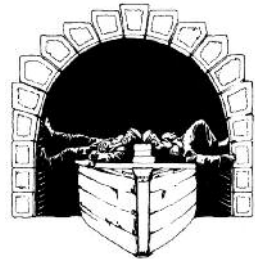


THE PORTAL



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

Registered Charity Number 1100700



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NEW YEAR 2009



CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Chairman's Notes	3
Lecture by our Patron Julian Richards.....	5
FCC News Update	6
Forthcoming Events	7
World Heritage Site Discovery Days	8
Christmas Social	11
Book Review - <i>There and Back Again</i>	12
Annual General Meeting	13
Working Party Report.....	17
Memories of Codnor Park.....	18
Working in Butterley Tunnel in 1907	21
Butterley Company versus Cromford Canal Company	22
News from the North	23
Obituary - John Hett.....	24
'Percy's Cottage'	24
Membership Matters	25
Archive Report - New Acquisitons.....	26
Leawood Pump Steaming Dates	27
Leawood Pump Outlet	28



FRONT COVER: Some of the members of the Red Lion Band, who entertained us at the Christmas Meeting at Ironville Church Hall, see page 11. A good time was had by all. Some of the musicians are taking it very seriously, but there seems to be some frivolity in the percussion section.

Photo: Editor

BACK COVER (TOP): This year the World Heritage Weekend was cold and wet and the heating in the Gothic Warehouse was much appreciated. The trouble was these dubious characters kept sneaking inside for a warm.

Photo: Beryl Singleton

(BOTTOM): Negotiating the swing bridge at High Peak Junction with boat and horse. Its a pity about the overhead pipe, which is not only an ugly eyesore, but necessitates disconnecting the towline.

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. 28.

It is now just a year since I became editor of *The Portal*, and the time seems to have passed by very quickly. Perhaps this is a sign of old age setting in, but I have to say that events on the waterways, not to mention the country as a whole, seem to me to be rushing along towards a future that is not necessarily a change for the better. Too many people in too small a space all striving for different ideals! We shall definitely need more mileage of waterway in the years to come, and yet overcoming the politics and then obtaining the ever increasing funds required seem to be becoming more difficult.

We are still in limbo regarding significant progress with the various projects of the FCC, but as Patrick says in his chairman's report, the coming year will be critical. I know I have said this before, but there really has been a lot of effort behind the scenes with apparently little to show for it to the outside world. This is the year when things must start to happen. Hopefully this really will be a Happy New Year for us all!

Please note the press date for the Spring 2009 issue will be March 23rd.

A NEW LINE OF CLOTHING

Owing to popular demand the Friends have introduced a

FLEECE

into the range of Quality Clothing with the 'Leggers' Logo embroidered on the left breast

This is now available in the house colour of Burgundy and will tone well with the shirts that you already have.



Modelled here by our Minutes Secretary Meg, who is impressed by the warmth and quality of the garment.

£19.50 plus £3.00 p&p

Owing to the bulky nature of the fleece they are not carried in stock and items will be ordered separately.

sizes: M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL

Please state size and send your order with cheque made payable to the FCC to the sales address.

Allow 2 - 3 weeks for delivery



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



A Happy New Year to you all!

I have no doubt that 2009 will be a difficult and indeed critical year for the Friends. We have to make progress with UK COAL and Smotherfly or else we will not be able to achieve our planning conditions during this forthcoming summer/autumn. Much promised consultation with the County Council and others regarding the management of the Ambergate to Cromford section of the canal has not taken place and the FCC's campaign to get some sort of partnership emulating the success of the Chesterfield Canal Partnership again requiring County Council involvement has yet to bear fruit. Having said that, even as I write this piece, we await confirmation of a meeting to discuss these very issues, likely to take place towards the end of January 2009. In the event of little or no progress on these fronts, we will be contacting you all either by insert in the spring Portal or separate letter before then to ask you, your friends and contacts who may not be FCC members, but who are interested in the fate of the Cromford Canal, to write to your County Councillor or Councillor Brian Lucas at Matlock to encourage them to establish a canal partnership and adopt a management regime for the canal between Ambergate and Cromford which is rather less the management of decline, and rather more the management of this unique asset with a view towards eventual restoration. Of course if you want to contact your County Councillor or Councillor Lucas now to stress these points then please do so. Remember 2009 is election year for the County Council, and local politicians always seem so much more amenable as this event comes around.

I have no doubt that the usual arguments will be deployed that ecological concerns and canal restoration cannot co-exist. Frankly, this is an outdated and blinkered argument disregarding much UK and European research, indicating that with careful management and good engineering practice much mutual benefit can be derived. I am sure that all organizations involved will adopt an open minded approach and be willing to take onboard the latest research.

