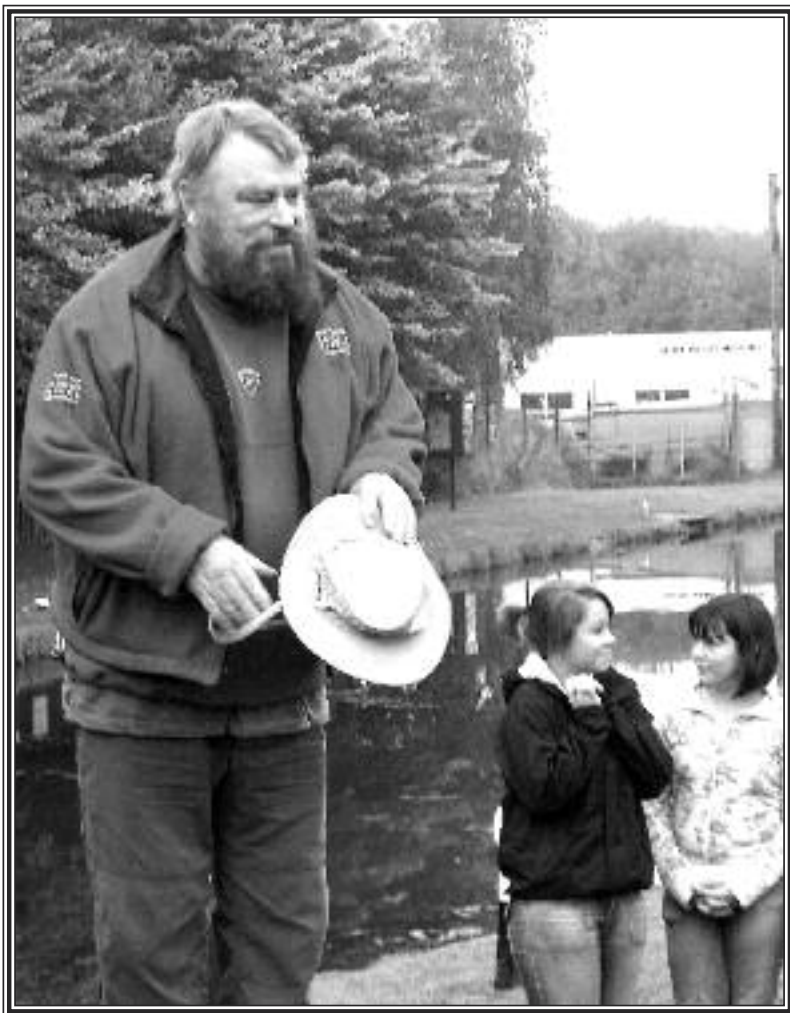


THE PORTAL



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

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FRONT COVER: FCC President Brian Blessed, having just arrived from Surrey, stands on the lock gate at Langley Mill to address the walkers before the start of the Pinxton Push Fun Walk, much to the delight of the young fans. His presence certainly improved the attendance and media coverage.

Photo: Giles Metcalf

BACK COVER: The first batch of walkers setting off from Langley Mill to Pinxton, encouraged by Brian Blessed. An interesting point to note in this picture is that since the new gates have been fitted, Langley Bridge Lock remains full of water rather than it leaking away. This is creating a pleasant reflection of the departing walkers.

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. 27.

We are still in a very frustrating period for the Friends of the Cromford Canal. There is as yet nothing to report regarding any meaningful progress with UK COAL on the Smotherfly site. As our chairman said at the last committee meeting, canal restoration is not very high on their priority list. This is no doubt understandable, but slightly worrying because to comply with the planning conditions, a start must be made on site within a fixed period. This in turn depends on definite figures being agreed so that the necessary funds can be raised by various means. However, I know that our chairman and senior committee members are on the case, and am confident they will keep pursuing this matter to a successful conclusion.

In the mean time, there are two main objectives for the FCC. One is to continue to raise our profile both in what we might call the waterway community and the world in general. The other is to raise funds.

The recent Pinxton Push Fun Walk, as reported elsewhere, is a good example of an event which has achieved both of these aims. It was very good to hear of the excellent turn out, especially among the young locals around Pinxton. This is exactly what is needed, because we must encourage the younger generation to become involved. Realistically, it will be they who will reap the benefits of a restored Cromford Canal when most of the present stalwarts are pushing up daisies.

The success of the walk was entirely due to the time and effort put in by the FCC volunteers who organised it all. I would especially like to thank our vice chairman Mike Kelley, whose project this was. It was particularly pleasing because many of the FCC committee and other regulars were not available at the time and Mike gathered together a new team for the event with great success. I do not yet have the final figures, but there is no doubt that a very worthwhile amount was raised for our cause, as well as raising our profile in the area. The presence of our president Brian Blessed also certainly added to the local turnout as well as the media interest and it was altogether a very good effort.

Continuing on the theme of raising both our profile and bank balance, don't forget the weekend of November 1st and 2nd at Cromford Wharf. This World Heritage Site Discovery Days event, detailed on pages 8 and 9, is always very popular. Not only will the horse drawn boat will be operating, this event is also one of the best in the year for our sales stall which will be in the Gothic Warehouse as usual, together with other displays. Your support (preferably wearing your FCC sweat shirts!) would be much appreciated.

Please note the press date for the New Year issue will be January 5th 2009



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



First the good news, the FCC's bank account is with HSBC at Eastwood, not the Thinkofanumberanddoubleit Bank of Iceland. The sting in the tale contained in all this bad news is of course, that funding for projects such as ours will become even harder to find. It was a problem before, with the London Olympics taking large amounts of funding from all sources, more so now. The case for the Cromford restoration will just have to be even stronger and put to the widest possible audience.

Efforts to get UK COAL to agree a likely timetable of work and their level of input to the Smotherfly project continue unabated. The problem is that canal restoration is not high up UK COAL's list of priorities so progress is slow. The issue was raised during a recent meeting with DCC Councillor Paul Smith, so we hope for some input from Derbyshire County Council to move things along a bit. The second Pinxton Push, very ably organised by Vice Chair Mike Kelley, has once again done much to raise the profile of our campaign and funds towards this project reinforced by the commanding presence of FCC President Brian Blessed (see page 12). Unfortunately I was away working that weekend so missed it all.

Coming up we have the World Heritage Site Discovery Days. This year it is spread across two weekends with the Derby and southern area events being held on the first weekend of half term (25th & 26th October) and the Cromford event complete with horse boat and FCC participation etc on the weekend of 1st & 2nd of November. Details are on pages 8 and 9. Please try to visit Cromford wharf that weekend to meet the faces and see latest archive acquisitions etc.

On Sunday the 5th October Hugh Potter and I attended the Northern Canals Association meeting at 'Conkers' on the Ashby Canal. To those of you who don't know, the Northern Canals Association is an 'umbrella' body for all canal restoration groups north of Birmingham. The Ashby Canal was the first canal to be aided by a Transport & Works order, allowing compulsory purchase of land if required. Listening to various comments from Ashby Canal people and Leicestershire County Councillors present reinforced the FCC thinking of what can be achieved when the relevant county council is fully involved in restoration efforts.

The Inland Waterways Advisory Council's last report on canal restorations placed the Cromford Restoration in the 'National' importance category, and suggested that the FCC needed to form a canal partnership and commission a whole canal feasibility study. The first priority requires considerable political influence and activity and the second a considerable amount of money depending on the depth of the study and the treatment of Butterley Tunnel, the 'great unknown' in the FCC plans. My I remind you all that IWAC is not a canal restoration body, but a government funded organisation, part of defra whose purpose is to advise the government on issues affecting canal restoration and use issues.



