through the once stately - and quite beautiful - Brookhill Park, former seat of the Coke family of Brookhill Hall. Furthermore, it was John Coke, the Squire of the Manor of Brookhill who founded the famous Pinxton Porcelain Factory that during its short life produced some of the most beautiful and sought after ceramics in the world between 1796 and 1813.

The rare Pinxton porcelain was produced there for just seventeen years before the factory closed and thus the rarity value of this most distinctive and distinguished of all English porcelain has made it extremely collectable. In a sale of small ceramic items at Neales Fine Art Auctioneers of Derby, a teacup and saucer was sold for £120, a milk jug for £150, and a coffee can, teacup and saucer for £200. At the other end of the market a Pinxton porter tankard with panelled scenes of Brookhill Hall went under the hammer at Sotheby's for £14,500.

The manufacture of pottery is humankind's oldest current art form and began virtually at the dawn of civilisation. The Chinese were the first to manufacture porcelain for domestic, religious and commercial use.

The pure white clay they used was actually kaolin, a word meaning 'top of the mountain', thus once exported to English speaking countries the various porcelain products became known collectively as 'china'. This should not be confused with 'bone china' which is an almost exclusively English product first perfected by Josiah Spode around 1750 by adding powdered animal bone to the mix of clay - thus producing 'bone'- china.

The Pinxton Factory produced elegant porcelain of a fine, light translucent quality that was richly and expertly decorated by a team of gilders and hand-painters led initially by William Billingsley, known for his artistry as a flower painter and especially for his design of the famous 'Pinxton Roses' - a favourite of our current Queen Elizabeth.

It was following the discovery of fine, pure white clay within the grounds of Brookhill Hall that John Coke wrote to William Duesbury, owner of the Derby Porcelain Factory in 1795 seeking his opinion about the possible commercial prospects of building a factory at Pinxton.

These were the days of the burgeoning Industrial Revolution and the Cromford



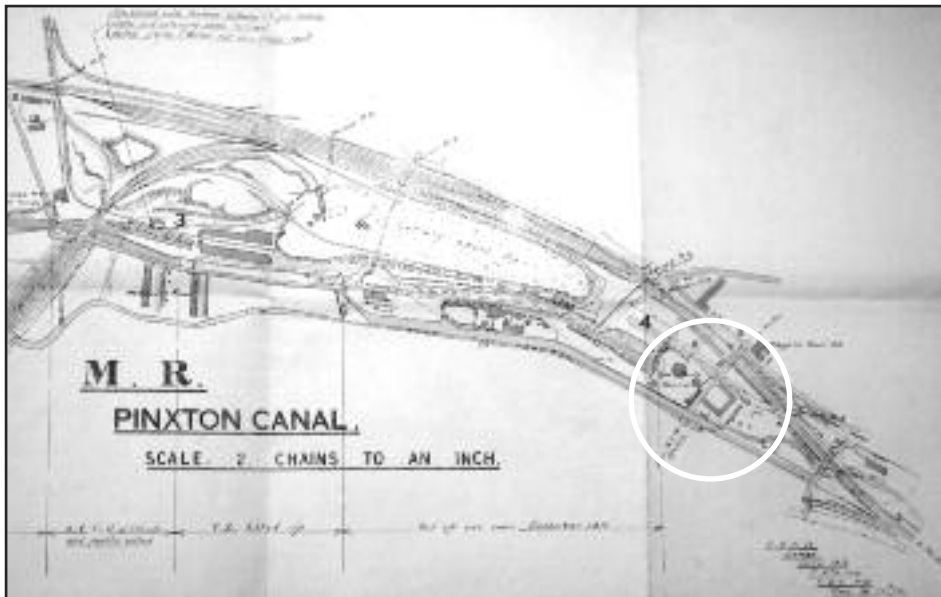
Canal, which ran from Cromford to the Erewash Canal at Langley Mill with a branch canal to Pinxton Wharf, had been opened just two years earlier in 1793. Coke himself owned a number of boats that plied both the canal and River Trent, thus the siting of his proposed factory on the site of the Old Water Mill at Pinxton Wharf at the head of the Cromford Canal was ideal.

Duesbury, fearing competition, tried to dissuade him, but William Billingsley who was the senior flower painter at Derby wrote to Coke offering his services. Billingsley had served his apprenticeship at Derby, where he had worked for twenty-one years and had previously experimented making porcelain bodies to his own recipe. He saw the opportunity with Coke at Pinxton to produce his own porcelain and the two quickly made plans and the factory was built and in production from April 1796. A steam engine was ordered from Francis Thompson of Ashover to provide the power, but this proved unsuccessful and power was eventually supplied to the factory via a water mill powered by the nearby Erewash River.

The last reference to Francis Thompson is not a happy one. In 1797, he bought a case against Coke and Billingsley, of the China Factory at Pinxton, for non-payment for a "fire-engine", as early steam engines were named, supplied by him. They counter-claimed for late delivery and failure to meet the specified performance. The case came up at the Derby Assizes, where it was decided to appoint John Curr to arbitrate. He gave his decision in favour of Coke and Billingsley and awarded them damages against Thompson, whose engine "was not erected within the time nor of the force and power affixed and agreed upon." Coke and Billingsley were therefore not to pay anything. Francis Thompson was to remove the engine at his own expense, and to pay £50 damages to William Billingsley, and £26 5 shillings costs, whilst William Billingsley was to pay £42 13 shillings costs to John Curr. In all, the action cost Thompson £149 15 shillings, and he was directed to pay this over on 12th July 1797 in the Coffee Room of the Angel Hotel in Chesterfield, but he did not turn up and the clerk had to attend again on the next day. During the action, Coke and Billingsley wrote to Boulton and Watt asking for a man to be sent over to determine the power of the engine, using the indicator invented by Southern in 1796. This was the last engine firmly attributed to Francis Thompson. Thompson's engine installed at Oakerthorpe Colliery moved to Pentrich Colliery in 1841 and subsequently housed in the Science Museum in London having been noted and rescued by Mr W T Anderson in 1917 had a better fate, but the story of that engine will be in another Portal.

Billingsley's 'secret recipe' produced beautiful but unstable porcelain and losses were heavy. The factory achieved its peak output late in 1798 but financial losses led to a reduction of staff in 1799 and Billingsley terminated his employment in April that year leaving John Coke as sole proprietor. He continued from 1801 to 1803 in partnership with Henry Bankes, and later with John Cutts. On April 26th 1806 John Coke married Suzanna Wilmott and severed his connection with the factory, leaving John Cutts as sole proprietor. Cutts finally closed the factory on Ladies Day 1813 signalling the end of the Pinxton porcelain manufactory after a short life of seventeen years. The factory site was converted into tenements for local colliers and the offices for Coke & Co. Ltd, a coal-mining company. At an auction in the George Hotel, Alfreton in 1859, lot 13 was described as 'sixteen dwelling-houses or tenements situated at a place called The Factory at Pinxton'. The buildings were finally demolished in 1937 following a slum clearance order in 1934 and a scrap-metal merchant, rather incongruously, is today using the land.

