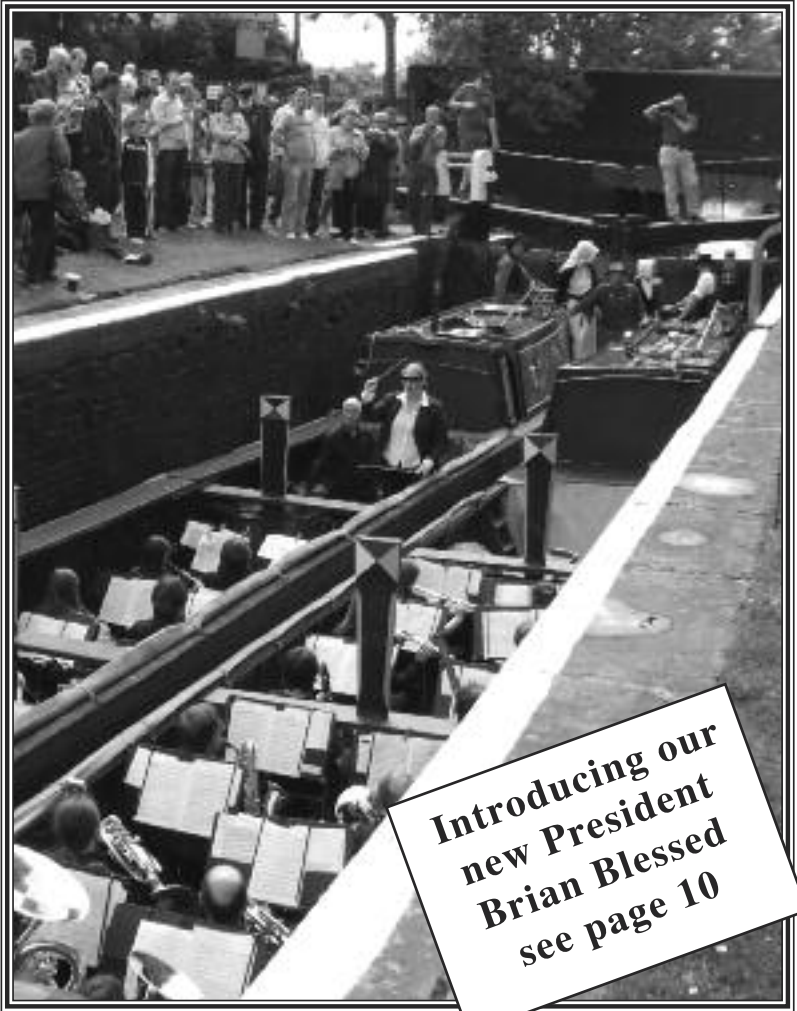


THE PORTAL



Introducing our
new President
Brian Blessed
see page 10

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

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FRONT COVER: Nottingham Symphonic Winds Band playing 'Land of Hope and Glory' make an unusual load for historic narrow boats *Bath* and *Petrel* rising in Langley Bridge Lock at the Langley Mill Rally of Boats.

Photo: Dave Tinkler

BACK COVER (TOP): The Cromford Canal at Langley Mill still infilled in 1974 taken from the top of the spoil heap of the opencast site which was destroying the canal behind the camera. This area is now Langley Mill Boatyard moorings, which shows what can be achieved.

Photo: Michael Golds

(BOTTOM): The line of the canal through the former Stevenson's Dyers factory yard at Bullbridge, awaiting its turn to be restored.

Photo: Mike Kelley

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 26.

I am feeling a bit out of touch with the affairs of the Friends of the Cromford Canal at the moment. Val and I managed to get away on the boat for most of June for our first trip for about eighteen months. Having enjoyed canal boating for over forty years, I have to say that in the last few years the canal system has changed considerably, not necessarily for the better, in two major ways. These were both very noticeable on this last trip, having been away from boating for much longer than usual.

First of all, the loss of what is nowadays called 'waterway heritage', in spite of claims to the contrary. At many sites between Langley Mill and London, we saw that historic mills, warehouses, wharves and basins have been obliterated and replaced with concrete and glass eyesores, twee apartments, trendy pubs, supermarkets and industrial estates.

The other major cause for concern is the increase in the number of boats. Whilst I accept that British Waterways have done a good job in promoting canals as a leisure activity and that the waterways themselves are generally in a much better condition than they were in the sixties and seventies, the system is in danger of becoming overwhelmed.

You may ask where all this leaves the Cromford. Firstly, we must try to ensure that such historic buildings and structures as remain are indeed preserved according to our aims and objectives. The tragedy on the Cromford is that so many were lost before sufficient people were interested in saving them, but hopefully future generations will still be able to see at least part of the past glory of this beautiful canal. Secondly, when the canal is restored, together with the Derby and Grantham Canals, it will provide significant extra mileage of waterway not just for boating, but for all waterside activities in the East Midlands, including, contrary to some opinions, real benefits to wildlife.

However, we must return to the present situation. Whilst we were away much has been happening, as you will see from the reports of important meetings from both Pat Morriss and Mike Kelley in this issue. The eventual outcome of these meetings, among other things, will be the need to raise significant funds for these exciting projects. The need for fund raising, as we have said before, will soon become acute. If you think you can help in this direction, the committee would dearly like to hear from you. What is particularly required is someone who can find out about any grants etc. which may be available and has the ability to fill in all the necessary, admittedly complex, forms.

I would also like to thank the various members who have manned (or indeed womanned) the sales stall or collected donations at several events during the absence of Val and myself. Details of our forthcoming programme of events are on page 4 and I hope we can carry on seeing some new faces to support them. Everyone is always welcome.

Please note the press date for the Autumn issue will be October 13th 2008



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



When asked by a journalist, "What is most likely to blow governments off course?" Harold Macmillan, Conservative Prime Minister of the late 1950's said "Events dear boy, events." That advice can apply to all organisations, including the Friends of the Cromford Canal.

In the spring *Portal* there was lots of information concerning the Smotherly/Pinxton project which was on course for taking up the committee's time for the next few years. In addition, as I stated "do not forget our efforts to protect and enhance the rest of the canal will continue unabated." Since the last *Portal* there have been several developments proposed either on the line of the canal, close by the line of the canal or on the line of future possible deviations of the canal which may be needed to avoid obstacles on the original route. All these will require input from the committee to one extent or another. As you will understand as you read the following comments, we are surrounded by "events".

Firstly, you may have read that the proposed Golden Valley Project incorporating a 'northern' deviation around Codnor Park Reservoir had been abandoned after the planning application had been withdrawn. This is not the case. The planning application for this project will be re-submitted in the autumn after further work and input by the FCC and others. The northern route around Codnor Park Reservoir remains the most cost effective solution to the problems caused by British Waterways' work to the canal and reservoir that resulted in today's massive flood channel through Ironville and Codnor Park. Not only is this route cost effective but it also reduces the impact on the environment which would result if the canal passed through the reservoir, and it reduces the widespread and intrusive engineering work around the current car park and overflow area that would result from attempting to stick to the original route.

Secondly, a further outline planning application has been submitted for the rest of the Butterley Company's site at Ripley. Part of the original site has already been developed as 'Cromford View' by Morris Homes. Now there are plans to redevelop the rest of the site and demolish the majority of the buildings except for those with listed status. The FCC have objected to this scheme as it would remove the remaining surface features of the link to the canal tunnel below, and of the famous Outram and Co's Ironworks, the history and development of which is inextricably linked to the history and development of the Cromford Canal in its first hundred years.

Thirdly, the owners of the former Stevenson's Dye works site at Bullbridge have launched a public consultation concerning the possible options for the redevelopment of that site, which includes a section of filled in canal between the road bridge near the Canal Inn and the North Portal of Hagg Tunnel. In many ways the current owners are to be applauded for their approach to this. They are consulting the local population before applying for any sort of planning permission. Various members of the FCC and others went



along on the consultation days and spoke up for the FCC plans to reinstate the canal. The FCC wish list includes a reinstated canal line and perhaps part of one of the original extant canal side buildings as some sort of FCC HQ and heritage centre. We are to meet with the developers this summer to discuss our plans and see what may be done.