Their opinions carry weight. My own efforts over the winter and beyond will be directed towards these two priorities now that I am back to something like 'normal'.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of you for your best wishes during my treatment for cancer over the last year, and further thanks to those of you who are supporting my solo sponsored walk from Langley Mill to Cromford on the 30th October to coincide with Discovery Days week mentioned above. Details can be found here:

<http://fundraisers.everyclick.com/info.xq?id=1122042&fundraiser-name=Patrick-Morriss>

Funds raised from this will be split 50:50 with Chesterfield Royal Hospital where I received excellent treatment and follow up care. I have deliberately kept this 'low key' amongst the membership as a whole as I do not want to 'beat' on the membership for yet more money, preferring to spread the net wider using the power of the internet.

Finally, can I urge all of you to do what you can to enrol new members to our cause, greater numbers carry greater weight when it comes to negotiating with the powers that be and applying for funding.

GOLDEN VALLEY PROJECT

An opportunity for rail and canal to connect.

by Anthony Darbyshire

I was delighted when Patrick Morriss invited me to write an article for your magazine about the Golden Valley Project.

The Golden Valley Project is, in my experience, rather unique in that the benefits extend well beyond the boundaries of the project and the interests of those directly involved. The local community should in time have an improved economy, social provisions and a more pleasant environment.

The genesis of the project was a commissioning brief to me to find more viable land uses for 100 acres of land north of Codnor Park Reservoir. The brief also placed importance on wildlife and 'giving something back to the community'.

Studies revealed that the Friends of the Cromford Canal's preferred route for a new cut of canal, to circumvent the restrictive reservoir, would have to pass very close to the existing Midland Railway Butterley passenger railway line where it curves through the land in question. A station on the line has long been considered as a useful addition to the simple back and forth route.

The MRB, the FCC and Griffiths Superior Homes Ltd, the land owner, realised that combining their own objectives in this land would not only satisfy their requirements but, importantly, provide social-economic potential for the wider community. To present the case for this bottom-up approach to regeneration they formed the East Derbyshire Regeneration Initiative, and the project was presented from the start to the local planning authority and the Amber Valley Partnership under the banner of EDRI.

So what does the project entail? For the FCC the project will provide the new cut from the Pinxton Branch at Ironville to the existing water section east of the Butterley tunnel in Golden Valley. It is intended that the canal will pass to FCC ownership for a 'peppercorn' sum. Consultations with British Waterways are in progress regarding the cut which will have to pass into BW owned land and connect to a short section owned by them west of the reservoir.

From the community point of view this new cut will hasten and add strength to the



thrust by FCC to restore the Smotherfly-Ironville section and allow Renaissance Ironville to incorporate the canal as a part of their overall re-development of the village.

A new rail station-cum-reception building will link passengers into the site and the proposed heritage and arts centre will be the focal point that glues the canal to railway. This will be a tourist attraction in its own right but one that will also provide activities/facilities for the local community but a short walk away from their homes.

Visitors will be able to travel to site by train with the option to return by barge or towpath to the terminus of Golden Valley Light Railway line near the tunnel entrance. This round route will make the day more interesting for visitors.

The primary land use will be a country park with walks through woods and meadows and by the canal. The landform north of the railway is ideal for the 'working' of horses and to prepare riders aiming at the highest level of cross country competition. A world-class equestrian centre with indoor and outdoor competition arenas will meet the immense demand of riders within the Midlands. Re-contouring for the arenas will take all the material excavated for the canal.

In collaboration with Groundwork Derby and Derbyshire, the abandoned allotments at the top end of the site will be put back into production to support their healthy-food distribution scheme, and an orchard and vineyard will be planted to extend the training programme, which is also run by GDD.

We believe this project has enormous potential for the locality and demonstrates Very Special Circumstances that are required to overcome the Greenbelt planning policy applicable to this restored open cast site.

The application for outline planning will be submitted to Amber Valley Borough Council this October and it would be appreciated if those FCC members who support the project would make their thoughts known to the local councillors and the Member of Parliament. The EDRI website, www.edri.co.uk, will include the full application and revised drawings once the application is submitted. A worthwhile preview can be had on the associated equestrian website www.goldenvalleypark.co.uk

Anthony Darbyshire is a Chartered Landscape Architect in private practice. His primary focus is large scale ecological and socially sustainable development in rural areas. Projects have included design and appearing as expert witness at public inquiries for developments in sensitive landscapes. He undertook phase 1 of the National Memorial Arboretum. He also has an interest in Learning through Landscapes and school projects and firmly believes that the natural world can offer as much as the classroom.

LEAWOOD PUMP IN STEAM

As part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend, the beam engine will be in steam and operating from noon to 5.00pm each day
on

Saturday and Sunday 1st and 2nd November.

This will be the last chance to see this wonderful machine in motion this year.





FCC NEWS UPDATE - so what *is* happening

from Mike Kelley



• The first news is no news! You will recall the FCC had a meeting with the senior managers of UK-COAL at Doncaster last May in an effort to agree to how the Smotherfly planning permission was to be administered. UK-COAL are the owners of the site and we have to have their agreement before we can proceed. In spite of letters and phone calls to them, they have as yet not responded. We were very well received by UK-COAL, so it must be that as yet they just have not got round to it – but they will, I am sure.

• **Friday 11th July** - I held a meeting at the Boat Inn at Pinxton to discuss the forthcoming Pinxton Push Fun Walk.

• **Monday 14 July** - Our monthly full Committee Meeting at the Derwent Hotel at Whatstandwell.

• **Tuesday 22nd July** - I attended a meeting at Heanor Town Hall, designed to guide organisations such as ours in seeking funding.

• **Saturday/Sunday 26th & 27th July** - A team organised by Dave Tinkler excavated the dry dock at Ironville's lock number 6, Marshall's Lock. It was one of the hottest weekends of a poor summer, but the team managed to excavate the whole chamber, even though parts of it, like so much more of the canal structure, was being damaged by tree roots. It was good to see some new helpers come along. See page 20.

• **Saturday/Sunday 2nd & 3rd August** - The annual Cromford Steam Rally with the FCC's sales team in attendance in our marquee and we also used our narrow boat display trailer, purchased last year for such occasions. A very popular show and a successful weekend for the FCC – and it was dry!

• **Tuesday 5th August** - Another meeting with parties involved with the World Heritage Events Committee at North Mill in Belper to discuss this years events in October and November.

• **Monday 11th August** - Our monthly full Committee Meeting at the Station Inn in Alfreton. Our first time at this venue.

• **Friday 15th August** - I held a meeting at the Clock Inn, South Normanton to discuss the forthcoming Pinxton Push Fun Walk.

• **Saturday 23rd August** - Our Chairman Pat Morriss delivered a talk to the Midland Railway at Butterley. It was very well attended and well received. Both the FCC and this railway group have many common interests. The railway society held a major themed event for the bank holiday weekend. See page 10.

• **Monday 8th September** - Our monthly full Committee Meeting at the Station Inn in Alfreton.

• **Tuesday 16th September** - Another meeting with parties involved with the World Heritage Events Committee at North Mill in Belper to discuss this years events in October and November. Pat Morriss and Hugh Potter in attendance.