The foundation of the Pinxton Porcelain factory in 1796 almost coincided with the construction of the Cromford Canal that was semi completed at least to Pinxton in 1794. The Pinxton factory was erected at the north eastern end of the canal at Pinxton Wharf, in an ideal location for the cheap and easy transportation of Pinxton's precious porcelain



products. But whilst the Pinxton porcelain production lasted a mere seventeen years, the Cromford Canal continued to be an artery of industry for the next century and a half, even if the Pinxton Canal's demise at the Pinxton terminus had taken place by World War One. The section of a Midland Railway plan of Pinxton Wharf (above) clearly shows the old factory, 'U' shaped and facing the then disused Gas Works at the end of the Pinxton Canal.

## BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?

Or, do you have a Yen to see the Cromford Canal restored? OK I'll stop now, but seriously how many of you have bits of foreign currency or Isle of Man, Channel Islands or Irish Republic currency lying around in drawers? We all know that we can take banknotes in to the banks and get some money back, and of course Euros can be kept until the next time we cross the Channel but other small change just tends to accumulate in those nooks and crannies. The same applies to all those bits of old UK coinage, the large size 50p, 10p and 5p even the old 1/2p. Going further back (to proper money), the Half Crown, Florin, Shilling, Sixpence, Threepenny Bits, Pennies, Halfpennies, and Farthings. All these items have a value, some more than others. To realise that value, two things need to be in place. Firstly, we need to collect them in sufficient quantities and secondly, we need a specialist to deal with the coin dealers and banks who will pay for them. The Friends of the Cromford Canal have reached agreement with a well known organisation to release the cash value of any foreign or obsolete coinage - and banknotes - that we collect. I am quite prepared to do the sorting and the face to face dealing with the contact.

So if you are coming to any meetings in the future or if you are going to see the FCC stand at any of this year's events, please have a sort amongst those bits and bobs and see what you can turn up. I am well aware that times are quite hard at the moment, and the news seems to be full of some economic crisis or another, but turning out all those old bits of currency won't actually cost anything, and who knows what missing item you'll find whilst looking!

Pat Morriss



# PINXTON CANAL CLOSURE

by Patrick Morriss

The Pinxton Canal was always predominantly a coal carrying canal. The rest of the Cromford Canal had railway competition alongside it, mainly from the Midland Railway, the Pinxton Canal had competition from the Midland Railway and for good measure, the Great Northern Railway as well! The dead hand of railway ownership, changing patterns of trade, colliery closure and of course mining subsidence from the very industry that had given the canal its lifeblood all conspired to see the Pinxton Canal slip away in its northern reaches before World War One. Even its then owners the Midland Railway had no records of traffic before 1908, at least according to the letter reproduced below from 1921.

By coincidence the area covered by the FCC planning permissions from Amber Valley Borough Council and Bolsover District Council are quite similar to the length of canal mentioned in this document, perhaps by 2021 wide beam barges will be once again able to navigate to Leicester and all points south.

8th February 1921

Dear Sir,

Pinxton Canal

Suggested closing between Bridge No. 10 Messrs. Kempson's Chemical Works & Terminus.

With reference to conversation. Mr Miles telephoned for me on the 3rd instant to see him as to this matter and instructed me in your absence to make quiet enquiries as to what claims for compensation we might expect in the event of this length of canal being closed.

I have since walked over it and have to report as follows:-

1. Immediately North of Bridge No. 10. The Midland Acid works is alongside the Canal here. They have of course only been there a short time and have never used the Canal for traffic so presumably could make no claim. If they did the length to be kept open could be extended a chain or two beyond bridge No.10.

2. Birchwood Basin. This basin was formerly used by and is the property of the Butterley Company. In years gone by there were sidings here and coal was loaded there into barges. The basin has been out of use for many years, the sidings have gone, and since 1914 the basin has been stanked off from the Canal by a timber stank. I should not think the Butterley Company would make any claim against us as we could show that they had not used the basin for traffic purposes for many years.

3. Pinxton Colliery Basin. This is the only place on the length where any claim could be put forward with any probability of it being considered, insomuch as there is even now a siding alongside it. Against the claim would be the facts that traffic to or from this basin was of the very smallest amount during the last few years prior to the Canal being closed for repairs.

No coal is turned at the Pinxton Colliery close by and the headquarters of the Pinxton Colliery Company so far as power production and coal winding go has been for the last few years the Brookhill Colliery just below our Pinxton Station. At one time the Pinxton Colliery Company used water from this basin for steam purposes but that arrangement also fell into disuse about three years ago and I understand the pipe is actually broken off between the basin and the engine house – all power now coming by cable from Brookhill.

4. Canal Terminus. Many years ago the Pinxton Colliery Company loaded coal here, there being siding accommodation alongside the canal, but the sidings have long since disappeared and owing to Coal workings having let this area down very much, the railway access to the wharf from the Collieries could not be replaced without very considerable expenditure on the part of the Colliery Company. At the extreme end of the Canal is the old Gas Works formerly the property of the Pinxton Gas Company now belonging to the Riddings District Gas Company. The works are quite derelict



and no part is used save one gas holder (a telescopic one all above ground level) which is used for pressure purposes in connection with the supply to Pinxton Village. The closing of the Canal could not affect that holder physically and I cannot see that any financial effect would result to the Gas Company either. The Pinxton Gas Company did not use the Canal for many years prior to the change of ownership but they might with some truth argue that the silted state of the canal near Palmerston House prevented them.

These four places mentioned are all that I can see where outside parties could make any show of a claim for compensation but there are several other points which could require consideration in the event of the Canal being closed e.g.,

Owing to Coal Settlements &c., this length is now partly filled with water at different levels, and partly with rank weed. At the Pinxton end in particular it is in Summer very insanitary and the Local Authorities might complain of its state if left permanently as it is today.

Several streams (large in flood times) empty into the Canal and these would have to be provided for.

Two or three culverts under the Canal which are known to be in a poor state and which would have been repaired had the raising of the banks been completed, would have to be repaired or opened out.

Some method would probably have to be arranged to keep the Canal empty or it might be filled up altogether in the worst places. The Pinxton Colliery Company's burnt out tip would provide excellent material alongside a greater part of it.

The towpath from Palmerston House to Bridge No:11 is a public vehicular road maintained by us.

There are two brick bridges 10 and 11 and a swing bridge which could probably be pulled down and their place taken by causeway improving the approaches and ridding us of their maintenance.

The public have I am afraid a prescriptive right to use the towpath for pedestrian traffic.

There may also be traders on the different canals between say Leicester and Pinxton who might claim they had suffered some loss through this closing, but of course this is merely hypothesis. We could if necessary give the names of any traders who used this piece of canal from 1908 (when our records started) to 1914 when the canal was temporarily closed.