Fourthly, there is a large mixed use development planned for the east of the A610 at Langley Mill. This is on the route of the possible diversion planned for the canal under the A610 using the former railway bridge. Again an outline application has been submitted to Broxtowe Council for this development and we hope to be negotiating with the developers to persuade them of the benefits of water front developments. This would link very nicely with the ECP&DA's northern push from Langley Mill.

As I said there are plenty of 'events' happening to keep the committee and volunteers of the FCC very busy. Once again I appeal to any of you with time or skills to be involved in fund raising, manning stands, involvement with working parties or a multitude of other areas where you may be able to assist the FCC. You do not have to sign over your life to us! You can be involved just as much or as little as you like, a particular need at the moment is fundraising expertise, as everything we do needs funding to one extent or another.

In the meantime negotiations with UK COAL are continuing regarding Smotherfly and initial meetings have been held with DCC officers regarding the Pinxton section and the design of footpaths etc. along the canal side at Smotherfly and Pinxton. In addition we still await the long anticipated release of the Ambergate to Cromford Canal Management Plan from Derbyshire County Council. As stakeholders we are assured of a consultation role on this but regrettably various 'chunks' of this report have found their way on to the internet in advance of this process.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

• 2nd/3rd August: **Cromford Steam Rally**, High Acres Farm, Dewey Lane, Brackenfield. Although this popular event is no longer held near the canal on Cromford Meadows, the FCC stall will again be attending. Lots of interest for the vintage transport enthusiast.

• 23rd/25th August: **Midland Railway Butterley** will be holding a major bank holiday event to commemorate the Horticultural Show and Open Day events which were a popular annual feature of the former Derby Locomotive Works. Our chairman Patrick Morris will be giving a presentation about the FCC on the Saturday. See page 19.

• 28th September: **Pinxton Push Sponsored Walk** from Langley Mill Basin to Pinxton Wharf, in aid of the restoration of the Pinxton Branch of the Cromford Canal. Full details on the flyer included with this magazine. See also page 5.

• 20th October: Members meeting at **Pinxton Village Hall, Kirkstead Road, Pinxton, Nottinghamshire NG16 6NA at 7.30pm. Steve Hayward**, who has entertained us all in the past with his talk 'Fruit Flies Like a Banana' will be talking about the book he has recently published - '**Narrow Boat Dreams**'. There will be tea and coffee available and a raffle will be held. Admission £1.50 to cover the hire of the room. See page 18.

• 1st/2nd November: **World Heritage Site Discovery Days at Cromford Wharf**. This is probably the most important event of the year for the FCC. Our sales stall and displays will be either in the Gothic Warehouse or in the marquee on the wharf. There will also be a slide show of archive photos, canal painting and rope making demonstrations, street organ and the horse drawn boat will operate from Cromford to High peak Junction throughout the weekend. Final details will be in the Autumn issue, but note the date now.



THE 2nd PINXTON PUSH FUN WALK

Please put the date, **Sunday 28th September** in your diary as a day you can do your bit for the Cromford Canal, particularly the Pinxton Branch. We need all sorts of help, not just walkers. The FCC is building up a reputation for successful sponsored walks along our beautiful canal and we are hoping to carry this forward with this year's event.

You will remember, in order to obtain money toward the costs of the Planning Application for the Smotherfly site, we arranged for the first Pinxton Push in April 2006. The walk was from Langley Mill canal basin, along the line of the canal (where possible) to Pinxton Wharf; approximately 6 miles.

It was a damp day, but 223 people turned out – yes 223 – to complete this walk. This was an amazing figure and shows the level of support there is for the canal in this locality. Now we want to beat this figure with a similar event this year.

The start of the walk was by Jonathan Webster, the then Managing Director of Hardy & Hansons Brewery (now sadly taken over by Greene King) who was then our chief sponsor. Taking part on the walk were two of our local MP's Geoff Hoon, then Leader of the House of Commons, and Judy Mallabier, also several prominent local Councillors and the Derbyshire Chief of Police. It was a great day and achieved what it set out to do.

Now that we have obtained planning permission for the Smotherfly site and its connection to Pinxton Wharf, we will need to raise money, a great deal of money, for its accomplishment. As well as the physical side of things, money will be needed for further studies required as part of the planning consent. So we need to raise cash. We are hoping that Brian Blessed, the actor and our new President, will accompany us on the walk.

Please come and walk for your canal, if you can. No pre-booking, just turn up. The start is staggered between 10am and 11am and will cost £3 for adults and £1.50p for children. To aid and speed up registration it will be helpful if you will:-

- i) Obtain sponsors using the form in this magazine (Further forms can be obtained by Emailing mgkelley@hotmail.com or calling 079 648 351 64)
- ii) Pay your entrance money on the day and be issued a simple ticket number
- iii) When you arrive at Pinxton Wharf you will sign that you have completed the walk
- iv) You can then collect any sponsorship money you have obtained for your achievement
- v) Send the collected sponsorship money to our Treasurer by 15th October

We need TEAMS, FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS to walk for us. All sorts of teams, pub teams, school teams, darts teams, club teams, boater teams, football teams, cricket teams and society teams.

If you can't walk but still want to help, we need people to help with registration, (at both ends) people to direct and point the way, people to help us get sponsors, and help with advertising this event.

So come on and help us – all of you.

Mike Kelley (Vice Chairman)



SMOTHERFLY - WHERE DID ALL THE TIME GO?

Steve Parish, FCC's local authority liaison officer, explains why the Smotherfly planning application was so protracted.

The timetable below gives some clue as to why it took so long to get planning permission for the Smotherfly development. This only gives problems and outcomes – the research and correspondence behind these bare details would fill several editions of *Portal*.

The first planning issue was trying to work out which authority would deal with the application. The mining area was all in Amber Valley, but we had other work to do in Amber Valley outside the site, and also in Bolsover. My choice (and eventually I suspect officers agreed it would have been simplest) was to use the existing conditions for the mining application, which allowed variations to the agreed restoration scheme to be subject to a written agreement between the county council and the mine operators, and make separate applications to Bolsover and Amber Valley for the other bits.

But the County insisted that we could not “parcel” the application and had to make one application to both district authorities, who would then have to liaise with the county as the mineral planning authority. It made for a very complicated arrangement, and one that was open to misunderstanding and delay from the outset.

One of the most difficult areas was trying to get a handle on what ecological surveys were required. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust provided via Amber Valley Borough Council a long list of surveys suitable for a major development with significant environmental impacts, but – having gone to the Secretary of State to establish that this project was not one that needed an “Environmental Impact Assessment” - we were still unclear what surveys would be required, and how much information was needed before the application could be determined, and what could be left to planning conditions.

Planning guidance notes still allow for some surveys to be done after determination (i.e. as a condition of consent) but a 2001 court case has made planning authorities very nervous. In *R v Cornwall County Council, ex parte Hardy* (2001), the high court allowed an appeal against a planning consent: The application involved the extension of a landfill. Permission was granted by the local planning authority subject to conditions, one of which prohibited development until, amongst other things, a bat survey had been carried out and measures agreed to mitigate disturbance. The court held that having concluded a further survey was required, the local planning authority acted unlawfully in granting permission before the survey was to hand. The authority could not rationally conclude that there would be "no significant nature conservation effects" without also the data from the forthcoming surveys.

There was an argument that there was no point having a survey for bats unless the developer got planning consent, and undesirable because any bats would be disturbed by doing the survey! The main issue was that if there were bats, the development could not go ahead (i.e. there were no measures that could mitigate the fact that the bats' roosts – if there were any – would be filled in). That in itself is rare – usually some mitigation is possible, even at huge cost – but this single case (untested in the higher courts) has been turned into a catch-all. For example, if taken literally, it might mean that for any house extension within crawling distance of a pond, a survey for great crested newts would be required.