Elsewhere in the Portal you will find a book review by Hugh Potter of Simon Stoker's book *There and Back Again*, not a history of Middle Earth and Hobbits but a fascinating and informative book outlining the Cromford Canal Society's commendable efforts to restore the Ambergate to Cromford section and the Leawood Pumphouse described by Councillor Lucas as "an important part of our industrial heritage". Well I won't argue with that, I would just like the same comment applied to the whole canal! Joking apart, much of the CCS's earlier efforts are now unseen and their legacy is in danger from benign neglect, I commend this publication as an essential informative document in the history of the canal and in the debate as to its future management. It could be argued that



without the restoration of the 1970's the canal would not have scored highly enough to become a SSSI in the first place. Let's not forget that the SSSI and the Cromford Canal Society's popular horseboat and restoration efforts co-existed for a number of years. Many people have suggested that the demise of the Cromford Canal Society and the unfortunate acrimonious comments at the time may still be influencing attitudes towards the FCC's efforts to restore the canal. I do not believe that this is the case. Indeed, I believe that all involved are mature enough not to be influenced by any past events that may or may not have reflected badly on earlier participants in Cromford Canal restoration efforts.

Another area where progress is needed is the Golden Valley Project where the planned deviation of the canal route will create a much needed link to the Midland Railway Centre's steam line as well as diverting the canal to avoid the legacy of earlier engineering work around Codnor Park Reservoir. The planning application for this was re-submitted before Christmas. Sadly one of the participants in this process, John Hett of the Midland Railway Centre died in the early hours of New Year's Day. I enjoyed working with John, whose enthusiasm and knowledge of the railway and local industrial archaeology will be sadly missed. I send my condolences to his family, friends and colleagues. A tribute to John, written by his Midland Railway colleague Alan Calladine is on page 24.

All our efforts take place against a back drop of very grim economic news. I have no doubt those restoration efforts such as ours will suffer along with the wider economy as money becomes tight and set piece events such as the 2012 Olympic Games have to be funded. The only bright outlook is that if the government is serious about bringing forward capital projects to ease unemployment etc., then projects such as ours with a large regeneration potential and the ability to provide employment both during restoration/reconstruction and in the longer term would help regenerate the local economy.

On 30th October, as one of the lesser known events of the World Heritage Site Discovery Days, Pat Morriss completed his own private sponsored walk from Langley Mill to Cromford Wharf, a very commendable effort in difficult conditions. This was not only to support the FCC, but also Chesterfield Hospital were Pat recently received excellent treatment. Below is his account of this escapade:

A BRISK WALK ON A COLD DAY

(well, perhaps not so brisk!)

I set out from Langley Mill at about 9.10am and finished at Cromford at about 4.30pm having stopped about an hour for lunch (mistake), I didn't push it. It only rained on me between Lower Hartshay and the back of Transco, but the ground was wet underfoot and heavy going.

Up to Hugh Potter's was OK, from Hugh's to Whatstandwell was hurting, from Whatstandwell to Leawood hurt a lot and from Leawood to the end was when I should have given up but didn't.

Of course it was further than 'normal' because there was no train over the tunnel. The Coach Road is a bit of a drag but at least you get the first glimpse of Crich Stand from there for encouragement, but it seemed a very long way away!

Many thanks for all your good wishes and to Freda for ferrying me to the start and from the finish and also 'Lotti' (Garrum Hot Lottery to give her her proper name) for keeping me company. She would happily have turned round and gone back, but of course as George Orwell said in Animal Farm 'Four legs good, two legs bad'

Pat



STONEHENGE THE STORY SO FAR



Illustrated Lecture By

TV Personality

Archaeologist, Writer and Broadcaster

Julian Richards

BA., FSA., MIFA.

(Meet the Ancestors and Blood of the Vikings)

Wednesday 11th March 2009 @ 7:30pm

**At Chesterfield Library Lecture Theatre,
New Beetwell Street, Chesterfield S40 1QN**

ALL TICKETS £5 each

The Patron of the Friends of the Cromford Canal is the well known TV personality, Archaeologist, Writer and Broadcaster, Julian Richards. Julian is noted for his research work on Stonehenge, both on TV and for his books on the subject. He travels the country to speak on this subject and has kindly offered to deliver this lecture for the FCC; all proceeds of which he will donate to the FCC funds.

We are deeply grateful to Julian for this kind and generous offer.

We expect to fill the venue for this event, so please put aside the date:

WEDNESDAY 11TH MARCH 2009; starting at 7:30pm.