There are a number of easements for sewers etc., which would presumably not be affected in any way if the canal were closed.

The length of canal suggested to be closed is 77 chains.

Yours truly

John Brunton Esq.

## HATCHET JOB

Hugh Potter sends this from the Your Archives web site:  
(<http://yourarchives.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php>)

Derbyshire Lent Assizes 1801

Derby Mercury, Thursday February 12th 1801 - Commitments to the County Gaol.

Committed to our County gaol, on the 4th instant, John Abbott and Wm. Sparrow, navigators of a boat on the Cromford Canal, charged on the oath of Joshua Roper, with having on Tuesday evening the 27th, or on Wednesday morning the 28th of January last, stolen a hatchet out a boat on the Cromford Canal, the property of the said Joshua Roper.





John Baylis has found the following extract from Joseph Priestley's "Historical Account of the Navigable Rivers, Canals and Railways throughout Britain". This first edition MDCCCXXXI (1831) was dedicated to King William the Fourth; and inscribed to Thomas Telford, Esq., F.R.S., L & E. President of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

## MANSFIELD AND PINXTON RAILWAY

57 George III CAP 37 Royal Assent 16th June 1817

The Mansfield and Pinxton Railway, commencing in the town of Mansfield, proceeds from thence in a westerly direction, leaving Skegby Hall, Unwin Hall and Brook House on the north, to Pinxton Basin near to Pinxton Mills, and not far from Alfreton in the county of Derby, where it communicates with a branch of the Cromford Canal. About a mile and a half from this point the branch passes easterly towards Codnor Park Works, which it passes, and communicates again with the Cromford Canal at a short distance from those works, at 278 feet above the sea.

The act for this undertaking was passed in 1817, as "An Act for making and maintaining a railway or tramroad from Bull's Head Lane, in the parish of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, to communicate with the Cromford Canal at Pinxton Basin, in the parish of Pinxton, in the county of Derby." By it the proprietors, who are styled "The Mansfield and Pinxton Railway Company," are empowered to make the road and to alter, repair and manufacture materials for the same; for doing which they are to raise the sum of £22,800, in shares of £100 each; and in case that should not prove sufficient for completing the same, they may raise an additional fund of £10,000 amongst themselves, or by creating new shares, or by mortgage of the work and the tolls. The following are to be demanded as TONNAGE RATES (shillings and pence per ton mile):

For all stone for repairing Roads and for all manure	0	2
For all Stone, Cinders, Chalk, Marl, Sand, Lime, Clay, Ashes, Peat, Limestone, Ironstone and other Materials, Building-stone, Pitching and Paving Stone, Bricks, Tiles, Slates, Timber, Lead in Pigs or Sheets, Bar Iron, Waggon-tire, all Gross and Unmanufactured Articles and Building Materials	0	3
For all Coal, Coke and Slack carried into the parish of Mansfield along any part of the railroad	2	0
For ditto in that direction but not into that parish	0	3
For ditto towards or to the Cromford Canal at Pinxton Basin	0	3
For all other Goods, Wares and Merchandise	0	6

Fractions of a Ton and a Mile shall pay as of the Quarter therein, and of a Quarter as a Quarter.

Carriage of Parcels, not exceeding Five Hundred Weight shall be fixed by the Proprietors. Owners of land on the line, and lords of manors are to erect wharfs, on their own land, if required by the company; and in the case of refusal the company may do so. The company is also directed by the act to build sufficient wharfs, warehouses and landing stages at Pinxton, for the reception of goods; and for the expenses so incurred they are to demand as WHARFAGE RATES as follows:

For all packages not exceeding Fifty-six Pounds in weight	1d
For all packages not exceeding Five Hundred Weight	2d
For all above the last quoted weight	6d per Ton



Private individuals building wharves and warehouses are authorized to claim the following as WHARFAGE RATES:

For all Coals, Culm, Lime-stone, Clay, Iron, Iron-stone, Lead Ore or other Ores, Timber, Stone, Bricks, Tiles, Slates and Gravel	1d per ton
For all other Goods and Merchandises	2d ditto

If any of the said goods shall remain above Twenty-one Days, then One Penny per Ton additional is to be paid for the succeeding Ten Days, and a further sum of One Penny per Ton per Day for every Day afterwards.

The railway is double, the length, eight miles, two furlongs and four chains. At the commencement in Mansfield it is 101 feet 8 inches above the level of the Cromford Canal at Pinxton Basin. From Mansfield to the summit level there is a rise of 88 feet 10 inches; from the summit to Pinxton Basin, a distance of four miles and nine hundred and twenty yards, there is a fall of 80 feet 10 inches; the railway at its termination there being 8 feet above the level of the canal. This work cannot fail to be useful, passing as it does through a country abounding with minerals, and where no other line of conveyance exists

*John Baylis, who sent in this article, has added the following note:*

I have copied the last paragraph correctly but to my mind there is a mistake in line five. The fall from the summit to Pinxton basin should actually be 180 feet 10 inches. If the rise from Pinxton to Mansfield is only 101 feet, little more than from Langley Mill to Pinxton but over twice the distance; relatively easy for a canal, but if the canal has to cross or penetrate a much higher summit, railway becomes the cheap option. On thinking about it in paragraph one 278 feet above sea level at Langley Mill seems a bit high to me, probably these heights are all suspect. I will try to get heights above ODN from some larger scale OS maps.

*Further to John's note above, John Boucher comments as follows:*

I agree with your correction - the figure from the summit to Pinxton should be 180 ft. The level of 278 feet (nowadays 272 feet or 83 metres to the current datum) is the level at which the Pinxton Canal joins the main line at Codnor Park Junction (also at Pinxton).

Curiously, the figures don't quite tie up, as working back the railway should end 9' 10" above the canal, not 8' as quoted, but why so high? Fine for tipping coal into boats, but not very clever if transhipping goods for Mansfield.





## LANGLEY BRIDGE LOCK STOPPAGE

As many members will know, Langley Bridge Lock (No.14 on the Cromford Canal) at Langley Mill was restored by volunteers of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association and re-opened in 1973. Since then the lock has been regularly maintained by the same volunteers as part of the ECP&DA lease.

This has all changed now that the lease has been reviewed and British Waterways have taken back the responsibility for the lock. Both sets of lock gates have needed replacing for some time and BW arranged to do this work over a four week period in Feb/March.

Nowadays, a major factor in work of this type is complying with the many and various rules and regulations. Health and safety legislation has totally overwhelmed the basic civil engineering. For the first week after the job started, work was confined to erecting safety fencing, building temporary bridges, laying a hard surface to provide a works compound and car park and installing a



Plenty of fencing and rather a superfluous notice as work gets under way

supporting framework and a staircase in the lock chamber. All this left those who had replaced the bottom gates in four days in 1983 rather bemused. Times have changed.