So, even though it was unlikely that there were any newts at Smotherfly, we had to look for them – likewise we had to look for water voles, even though we knew they were there! (There is a separate argument that the planning process is not the place to decide



these things – with or without planning consent, it's the law that protects protected species.) Eventually, we got the surveys done, but we then had to negotiate over the fine detail of landscaping. And having got long past the “target” dates for determining major planning applications (13 weeks!) there often seemed a lack of urgency by the authorities, compounded by having to liaise between two district planning authorities and the county. Just when we thought it might be settled by Christmas (2007...) we had a final argument with the county asking for a start date earlier than the usual three years (it used to be five for planning consent but changed recently). This one issue took over two months to settle... Having read so much of planning guidance (and I have to do similar stuff with churches as I'm chair of an advisory committee that deals with changes to listed churches), I'm thinking of taking the Royal Town Planning Institute exam. Do enjoy this torrid tale...

SMOTHERFLY PLANNING PROCESS

- February 2005: Friends of the Cromford Canal asks Derbyshire County Council how the application should be handled.
- April 2005: Authorities agree we need to make an application for the whole project. Bolsover DC says we should “make an application (the same application) to both Amber Valley B.C. and Bolsover D.C.”
- 24th May 2005: Letter from Environment Agency (EA) stating it has no objection in principle to the proposed planning application
- June 2005: FCC seeks a screening opinion from Amber Valley Borough Council (AVBC) to see whether the project needs an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- July 2005: AVBC rules that we need an EIA (and sends long list of surveys that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust says we'd need for EIA)
- October 2005: FCC appeals to the Secretary of State concerning EIA
- December 2005: Secretary of State rules we do not need an EIA. AVBC seemingly unwilling to tell us what surveys will still be required (other than the EIA list).
- January 2006: Funding bid submitted to Amber Valley Partnership (for East Midlands Development Agency money via Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership).
- April 2006: Flood Risk Assessment carried out.
- May 2006: Planning application number AVA/2006/0615 submitted to AVBC (with copies for Bolsover).
- June 2006: AVBC planning officer asked FCC to withdraw planning application on grounds of insufficient information; FCC refused as it was felt making the application was the only way to draw out what information was required.
- June 2006: Bolsover register application (via AVBC) as 06/00363/NCO but then say it should be a *separate* application – not quite how we'd understood “make an application (the same application) to both Amber Valley B.C. and Bolsover D.C”. FCC submits application to Bolsover DC (06/00642/FUL).
- June 2006: Objections from EA, Natural England (NE) & DWT.
- June 2006: FCC Wildlife Committee set up to answer objections.
- 26th June 2006: EA and NE supplied with answers to their objections (“lack of ecological information”). An ecological study will be commissioned.
- August 2006: Meeting at Ripley Town Hall (with AVBC and DCC officers) draws out more requirements including landscaping changes. It becomes clear that although planning guidance allows for some wildlife surveys to be done after consent, a legal case (*R v Cornwall County Council ex parte Hardy*) has made councils nervous, interpreting it to



mean all surveys are needed prior to determination of the application (rather than as a condition of consent).

- September 2006: Anthony Darbyshire commissioned for extra landscaping requirements.
- 10th October 2006: Ecological survey of the site carried out by contractor at FCC's expense. Finds water voles but no great crested newts.
- December 2006: FCC meet with DWT to find areas of common ground.
- 5th January 2007: Bolsover DC request details of how the FCC will protect the existing water voles at the Pinxton Wharf.
- 13th March 2007: UK COAL informed of developments (David Miller, Dave Bolton & Craig Ball)
- 26th March 2007: Network Rail informed of proposal.
- 11th April 2007: Letter sent to Bolsover DC confirming the method statement/mitigation proposals could be dealt with at a later date.
- 16th May 2007: Copies of 5 letters from EA sent to AVBC.
- 16th May 2007: DCC says their ecology officer is content that this is an acceptable alternative scheme.
- 21st June 2007: Further meeting with DWT.
- May – June 2007: Grass Snake survey requested by NE, carried out by contractor. Three snakes were found outside the main area.
- June 2007: NE ask for and get a comparison of the benefits of the FCC proposals to the original restoration plans.
- 13th June 2007: Anthony Darbyshire informed us that DCC Greenways Officer intended the proposed greenway multi-user track to go along the centre line of the Pinxton Canal. Evidence submitted that this has been discussed with DCC in February 2005, and that the policy on restoration precluded taking the centre line.
- 26th June 2007: AVBC officer states publicly that he is still awaiting drawings from FCC. Informed by FCC he had perfectly adequate drawings already, & that DCC had not objected to them.
- July 2007: NE & EA agree to withdraw their objections and replace them with conditions (making a satisfactory outcome much more likely).
- 16th July 2007: DCC examined FCC proposals at the Planning Board – a report was issued in which DCC said it was acceptable and passed it on to AVBC completely for their determination.
- 22nd July 2007: FCC made sure all required drawings were with AVBC planning.
- 7th August 2007: Letter written to AVBC asking the council to pay charges for notices of footpath diversions. AVBC say to ask again once planning consent was obtained.
- September 2007: Email from AVBC saying Highways Officer DCC has asked for details of additional car parking and visitor traffic. (A transport plan sent in 2006 was not received - a wrong email address - so plan sent again.)
- 5th September 2007: AVBC officer said he could not report the application to the Planning Board in September, because AVBC did not have formal approval from DCC (from full council not just the planning board). It was now his intention to report to October meeting.
- 10th September 2007: Email to AVBC stating parking areas are in Bolsover not AV. Also that DCC Highways had told Bolsover in June 2006 they had no objections. Also it was pointed out that any problems the FCC scheme generates would be similar to those generated by the DCC's greenways multi-user trail.



- 28th September 2007: NE wrote to AVBC to say NE & DWT wanted conditions to:
 1. Limit speed of boats to 4mph (This is normal for canals anyway)
 2. Limit the number of boats. NE said this should be agreed between them and DWT – we disagree as it should be between FCC and planning authorities
 3. Limit the number of anglers
 4. Limit the number of canoes
 5. Make an agreement as to the types and numbers of fish that should be in the water.
- September 2007: FCC agreed to point 1, but felt points 2, 3 & 4 should be for LPA to decide in a 5 year programme of management for the site. Point 5 we felt would be hard to police (especially when connected to the main canal system). Limits on the numbers of boats and fishermen would preclude rallies and competitions.
 - 8th October 2007: Email from FCC to AVBC saying it was time to reach some conclusions.
 - 9th October 2007: FCC were informed AVBC officer was going to write out conditions for approval this week.
 - October 2007: AVBC case officer ill, then on leave.
 - 22nd October 2007: Bolsover planning say they are content and will write the required conditions and lean on AVBC.
 - 15th November 2007: DCC made amendments to AVBC's conditions – a bit of a demarcation dispute over who should write conditions.
 - 22nd November 2007: DCC changed wording of AVBC's conditions (more style than substance) but AVBC officer now has to check it over to see if he's content. But Bolsover aren't even in the loop yet.
 - 30th November 2007: AVBC send draft copy of officer's report which seems to recommend approval. DWT have withdrawn their objection, and it can probably be approved on delegated authority (without going to committee).
 - 4th December 2007: Draft press release to announce the approval passed to UK COAL
 - 4th December 2007: DCC ask AVBC and Bolsover to impose a one-year start date (instead of the usual three years), and for a completion date. FCC starts lobbying for minimum two years for commencement, and argues that a completion date is unacceptable under planning guidance (eventually conceded as it's not a mineral extraction application).
 - 14th December 2007: AVBC officer hints that it might be all over by Christmas but FCC has not yet seen the conditions that are now being argued over between DCC and the two district authorities.
 - 17th December 2007: Steve Parish now acting as broker between the authorities, telling them what's in planning guidance.
 - 19th December 2007: Bolsover tell AVBC that they will stick to a 3-year start date. Question whether different authorities can have different start dates for the same application.
 - 20th December 2007: UK COAL agree "tweaked" press release (including UK COAL in capitals)
 - 21st December 2007: AVBC officer says DCC has been advised that AVBC may not support the earlier start condition, but says approval is likely to be recommended in the new year.
 - 31st December 2007: Seek guidance from DCC as to what would constitute "beginning operations"; FCC still hasn't seen the draft conditions.
 - 7th January 2008: AVBC still seeming intent on a "within three years" start, DCC up to two years from one. We tell AVBC that if they don't think an earlier than normal start is



necessary, planning guidance says it's not a reasonable condition. Unfortunately, there's now no appeal against a time condition, so FCC's only recourse would be a legal challenge.