This event will be held at

Chesterfield Library Lecture Theatre, New Beetwell Street, Chesterfield – S40 1QN

A map showing the location of the venue is on the reverse of all tickets.

THE COST IS ONLY £5 PER SEAT and will be sold on a 'first-come-first-served' basis.

Please send a cheque, or postal order, payable to FCC to:

FCC, 50 Beech Avenue, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 7EW

Tickets will be sent by return, second class.

(Remember to include your name and address)

This is a unique opportunity to see and hear a first class lecture
and at the same time help the FCC.

SO PLEASE BOOK YOUR SEAT NOW

Mike Kelley



FCC NEWS UPDATE - so what *is* happening

from Mike Kelley



• **Still no news from UK COAL** regarding the Smotherfly site. They wrote to us in November to say they '... should be in a position to have our (UK COAL) costings completed prior to Christmas and we will then be in a position to contact you.' Well they did not! We need to know what costs, if any, UK COAL will impose on us for the installation of the canal at Smotherfly, before we can seek any funding. This delay is of concern to us and we will now have to start lobbying them and our local and national government representatives, if we do not hear soon.

• **Tuesday 14th October** - Our Chairman, Pat Morriss delivered a talk on the Cromford Canal to Tansley Garden and Countryside Club.

• **Saturday 25th October** - The FCC had a stall at the Jacksdale Community Centre event. This attracted much local attention and the sales stall had a pleasing day.

• **Wednesday 29th October** - As part of the 'Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Discovery Days' (They must get a shorter title for this!) our chairman Pat Morriss delivered a talk on the canal at the Cromford Wharf's Gothic Warehouse.

• **Thursday 30th October** - Our Chairman went on a 15-mile sponsored walk, by himself, from Langley Mill to Cromford Wharf. It was hard going for him, but he made it and the proceeds will be divided between the FCC and the Chesterfield Hospital, where Pat was recently treated. See Pat's comments on page 4.

• **Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd November** - As part of the 'Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Discovery Days' we held our annual events at the Cromford Wharf. These included our sales stand, display boards and trailer, an on-going slide show, a street organ and on the Sunday, the horse drawn boat, which ran from Cromford Wharf to High Peak Junction. Unfortunately the horse people failed to turn up on the Saturday and on the Sunday the weather was wet and cold, so it was not so successful as it had been in other years. We will seek to improve this next time. See page 8.

• **Monday 3rd November** - To round off a very busy period, especially for our Chairman, Pat delivered another talk to the Admiral Close Housing Complex at Heanor.

• **Saturday 8th November** - The FCC had a stall at Pinxton Parish Hall charity event.

• **Sunday 9th November** - A work party was held at Ironville, to continue clearing away the overgrown banks on the offside of the lock flight.

• **Monday 10th November** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at Devonshire Arms, Somercotes. This was the first time we have held a committee meeting there.

• **Wednesday 12th November** - Pat Morriss delivered a talk to the Selston Ladies Club, over 30 attended.

• **Thursday 13th November** - I attended a day's session on 'Community Planning' at Saint Joseph's Hall at Ripley.



- **Friday 14th November** - Pat delivered yet another talk, this time to the Furness Vale Boat Club, with over 50 in attendance.
- **Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th November** - A work party weekend, working with Derbyshire County Council, near Whatstandwell, clearing trees. If these trees are not removed they will destroy the embankments of the canal, so no water will be able to be contained therein. We need more help on such occasions so why not come along?
- **Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th November** - Hugh Potter and Liz Tatam gave their house over to a 'Pots & Pics' weekend, when the very fine pottery, which Liz makes, was on show and for sale. Alongside this were many items from our Archivist Hugh Potter's ever growing collection of Cromford Canal historical pictures and records.
- **Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th December** - Another work party weekend working with Derbyshire CC, near Whatstandwell, clearing trees. Cold and frosty days, but lovely and sunny. We need more helpers for these events.
- **Monday 8th December** - Our monthly full committee meeting, this time held at the Derwent Hotel at Whatstandwell. At the moment we are rotating between two venues.
- **Sunday 14th December** - Another work party was held at the Ironville lock flight, clearing away more of the overgrown banks on the off-side of the canal. Our work party organiser Dave Tinkler would really appreciate more support on these occasions. See also his report on page 17.
- **Monday 15th December** - Our annual Christmas Party held at the Ironville Church Hall. The Red Lion Folk Band entertained us with many songs and dances. A lovely evening enjoyed by all who attended. A good opportunity for all to get together and chat over a pint – or two. See page 11.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The following is a **provisional** list of members meetings etc for 2009.

All will be held at **Ironville Church Hall at 7.30pm** unless stated.