The exciting part came with the arrival of the new gates. After causing a major



Removing the top sill

traffic hold up, it was realised that the lorry would not pass through the gate on to the lock side. Cutting gear was brought in and the gate post quickly removed, and was equally quickly welded back in place afterwards. The crane to lift the gates was overkill to say the least, see the back cover, but it was certainly very effective. With the lock chamber stanked off and pumped out, the gates were soon



removed. The bottom gate sill was then broken out and the hollow quoins, ie the shaped parts of the stonework where the gates pivot, were cut away. BW policy is to fit new iron quoin sections which make a good seal and should last many years. With these in place, the new bottom gates were lowered into position. The new concrete sill with its facing timber was then completed. It had been intended to retain the sill and original quoins for the new top gates, but this proved unsatisfactory, so they were replaced after all and the gates had to be removed and refitted. Whilst the chamber was empty, a second lock ladder was also installed, also as per present BW policy, but unfortunately no attempt was made to remove the accumulated silt and rubbish from the lock at the same time.



First trial of the new top gates

When the lock was restored in 1973, the paddle gear was donated by a waterway enthusiast who owned a foundry in Sheffield and at that time was making the gear for the Upper Avon Navigation. This gear was a copy of the type used on the Birmingham Canal Navigations, but funds were limited to say the least and we were very pleased to accept it for Langley Mill. It has remained in use ever since, during which time Langley Bridge Lock has become a listed structure. Unfortunately, the BW heritage adviser therefore thought that at least some of this gear should be retained, whereas the correct gear for this lock was more like the Grand Union Canal pattern. After some discussion, BW have agreed to use the GU type, which is now fitted on the new bottom gates and looks and works very well. For some time now, John Baylis has been developing some GU style gear which incorporates a locking mechanism for the top ground paddles. This will also be fitted in due course to complete the set.



Completed bottom gates with all new anchors, balance beams and appropriate paddle gear

All this work, perhaps inevitably, led to the stoppage overrunning the scheduled period by some ten days, but it must be said that the standard of work is excellent. However, one slight drawback can be foreseen when the weather improves. The bottom gates now hold the water better than for some years, meaning that the lock tends to remain full, which in turn will provide a handy lido for the good people of Langley Mill!

Words and photos: Editor



# **PUSHING NORTH FROM LANGLEY MILL**

**An account of the ongoing work beyond the present head of navigation of the Cromford Canal at Langley Mill by Howard Smith, Chairman of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association**

The saying goes that Rome was not built in a day. Canal restoration is no quicker and in most cases a lot slower. Cast your minds back to 1994 and what you were doing then. We at ECP&DA were content to have our monthly meeting along with the following Sunday work party when a communication from a company in Chesterfield was received. These people were looking at doing an opencast coal project at Langley Mill and asked if we were interested in having the Cromford Canal restored up to the A610 by-pass road. WERE WE INTERESTED? You bet we were.

Plans and ideas were passed around but things eventually went quiet and then suddenly there was another company looking at the same site. This was Shires Developments, who have the same man at the helm as the previous company. Needless to say we are still waiting for work to start!

We were so frustrated by 2000 that we decided to contact British Waterways just to find out what they did or did not own and to move things along. BW did not only send plans of what they owned but also an engineer from Leeds. We explained what we wished to do and what seemed a short time afterwards a letter arrived telling us to "get on with it"

Many questions needed to be answered. How big a scheme? How was it to be funded? Had we got enough money? Had we got the expertise? All needed answering.

Many meetings later, we decided that we could cover most of the points. Indeed many of our members were of the opinion that the ECP&DA funds should be put to some useful and appropriate purpose rather than remain in the bank, but of course we needed more money for this scheme.

In co-operation with Erewash Groundwork we applied for a grant from EMDA. The hard work of Groundwork should not be underestimated and we would say to anyone trying to fill out the forms, do not be put off by a rejection but stick at it. There are many hoops to jump through before you get to the Promised Land. Our grant was not big but it gave us the push to get started. Risk assessments and method studies were like confetti, each part having to be submitted to BW at Sawley.

Nothing goes smoothly as shortly after we had got started, BW Chief Executive Robin Evans decided to do his big carve up, so not only were we moved from Sawley to Newark, but we now had a new regime to talk to. Work had to stop, as they wanted to see the papers. "You have got all the relevant papers at Sawley" we said. Weeks passed with no sign of permission being given to continue. No, the papers had not arrived at Newark and all they could tell us was that they might have gone up in the fire at Sawley. We offered to send photostat copies but they wanted the originals. Back to square one with new risk assessments and method studies being made and sent to Newark.

Thankfully we were eventually allowed to restart our work towards Cromford. I have deliberately not named people as there are too many to thank but they know themselves. Now to boys toys, hard work for the geriatric volunteers and yet something to be seen for our labours.

## **The Work**

I do not wish to make the next piece too hard a read so here goes. To make things easy I have called the area at the Langley Mill end the bottom and the extension the top. In the early days of the restoration at the bottom end, J C Balls of Ambergate had helped



immensely with the digging out. A couple of phone calls were all that was needed to get the same firm to do the work required at the top end.

Previously we had dug down with the JCB, hoping to find the old wall of the canal, which had been bulldozed and infilled in the days of the NCB. Bingo! Spot on doing three trial holes, but they were all over a metre and a half deep. Five and bit feet in old money. This was partly because the ground in this area has all subsided due to deep mine workings but also the coping stones were mostly missing and the top part of the original wall had been destroyed.

One very foggy morning the digger appeared from J C Balls but we then found it over six inches too wide to get across the access bridge. Phone calls were made, the machine was taken away and replaced the next day by a slightly smaller digger. By this stage we were positive where the old wall was so it was comparatively easy to give the

driver the right directions. Cuppa time while he was getting set up. No time for that as he had already dug down and exposed the old wall. Beautiful red brick, which had been there over two hundred years. By the end of the day nearly seventy metres had been cleared and that was all we needed to get started. It was decided to build up the wall to coping level with mass concrete rather than brickwork, to save both time and expense. Wooden shutter boards had



Exposed original brick wall with reinforcing and shuttering being set up

been made in the workshop ready for starting. Good ply was used, as they would be needed several times. Work cabin, mess cabin, reinforcing, shovels, tie bars and all manner of other bits and pieces had to be brought on site. The whole area had to be fenced



After the first concrete pour

to comply with all the rules and regulations including notices telling people that it was a deep excavation. All loose brickwork was removed to leave a solid foundation, reinforcing lowered in, all tied together and shuttering on both sides. The foundation was cast a metre wide and 300mm deep on top of the remains of the original wall. The concrete wall was then cast 500mm



wide at the bottom going to 350 at the top. All quite technical if you have never done it before.

Remember this was all done by the over sixties on Fridays with the monthly Sunday thrown in. We were very lucky that the company at the end of Chrysalis Way allowed us to take their security fence down so we were able to access the site more easily. This allowed us to bring ready mixed concrete lorries virtually right where they

were required. Some members were coming in during the week just to strip the shuttering off and get the next section ready for the Friday pour. The weather was kind but where there is water, mud is not very far away when you are working in a trench. Happy days!