- **Monday 22nd September** - A final meeting at the Clock Inn South Normanton to discuss the Pinxton Push Fun Walk.
- **Tuesday 23rd September** - Pat Morriss, John Boucher and myself had a meeting in Matlock with Derbyshire County Councillor, Paul Smith. We spoke of our future plans and requested he send a letter to UK COAL asking them to respond to us regarding Smotherfly site. Councillor Smith said he would do so.
- **Sunday 28th September** - The 2nd Pinxton Push Fun Walk. 229 walkers plus many local people turned out to support their canal. Brian Blessed our President made an impressive appearance. BBC Radio Derby and the Derby Evening Telegraph were also in attendance. See page 12.
- **Sunday 5th October** - The Northern Canals Association held a meeting at Conkers, hosted by the Ashby Canal Society. Pat Morriss and Hugh Potter were in attendance from the FCC. Included was a discourse on getting greater county council involvement with canal restoration and a visit to the Ashby Canal.
- **Sunday 12th October** - A work party organised by David Tinkler, had ten helpers clear the young willow trees growing near the back of lock six on the Ironville flight.
- **Monday 13th October** - Our monthly full Committee Meeting. This time we returned to the Derwent Hotel at Whatstandwell.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- **Saturday 25th October** - Heritage Day in Jacksdale Community Centre, 10am to 4pm. The FCC sales stall will be attending and our archivist Hugh Potter will be putting on a display of heritage photographs and old maps etc.
- **Saturday/Sunday 1st & 2nd November** - World Heritage Site Discovery Days at Cromford Wharf. Your support would be particularly appreciated at this event. Full details are on pages 8 and 9.
- **Saturday 8th November** - Charity Sale at Pinxton Village Hall, Kirkstead Road, Pinxton, NG16 6NA @1.00 - 3.00 pm. The FCC stall will also be at this event with a range of items. Don't forget your 2008 Christmas cards at £3 per pack of 10.

Ironville Church Hall
Monday 15th December at 7.30pm.
All are welcome to the FCC's
CHRISTMAS FOLK MUSIC NIGHT
Live Music
Licensed Bar
Please Bring Seasonal Refreshments To Share
Tea and Coffee Provided
Raffle
Admission £1.50



DISCOVERY DAYS AT CROMFORD

We are now approaching one of the most important events in the FCC calendar, the annual Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days. We shall again be operating the horse drawn boat between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction on Nov 1st and 2nd. There will also be a horse drawn dray, ropemaking and a street organ as well as the FCC sales stand, original paintings, photographic display and a slide show of archive images. Your support at Cromford will be most welcome as the FCC now plays a major part in helping to inform and direct the many visitors to this very popular event. Many other activities are taking place during the week from October 25th to November 2nd as shown below. There are also several free talks at various venues as show opposite.

Saturday 25th October to Sunday 2nd November

Discovering Cromford Canal

Monday 27 October:

10am and 1.30pm Wonderful Water Voles - Family Activity with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. Meet at Gothic Warehouse, Cromford Wharf. Interactive activity is followed by search for water voles. Booking essential. £3 per child.

Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 October:

9am Clearing overhanging trees along Cromford Canal with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. Meet at Whatstandwell.

Ring Sam Willis on 07732 168942 to check work task.

Don't forget your water proofs, boots and lunch.

Wednesday 29 October:

7pm The Cromford Canal: Ambergate to Cromford talk in the Gothic Warehouse, Cromford Wharf.

Thursday 30 October:

9am Clearing overhanging trees along Derwentside section of Canal with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. Ring Sam on 07732 168942 to check work task.

7.30pm Cromford & High Peak Railway Talk at High Peak Junction Wharf Shed with Andy Pollock on this unusual railway. Park at High Peak Junction.

Saturday November 1 and Sunday November 2

Horse-drawn Narrowboat between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction from 10am to 4pm. Rope-making, traditional boat-painting, exhibition and family crafts drop-in sessions at Cromford Wharf. Forge lit at High Peak Junction 10am to 4pm. Leawood Pumphouse in steam 11am to 4pm.

There are over 100 events taking place between October 25 and November 2 in World Heritage Site Discovery Days Festival Week. To find out more visit www.derwentvalleymills.org or ring 01773 841488.





World Heritage Site DISCOVERY DAYS



DERWENT VALLEY MILLS
World Heritage Site



Saturday 25th October to Sunday 2nd November

Free Discovery Days talks

During this year's Discovery Days, for the first time, there are free talks to enjoy and help give you a better understanding of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

Saturday 25 October:

11am Joseph Wright Gallery talk at Derby Museum and Art Gallery.

Wright's life and paintings explained.

Monday 27 October:

7pm The history of St John's Chapel, Belper with Mary Smedley. Meet in the chapel, off St John's Road, Belper.

Tuesday 28 October:

7pm Leawood Pumphouse talk by Derrick Hale. Come and learn more about this fantastic beam engine and its history in Strutt's North Mill, Belper.

Wednesday 29 October:

7pm The Cromford Canal: Ambergate to Cromford with Patrick Morriss of the Friends of Cromford Canal, in the Gothic Warehouse, Cromford Wharf.

Thursday 30 October:

7.30pm Cromford & High Peak Railway Talk at High Peak Junction Wharf Shed with Andy Pollock on this unusual railway. Park at High Peak Junction.

Friday 31 October:

7.30pm The Search for Belper's lost Manor House with the Friends of Belper Parks in St John's Chapel, Belper. An exhibition will also be on display.

There are over 100 events taking place between October 25 and November 2 in World Heritage Site Discovery Days Festival Week. To find out more visit www.derwentvalleymills.org or ring 01773 841488.



DERWENT VALLEY MILLS
World Heritage Site

World Heritage Site
DISCOVERY DAYS

This sounds a very full and interesting programme of events which deserve our support, and your committee would particularly appreciate a good turn out at **Cromford Wharf on November 1st and 2nd.**



MIDLAND RAILWAY BUTTERLEY WORKS OPEN DAY

by Stuart Smith

A Works Open Day event, as mentioned in the last issue, was held at the Midland Railway Butterley over the August bank holiday weekend and was without doubt a major success, so much so that it was the best ever railway related event ever held at the railway.

The concept for the event was born out of a mutual discussion between John Hett and myself in the summer of 2007 and it took some nine months to put all the pieces together and even then it was not possible to achieve all the elements that I had hoped for. Nevertheless those elements of the event that did occur went extremely well with over 3000 visitors over the three days.

The train service worked well with five steam locomotives deployed, including the return of locomotives 80098 and 92214 as well as a varied collection of diesel locomotives and the highlight was the incoming charter train from Woking operated by UK Railtours. This train brought a full complement of passengers off a 13 coach train "top and tailed" by 2 Class 67 locomotives and arrived more or less on time and was stabled in the north siding at Butterley. The stock was all Pullman vehicles and made a fine sight in blue and white livery apart from some odd vehicles still sporting Anglia and Inter City liveries. Feedback from the tour organiser was extremely positive and hopefully we may be able repeat this in the future.

Everyone on the railway played a significant part in the overall success of the event from model, miniature and narrow gauge railways of which the Golden Valley Light Railway featured a locomotive cavalcade on each day and we were graced with the flypast of a Spitfire and on one of the days the Red Arrows flew over as a tribute to Mike Gallimore who sadly died prior to the event and who organised many occasions that the Battle of Britain Memorial flight flew over our site.

So successful was the event this year that we are now embarking upon the planning for "Works Open Day II" which will take place between the 29th and 31st August 2009 and for which I intend to endeavour to widen the scope of the event and participants on the basis of "Make a weekend of it" and to this end I have already received expressions of interest from numerous organisations and will be actively pursuing joint promotional opportunities with the National Waterways Festival 2009. As the plans develop I hope to keep readers of *The Portal* informed.