- 18th January 2008: Steve Parish's own planning authority gives him access to the "Planning Encyclopedia", which gives precedents as to what would constitute a start to operations; "initiated", "begun", "instituted", "commenced" and "implemented" apparently mean different things in different bits of planning law. John Boucher thinks two years is manageable, and we hint to AVBC that to resolve this final argument (which has already lasted six weeks) we'd not object to that.

- 29th January 2008: AVBC officer says he's completed his report, with a two-year start.

- 8th February 2008: Bolsover officer has case on his desk but other things are taking priority (presumably cases that can still meet target dates for determination). We assume AVBC are waiting for Bolsover to grant consent at the same time.

- 22nd February 2008: AVBC issue planning consent.

- 3rd March 2008: Press release goes out without waiting for Bolsover consent.

- 13th March 2008: After several prompts, Bolsover issue consent.

WELCOME TO BRIAN BLESSED - OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Julian Richards, archaeologist, writer and broadcaster is our 'Patron' and has been for about two years now; but we have not had a President since the late Duke of Devonshire, who held that role, died. After reading how interested Brian Blessed is in the Peak District we approached Brian's agent to ask if Brian would consider filling that role. You can imagine how delighted we were when he readily accepted.

Derbyshire's largest selling newspaper, the Derby Evening Telegraph, ran a full page article on our new President with the headline, 'Blessed is Our President.'

Brian is a much-loved actor, adventurer and personality, and has been one of Britain's favourite actors for many years. He is a true national treasure with one of the most recognisable faces and voices in television, film and theatre. He has performed many roles with the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as appearing in many films and television dramas.

He was born in Doncaster, Yorkshire, but has strong connections with Derbyshire, in particular the Peak District National Park. He is quoted as saying, "For me the beautiful landscapes of the Peak District are the centre of the earth." He is delighted to be

able to head our great restoration project especially at this time. Formerly he was President of the Council for National Parks (CNP) 2001 to 2007.

When not acting, Brian is an intrepid alpinist and mountaineer, having scaled such peaks as Kilimanjaro and Mount Everest (which he has attempted three times, but has yet to conquer). He is also the oldest person to have trekked to the North Pole.

So now with Brian as our President and Julian as our Patron, we have a complete and balanced team to help us move ahead. We welcome Brian aboard.



Mike Kelley



NEW SALES TRAILER

When the new FCC sales trailer made its first appearance at the National at St. Ives last August, our then committee member Graham White had only just had time to complete the basic painting before it was pressed into service. The trailer is designed to look like the cabin and stern end of the hull of a motor narrow boat and Graham did an



excellent job in maroon and cream livery reminiscent of the Midland Railway. Since then, the job has been completed by the addition of traditional sign writing and roses at a substantial discount by Jan Deuchar, the well known canal painter from Trent Lock. This enabled the trailer to look resplendent at Cromford in October and again at Langley Mill in

May. The idea is to use the trailer both as an attraction in itself and as a means of transporting the marquee, display items and sales goods to outdoor events. It is designed with a full length locker in the hull and a large compartment in the cabin with shelves and a drop down side panel for display purposes. Anyone interested in helping to tow the trailer to events and man the sales stall will be most welcome.

Editor





FCC NEWS UPDATE - so what *is* happening

from Mike Kelley



Since the last publication of this magazine there has been a lot happening. It is only when I write down the list that I realise just how much. Please read on:

- 14th April: After seeing in a local publication how much Brian Blessed loved Derbyshire and noting his recent position as President of the National Parks, I approached his agent to ask if Brian would become our President. We were delighted when he agreed. See page 10.

- 21st April: Pat Morriss, Hugh Potter and myself met with the World Heritage Events Committee at North Mill in Belper to discuss this year's events. This has now become an annual event, only much longer than other years. The FCC will be again at Cromford Wharf for the weekend of 1st and 2nd November, with our photographic display, sales stand and of course the horse drawn boat plying from Cromford Wharf to High Peak Junction, as well as other events. Do come along and support us.

- 23rd April: The Derby Evening Telegraph ran a full page article on Brian Blessed agreeing to become our President. The headline was 'Blessed is Our President'.

- 24th April: A meeting was arranged with interested parties, including several councillors at Pinxton Parish Hall. This was a PowerPoint presentation and open discussion on the recent approval of our Planning Application for the Smotherfly and Pinxton Wharf section of the canal. Names are being collected of people willing to help in monitoring and managing this project. (If you would like to help call me on 01773 833425 or Email me on: vicechair@cromfordcanal.org.uk)

- 24th April: The special edition of the Portal was released, dealing mainly with our successful planning permission for Smotherfly and Pinxton Wharf.

- 27th April: Local residents met with the developer concerning the proposed equestrian centre for Golden Valley, which will also include a new section of the canal.

- 24th-26th May: Our neighbours and friends of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association had a busy bank holiday when over 100 boats gathered at Langley Mill for the Boat Rally, celebrating 40 years since their formation. Without this early work to save the Erewash Canal there would be no chance of the Cromford being restored. It was good to see the FCC and the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society having stalls at this special Erewash event. Happy anniversary Erewash. See page 14.

- 3rd June: Pat Morriss, Steve Parish, John Boucher and myself had our first face-to-face meeting with UK-COAL (UKC) the owners of the Smotherfly site. We could not meet with them earlier as UKC wanted to know the outcome of our planning application before they would officially meet us. The meeting was at Doncaster, included one of UKC's directors, and lasted about two and a half hours. We were very well received and considerable detail was gone into. The outcome was that the FCC now have to provide details of the planning agreement so that the Board of Directors can evaluate the FCC's plan against the original UKC one, then see what, if any, cost differences there are. So follow-up meetings will be required.



• 5th June: The old site of Stevenson's Dye Works at Bullbridge (where my wife once worked!) is set for a housing redevelopment. The new owners of the site were seeking local opinion before they produce any details, so Pat Morriss and myself attended the Open Day on this site and let it be known the canal line is 'protected.' We would like to see the canal as a feature in the Developer's plans and will continue to present our case for this.

• 7th June: Coincidentally to the event on the 5th, Hugh Potter had arranged for an IWA walk along the central section of the canal and was able to obtain permission from the new owners and developers to take his group into the Stevenson's site, look at the filled-in section of the canal through that site and then to get as close as was possible to the portal of the Hag Tunnel. Stevenson's engineering work made it impossible to actually 'see' the tunnel as a large concrete reservoir had been built in front of it; but the tunnel is still there and this was the closest most of us had ever been to it. See page 20.

• 12th June: Pat Morriss, John Boucher and myself met with Anna Chapman and Cathy Cook of Derbyshire County Council (DCC) in Clay Cross. The meeting was to discuss the 'Greenway' which is being planned, part of which will go along the Smotherly section of the canal for which we now have planning permission. It was a constructive and helpful meeting, but it became evident that the required width of the canal and that of the Greenway may conflict in certain places. However both sides expressed a willingness to come to some agreement.

• 15th June: The FCC had a stall at Brinsley Carnival. It was a bright sunny day and a great deal of interest was shown in the canal. Often at such events it is not what we sell which is so important, as the fact of our presence there showing the local people we are active. Thanks to Eric and Beryl Singleton, Val Kelley and Jan Colombo for manning the stall.