We got as far as we could using the old method but there came a time when we were too far away from the lorries. Answer, bring in a concrete pump. Pump on time, but



More wall is cleared as the site begins to resemble the Somme

no ready mixed concrete lorry. Several calls later, with the pump man getting very agitated and missing another job, we got the concrete. Not once did the lorries come on time so we went back to mixing our own, hard work but worth it not having to rely on outside agencies. What a let down.



Pumping the concrete from the Chrysalis Way car park to the far end of the shuttering

When we had finished concreting the wall, replacement coping stones were required. To provide these, we bought two

redundant platforms from a little station just above Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire, Portsmouth to be exact. These stones cost £10,000. With these fitted, all ground was backfilled up to the correct level and all roads within the site made good before we went any further.



All the above work was carried out on the offside wall (ie on the east side of the canal). The towpath side was a different matter, however, as what remained of the original wall, if it was there at all, was so far below the present ground level that it was decided steel piles would be the better method. We therefore turned our attention to steel piling. We will not go into just where the piling hammer came from, but suffice to say it was being thrown out for scrap by another canal society.



The railway platform coping stones are now on site and the galvanised steel piles are just arriving

Everything in place, hard hats, viz vests, hard toed boots, compressor and of course the "Ruston Bucyrus" machine, which was first registered for the road in 1963. These may be old machines but they work well most of the time. Oh! We forgot the ear defenders.

We had now moved to another part of the extension and yes, you have guessed it, we needed all new risk assessments and method studies. Piling went well until we hit the old wall, very hard stone on this side. Still, where there is a will there is a way and after much head scratching it was done.

The connection to the existing canal will be via a channel fourteen feet one inch wide to allow a wide beam boat or two narrow boats side by side to pass through. A set of stop plank grooves was also provided. This involved another large amount of reinforced concrete. Having just said we would not use ready mix again, we thought we will have the pump in once more and do the stop plank area. Yet again the concrete failed to arrive on time. An even bigger let down. After having ten cubic metres pumped in to form the stop plank sill, it was back to mixing our own. It took us a day each side to concrete for the stop plank grooves which were steel channels that had been fabricated in our workshop and then sent away to be galvanised which gives them a much longer life. Mixing and pouring a further five cubic metres of the stuff was no small task and is not done in half an hour. These stop plank grooves are now in and all services have been ducted under the canal bed.

Before the final connection can be made, the channel will need to be crossed by a movable bridge to give access to the Langley Mill Boatyard moorings. Should there be a lift bridge or should it be a swing bridge or just a walk over one? We have still not made our minds up but we are not having a telephone vote on it. A lot will depend on what happens with the Shires Developments scheme, which could result in a marina being built after the coal has been worked. But given that it is about fourteen years since this was first mooted, we are not holding our breath.

The cost of the whole project was to have been in the region of £160,000, but as anyone who has watched Grand Designs on television will know, most projects go over budget because things get altered. This was no different.





All Photos: Editor

Looking forward to Cromford and waiting for the boats.

The piled connection channel with the stop plank grooves is in the foreground and a pleasant mooring area on the right.

The proposed movable bridge will be at the camera position.

Just to be really boring here are some more of the figures to digest.

First digger	£250
Second digger to level ground	£250
Concrete pump (twice)	£900
First load of piling	£16,000

We have had over 31 ton bags of ballast and sand, cement by the pallet and all sorts of sundries including four pallets of setts to give the whole thing a good finish.

To round things up, we made our own moulds, so if there was any concrete left over it was poured into the moulds to make our own copings. How many man days have gone into this project, we have not had time to work out, but as all volunteers book in and out it should not be an onerous task. We had to have people booking out just in case we had left someone under the concrete.

There is the opencast to come, but if we go any further with our workings it will make their area that much smaller and anyway they have to work no closer to the fence than 15 metres. We will not say the whole area will be finished by the time of our rally which is the 23rd –26th May 2008 but we will be showing people round so that they may see something we are very proud of. This rally is to celebrate 40 years of the ECP&DA without whom there would not be an Erewash Canal so therefore any Cromford.

We could not have done all this work without travelling through Langley Mill Boatyard, so I would also like to record our thanks to them for their patience and assistance. To the uninitiated.

ECP&DA	Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association.
EMDA	East Midlands Development Agency
PILES	What you knock into the ground to hold soil or water back.
COPINGS	These are put on top of the piles to make a good finish
SETTS	These make everything look pretty.

Pretty we are not, but practical we are.

All this work is for the future generations so “Onwards and Upwards”



The Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association

# RALLY OF BOATS

**Great Northern Basin - Langley Mill 23 - 26 May 2008**

This is to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Association and 35 years since the re-opening of Langley Bridge Lock and the Great Northern Basin

The Official Party will leave Anchor Bridge at 11.00am preceded by the Nottingham Symphonic Winds Band onboard two historic narrow boats *Bath* and *Petrel* sailing up the Erewash Canal to arrive at the lock for the

**Official Opening Ceremony - Saturday 24th May at 12.00 noon**

## **Events include**

**Duck Races** - Saturday & Sunday - Final on Monday

Prizes: 1st £50 - 2nd £25 - 3rd £10

Try your luck £1 a duck

## **Grand Prize Draw**

LCD flat screen TV, Digital camera, Garden seat and many other prizes - to be drawn Monday 26th May

## **Exhibition of memorabilia**

**in the restored Nottingham Canal Tollhouse**

Rope making demonstrations and numerous stalls

Real Ale Bar open to the public 12.00 noon - 4pm

"A Touch of Brass" - Vintage Fire Engine

Best Dressed Boat - Boater's Dog Show

**Sunday 25th - Religious Service - 10.30 am - Main Marquee**

Conducted by the Rev. Dan Pattimore

## **The Friends of the Cromford Canal**

Exhibition and Sales stand will be there and all members' support will be appreciated either as staff or customers

**Over 100 boats expected from far and wide**



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



Spring is officially with us, and it is the time of year when your Committee are looking at the events we would like the FCC Sales Stand to attend this year. As usual, we have one stumbling block – who is going to man the stand! - So I start with our customary appeal for anyone who would like to help us, to contact Val Roberts or any committee member; our contact details are on the inside cover of your magazine. We are particularly in need of people to help put up and take down the stand and tent, which is often a task requiring several ‘bodies’, especially if the weather is at all windy. These events are very important to the Friends; now that we have the ‘go ahead’ for the Smotherfly site we need all the coverage we can get.

Members meetings are proving a bit of a headache for us at the moment. As I mentioned last time, we no longer have the use of the main hall at Ironville, and it took only one meeting for it to be obvious that the offered alternative was not suitable. We are looking at other venues, but it appears that we will have to move from the Ironville area, possibly to somewhere nearer Alfreton. The other problem we have encountered is one of cost – most halls will cost us double what we were paying at Ironville. With speakers charging up to £40, this means that a meeting could cost £80. This is clearly not sustainable, so the Committee have reluctantly decided that we will have to charge £1.50 per person for our members’ meetings from September 2008. We hope that this will not put you off coming, but we aim to offer you value for money in a variety of interesting speakers. You will find a list of our arranged talks and venues elsewhere in this magazine, hopefully by September we will have found a permanent ‘home’ for our talks.