Our Chairman Pat Morriss gave a well-received presentation at this event and we are looking forward to working with the Midland Railway people in the future. The prospect of special trains between Butterley and the new station adjacent to the 2009 IWA National Waterways Festival site at Red Hill on the River Soar is particularly exciting. These arrangements should be an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of both the FCC and Midland Railway Butterley.

Your committee will be represented at a preliminary meeting with the Waterways Festival organisers shortly and then decide how the FCC can become involved. Hopefully we can gain significant benefits not only financial, but perhaps more importantly in this case, from a publicity point of view, from this major waterways event on our doorstep - Ed.

YOUR support over the August Bank Holiday in 2009 will be very much appreciated.



THE OLD HOUSE AT HOME

FCC Archives



Since the FCC was formed, we have acquired various snippets of information about this once popular public house (pictured left during Charles Naylor's occupancy) which stood by the towpath between Pye Bridge and Pinxton. Sadly, this building has now been swept away by the Smotherfly opencast coal workings. Margaret Vernon, a life member of the FCC, has sent in the following useful additional information:

I was very interested in the article about the Pinxton Arm of the canal in the latest edition of *The Portal* magazine, particularly with reference to The Old House at Home. My great grandfather kept it in the 1880's/90's. His name was Charles Naylor and he took over from John Bland. Below is a copy of the details when the pub and farmland were auctioned.

AT SOMERCOTES & PYE BRIDGE.

LOT 9.

All that PUBLIC HOUSE known as "THE OLD HOUSE AT HOME," with the Brewhouse, extensive Stabling, Cowshed, Piggeries, Garden, Orchard, and appurtenances thereto, bordering upon the Great Ouse Canal, and in close proximity to the PYE BRIDGE STATIONS OF THE MIDLAND AND GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAYS.

And also all those TWO CLOSES OF PASTURE LAND (formerly in six Closes), now known as the Pasture Meadows, adjoining the above, bordered by the River Erewash on the east, and the Great Ouse Canal on the west, formerly in the occupation of John Bland, and now of Charles Naylor, containing altogether 14 acres or thereabouts.

In the 1891 census, Charles Naylor was described as a coal miner and beer house keeper residing at the Old House at Home on the canal side with his wife and family. His eldest son (also Charles Naylor) married Annie Foulds a month before his father died. Family stories tell of wedding celebrations with home brewed parsnip wine. The 1901 Census shows Mr. Wass as the innkeeper.

Annie's grandfather was John Foulds, a boatman who transported coal from the Portland Basin to Aylesbury usually for James Oakes & Co. His older brother Danny was similarly employed by the Midland Counties Railway Co. John was an early resident of Stone Row in Golden Valley. His son Joseph followed in his father's footsteps and was also a boatman. Tragically, in early December 1873 his wife was operating the lock gates at Ironville when she slipped into the lock and was drowned. She was aged 28 and left my grandmother aged 3 and Daniel aged 4. Annie was brought up by her aunt and uncle in Leicester but returned to the canal-side when she married my grandfather. Having raised their family there they moved to Pye Bridge until their deaths.



THE 2nd PINXTON PUSH FUN WALK

by Mike Kelley

The first Pinxton Push was held in April 2006, to help raise money for the Smotherfly planning application. We had 223 walkers who turned out and helped to raise the money we required.

This time, for the Second Push, plans were started early this year. It takes a great deal of time and energy to plan such an event. There are so many things which can go wrong if co-ordination goes awry; not to mention the appalling weather we have been having! The walk is six and a half miles, from Langley Mill canal basin to Pinxton Wharf. This is a reasonable distance for most, and especially for families. Some of our first sponsored walks were from Langley Mill to Cromford, which with the diversions is around 15 miles, a little too far for many.

So the 'Fun Walk' was deemed to be better for the majority, and so it turned out to be. Your FCC committee already work very hard and I did not want to burden them with more things to do. Instead I set out to find and use new faces from our very large membership to help out for the Push. They were glad of this chance to get involved and many excelled all expectations. Several meetings were held with these willing helpers and gradually a team was formed and moulded.



Brian Blessed greets our vice chairman and his good lady before starting off the Pinxton Push from Langley Mill

Mike Kelley

Our new President, Brian Blessed was approached to see if he could attend, to which he graciously said he would try. So 2,000 leaflets were printed, some of which were placed in the last edition of this Portal magazine, but the majority had to be hand delivered. The team distributed them all and some even printed out more for themselves.



Hugh Potter



There seems to be some sort of confrontation between Brian and Mike before setting off. But what are they saying to each other?

Printable suggestions to the editor please.

The idea was to have the conclusion of the walk at the Boat Inn, but shortly after we had announced the event the Boat Inn closed for refurbishment! I was assured by Nick, the new landlord, that all would be OK. However, a week before the Push I went down to check and it was still very much a building site. 'Don't worry Mike,' said Nick, and true to his word the ground and area was prepared and in excellent condition for the event, as was the important item of having an available toilet!

Emma Atkins and Brian Marshall helped a great deal by getting the local scouts to provide a barbecue for us. Also the Frederick Gent Comprehensive School provided their school Rock Band, who were excellent for the occasion.

Some of the crowd starting off from Langley Mill



Hugh Potter

We needed people to help with car parking at Langley Mill; also people to help register the walkers. (This time we used a faster and smoother registration than we had done before). Then we needed people to help check out the walkers at Pinxton, plus people to lead the three separate walks at half hour intervals. Someone had to look after the money and we needed people to run the Tombola at Pinxton.



We had to arrange for the St. John's Ambulance crew to be in attendance, the news media had to be informed, as were the waterway magazines. Insurance for the event had to be sourced and risk assessments put in place. Our webmaster, Giles Metcalf, was on hand to photograph the event. (Giles managed to get photos onto the website within a few hours). Then the way had to be marked out with arrows and signs, therefore on the day before I set out with Eric Singleton to fix and fasten the signs along the way, which in effect meant covering the walk twice, there and back.

Walkers and supporters starting to gather outside the Boat Inn, still undergoing refurbishment.



Giles Metcalf

The day of the walk was Sunday 28th September and it meant an early start for several, but especially for our President Brian Blessed and his agent, who had to travel up from Surrey that morning. Brian has climbed Everest and gone to the North Pole, so he would not find a fun-walk very difficult, but just the day before he twisted his ankle.

The Frederick Gent Comprehensive School Rock Band were brilliant. Ringo looks a bit serious though.



Giles Metcalf



However, like the trouper he is, he still turned up and was greeted by rounds of applause as he walked from his car, and across the lock gates at Langley Mill. Standing on top of the gates he addressed the large crowd who were registering for the walk. Brian did not need a microphone, as his trademark voice lifted above the Cromford Canal. The Derby Telegraph reporter and photographer, as well as Radio Derby were also there.

He laughed and joked with all and posed for many photographs. Soon the first walk set off, ably led by Anne Smith. Many whole families had turned out, from grandparents to babies in pushchairs. Yes, two ardent families pushed their three-wheeled pushchairs all the way, mud and all. One grandmother proudly came to me at Pinxton to say her 4-year-old grandson had walked the whole way without being carried once. We have always had good support from the 'Shoulder of Mutton Biker's Club' and true to form they had turned out again to show their support.

It was good to see so many young ones walking for 'their' canal. Unable to walk, Brian needed me to escort him to the midway point at Codnor Park Reservoir. (Well I had walked it the day before!) There he looked at the derelict canal locks of Ironville and greeted many as they walked up the towpath from Langley Mill. One young boy was mesmerised when Brian put on the voice of his Star Wars character for him, one of Brian's many film roles. It was here at the reservoir that Radio Derby had an extensive interview with Brian.