- **Monday 16th February** - Michael Golds, Work Party Organiser from the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association, will show slides of 40 years work on the Cromford Canal at Langley Mill, plus others of his extensive canal boating.
- **Monday 11th March - Chesterfield Library.** A lecture by our Patron Julian Richards about Stonehenge, a subject close to his heart on which he is an acknowledged authority. See page 5.
- **Monday 30th March - FCC Annual General Meeting.** Some entertainment will be arranged for after the official business. See page 13.
- **Monday 20th April** - Steve Haywood talking on his book 'Narrow Boat Dreams'.
- **Monday 18th May** - Tony Fisher showing his video 'A Clearing in the Woods' about Oakes Ironworks. This is local to Ironville and Pye Bridge and comes highly recommended.
- **Monday 15th June** - Well known local history expert Brian Key. No subject specified yet, but Brian's forte is industrial archaeology.
- **Monday 21st September** - Chris Stone will be speaking on 'British Canals and Railways'.
- **Monday 19th October** - Wendy Freer will be speaking on 'The Lost Canals and Tramroads of the East Midlands'.
- **Monday 16th November** - Our Vice Chairman Mike Kelley will be giving us an account of his extensive travels in Yemen and Sudan.
- **Monday 14th December** - Christmas Social.



WORLD HERITAGE SITE DISCOVERY DAYS

by Patrick Morriss

Once again the annual Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days events involving the Friends of the Cromford Canal took place at Cromford Wharf on the 1st and 2nd of November 2008. Last year was the fourth such event and was a different format from previous years. For the first time ever events up and down the valley were spread over the whole nine days of the half term school holiday. This approach was needed as the Discovery Days event has grown to such an extent that it was impossible to see all events if they were held on just one weekend. Events in the southern portion of the Derwent Valley site started on the first weekend of the holiday. However the events taking place on or around the Cromford Canal took place on the last weekend of the holiday. During the week between the two weekends various talks were organised either of interest to FCC members or directly concerning the canal during the weekday evenings, these were considered a great success.

The Discovery Days event started in 2005 with a single day's activity on the weekend at the end of the half term holiday, this was widely acknowledged as a great success and the following year, 2006, two days of events took place, again at the end of the half term holiday. In 2007 the event remained more or less unchanged except that it was moved to the opening weekend of the half term holiday. However, the 2008 event was the first one over the whole nine days of half term. Rather sadly, for the first time in 4 years of events, the weather let us down badly as it was cold and wet for much of the weekend. All things considered it was surprising just how many visitors still found the time and inclination to visit!

The FCC, unlike some other organisations involved in Discovery Days, has to rely totally on volunteers and does not attract any funding for the FCC input. In 2008 the FCC calculated how many hours work went in to organising this event, not counting

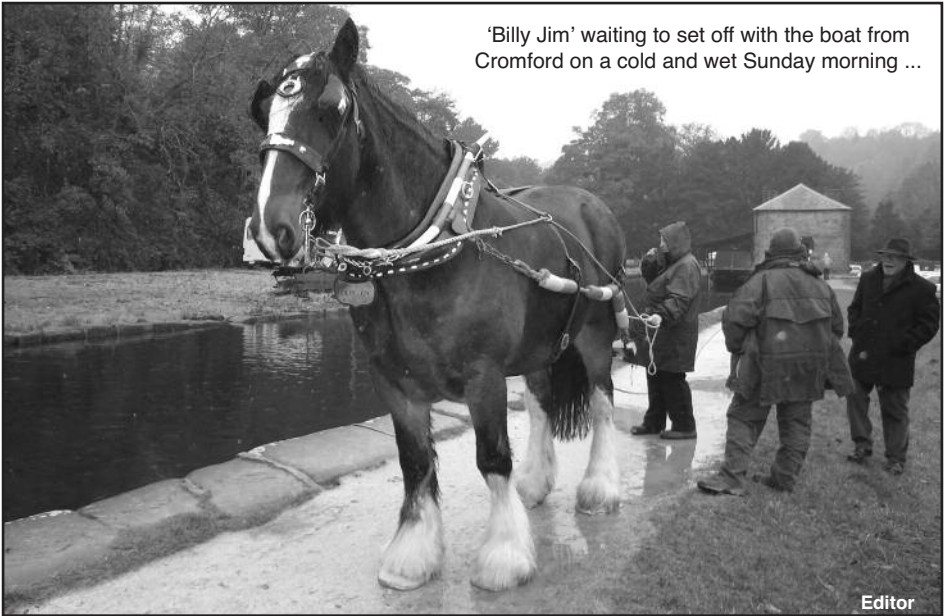
preliminary meetings. FCC members and others put in 387 hours to help stage the event. For the first time the FCC had sufficient volunteers to help steward events around Cromford itself and to act as general points of information, much appreciated by Adrian Farmer, the World Heritage Site Coordinator, as volunteers from Rolls Royce and Barclays Bank were sadly missed in 2008.