• 16th June: Tim Boddington came over from the Macclesfield area to deliver a wonderfully illustrated talk for us at Pinxton Village Hall. The talk was concerning a hotel riverboat trip along the Rhine and Danube. Several local councillors attended and all who were there thoroughly enjoyed it. We were a little disappointed by the numbers attending, in spite of newspaper and Radio Derby advertising. – How do we get you folk out for our social evenings? A key feature of the night was the surprise donation of a huge map, and I mean an enormous 19 feet by 10 feet, which was made in 1881 of the Alfreton to Pinxton district, including the Pinxton Canal and local tramways of the time. This gift requires an article in itself and was kindly donated to the FCC by John Taylor, Managing Director, CCC Ltd & John Taylor Associates, Alfreton. It was a wonderful gesture, many thanks John.

• 21st June: This was 'Pinxton Fun Day' in the pouring rain; but fortunately we were indoors for this one. It was a smashing day with many activities in the main hall, from River-dancing to a rock group, and Co-Co the clown. Again it was important to be seen there and many questions were asked of us. In particular the local MP Dennis Skinner showed a keen interest in our progress. Our thanks go to Anne Wright, Eric and Beryl Singleton and Val Kelley for their work that day.

• 23rd June: Another meeting with parties involved with the World Heritage Events Committee at North Mill in Belper to discuss this year's events.

• 4th & 5th July: We held a charity collection stand at Tesco's store, in Alfreton, Derbyshire. On Friday we collected £76.40 and on Saturday £111.60; a total of £188.00. The FCC have had several such stands at local superstores, so why not put your name down and give the FCC a couple of hours and come and help at the next one? All you have to do is hold a collection tin and hand out leaflets; and as Tesco say, 'Every little helps.' There was a great deal of interest and appreciation for our work. I was especially impressed with the many young people who donated. Our thanks go to Meg Tarlton, Jan Colombo and Val Kelley.



RALLY OF BOATS AT LANGLEY MILL

Photo: Editor



On the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend, the FCC sales stall attended the Boat Rally at Langley Mill. This event, organised by the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association, was rather special for various reasons. Not only does this year mark the 40th anniversary of the formation of ECP&DA, but it is also 35 years since Langley Bridge Lock (No 14 on the Cromford Canal) and the Great Northern Basin were re-opened at the first Langley Mill Rally in May 1973. Equally important, it is also just 25 years since the Erewash Canal was elevated to 'Cruiseway' status by British Waterways. In the 1968 Transport Act, it had been classed as a 'Remainder Waterway', which meant that it was to be dealt with in the most economic way possible. At that time, filling in was a very real possibility and it was only saved by the early efforts of the ECP&DA in persuading local councils to give financial support. It is no exaggeration to say that there would be no Erewash Canal today and certainly no FCC were it not for these early efforts.

The FCC had been offered a free pitch near the lock and we had bought a new marquee for the occasion. This was brought to the site, together with the sales boards, easels and photos etc. by Dave Tinkler in the FCC boat trailer and was erected without difficulty on the Friday. We then set out the sales items on each of the three days. This was very successful and

Photo: Editor



Part of the sales force enjoying the luxury of the new marquee



well supported by helpers. Apart from our sales officer Val Roberts, both Dave Tinkler and Yvonne Shattower came each day and we were particularly pleased to welcome our new sales team volunteers Eric and Beryl Singleton. These good people came for the full day on all three days and were a great help. Thank you both.

This gave me more time to chat to the invited guests including many ECP&DA stalwarts whom I first met whilst shoveling mud under the bridge at Langley Mill in 1972 and who usually turn up at these events.

Proceedings were started off on the Saturday by the now well-established tradition of carrying a band in a pair of working narrow boats from Anchor Bridge up past the rally moorings to the lock whilst they played various rousing tunes, culminating in 'Land of Hope and Glory' as the boats rose in the lock (see front cover). This was followed by the



Photo: Dave Tinkler

The official party conducting a stability test on the British Waterways launch en route to the opening ceremony. Note the position of the exhaust outlet.

British Waterways launch carrying the various VIP's. Being on board a BW craft, they all had to wear life jackets as well as their chains of office. This was thought by most of them to be an unnecessary inconvenience until water started to swirl round their feet. There was, however, no cause for alarm as it was only rainwater which had collected in the bilge all running to the stern because of the number of important passengers!

Having all safely disembarked, the official party made suitable speeches at the opening ceremony. This was held outside the Nottingham Canal

Toll Office, which is the latest ECP&DA restoration project. This very interesting small building will be used to display photographs and artifacts and the FCC have kindly been offered some of the space. We then all proceeded to the large marquee, where the ECP&DA ladies had prepared an excellent buffet lunch.

The evening activities also kept up the ECP&DA tradition. The 200 plus boaters were entertained by an Irish Folk singer on the Friday, a hilarious couple with Black Country humour on Saturday and probably best of all, party pieces by the various boat clubs on the Sunday all helped along by quantities of real ale.



Photo: Editor

The restored Nottingham Canal Toll Office

The weather was good on the Saturday, but the threatened rain came with a vengeance on the Sunday afternoon. Monday, however, was better than expected and it kept dry but very windy. This created some excitement when dismantling our marquee but various neighbours kindly assisted and we managed to avoid the whole thing blowing into the cut and got it all packed away before the rain returned.

Altogether a very pleasant weekend and a rare opportunity to show the flag of the FCC at an event immediately alongside the Cromford Canal.

Editor



PINXTON PRE-EMINENT

Part two

By Patrick Morriss

In the spring 2008 Portal I said that the next instalment would be the world's first oil refinery. With the price of crude oil reaching \$140+ a barrel, it may be a shame that we don't have a refinery at Riddings still. Although not quite in the Smotherfly/Pinxton project area, this site just to the south of Pye Bridge was another important canal side industry for a while, and a stepping stone to what is now, for good or ill, a massive industry world wide.

'Paraffin' Young and his Riddings Refinery

Although whale oil had many uses, it was most highly valued as a luminant. Sperm whale oil was the best, burning with a bright light and little smell or smoke. In 1850, however, it was selling at \$2.00 to \$2.50 a barrel. \$2.50 dollars in 1850 was the equivalent of just under \$69 in 2007, which was about the price of a barrel of crude oil in 2007, not now though! Which meant it was expensive and only available to better off households. Oil from the Right whale was less than half the price yet still considered dear. There were cheaper artificial alternatives, some of which had appeared on the market as early as 1820, but for one reason or another they had not been taken up with any great enthusiasm, especially in the home. Gas lighting was available but this tended to be confined to the cities and larger towns – not everywhere was as fortunate as Belper to have a man like Strutt to build his own private gas works and share it with the town.

James Young was very much a man of his time. The son of John Young, a cabinet maker and carpenter, he was born in Drygate, Glasgow on 13 July 1811 and at first worked for his father. At Anderson's College, now part of Strathclyde University, the Professor of Chemistry, Thomas Graham gave evening classes which Young attended. By the time he was twenty, Young was able to give up carpentry to work as Graham's laboratory assistant. While at Anderson's College he also met and befriended the famous explorer David Livingstone. This relationship was to continue until Livingstone's death in Africa many years later.

In Young's first scientific paper, dated 4 January 1837, he described a modification of a voltaic battery invented by Michael Faraday. In the same year Young went with Graham to University College, London, and helped him with experimental work. In 1839 he was appointed manager to Messrs. Muspratt at Newton le Willows, and in 1844 to Messrs. Tennant at Manchester, for whom he devised a method of making sodium stannate direct from tin-stone. In 1845 he served on a committee of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society for the investigation of the potato disease, and suggested the immersion of the tubers in dilute sulphuric acid as a means of stopping the disease; he was not elected a member of the Society until 19 October 1847. Finding the "Manchester Guardian" not sufficiently liberal, he also set on foot the movement for the establishment of the "Manchester Examiner," which was first published in 1846.