When everyone had arrived, it made quite a party in the pub yard.

Giles Metcalf

I then moved on (by car!) with Brian to Pinxton Wharf, and what a nice sight greeted us. Dozens were already there even before the first walkers arrived. The tombola, rock band, barbecue and temporary bar were in full swing. Gradually the walkers started to arrive and first had to 'check out' by signing against their number that they had made it. Each walker was given a certificate, which many presented to Brian for his signature; in fact he was inundated with requests to sign his autograph.

The final count was a grand total of 229 walkers and one dog that was also given a paid-for walker's number! (It was a good day out for the family dogs, dozens of them!) These numbers show just how much the local people want to see the restoration of the Cromford Canal. Thank you to all who helped to make the 2nd Pinxton Push a great success. Well done.

Sorry I missed it! Ed.



IN PRAISE OF THE EREWASH CANAL

by Mike Kelley

If boaters have a weakness it is that they have sometimes been known to repeat someone else's opinion as an established fact. Someone quotes a prejudicial rumour and it is passed on as factual. Many times, since the FCC has been established, numerous boaters have said to me, 'It's alright you trying to get the Cromford reopened, but you have to get up the Erewash before you can get to the Cromford.' Thus saying with a wince or a sickly grin!

And so it was this year, when fellow boaters at the many locks we were passing through asked me - as they do, 'Where are you heading?' When I told them, 'Up the Erewash to Langley Mill', their reaction was a constant one of disbelief. 'It's all choked up, you'll get stuck' or 'Travel very early but don't travel in the midday' or even, 'Is it still open then?'

Such ignorant and ill-informed comments raise the hairs on the back of my head. I was a member of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association (ECP&DA) before the FCC was formed. It was high time I found out for myself what it was like to cruise the Erewash Canal from Trent Lock to Langley Mill and back. So this year when people asked me where I was going for my holiday, I smiled and said, 'Somewhere exotic,' then paused while the look of envy crept over their face, then added, 'Langley Mill!' I deliberately chose the summer school holidays for my trip and travelled during midday time. As always there were plenty of people to see us off at Trent Lock. Fathers, who used the occasion to explain to their children how a boat can travel uphill with the aid of a lock, and several willing helpers keen to shut the gates for you. The first thing I noticed was how clear the water was. Unlike most canals, on the Erewash you could actually see the bottom, it was beautiful clear water. The attractive and varied house boats along the first mile or so are a particular feature of interest, as are the many gardens using the canal to make the best of their garden vista.

From Long Eaton to Sandiacre it was the urban canal I had expected with mills and houses in close proximity, even so it looked more rural than I had thought. Sandiacre Lock is where the ECP&DA have their headquarters, a lock-keeper's cottage which was saved from demolition and now contains an interesting collection of artifacts. It is here that the Derby Canal had its junction with the Erewash. As I passed through Sandiacre there is a wonderful old mill, now refurbished, which is nothing short of an architectural masterpiece. Thank goodness it has been preserved for future generations to admire.

From here on, the canal becomes amazingly rural for a so-called urban canal. We encountered plenty of friendly young fishermen, some of whom were quite happy to help us at the locks. Maybe it is the name of one lock which puts some people off? 'Gallows Inn Lock' does not have a friendly appeal to its name. It was here we saw the worst amount of litter during the whole trip.

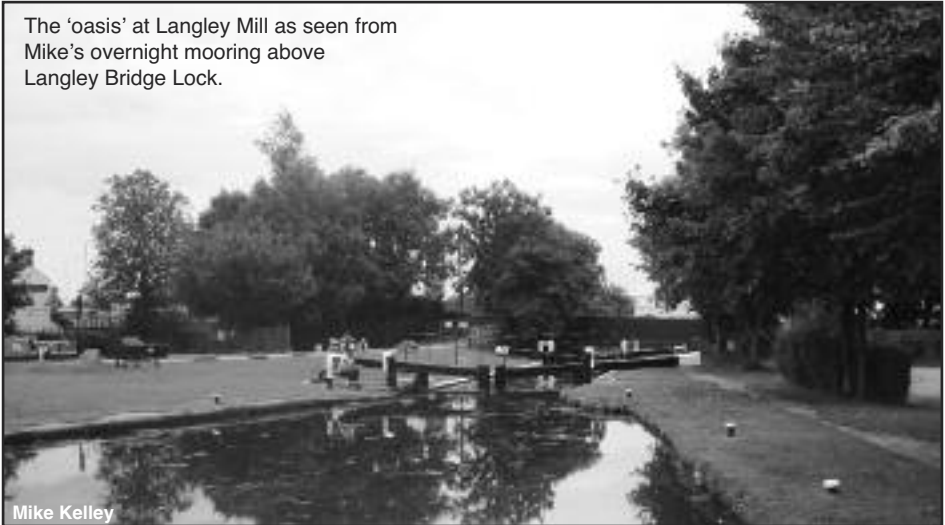
Onward and the water was still clear as a bell and three times I saw carp fish which were over two feet in length. Now I am not a fisherman, but I am told a carp is the one with the very wide mouth, slowly opening and closing all the time. (That reminds me I must get the wife a birthday card!) Later on I saw a pike fish also around two feet long. The key fact is that you could see the fish; they were not covered by the usual clouds of mud so common to most canals. And all along were beautiful groups of water lilies.

Some travel the whole length of this canal in one day, but not me, I wanted to take my time a little. We stopped for the night at the Bridge Inn at Cotmanhay, a lovely pub with very friendly landlord and landlady. We were made to feel very welcome.



The next day we proceeded through more rural scenery on to the current terminus at Langley Mill canal basin, the first and only part of the Cromford Canal still accessible by boats. The canal at Langley Mill is an oasis surrounded by roads and buildings. It is an attractive area, and my son's family came to join us for the night where we had a very pleasant barbecue and my grandsons had their first attempt at rod fishing.

The 'oasis' at Langley Mill as seen from Mike's overnight mooring above Langley Bridge Lock.



Mike Kelley

The next day I set off back again, but this time we stopped for the night at the Old Plough Inn at Sandiacre, a nice steak house. The food was first class and the real ale beer the cheapest I have come across this year. They have a very good mooring facility and we found it all-in-all a good place to moor for the night.

The only downside I could find with the whole canal was due to British Waterways. All of the locks require handcuff keys to unlock the extra security on the paddles. This in itself was time consuming and I personally would question whether they are really needed. Also some of the paddles had not been greased and in two cases I could not open them at all. These two things made the locks hard work, which with a bit more forethought from British Waterways could be alleviated.

The Erewash is a lovely canal which as it says in the Pearson's Guide to the Erewash, 'There's nothing quite like the Erewash anywhere else on the canal system.' Yes it truly is a lovely canal yet it is so underused. In a time when mooring spaces are hard to find we saw only one moving boat on the way up and four on the way back. At one lock a fisherman said to me, 'I come here often, but you are the first boat I have seen here.' So sad; and it need not be this way; so plan your next cruise to be up the Erewash.

I was very pleased to read these comments from Mike about the Erewash. It is a message that the ECP&DA have been trying to get across for the last forty years. The first time I boated to Langley Mill was in 1970 (when it really was a struggle!) and since then have been up and down the canal dozens of times. There is no doubt that it is harder work than your average canal, and it is also true that a few people have had bad experiences with the locals, but no more so than a good many other places throughout the waterway system. It is also of course the gateway to the Cromford and I for one am looking forward to the possibility of having to contend with the trials of working through the locks at Ironville. Ed.



Now is the time to get your FCC 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

or buy from any of the events listed on page 7 and save postage!