Jan and Meg braving the elements acting as stewards and giving out information.

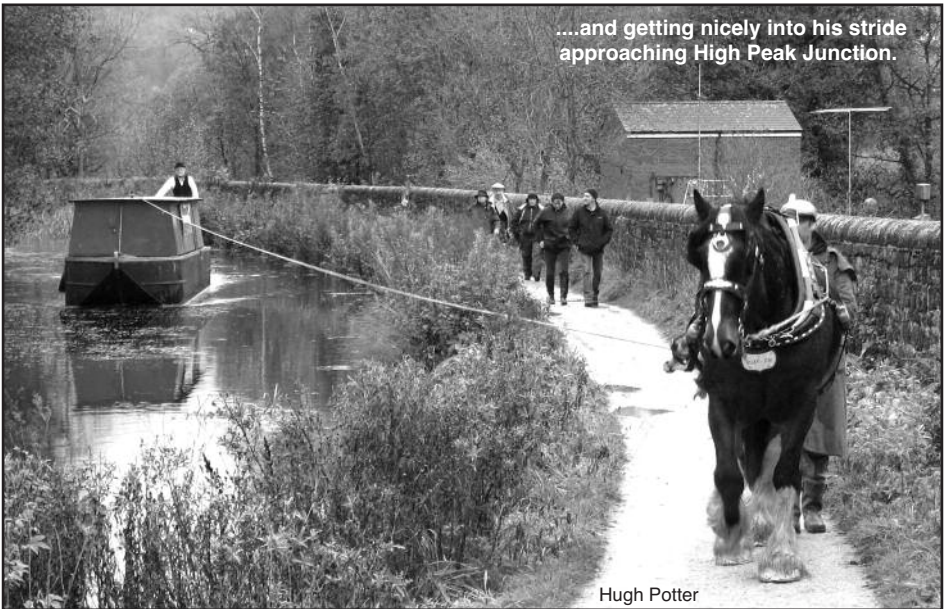
Mike Kelley

The downside of relying on volunteers to actually provide the attractions is that it is very difficult to 'force' involvement, and promises of support have to be taken at face value. Unfortunately, for the second year running the 'horsepower' for the demonstration horse drawn boat trips failed to materialise on the Saturday, this time due to a veterinary emergency. For future years, as the event grows in importance, the FCC will have to endeavour to make sure scheduled events do



'Billy Jim' waiting to set off with the boat from Cromford on a cold and wet Sunday morning ...

Editor



....and getting nicely into his stride approaching High Peak Junction.

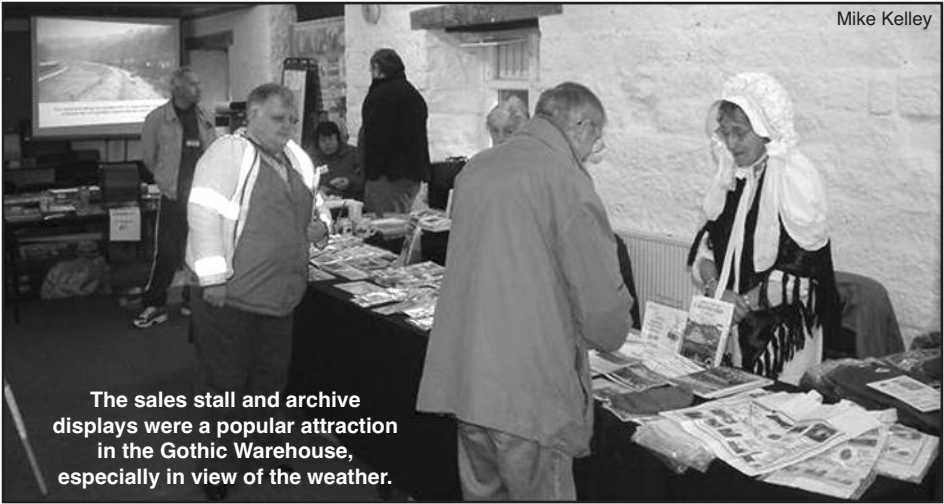
Hugh Potter

take place as far as is humanly possible. We apologise to anyone disappointed by the lack of the horse drawn boat on the Saturday.