Another character has to be introduced here, Lyon Playfair. In 1843 he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Manchester Institution. Two years later, he was made chemist to the Geological Survey, and subsequently became Professor in



the new School of Mines. In 1848, he was elected to the Royal Society, and three years later was made Special Commissioner and a member of the executive committee of the Great Exhibition. Appointed CB that same year, Playfair also became Gentleman Usher to Prince Albert. Playfair was a friend of James Young and also brother-in-law to James Oakes of Riddings near Alfreton.

By far the most important development as far as the oil industry in Britain was concerned occurred in the year 1847 when Professor Lyon Playfair, whilst visiting one of Oakes' coal pits at Alfreton, Derbyshire, discovered a black oily substance oozing from the walls of the mine. Thinking that this substance might be of use once chemically treated, he sent a sample to his old friend, James Young. What Young discovered was to lead to the development of one of Britain's greatest industries and in the process make him very rich.

After Lyon Playfair drew Young's attention to the spring of naphtha that had been discovered on Oakes' estate at Alfreton in Derbyshire, he wrote to Young saying, "It yields about 300 gallons daily. It has the consistency of thin treacle and with one distillation it gives a clear colourless liquid of brilliant illuminating power." Playfair had advised Oakes not to develop this product "since it is foreign to your occupation. To Young however he wrote, "Perhaps you could make a capital out of this industry." Young could, and did.

In 1848 Young left Messrs. Tennant, after he received Playfair's samples of oil. Realising the potential of the substance, Young set up an oil works at Alfreton, adjoining the pit where the oil had been discovered. In partnership with Edward Meldrum, he bought up the yield of the spring in the Riddings colliery at Alfreton. From this they manufactured illuminating oils and lubricating oils until in 1851 it was exhausted. While here he had a ready buyer for his oil, the cotton mills in Manchester which required lubricants; but just as demand for his product began to rise, the source dried up.

An interesting story was carried in the local press at the time. A spillage of oil occurred at Riddings and the south westerly wind blew the oil floating on the surface of the canal up to Pinxton where local youths promptly set fire to it! [*no change there then!* -Ed.] This was reported under the headline, "The day the canal caught fire". Not only did the area have the first oil refinery but it may well have had the world's first oil spill as well.

Coal and ironstone had been mined in the Riddings area in a small way for centuries before the opening up of the Cromford Canal and its Pinxton branch in 1793 made large scale mining and the establishment of an ironworks feasibly worthwhile. The original works belonged to three Derby ironsmiths trading as Thomas Salelbye & Co in the late 18th century but was bought out by James Oakes in 1818.

Young had long been experimenting on the production of paraffin from the dry distillation of coal, and on 17 October 1850 took out a patent for this purpose, of which the specification was completed on 16 April 1851. In the summer of 1850 Young & Meldrum and Edward William Binney entered into partnership under the title of E.W. Binney & Co. at Bathgate, and E. Meldrum & Co. at Glasgow. They erected works at Bathgate, which were completed in the following year. In 1852 Young left Manchester and lived afterwards in Scotland. The firm first manufactured naphtha and lubricating oils. Paraffin for burning and solid paraffin were not sold till 1856.

The oil industry may have grown to become the human race's greatest asset or its greatest folly depending on your point of view. However, it did contribute to the demise of demand for whale oil and as such may have helped save the great whales from an early extinction. They may not be Derbyshire wildlife but the part played by an early oil refinery about as far from the sea as you can get ought to be acknowledged.



THE B&Q BID

Tony Brookes discovers that making applications for grants can be very frustrating in more ways than one:

Earlier this year, I was involved in submitting a bid to B&Q, under their community support scheme (name since erased from my memory). We were asking for a few thousand pounds worth of tools to support our working parties. As you do, I got a copy of their paperwork, worked up a shopping list, collected together some photos showing the sort of thing our working parties do and the results. I'd typed up the bid and was just re-reading it prior to sending it off, when I noticed the document needed to be HAND WRITTEN. Horrors. At the best of times my handwriting is poor; (a badly trained spider was one comment from school), and prolonged use of the spell checker has also removed that skill, one that was never too strong to begin with.

Oh well, I thought, I'll give it a go. Within ten minutes at least three copies of the first paragraph had been hurled across the room in the direction of the bin. It was rapidly becoming obvious that at this rate of progress the deadline of 2pm submission the next day was increasingly unlikely to be met. As for the language and general grumpiness that I was showing, well!!!!

I'd reached the point of total frustration and had just uttered the immortal phrase "That's it, I've had enough" and stomped out of the dining room for a coffee to reflect. Fortunately my wife, a kindly soul, took pity on her husband who'd been reduced to a gibbering wreck by his inability to hand-write an application form and completed it for me. It was then sent to B & Q and arrived in time.

After all that, we didn't get the money anyway and now the story of how I learnt I don't do large handwritten and error free documents anymore can be told. Mind you, I'm not sure I ever could write error free documents....

MEMBERS MEETING OCTOBER 20TH

Steve Haywood will be talking about his book

Narrow Boat Dreams

Steve has a problem. He doesn't know where he comes from. In the south, people think he's a northerner. In the north, they think he's from the south. Judged against global warming and the sad demise of Celebrity Big Brother, this hardly registers highly on the Richter scale of world disasters. But it's enough to worry Steve. And it's enough of an excuse for him to escape from his long-suffering partner Em for a voyage of discovery along England's Inland Waterways. Travelling by traditional narrow boat, he heads north along two newly opened Pennine canals, a trip that takes him from Banbury in deepest Oxfordshire, through the vibrant modernity of Manchester, to the trendy affluence of Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire's answer to London's ciabatta belt. With irrepressible humour he recounts the history of the inland waterways and the stories of his encounters with characters along the way, and attempts to define the magic that makes England's waterways so appealing.

7.30pm at Pinxton Village Hall, Kirkstead Road, Pinxton, Notts, NG16 6NA
Admission £1.50 Raffle Tea and Coffee available



THE MIDLAND RAILWAY BUTTERLEY AIMS TO RECREATE WORKS OPEN DAY NOSTALGIA

by Stuart Smith

The Midland Railway Butterley will be hosting a major themed event over the August Bank Holiday period 23rd to 25th August which will aim to commemorate the Horticultural Show and Open Day events held at the former Derby Locomotive Works over very many years until the works closed in 2005.

These events were an opportunity for visitors to tour the works and see the work in progress on the building and overhaul of traction and rolling stock as well as visit the Horticultural Show which for the most part was organised by the employees of the works and held each year in the works canteen.

The Midland Railway Butterley is devoted to the history and development of the former Midland and LMS Railways and is aiming to reflect on times past and endeavour to capture some of the atmosphere as well as commemorate what has been virtually lost from the railway scene.

Over the weekend of 23-25 August the event at Butterley will probably be the single largest event ever held on the railway and will feature a wide range of events and activities with an intensive timetable of steam and diesel hauled trains including travel over the Swanwick branch for the first time, diesel multiple unit service complete with cinema showing railway films and use of an LMS inspection saloon on timetabled trains giving a panorama of the line from the comfort of the coach. Light refreshments will be served for a supplementary fare on this saloon.

An extensive collection of modern traction units will be displayed, some with opportunities to visit the locomotive cabs with over 100 steam, diesel, dmu, narrow gauge and miniature locomotives on display or in use. The Golden Valley Light Railway will be operating on all three days and there will be a special staged locomotive cavalcade.

Apart from the operation of trains and the various displays, there will be other activities including a 75 tonne breakdown crane giving lifting demonstrations, Midland Diesel Hall open with special exhibitions and a locomotive naming ceremony on the Saturday. Miniature, narrow, garden and model railways will be operating in addition to displays in the Static Power house, Fork Lift Truck Museum and Midland Road Transport Gallery. A vintage bus service will be operating on the main museum site at Swanwick on all three days. Other attractions include a traditional brass band, real ale bar, amateur radio station, RAF Spitfire flypast on the Sunday and a series of specially commissioned audio visual presentations featuring railway and industrial archaeology related subjects.