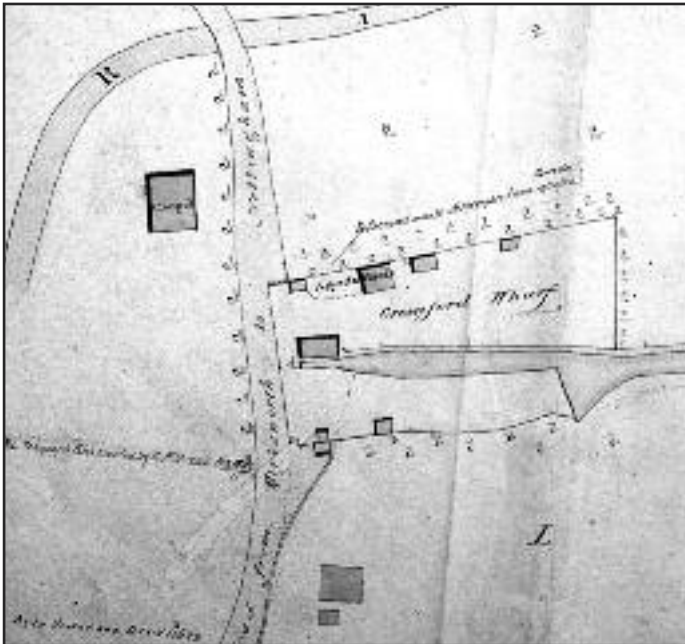
POTS & PIX VII

The 7th Annual 'Pots & Pix' Exhibition will be held beside the Cromford Canal at Ambergate on Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th November.

Pots & Pix combines an open studio and Christmas Exhibition of Liz Tatam's stoneware pottery with a display of historic images of the Cromford Canal by Friends of the Cromford Canal's Archivist Hugh Potter.

Liz Tatam's distinctive ceramics make ideal Christmas presents, and a range of pots and glazes will be available.

There will be a continuous showing of historic photographs of the Cromford Canal as well as a display of large-scale hand drawn and coloured maps of the canal made in 1811. This is the first time ever that these have been on show.



The 1811 maps referred to above contain a great deal of fascinating detail. This example on the left shows the original single terminal basin and warehouse at Cromford Wharf, before the second arm was built.

Hugh's book *'The Cromford Canal'*, the FCC *Walker's Guide to the Cromford Canal* and Christmas cards will be on sale, together with the opportunity to order a choice of historic prints suitable for framing.

Also Hugh will be offering a rare chance to see a half-hour television programme in the *Yesterday's Witness* series, entitled *The Narrow Boat Men*, in which boatmen and canal workers from the Midlands were interviewed for an early colour TV programme around 1960. Their voices were later heard on the BBC's 'LP' entitled *Narrow Boat*.

**Pots & Pix VII is open from 11am to 6pm each day at
Bankfield, Chase Road, Ambergate, Belper DE56 2HA.
Phone Hugh or Liz on 01773 852009 for further details or directions,
or email archivist@cromfordcanal.org.uk.**



WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



In July we had a work party to clean out the dry dock, alongside Lock 6 at Ironville. We had a good turn out of volunteers over the two days and good progress was made, as shown below. Additional pictures may be seen on the FCC website.



Dave Tinkler



Jan Columbo



Dave Tinkler

TOP LEFT: In spite of several scrub bashing work parties earlier in the year, the dock had become very overgrown in the bird nesting season.

TOP RIGHT: A good crowd of volunteers was soon making progress.

BOTTOM: It was one of the hottest days of the year and I would like to thank my wife who looked after our welfare by insisting on frequent stops to replace lost fluid!



Dave Tinkler



TOP: The gang are really getting down to it now and much of the concrete floor of the dock, covered in soil and rubbish for many years, is coming into view.

BOTTOM: The satisfying result of a good weekend's work.



Mike Kelley



Our next project is to resume work on the overgrown locks at Ironville after our enforced break from this during the bird nesting season. There are still a great many young trees and bushes etc. growing in the lock chambers and waterside walls, so there is plenty of scope for scrub bashing and lighting bonfires, also using a turfor to pull out the tree stumps. The first of these for this autumn / winter period was held on October 12th. We will be having further work parties on this site once a month from now until March. These will be mostly on a Sunday as that seems to be the most popular day. The dates are as follows:

- | | | | |
|--------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| Sunday | November 9th | Sunday | February 15th |
| Sunday | December 14th | Saturday | March 14th |
| Sunday | January 11th | Sunday | March 15th |

Put these dates on your calendars and come and join us.

I have also been in touch with Derbyshire County Council Rangers at High Peak Junction regarding work parties on the canal at the Cromford end. We regularly have winter work parties with DCC and we work with the Rangers under their supervision. We are limited to twelve volunteers on these occasions, therefore I have to make a list of names so as to limit the number to twelve. If you would like to volunteer then could you please let me know so that I can put your name on the list? Could you also let me have a contact phone number? First come first served applies. The dates are:

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| Saturday | November 15th | Saturday | December 6th |
| Sunday | November 16th | Sunday | December 7th. |

The actual location has yet to be confirmed but it should be around Ambergate. I will inform those on the list when I have the details.

We tend to get a regular band of volunteers on our work parties but it would be nice to see a lot more faces. If you have never been then why not make the effort and come along. We promise not to work you too hard but more to have a good day out with like minded folk whose one aim is to see the Cromford Canal reopened. If you require further information then please contact me. My details are on the inside front cover.

Of course, if work parties are not really your scene, then there are certainly other ways in which you can help the FCC. We are always looking for helpers at the various other events throughout the year. If you could spare some time, perhaps an hour or two, we would be extremely grateful. Just contact one of the Committee members. I hope to see a lot of you soon. In particular, your help would be appreciated at the World Heritage Discovery weekend at Cromford Wharf on November 1st/2nd. See pages 8 and 9.

Dave Tinkler

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hi Mike,

I just wanted to encourage you in the job you're doing as magazine editor. As editor of two magazines myself I know the amount of time it takes to put together. *The Portal* looks very professional and your design changes have made a big difference. The articles in your special Smotherfly edition were great too. They are particularly valuable to those of us who live some distance away (Kent in my case).

Best regards, Neil Quarmby



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



Hello again! What strange summer weather we have had this year - cold and wet in August and warm and sunny in October. Now boats are returning to their moorings on the Erewash Canal, a sure sign that winter is not far off.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to attend as many events this summer as in previous years; although Val Roberts and Mike Harrison waved our flag at the IWA National Festival over the August Bank Holiday, it was decided that we would not have a stand there this year. However, next year will be a different matter, as the Festival will be held at Redhill, right on our doorstep. By the time you get this magazine, the first of many meetings will have been held locally, and we shall have to start planning our campaign. This is an excellent opportunity to present ourselves, and we must make the most of it.

Earlier this year, we lost the use of the Church Hall at Ironville for our members' meetings, due to priority being given to their regular weekly hirers, which was unfortunate but understandable. I am very pleased to say, however, that due to recent changes in their bookings, the hall is once again available to us on Monday evenings. We shall therefore be resuming our meetings at this popular venue, starting with the FCC Christmas Folk Music Night. See page 7 for details.