The Discovery Days event acts as a showcase for the FCC and enables the FCC to show what the canal should be and once was, a working canal. In 2008 during the weekend the sales team was active in the Gothic Warehouse selling FCC merchandise and



Mike Kelley



The sales stall and archive displays were a popular attraction in the Gothic Warehouse, especially in view of the weather.

running a fundraising tombola. Also in the warehouse were video presentations of the canal and its history, an archive display of pictures and documents, many of which had come to light in the previous twelve months and Wallace Spence, a local artist who creates many works inspired by views along the canal. External attractions included traditional rope making, barrel organ music, the boat and horse on the Sunday and guided tours along the canal to High Peak Junction and Leawood Pump House, which was of course in steam on both days.

On the Sunday morning a longer walk took place from Ambergate to Cromford. In addition to canal centred events a whole host of other attractions take place concerning the history and ecology of the Derwent Valley, too many to list here but well worthwhile to make a note of for the autumn half term in 2009. It is always a great pleasure to share the Gothic Warehouse with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust on the Sunday of these weekends to promote ecological attractions of the canal.



Dave Tinkler

The indefatigable Peter Keating cheered us all up with his organ music.

On a personal level, I would like to thank on behalf of the FCC and myself all those people involved in the planning and execution of the

Discovery Days event. I would also like to thank all those FCC members who attended the preliminary meetings and who spent the first weekend of November 2008 helping to make the FCC involvement a success, too many to name individually, but your help and support are much appreciated and I am sure you probably would have had better things to do than get cold and wet at Cromford! The sense of camaraderie was however excellent, thank you all.



Hugh Potter

Ron Amner, fund raising as always.



CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - DECEMBER 15th 2008

Photos: Editor



We have been unable to use Ironville Church Hall for a while because other groups with more frequent bookings have had priority. I am pleased to say that this situation has now been resolved and our entertainments committee are planning regular events at this popular venue over the coming months (see page 7). The first of these was our Christmas get together.

For this we were able to secure the services of the Red Lion Band. This group will be familiar to those of you who have attended the various excuses for a drink and a laugh organised by the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association in recent years.



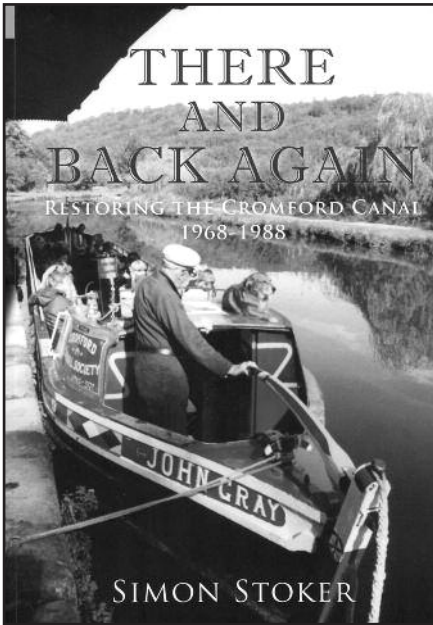
One of their number is an experienced 'caller', who succeeded in encouraging quite a few of our members to take part in the impromptu ceilidh, as shown above and left.

There was also an adequate supply of mince pies and other goodies and a well supported raffle. All together a pleasant interlude to round off the FCC year.

Editor



BOOK REVIEW



There and Back Again

by Simon Stoker

published by Amberley

128 pages. £14.99.

ISBN 978-1-84868-153-8

Many people walking the canal between Ambergate and Cromford imagine that it has always looked as it does today. But that is far from the truth, as this new well-illustrated full-colour book reveals.

In the three decades between the last boats working and the canal being taken over by Derbyshire County Council, it deteriorated from a working waterway carrying narrow boats loaded with 20 tons of coal to a sometimes stagnant, sometimes weed-filled, sometimes drained and dry ditch.

The restoration and management of the canal was handed over to the Cromford Canal Society, the manager of which was the book's

author. Remarkably the canal between Cromford and Leawood was fully restored on a budget of around £10,000 per year, which even in today's terms is only £30,000! That must have seemed good value to DCC at the time compared with today's costs when £800,000 is about to be spent on a few specific projects.

Further restoration was carried out southwards to Gregory Tunnel, and the channel to Ambergate was at least partly dredged and banks and culverts repaired. Certain environmental groups were against such work being carried out, but in fact it was only after much of the work had been done that the entire length was designated an SSSI, showing that restoration for navigation and for wildlife need not be mutually exclusive.

Subtitled 'Restoring the Cromford Canal 1968-1988', the book tells the story of the dredging and associated work, the restoration of Leawood Pump, the reconstruction of the swing bridge at Leawood, and the construction, extension and operation of a horse-drawn passenger boat carrying up to 15,000 passenger a year!