There will be peripheral activities during the event including a railwaymen's reunion for those who worked at the Locomotive Works, two railway competitions with noteworthy prizes, trade stalls and hopefully a horticultural element also.

The event programme and timetable will be issued in a commemorative brochure available at the event on the day and the event itself is seen as a fitting tribute to the former Derby Locomotive Works and hopefully will reflect on times past in a suitable manner.

Further details will be available in late July from the Midland Railway Butterley Visitor Information Line 01773-570140 or the website www.midlandrailwaycentre.co.uk or by email mr_B2004@btconnect.com

Our chairman Pat Morriss will be giving a presentation on the Saturday at this event, which sounds like an excellent weekend - should be well worth a visit - Ed.



THE CANAL AT STEVENSON'S

FCC Archivist Hugh Potter looks back to before the canal at Bullbridge was sold off.

As mentioned by Mike Kelley elsewhere in this issue, the Stevenson's (Dyers) site at Bullbridge is proposed for redevelopment. I therefore thought it would be timely to look back to what the canal between Hag Tunnel and Bullbridge Hill looked like before it was purchased from British Waterways by Stevenson's in the mid-1960s. Several views of this area were published in my book *The Cromford Canal* (available from FCC sales if you have not yet got your copy!) so I have tried to choose some of the newer acquisitions from the FCC Archives.



The short section adjacent to Hag Tunnel was dug out to a depth of some 20ft or more to create a reservoir for the dyeing processes. The entrance to the tunnel was blocked with a concrete dam, but the stones above the portal remain visible. It is thought that the tunnel itself is intact – simply blocked off at each end.

Hag Tunnel in earlier times. Note that the path is well trodden even with snow thick on the ground. The reinstatement of the canal and towpath through Stevenson's site, and ideally through a reopened Hag tunnel, could, with Transco's co-operation, offer the return of the once popular level walk between Bullbridge and Ambergate. Today, the walker must either go down and round by the main road, or up a steep climb around the site. Note also the run-off sluice in the foreground. The reinstatement of the canal could protect the new properties by acting as a catchwater drain for flash flooding from the hillside above, channeling it properly down to the River Amber.





Probably taken in the early 1960s, just before the sale of the canal, this view is from beneath the bridge under Bullbridge Hill looking past the extant stone building, towards the Derwent Valley Aqueduct pipeline bridge. This brings water from the Derwent Valley Dams via an underground reservoir at Ambergate, to Nottingham and Leicester. On the right can be seen the roof of the workshop beside the dry dock.

A closer view of the entrance to the dry dock, which was used to repair the wooden boats that worked on the canal up to the 1930s. This is located just outside Stevenson's boundary in the corner where the footpath around their works turns right and uphill.

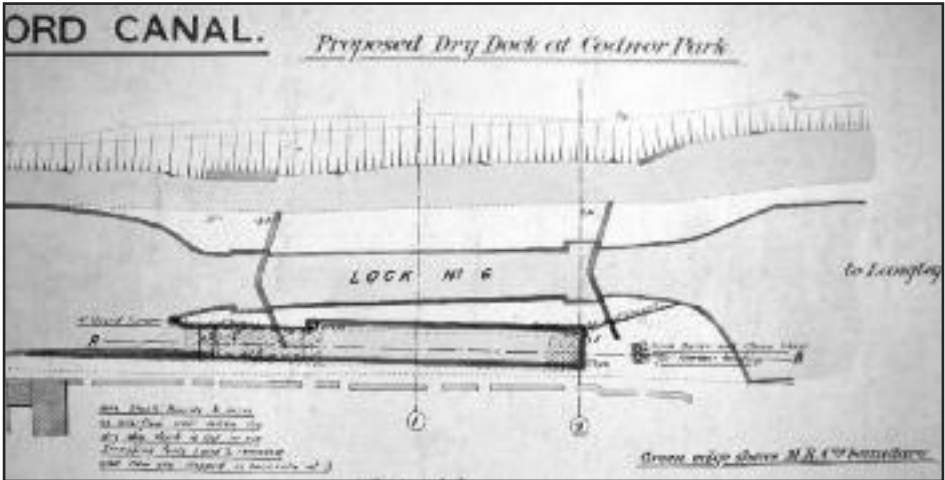


It is hard to believe that this idyllic view could be what is now within the Stevenson's site. It was taken from near the pipe bridge looking east towards Bullbridge Hill. If the site to the right were to be developed for housing, as is now planned, think how much value a view like this would put on the properties!



LOCK SIX DRY DOCK

As many of you will know, following agreement with the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, our work party organiser Dave Tinkler has arranged a number of visits to the Ironville locks. One of the 'scrub bashing' work parties last autumn concentrated on the dry dock alongside lock six. This interesting structure was opened in 1911 and the arrangement is shown on the plan below which has been tracked down by our archivist on one of his visits to British Waterways at Leeds.



Many years of neglect have allowed the lock chamber and dock to become very overgrown, with quite large trees getting established as shown in the following pictures taken by Ron Amner.

The first photo was taken looking downstream at the start of the day and shows the chamber of lock six on the left with the dock almost buried in the jungle to the right. After

the efforts of the volunteers, the dock walls are starting to become more apparent. Note that the dock is significantly narrower than the lock and would only be usable by narrow boats, which may seem strange on the Cromford, being a wide canal east of Butterley tunnel. By the time of the dock's construction, however, narrow boats would be in the majority on this length and the narrow

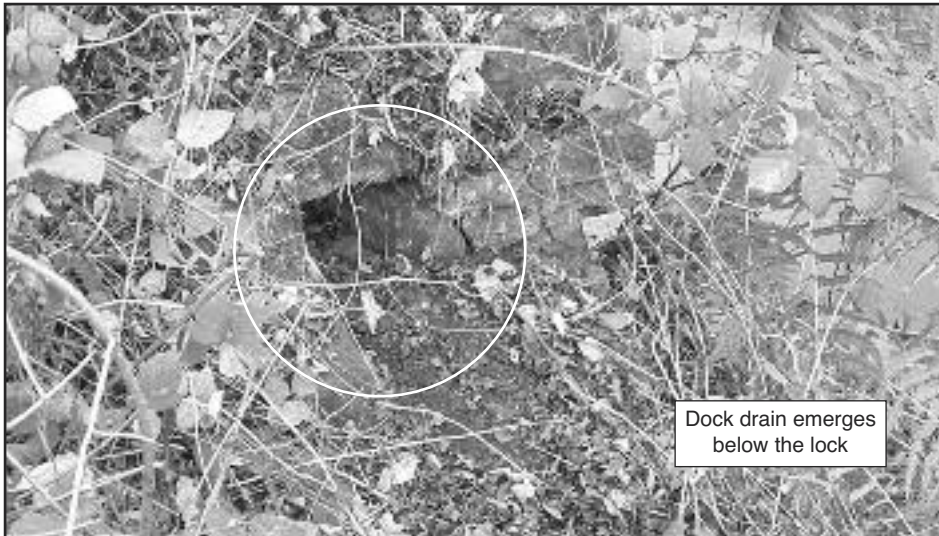




dock would be sufficient for the requirements, as well as being cheaper to build and easier to work. As with most narrow docks, the entrance was stanked off with simple short stop planks. These could easily be lifted to allow the water into the dock, removed to let the boat in and replaced to seal the entrance without the need for a pair of gates. The grooves where the stop planks fitted are still intact and can be seen in the photograph on the right.

Dry docks on canals were often, as in this case, built alongside a lock. The dock can then be easily filled from the pound above the lock and then simply drained out via a paddle and culvert into the pound below as shown on the plan. This means that the water in the dock is returned to the canal





rather than being run to waste or having to be pumped out. The outlet from the drain culvert in the offside wing wall below the lock is shown in the photo above.

Perhaps surprisingly, the walls of the dock in this case are concrete, but the access steps in the corner are built of brick as shown on the right.