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

Mrs E Exton, Alfreton
Mr N Henderson, Nottingham
Mr P Straw, Ambergate
Mr D Moss, Heage
Mr B M Dibb, Ilkeston
Miss M A Tavender, Matlock
Ms J Berry, Nottingham
Mr & Mrs D A Taylor, Matlock

Mr J Hunt, Huntingdon (Life Member)
Mr & Mrs K Beastall, Alfreton
Mr & Mrs G Kenning, Ambergate
Mr I Scott, Sutton-in-Ashfield
Mr A Alford, Coggeshal
Dr B Doman, Liverpool
Mr & Mrs A Doxey, Sutton in Ashfield

New Memberships have been a bit slow the last month, and I would like to see some more new names on my list, so if you know of anyone who is at all interested in the Canal or the Cromford Canal area, please encourage them to join us. If every member were to enrol just one new one, it would make a considerable difference.



100 YEARS AGO

Patrick Morriss writes

Virtually every year the Midland Railway had to get an Act of Parliament to get permission to expand or change its network. I have a copy of 'The Midland Railway (New Lines and Additional Powers) Act 1865', purchased because it gave details of what became the Butterley Branch Line after its construction in 1875. This of course is the line from Ambergate to Pye Bridge, some of which now forms part of the Butterley Museum.

The construction of that line necessitated the deviation of the Cromford Canal at Sawmills and the demolition of various properties. Interestingly, this diversion is referred to below. It was also the construction of that railway that put another nail in the Cromford Canal's coffin, as after the construction and opening of the railway, the Cromford Canal had an alternative route running near enough parallel to it for all its length.

In 1907 the Midland Railway Company wanted to close the Butterley Tunnel permanently and this wish became part of the Midland Railway Bill for 1907. During the visit to BW archives in Leeds and our earlier visit to the Midland Railway archive at Derby Industrial Museum, Hugh Potter and I unearthed several documents concerning the campaign to get this bill through. The following transcript is the evidence of one canal 'expert' that appears to be a bit of a Midland Railway poodle. Now read on!

Midland Railway Bill 1907

Cromford Canal

He Mr Lionel Bury Wells, M. Inst. C. E. will state –

That he is a Civil and Consulting Engineer whose office is in Haworth's Buildings Manchester.

That he has been a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers for 35 years.

That in 1877 he was appointed Engineer to the River Weaver Navigation, an important navigation connecting the salt works at Winsford and Northwich in Cheshire with the River Mersey at Weston Point, along which salt was sent to Liverpool, and coal was received via the Bridgewater Canal from the Wigan district. The Weaver was also connected with the Trent and Mersey Canal by the hydraulic lift at Anderton.

That while witness was Engineer to the Weaver Navigation he improved the waterway by widening and deepening it, new locks were built of large capacity.

Witness has reported on canals and navigations in Lancashire, Yorkshire, The Fen District, The South of England and in South Wales, derelict as well as in use.

That he prepared a map of the canals of England and Wales for the International Conference on Inland Navigation held in Paris in 1892 and has visited various waterways in France, Germany and the Low Countries.

Witness has inspected the Cromford Canal and Reservoirs and excepting the Butterley Tunnel he found the works including Locks, Bridges, Reservoirs, Aqueducts, short Tunnels and Towpaths in very fair order. A great portion of the works were in good order and compare well with the condition of similar works on other canals, which he has inspected from time to time.



Witness started in a boat from Cromford. Soundings were taken at intervals along the canal to the Pentrich Colliery Wharf and along the whole length of the canal to the West of the Tunnel as far as the channel has been used for navigation since the closing of the tunnel.

From Cromford the general depth of water was 3 feet 6 inches to 4 feet 1 inch and as far as the London and North Western Railway siding there was only one sounding as little as 2 feet 6 inches.

Witness found the channel clean to the puddle.(clay)

That on aqueducts, in the short tunnels and under bridges the depth measured 3 feet or more than 3 feet.

Where the canal has been recently diverted for Railway purposes beyond Bullbridge it was of greater width than ordinarily found and the sides were protected with stone pitching

Here the sounding reached a depth of 5 feet 6 inches proving that there was no lack of accommodation or stinting of expenditure where the canal was deviated by the Railway Company.

Soundings of less than 3 feet were rare and only found where slips of earth had occurred or sewerage effluents were received from Whatstandwell and Ripley.

That in these places instead of finding the hard puddle, the bottom was soft mud and depths of 2 feet 11 inches, 2 feet 6 inches and 2 feet 5 inches are recorded. The Ripley sewage was noticeable for nearly a mile from the inflow. The water was foul and in warm weather the smell cannot fail to be objectionable.

Witness noticed a spoon dredger at work near Bridge No. 30.

That on the other side of the Tunnel the Pinxton Branch was inspected. Soundings shewed depths of 3 feet 5 inches to 4 feet 10 inches in the lower portion. Above Oakes' Works the depth shoaled to 2 feet 9 inches, this and one sounding of 2 feet 6 inches, another of 2 feet 11 inches, were the only soundings found less than 3 feet in depth to the Pinxton Colliery Wharf. Beyond this Wharf Witness noticed that the weeds in the channel had been recently cut to improve the inflow of the Brook.

He also observed the Hindoo, a wide boat belonging to the Trent Navigation Company which drew 3 feet 0 1/2 inch which he was told had been recently loaded and navigated from Pinxton to the top lock. A spoon dredger was at work on this Branch.

Witness found the top lock – No 1 - and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 empty, as well as the intervening lengths of canal, the water having been run off for repairs at Whitsuntide.

Witness therefore had the advantage of seeing this portion of the canal thoroughly and it was in very good condition. Where mud had accumulated below lock No. 3 men were excavating it. The masonry in Lock walls was all in very good order. Many of the lock gates were comparatively new and in good order, the others were in fair order. This applies not only to the Locks which were seen empty, but as far as he could judge, to the remainder of the Locks to the terminus at Langley Mill.

Two locks, Nos. 12 and 13 were especially noticeable owing to the fact that they subsided through coal being worked below. The walls of Lock No. 12 had been raised 2 feet 6 1/2 inches, of Lock No. 13, 2 feet 1 inch. The work was well done in a permanent manner. In the neighbourhood two bridges had been rebuilt in brick, one recently, the other 4 or 5 years ago.

Witness saw a fine extent of wharf at Beggarlee, from which he was told that coal was shipped in large quantities.

The number of disused wharves and basins between Pinxton and Beggarlee was



a noticeable feature and a branch canal to Aldercarr was seen by Witness to be abandoned and grass grown. It therefore appears that the owners of these wharves and basins had found long since that water carriage was of no service and had allowed them to get out of repair.

Witness has seen the longitudinal section which shews approximately the position of the coal seams under Butterley Tunnel and the portion that has been worked. At present, the Furnace seam, 3 feet 9 inches thick, is the only one being worked. The falling in of the tunnel in 1900 coincided with the coal being got in this seam under the canal. The Deep Hard seam 4 feet 4 inches in thickness had been worked before and presumably caused the damage which had to be repaired between 1889 and 1893. There remain unworked at a higher level parts of the main soft seam, 4 feet thick and the deep hard seam, and at a lower level the Black Shale seam 4 feet 3 inches thick and the Kilburn 2 feet 6 inches thick. A portion of the deep hard and main soft seams have been purchased by the Railway Company.

Witness carefully examined the Butterley Tunnel entering at the west end and going as far as the No. 2 shaft. For 4 chains distance from the entrance the tunnel has evidently been relined, beyond the roof has sunk and is cracked and leaky in various places. In some places bent rails have been used to support the roof. At various places as shewn on the section, the tunnel has been relined. At 14 chains the relined portion measures only 5 feet 11 inches above water, although the tunnel was originally said to be 9 feet above water. It had therefore sunk 3 feet at this point. The contour of the arch and the condition of the bricks shews that very severe pressure has been exerted. Pieces of brick were splintering off both in the sides and roof, and as the working of coal extends this condition of things will be aggravated.