It should be compulsory reading for all those who think that a canal will not deteriorate if left to its own devices. The salutary fact, as summed up in the final chapter 'Back Again', is that in the two decades since CCS ended work, the canal has reverted to a state which in many places is not far removed from its condition before work began.

Had that work not been done, today we would not have a canal worthy of being designated both an SSSI and the UK's longest length of canal in a World Heritage Site. It is a unique asset and it behoves us to look after it better.

Hugh Potter

**This book will shortly be available from the FCC sales address
for £14.99 plus £2.20 p&p. Place your order now.**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is hereby given that the
Seventh Annual General Meeting
of the Friends of the Cromford Canal will be held on
Monday, March 30th. 2009 at the Church Hall, Ironville
commencing at 7.30pm.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Sixth Annual General Meeting on Monday, 7th April 2008.
3. Matters arising.
4. Report of the Chairman.
5. Report of the Treasurer and presentation of accounts for 2008.
6. Adoption of the accounts.
7. Election of Trustees.
8. Reports by Officers
9. Any other business.

Minutes of the Sixth AGM are on pages 14 - 16.

The accounts for the year ending December 31st. 2008 will be available at the meeting.

Election of Trustees.

The Friends of the Cromford Canal is managed by up to eleven Trustees assisted by a number of other members with about twelve meetings a year. The Trustees are responsible to the Charity Commission for the organization of the Friends and report to the Charity Commission each year. In order to have rotation of Trustees and comply with our Constitution, Trustees are elected for a three year term. At present Val Roberts, Yvonne Shattower, Peter Stone, David Tinkler, Tony Brookes and Christopher Jacklin have served either 1 or 2 years and will continue as Trustees. This year Pat Morriss, John Baylis, Mike Kelley, Mike Harrison and Bob Bullock retire by rotation and are eligible for re-election.

This means that we have five vacancies for election as Trustees. Nominations, which can be for any paid up FCC member, must be submitted in writing to:

**John Baylis, 215 Clipstone Avenue West,
Forest Town, Mansfield, Notts, NG19 0HJ**

before March 16th. The nomination must be signed by the proposer, seconder and the nominee who must all be FCC members.

After the formal business, some entertainment will be arranged. This will include an archive display and probably a power point presentation. The sales stall will also be in attendance. Please come along and support the committee and ask any questions you may have. We need to attract more active members to make some meaningful progress on important projects in what will be a critical year for the FCC

John Baylis



Minutes of the Sixth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal held at 7.30pm on Monday, April 7th 2008, at the Church Hall, Ironville.

1. Present

Patrick Morriss (Chairman), John Baylis, Mike Kelley, Hugh Potter, Val Roberts, Mike Harrison, Yvonne Shattower, Peter Stone, Bob Bullock (Trustees), John Boucher (Honorary Consulting Engineer), Howard Smith (Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association representative), Dave Tinkler, Tony Brookes, Giles Metcalf, Jan Colombo and Meg Tarlton (minutes secretaries), and over 40 members.

2. Apologies for absence

The Rev Steve Parish, Tim Boddington, Val Kelley, George Jones, Pippa Mansel, Sheila Smith, Chris Stone, Peter Keating and Richard Biggin.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the Fifth Annual General Meeting held on March 26th 2007 had been circulated earlier. Their adoption was proposed by Howard Smith, seconded by Yvonne Shattower and carried unanimously.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's report

During 2007, there appeared to be little progress, however, a lot of hard work had been going on in the background. As a result of an improved relationship with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT), the two organisations began joint working parties. There was additional publicity partially as a result of the planning applications and FCC activities. Sales revenue was increased. A grant of £2,000 was received from Radio Derby Money Mountain Appeal towards re-watering the Ironville Flight.

Efforts begun in 2007 came to fruition in early 2008. These included the granting of planning permission for the Smotherfly/Pinxton section. Patrick thanked the elected members of Derbyshire County Council (DCC) for their patience and help during the long period of waiting for planning permission. Agreement was gained with DWT that the first lock to be re-watered would be Lock No.5, owned by them. There has been progress on the opencast scheme at Langley Mill, with respect to the flood risk and mineral planning. FCC is acting as adviser on the Golden Valley Project. This proposes to re-route the line of the canal to the north of Codnor Park Reservoir. This project and its proximity to the Midland Railway Centre would create a significant visitor attraction in the area. DCC were awarded £417,500 by the East Midlands Development Agency for the Ambergate to Cromford section. This funding is to be used for dredging, water control, access improvements, Leawood Pump House, etc., to safeguard the structure of the canal.

On the topic of Smotherfly/Pinxton section, Patrick Morriss announced that a meeting is planned at Pinxton Village Hall on April 24th 2008. Work on the Smotherfly section has to be started within 2 years and on the Pinxton section within 3 years, to comply with the



planning conditions. He felt there was a need to explore the way forward and involve the local community to maximise benefit for all.