When in the dock, boats would be supported on substantial wooden beams known as bostocks which were placed across the dock floor at intervals. These are to support the boat without damaging it and to give sufficient clearance underneath for the maintenance work to be carried out. The remains of one of these were also exposed during the scrub clearance as shown in the final picture on the left.



The remains of one of these were also exposed during the scrub clearance as shown in the final picture on the left.

Since I compiled this article, Dave Tinkler has held a further work party on the locks and dry dock as reported in the last issue. The chamber of the dock is now cleared of the major undergrowth and Dave has recently obtained permission to carry out further work. See his report opposite.

I find it particularly pleasing that work is going ahead on this project, being involved in 1976 when these locks were first tackled and a great deal of clearance work was done by volunteers. This all came to nothing because of an ill-conceived flood relief scheme. This time it must succeed.

Editor



WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



Members will recall that following our work on clearing trees and undergrowth from in and around some of the Ironville flight of locks in the Spring, we have been obliged to suspend this type of work until the Autumn to allow the birds to nest undisturbed.

I am pleased to say, however, that I have now obtained permission from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (the owners of this stretch of the canal) to clean out the dry dock adjacent to lock six. We have already removed the undergrowth from this area as described in the last issue and it is my intention to now carry on and remove the accumulated silt and rubbish from the dry dock. This is the only surviving example of the various dry docks which were built alongside the Cromford Canal and it needs to be cleaned out and displayed to the public. Since work of this type can go ahead at this time of the year without disturbing the wildlife, I have organised a work party on:

Saturday / Sunday 26th/27th July.

We are meeting at the dock at 10am on both days but if you can't make that time then you will be most welcome to come when you can. All I ask is that you sign in when you arrive. Stay as long or as short as you wish but please do attend. Dogs are welcome as long as they are kept under control and you clean up after them. There is parking at Jacksdale Community Centre, Codnor Park Reservoir and on the road at Ironville.

We will need shovels, spades, brushes, buckets (for lifting the muck out), loppers and possibly a small trowel to get into the corners. If you can think of anything else then please bring it with you.

There are a number of small willow stumps left over from our last work party which still need cutting down at ground level. If we have the time and/or labour we will cut them back and possibly burn them. I will bring some bow saws for the task but if you prefer your own then feel free to bring it. Don't forget your flask and sandwiches and water for your dog.

If you need any more information then please contact me on 0115 9635113
or email: work@cromfordcanal.org.uk

I have also spoken with Derbyshire County Council Rangers at High Peak and they are planning some work parties for us at the Cromford end of the canal. I am still awaiting the dates but when I have them I will let you all know.
I hope to see all soon.

Dave Tinkler (work party organiser)



Friends of the Cromford Canal
introduce 2 new designs of
Christmas Cards for 2008



1. Features overnight snow on the Leawood Aqueduct which carries the Cromford Canal over the Midland Railway

Greeting Inside:

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year

2. The Eastern Portal of Butterley Tunnel from a painting by Simon Waller



Both cards are in full colour which may be viewed on the website

Packs of 10 cards and envelopes £3.00 plus 75p per pack p&p
Mixed packs including designs from previous years
are also available at the same price

Please forward cheque payable to FCC with order to:
Mrs V Roberts,
Beggaree Wharf, Church Lane, Horsley Woodhouse, Derbys. DE7 6BB



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



We have had a busy few weeks with our attendance at the Erewash Rally, and publicity appearances at some of the major supermarkets in the area. The Erewash Rally was a busy few days, but we gained a good number of new members and made some excellent sales as well as raising our profile and letting people know we exist, which is very important. The weather was kind to us on the whole, although the Sunday afternoon was wet and windy, and our new marquee stood up to the wind and the rain well. One or two 'tweaks' from our Chairman and it will be even better! Our day in Sainsbury's foyer at Ripley, where we were able to sell FCC items, also proved worthwhile, making people in the area aware of our existence, and we also had two days at Tesco in Alfreton. Our thanks must go to all the people who made these events possible.

Some members have queried the fact that the Reference Number on the renewal forms I send out is different to their Membership number. There is a very simple reason for this – each member has their own number, so a couple have two membership numbers, but only one entry on the records. It is the number given to this record that I use for the membership renewal form, not the personal membership number, hence the variation. I still have quite a few renewals outstanding from the last couple of months – is YOUR renewal form hiding behind the clock on the mantelpiece?

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

Ms S March, Kirkby in Ashfield
Mrs B Saunders, Nottingham
Mr T Harrison, Nottingham
Mr & Mrs P Mackley, Derby
Mr P Outram, Nottingham

Mr C Gilbert, Belper
Mr & Mrs R Boddy, Newark
Mr G Blackborrow, Nottingham
Mr T Alkinson & Ms H Chester, Nottingham
Mr J Barker, Nottingham

ADVANCED NOTICE

River Soar to host IWA's 2009 National Festival

The Inland Waterways Association have announced that its 2009 National Festival and Boat Show will be held at Red Hill on the Soar Navigation, close to its confluence with the Trent. The Festival intends to raise the profile and give support to the waterway societies in this area, including the Cromford, Derby and Grantham Canals. The 'National' coming so close to us in 2009 will be an excellent opportunity for the FCC to show the flag. By that time, we shall need to be raising both our profile and serious funds, not least for Smotherfly. Make a note in your diaries now and come to Red Hill over the August Bank Holiday next year to support the FCC stand!



LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates

This year's steaming season is well under way and so far attendances have been good, that is until the last steamings on July 5th and 6th which thanks to the weather were the worst for about 5 years; takings did not cover coal costs. Hopefully things will improve for the next few steamings and costs will balance out. The problem this year has been the high fuel costs. We usually have an increase at the beginning of each year but another one occurred in May putting the cost per tonne up to £212.00, each steaming weekend therefore costs around £400. The firing shovel has been shortened so we burn less!



The electricians are behaving themselves despite several sockets being soaked due to gutters overflowing in the downpours. Being under trees does not help, leaves and twigs soon block up downpipes.

Painting has been carried out in the Engine House and the new panelling under the stairs looks very smart. The panels match a photograph taken in the 1930's which show the area under the stairs panelled and also some cupboards on the external wall side. The cupboards will not be put back as this would restrict the floor area in the engine house too much. The photograph also shows a coal stove with frying pan hanging above, a streak of fat running down the wall from the pan, another feature not being replaced!

Quotations are still in the process of being obtained for the boiler repair works and hopefully carrying out some minor repairs to 44 as well. A hole has appeared in the top of the smokebox on 44 and this has had a temporary patch fitted. The metal is very corroded with the smoke and we may have to look at more major repairs if required. This work would be outside the pressure vessel so we may be able to carry it out ourselves if funds do not cover outside contractors.

The outlet valve is still working satisfactorily but despite our works still leaks badly. A potential new member turned up at the last steaming and has a source of wood which may be suitable to remake the blocks. We await his return with bated breath!

A special steaming was carried out on the 2nd of June for Central Television and featured as part of the weather forecast approx 1 hours filming for 3 minutes on screen, but any publicity has to be good. There are four steaming weekends left this year as shown below, so you still have time to visit and meet the TV stars!

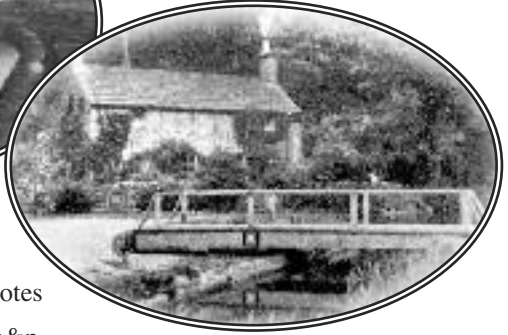
LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING WEEKENDS 2008

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

August 2nd & 3rd	First Weekend
August 24th & 25th	Bank Holiday Sunday & Monday
October 4th & 5th	First Weekend
November 1st & 2nd	Discovery Weekend

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