It was good to be able to report an increase in Membership numbers at the AGM, please do keep up your support for us. We still seem to be having problems with the banks paying standing orders payments, unfortunately some banks seem unable to read the instructions and a few members have found themselves paying monthly rather than yearly. There are also instances where the account name appears to bear little relation to the member’s name; one in fact comes through only as one and a half Christian names. Fortunately I was able to work this out. If you pay by standing order, do check your bank statements, if you have any queries please contact myself or our Treasurer, Bob Bullock.

We give a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined us since the last edition of ‘The Portal’

Mr & Mrs P Daniels, Heanor  
 Mr & Mrs R Dowling, Belper  
 Mr & Mrs C Brewin, Belper  
 Mr & Mrs E Singleton, Heanor  
 Mr K G Rodgers, Jacksdale  
 Mrs P Carlin, Eastwood  
 Mr C Maddison, Eastwood

Dr & Mrs R Buss, Chester  
 Mr R Dewey, Wrexham  
 Mr & Mrs G Barksby, Kimberley  
 Mr J Brett, Kimberley  
 Mr R Boot, Nottingham  
 Mr & Mrs G Mozley, Kimberley  
 Mr C Jacklin, Nottingham



# FREE MONEY!

by Patrick Morriss

Now I have your attention I will explain. Giles Metcalfe, our Webmaster and Newsgroup 'operator' tells me we have about 120 people on our newsgroup list and Yvonne Shattower tells me we have 660 plus members. Now I know you are not all computer users, so for those of you who find anything computer orientated a turn off please turn to another page. Those of you who do use computers and more especially search engines please read on. Twenty eight Friends and friends have raised about £100 for the FCC by using a search engine called Everyclick. Google, Ask, MSN, Yahoo and all the other search engines make anything from a fraction of a penny to several pence each time you search for and visit a site using a search engine. This is why they make huge profits.

## **Everyclick shares its income 50:50 with charities.**

Everyclick.com works just like any other search engine, but allows the users to choose the charity they would like to benefit from their searching. The revenue generated for charities comes from companies that advertise on the site. There is no sign up fee or hidden charge to the user or the charity, it is free giving.

Go to <http://www.everyclick.com/friends-of-the-cromford-canal/377544/0>

Then hit the 'read more' button to sign up to help the FCC raise funds. If 28 of us can raise £100 just think what 280 or 2800 of us could do. Please pass this on to friends, colleagues and if you can please get your employer, school or college to join. You will not be inundated with Spam, emails or other Junk mail if you do this, and as I have said elsewhere it's a method of helping the FCC without actually costing you anything, very vital in these economically troubled times.

Charities of all sizes are benefiting from this new fundraising service; they range from Cancer Research to small village schools. If 10% of the UK online population used Everyclick.com for their searches, an additional £172,000 would be raised for charity every day.

"Most of us wish we could give more, now we can. Everyclick is a really simple way to raise money for free, just by doing something you already do", said Polly Gowers CEO, co- founder and winner of the WEBA Ethical Entrepreneur of the year 2007. "As we see it, every search that is not raising money for charity is a search wasted."

Everyclick.com has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for charity; please see the website for an up-to-date total.

## **TEA AT ROBIN HOOD**

If you're walking the northern section of our canal and fancy a cuppa – or something more substantial – FCC members John & Jacky will welcome you to Oakford Cottage at Robin Hood. They offer hot and cold drinks, and very reasonably priced homemade soups, sandwiches and cakes as well as chocolate bars and ice creams. To reach them, leave the canal at Simms Bridge (the footbridge just north of Whatstandwell) and they are a hundred yards along the road at the top of the track. They offer indoor or outdoor seating and from their terrace you get splendid views over the canal and the Derwent Valley. They even offer to let you eat your own lunch their provided you buy their drinks! They are open 10am to 5pm every day except Monday. You can call them first on 01773 852406.

Hugh Potter



## BUGSWORTH BASIN

On Monday Feb 11th, a good attendance of members and visitors had a very interesting illustrated talk at Ironville Church Hall from Ian Edgar, chairman of the Inland Waterways Protection Society, and his colleague Don Baines. Volunteers of the IWPS have been working at Bugsworth for over forty years and their perseverance over many severe trials and tribulations is an inspiration to us all.

It is a familiar story: The Peak Forest Canal, of which Bugsworth Basin was the terminus, was itself only marginally navigable and the fine flight of sixteen locks at Marple, leading down towards Manchester, was in ruins. British Waterways had stanked off the approach to the basins from the main canal to prevent water loss due to severe leaks in the bed. They saw the site as an unjustifiable and unwanted liability and in any case nobody was interested.

Then along came a group of enthusiasts (or eccentrics or nutters depending on your point of view) who looked at the dereliction in the 1960's around this once thriving canal location and could see the potential of what had once been one of the largest inland ports on the English narrow canal network.



Ian gave a well informed account of the ensuing struggle with both the practical difficulties on the site and the negotiations with authority. This went on and on for years and suffered many set backs, particularly trying to locate and rectify the serious leaks in the waterway walls and bottom, a problem which had dogged Bugsworth since it was built. Refilled sections had to be drained and resealed several times. Eventually, British Waterways was won over and co-operation was at last agreed upon. Various sections were sealed permanently with a plastic membrane and concrete.

Another major problem then came with the proposed Whaley Bridge bypass. At first this entailed a low level bridge which would have cut off the basin for ever. Further protracted negotiations resulted in navigable headroom being provided.

All this is of great significance to the FCC. Bugsworth Basin is adjacent to Whaley Bridge, which is the opposite end of the Cromford and High Peak railway from Cromford. The local limestone was the basis of a very important industry at both locations and



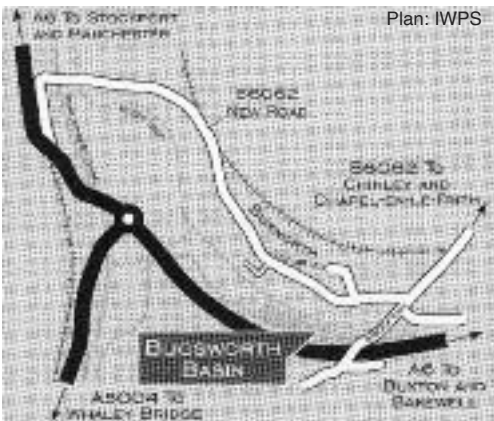
accounted for a large proportion of the traffic on both canals and railway. Apart from the historical similarities, however, the efforts of the volunteers at Bugsworth give us a good example of what can and will be achieved on the Cromford. Being able to visit this very picturesque and historically fascinating location by boat is really amazing. Since the



Photo: Editor

eventual re-opening, Bugsworth Basin has provided a truly idyllic canal location, very popular with boaters and walkers alike. The basins have in fact become a significant tourist attraction. The same could one day be the case on the Cromford. We certainly have the scenery and the industrial archaeology. The picture above shows the Lower Basin at Bugsworth during one of the boat gatherings which have been held there in the last few years. Wouldn't it be nice to see this type of scene at Ironville, Pinxton, Leawood or even

Cromford? I believe that day will come!