FCC Archives

The western portal of Butterley Tunnel at about the time of the report by the witness in 1907.

A maintenance or inspection boat is just emerging, using the traditional method of legging.

If you think this picture looks familiar, it is because it was used as the basis for the FCC logo!

Entering at the east end witness proceeded as far as 42 chains. From 40 to 42 chains the tunnel was very low. It only measured 5 feet 2 1/4 inches high and 7 feet 8 inches from side to side, at 42 chains; and 4 feet 11 1/2 inches high by 7 feet wide at 41 chains; the original width was 9 feet. In some places, as at 39 chains 34 feet the original



roof had been rock and this was now supported by rails and timber. In other places rails were laid horizontally and bricks built between these and the rock above. At about 38 chains the rails were only 4 feet 6 inches above water level.

The condition of the eastern end appeared more dangerous than the western end. Bricks were giving way and the tunnel had been reduced to smaller dimensions.

In places the roof has been supported by timber, which proving insufficient, rails have been added. The timber was rotten and has evidently been in for a considerable period.

Witness believes that the movement must have taken place years ago and that when another seam of coal is worked the movement will begin again in a more aggravated form, and continue for an indefinite number of years.

The condition of the tunnel was so bad that Witness was extremely glad to get out of it. If it were safe to re-open the tunnel for traffic the portion that has already been relined on the west side would have to be taken in hand as it is only 5 feet 9 inches above water level and as more coal is got this and other portions would have to be reconstructed.

Until there was an assurance that no more coal would be mined in the neighbourhood of the tunnel it would be futile to attempt to open it for traffic. The work of reconstruction could only be done slowly and at great cost. A very small amount of traffic used the tunnel when it was available. The Butterley Company and other owners of private wharves and basins have left them to decay. There is no prospect of a recovery in traffic.

Witness does not believe that the public interest in the re-opening of Butterley Tunnel is great enough to warrant the cost involved.

Witness inspected the reservoirs and found that Codnor Park reservoir was full. Butterley Park reservoir was within 3 feet 6 inches of the overflow and Butterley Reservoir within 2 feet of the level of the overflow.

That the total capacity of the three reservoirs is 22,250,000 cubic feet and if filled in the spring this quantity of water would very nearly suffice for the canal and other purposes until autumn.

That a lock full of water is agreed with the Erewash Canal Company to amount to 263 tons or 9441 cubic feet.

That the total number of boats on the eastern length of the canal for last year was 874. 874 per annum divided by two equals 437 in six months, the period during which any shortage of water has to be provided for.

That assuming each boat requires a lock full of water, which in times of scarcity is not necessarily provided, for a boat coming down may be detained until a boat is ready to ascend: yet:

On the liberal basis of a lock full for a boat to go up with and for a lock full to come down with, in six months 874 locks would require 8,251,434 cubic feet

To this must be added the water required for locomotives 4,368,000 cubic feet

The maximum amount allowed to the Erewash Canal 2,329,600 cubic feet

And for evaporation, leakage etc. 3,780,975 cubic feet

Total: 18,730,009 cubic feet

As the reservoirs hold 22,250,000 cubic feet a surplus of 3,519,991 cubic feet would be left after 6 months.

That in addition to the water which may be drawn from the reservoirs there is the inflow from streams and surface water, as well as water pumped from mines in the district for use on the canal.

A second view of the case is to take the tonnage of traffic, 53,000 tons per annum, and apply to this the quantity of water stated by Mr Thomas of the Grand Junction Canal



Company in his evidence before the House of Lords, page 114, question 117 as being required to pass 17 tons of traffic using 56,000 gallons; 56,000 gallons is 250 tons. Equals 14 1/2 tons of water required per ton of traffic. On this basis the water required in six months is therefore 53,000 tons x 14 1/2 tons divided by 2, equal to 13,794,575 cubic feet For locomotives add 4,368,000 cubic feet For the Erewash Canal add 2,329,000 cubic feet And for evaporation add 3,780,975 cubic feet Making a total of 24,273,150 cubic feet Showing a deficiency of 2,023,100 in the reservoirs capacity.

That in addition to water coming from streams, surface water and mines, the Midland Railway Company undertakes to provide machinery capable of pumping 240,000 cubic feet of water in 24 hours from the canal to the west of the tunnel into the reservoirs.

240,000 cubic feet a day equals 1,680,000 cubic feet of water a week and over 40,000,000 cubic feet in six months.

The Railway Company have already pumping machinery at Lea Wood capable of pumping 1,440,000 cubic feet a day into the western canal. During the week this will be pumped into the reservoirs so that there can be no fear of any scarcity of water at the east end when a supply from the Derwent can be pumped.

If in the spring, the reservoirs are filled, and there is no reason why they should not be filled, it is clear that with ordinary care there need be no scarcity of water for the eastern canal, even if for several months no water could be pumped from the Derwent.

Witness inspected a portion of the Nottingham Canal and also of the Erewash Canal below Langley Mill. These canals have suffered from coal working. On both, the towpaths were almost impassable. The path on the Nottingham Canal was being raised by a covering of clay from a short distance below Junction Lock for about half a mile.

The Erewash tow path was in still worse condition, the clay had been placed on it but not high enough to keep the water from flowing over the path into fields on both sides of the "Anchor Inn", for a considerable length. Nearby a bridge had been rebuilt evidently quite recently, and yet the management had neglected to raise the towpath. Further on the path was so narrow that good sized horses would have a difficulty in passing each other and there were ugly holes in the surface which ought to be filled up.

That at Eastwood Lock the gates were very old, two of the heel post tops were gone and the rotten timber left was cobbled with an arrangement of iron straps. A third was so rotten that it must soon give way in the same place as the other two.

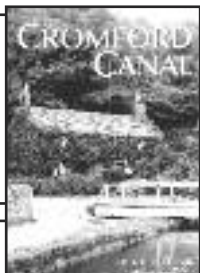
Shipleigh Gate Lock was empty of water and under repair. The top of the east wall was being pulled down and rebuilt. The west wall was out of plumb. A new set of gates were being fixed in position, in Witnesses opinion not a day too soon. The old gates, especially the upper gates were in a very bad state.

That of the three canals so far as seen by Witness, always excepting Butterley Tunnel, the Erewash – an independent canal – was in the worst condition and the Cromford in the best condition of the three.

Well that was what Mr Lionel Wells said in 1907. In the end the Midland had a battle on its hands and the tunnel was piped in the 1920s with 15 inch pipes to get water to the Butterley Company at Codnor Park Forge (no mention of their need in the evidence!) Nothing changes really, with a bit of spin, slagging off other local canals and some questionable arithmetic they tried to make their case.

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

Available by post from the Sales Address



The Cromford Canal

by Hugh Potter **£12.99** plus £1.85 p&p

This 128 page, softback book contains many rare and historical photographs of our canal, with extended captions giving much well researched information

A Walker's Guide to the Cromford Canal

by Mike Harrison & Val Roberts **£3.50** plus 80p p&p

This 36 page booklet follows the route of the canal, including the branches, and guides the walker around the sections which are presently missing



Portal to Portal

a short history of the Butterley Tunnel

by Des Greenwood. **£6.50** plus £1.85 p&p

This 49 page softback booklet contains rare photographs of the tunnel interior and the unique loading wharf from the Butterley Works to boats waiting below



Mouse Mats

Available in various designs
all in full colour

£4.50 plus £1.50 p&p



Tea Towels

Various designs
in full colour
vertical or
horizontal

£5.00
plus 80P p&p

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