The plan on the left shows how to get to Bugsworth Basin by road. In addition to the canal, the area has great potential for walking on the remains of the Cromford and High Peak Railway and also along the line of the Peak Forest Tramway, which brought limestone to the basin from the surrounding hills.

Before they concentrated their efforts at Bugsworth, the IWPS proposed an ambitious scheme for a Leeds to London waterway. This will be described in a future issue.

Editor



## MALCOLM HARROD

In January of this year we heard the sad news that one of the Derbyshire County Council Rangers had passed away suddenly. Those of you who have worked with me on the work parties with Derbyshire County Council will probably have met him as he was usually the head ranger who was responsible for us. We all knew him as Malc.



Photo: Hugh Potter

Malc was to me the man who made the work parties with the relaxed and carefree manner in which he went about his duties. From the onset at the very first work party I knew that FCC had a very good friend in Malc. He made the work parties fun and although we all worked hard we still had time for a laugh and a joke with him. He was a great supporter of the Cromford Canal and supported us with our aim to re-open it. He would have loved to have seen canal boats back at Cromford Wharf.

The photo shows Malc with the small tractor which he used on the canal, having just towed the boat *Duchess* to Cromford Wharf for the Heritage Weekend following the non-arrival of the horse, as mentioned in the last issue of Portal. This was a much appreciated gesture well beyond his call of duty and enabled us to have the boat there on static display for the Saturday.

He was a very popular man as at his funeral the chapel was packed with many standing at the back. There were family flowers only as Malc had another love in his life which was the Bolsover Woodland Enterprise, so I have made a donation on our behalf.

He will be sadly missed and our thoughts go out to his family. Dave Tinkler

## NOTHING CHANGES

Our Archivist, Hugh Potter has found the item below and says: Here's one for our illustrious working party organiser to reassure him that he is following instructions given almost 200 years ago!

At a meeting of the Cromford Canal Co Committee  
held at Matlock Old Bath the 19th August 1812:

Order'd that Mr Cutts do give Notice to the Owners of Trees and Bushes hanging over any path on the Canal to cut and clear away the same so that Boats navigating on the Canal may have a free passage and if they neglect to do so then Mr Cutts is desired to cut and clear away such Trees and Bushes.



## WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



On the 8th and 9th March we had a work party on the length of canal at Ironville which is owned by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, who have asked us to help in clearing it up. This section includes the lower part of the Ironville flight of locks below the main line railway bridge. On this occasion we had the Waterways Recovery Group (WRG), from the North West section, in attendance. I had arranged suitable accommodation for them at Waingroves Community Centre.



Photo: Pat Morriss

Waterway Recovery Group and FCC volunteers attacking the young trees in the channel above Lock 5.

The idea was to carry on the good work started last autumn and continued in February. Our task was to cut down and dispose of trees, bushes and vegetation that were growing in or on the canal banks and locks. This was to be the last work party to cut down vegetation until the autumn due to the wild life; we have to allow the birds to nest undisturbed and the other creatures to do their thing.

We had eighteen volunteers from the Waterways Recovery Group and there were nine FCC volunteers on the Saturday and five on the Sunday. The weather was really good to us so we all got stuck in and had an enjoyable weekend. We had Dave Wright, who is





one of our members and is trained and authorised to use a chain saw, with us on the Saturday. So the first job was to cut down a large tree that was growing out of the side of lock six. This was then cut up and placed on a bonfire to dispose of it.

The chainsaw brings rapid results at Lock 6.



Photo: Jan Columbo

We then spread ourselves out into four or five groups, so as not to clash with each other and progress was made each side of lock six. In the mean time Dave carried on cutting down the larger trees, with his chain saw, heading towards lock seven. These



The Cromford Canal 'Logging Company' enjoying themselves

Photo: Editor



Good bonfires are essential at this type of work party.



Photo: Jan Columbo

trees mostly fell into the canal and so Sunday was spent pulling them out with the aid of a capable young lady from WRG operating a Tirfor. We then disposed of them on the bonfire.

On the Saturday morning our chairman paid us a welcome visit, which was very much appreciated, especially as he is not a well man. Thank you Patrick. We also had a visit from our Portal Editor. The Press get everywhere.

The dry dock at Lock 6 is now fully cleared of undergrowth. We are hoping to be able to excavate the silt from the dock chamber in the near future.



Photo: Editor

By the end of the two days a great deal of work had been done and our gratitude goes out to all the volunteers who attended. I would personally like to thank the WRG for their efforts and hope that they will come back and work with us again.

I will keep you all informed of any further work party dates as soon as I have them. Hoping to see more new faces as well as old ones soon.



# LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates



Welcome to the first set of jottings from the Leawood Pumphouse. We have been asked by the editor to do some short articles for The Portal to keep members up to date on events and works at the pump.

The first good news received recently is after a patient wait since 2002 funding for repairs to boiler 43 has been secured. This boiler was taken out of use due to leaking rivets at the rear of the firebox. Upon further inspection the boiler inspector requested some other rivets were replaced at the same time. Despite several unsuccessful attempts, Derbyshire County Council Rangers Service (our bosses!) have persevered and at last the money is available. The next stage is to update all the old quotations for the work and arrange for the works to be carried out. We will keep you updated on this.

Another surprise received this year was that the Pumphouse was to be completely rewired. The electric wiring has been a bit dodgy for a long time with regular bangs as bulbs failed. Damp or even water got into various fittings causing regular trip outs on the main board. The building has been struck by lightning twice, once causing a burn out in the boiler house roof and also damage to the wiring in the engine house. The works commenced at the end of January and as promised were completed in time for the Easter Steaming - just! The whole building was given a thorough clean but there is still some tidying up to do over the coming months. There are some mixed feelings about the lights after many years on the old system but the works are a definite improvement especially with the provision of working sockets around the place, no more extension cables from the boiler house to the engine house via the yard.

Works were carried out during the winter closure, around the electricians, to try and improve the seal on the outlet valve to the canal. This seal is formed by two rows of wooden blocks which we are trying to get even to form a smooth face with the cast iron of the valve. The blocks were replaced a couple of years ago but have decayed rapidly due to the action of the water flowing through the valve during pumping and finding its way through the small gaps between the blocks. A temporary rubber seal has been placed over the gap whilst a method is worked out how to get the two layers parallel with each other. A spare valve is outside the rear doors and hopefully, using this, a method can be worked out in the open and transferred into the tight space within the pump chamber.

During last summer one of our members cleared the edges of the canal from the swing bridge at the end of the aqueduct to the boundary just past the outlet both sides. Many favourable comments have been received about this and it has also made unloading coal much easier, we now know where the edge of the canal is! The mooring posts have been replaced and some timber work on the outlet is due for work. A new floor has been fitted in the boat after several people went through the old one during coaling. It's a bit wet below the floor when it rains hard.

Our steaming dates are shown on page 36 and we would welcome visits from any members; let yourselves be known when you visit. As a group we would also welcome anyone who might like to help with works at the site on a Monday night, come down and have a chat. Hopefully the above notes are of interest and will become a regular feature.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

Being fascinated by kingfishers (as spotted by Hugh Potter and yourself – Portal 24) my wife and I usually strike lucky when walking by the canal at Golden Valley. In particular, the Sunday before Christmas last, one bird entertained us for fully ten minutes. It moved from bush to bush (as they do) keeping us 20 to 30 yards behind. But we were moving slowly, so little perturbed, it periodically treated us to views in which it rested, peering into and searching the depths and occasionally darting (fruitlessly on this occasion) after a fish. We were creeping forward once more for a renewed better view, when suddenly two more birds erupted from a hole between the stones in the canal wall, right opposite us. These two, startled a little, shot off westwards towards Newlands Road, passing the other which unceremoniously joined them. We watched all three until they disappeared into the tree line around the canal bend.

It was a breathtaking sighting, but our delight quickly became tainted and tinged with sadness. A “breathtaking” (in its other sense) reek of contaminating, swirling detergent foam, in the canal at that period, reminded us of the proximity of industrialisation to feeder streams to the west. Clearly, not all discharges have been eliminated from these sources and if these continue or repeat one must fear for the future of birds, fish and animals alike on this stretch. I hope our fears prove unfounded and joy returns.

Yours faithfully

Bevan Parr, Riddings

John Baylis replies:

Dear Mr Parr,

I was very pleased to hear that you were lucky enough to see three kingfishers at one time near Newlands Road; most of us are lucky to catch sight of the one. Although I don't think many towing path walkers, anglers and boaters realise that it is mainly these groups that have the chance of seeing kingfishers, herons, cormorants and woodpeckers. On your other point I assume the foam was at the small weir at the end of the Derbyshire County Council section or, more probably, at the deeper concrete weir into Codnor Park Reservoir. As far as I know there are no industrial outlets into the waters this side of Butterley Tunnel, with all water originating from the tunnel flowing to the west. Unfortunately these days the most common pollutants are seen when they are “diffuse” and too late to do any tracing of the source. The source is often not a fixed property or drain but from dumping old oils, detergents and paints that are difficult to dispose of through the community refuse collection sites. Local authorities and the Environment Agency are doing their best but unless they get almost instant reporting or identification of the vehicle seen dumping they can do little; it is too late to leave it to the next day. The Environment Agency pollution Hot Line can be contacted on 0800 80 70 60.

Patrick Morriss adds the following:

I have noticed that for some time at the junction of Newlands Road and Coach Road opposite the canal, there were quite a few wrapped silage bales stored. If any of these were damaged or lying in standing water the liquor will seep out. The run off from this is not very pleasant, it strips oxygen from the water and can have a detergent like action amongst other issues. I imagine that the run off from that field has nowhere else to go but into the canal.



Dear Sir

I refer to my correspondence in "Letters" issue 24, concerning the possible discovery of "loading shafts" on the new "Cromford View" building site at Butterley. I would like to advise members that I have since been afforded a most enjoyable and informative guided tour of the lower plane of the Butterley work site. This took place on Saturday 23rd February 2008 and I am currently compiling a report of the visit viewed from my own personal perspective.

The tour essentially followed the N-S line of the original furnace bank. This "40ft" high series of furnace walls and associated masonry, is set into (and thus retains) the upper plane to the east of the works site. There are many interesting (and puzzling) features. The upper (or so called "Top Plane") constitutes the old "stock" and "coke" yards from which the original furnaces were fed.

The Butterley loading wharf and canal tunnel, lie some "60ft" below the central section of this wall bisecting it roughly in a WNW to ESE direction. Features pertinent to and local to this historic feature were examined at length. Butterley's unique wharf was originally equipped with two overhead loading shafts in its eastern berth. These are known to have opened on to the Top Plane for offloading materials arriving by canal boat, but the true position of the wharf is disputed and the shaft positions largely unknown. The probability that Morris Homes Ltd had uncovered one or both of these shafts is high and this opens up the possibility of pinpointing these features. Such a tantalising opportunity naturally prompted this exercise and the objective now (if possible) is to establish the truth of the matter. The visit itself was not conclusive on this account as it was primarily for the purpose of familiarisation for those concerned. However, several pointers were noted which permit tentative conclusions to be drawn and I am continuing researches into these. It is hoped that with appropriate help and guidance, these can be properly evaluated and full justifications produced in due course.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the theme of water control and management was much in evidence around the site. This aspect would have been just as important in the early years as of late and must in my opinion, be included in any considerations of engineering arrangement.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to John Boucher, Hugh Potter and Des Greenwood for arranging this visit and for giving up their valuable time so readily on such a cold, windy morning. Thanks too for their assistance in providing so many insights into the features pertinent to the investigation. I'm sure John and Hugh will endorse my particular appreciation to Des for his patience and understanding in the additional roles of Butterley representative and tour guide.

Kind regards

Bevan Parr, Riddings

### **LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING WEEKENDS 2008**

The engine will be in motion from noon to 5.00 pm on each of the following dates:

May 4th & 5th	Bank Holiday Sunday & Monday
June 7th & 8th	First Weekend
July 5th & 6th	First Weekend
August 2nd & 3rd	First Weekend
August 24th & 25th	Bank Holiday Sunday & Monday
October 4th & 5th	First Weekend
November 1st & 2nd	Discovery Weekend

## Friends of the Cromford Canal - A selection of the items for sale



### Quality Clothing with the 'Leggers' Logo embroidered on the left breast

**Sweat Shirts** Sizes: M, L, XL, XXL  
£17.50 plus £2.50 p&p

**Polo Shirts** (with collar) Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL,  
£13.50 plus £2.20 p&p

**Tee Shirts**  
Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
£9.50 plus £1.50 p&p

### All items Burgundy colour

**Printed Tee Shirts** →  
with the 'Leggers' logo printed  
across the chest

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
£7.00 plus £1.50 p&p



### Shopping Bag £7.50 plus £1.50 p&p

A strong bag with shoulder length handles, and the design printed in full colour on one side  
Available in 3 designs. 18 inches wide by 17 inches deep

All items available by post  
from the Sales Address  
Please enclose cheque with  
order made payable to FCC



### Tote Bag £6.50 plus 60P p&p

A lighter bag than above, with the design printed in black on one side 15 ins x 16 ins

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