The Chairman then gave his thanks to various members, including:
Brian Dominic for initiating Portal and the website.
Hugh Potter for having served as a trustee.
Graham White for his work on policies as Executive Secretary and trustee.
Val Roberts and Mike Harrison for their work as a very successful sales team.
Dave Tinkler for organising working parties.
Yvonne Shattower as Membership Secretary.
Bob Bullock as Treasurer and for organising FCC stands at supermarkets
The Public Meetings sub-Committee for organising a range of social events
John Boucher for his superb technical input.
The Rev. Steve Parish for his expertise on local planning regulations.
All the members who have given responses or taken action as a result of general queries submitted to the Committee.

The Chairman also wanted to thank all members who had supported the FCC, in whatever way and finished with an appeal for people to come forward who can offer expertise in organising events, publicity, and fundraising. FCC also needs people to take an active part at events. There will be a lot happening in the next year, and all help will be welcome.

6. Treasurer's report and presentation of accounts

A copy of the summary of accounts for 2007 and the balance sheet for year ended December 31st 2007 was circulated at the meeting and Bob Bullock explained them to the members. Kimberley Brewery had previously given a grant of £5,000, but they have now been taken over by Greene King, so no grant was available in 2007. The Events and Equipment item on the expenditure included the cost of the display trailer, which has proved very successful. Brian Dominic queried why the cost of the trailer had been treated as revenue in a single year, rather than treated as capital expenditure. John Baylis to check with the auditor.

7. Adoption of the accounts

Peter Stone proposed the adoption of the accounts. This was seconded by Mike Harrison and carried unanimously.

8. Election of Trustees

Hugh Potter and Graham White were resigning as trustees. Peter Stone and Yvonne Shattower were the retiring trustees and had been proposed for re-election. Tony Brookes, Dave Tinkler and Christopher Jacklin had been proposed as new Trustees. As there were no other nominations, Patrick Morriss suggested that all five were elected en bloc. This was proposed by Mike Kelley and seconded by Brian Dominic and carried unanimously.

9. Membership report

Yvonne Shattower reported that there had been a slight increase in active members over the year, from 654 to 663. There are 9 charity members and 1 corporate member. Yvonne is still dealing with the problem of overpaid subscriptions. Yvonne also thanked the members who help to distribute the Portal and membership leaflets.



10. **Archivist's report**

Hugh Potter reported that in the last year he had made over 1,200 digital images of documents and drawings relating to the Cromford Canal, from various sources. Many of these relate to the collapse of Butterley Tunnel. A Cromford Canal Company seal was discovered in the British Waterways Leeds archive, which was previously unknown.

Donations to the Archive continue and include files relating to the former Cromford Canal Society from the late Royston Torrington, scans of paintings by Simon Waller with permission to reproduce, and a host of photographs and postcards.

An important discovery has been the Reg Baker collection of 190 black & white photographs of the Cromford Canal in the early to mid 1960s.

The Archive has also generated income from selling large photographic prints of archive images and the use of images in commercial magazines and books.

As the Archives not only help preserve and interpret the history of the canal, they also generate revenue towards its restoration, Hugh made a plea for old photographs or documents relating to the canal.

11. **Portal Editor's report**

Mike Harrison introduced himself as the new editor of Portal and paid tribute to Brian Dominic, the original editor. Mike stressed the importance of Portal in keeping members informed. Mike said that the editor's job depends on the contributions and made an appeal for articles and photographs.

12. **Webmaster's report**

Giles Metcalf, the new Webmaster, thanked Brian Dominic for his original work on the site. Giles said that the role was now mainly housekeeping and updating the site. Giles was planning some cosmetic changes to the site. The e-mail list of members was also maintained by the Webmaster.

13. **Any other business**

Alan Heeley thanked Patrick Morris and the officers for their hard work.

There was a question from the floor asking if there was a Cromford Canal Partnership, similar to the Chesterfield Canal Partnership, as Chesterfield Canal Society had been able to employ someone and had been involved at an early stage with economic regeneration. Patrick Morriss replied that in the past, DCC had been asked about this, as they are the majority landowner. At that stage FCC was relatively new. Now that DCC has applied for grants to improve the canal and FCC is working closely with DWT, FCC believes that we need an umbrella organisation to ensure that we all work in the same direction. Patrick Morriss is to contact DCC again in the next few weeks about this. One difficulty for DCC may be that there are several canals in Derbyshire.

It would be nice to see a good turnout at the AGM. The next year will be decisive for the FCC. We must make our mark and see some real progress towards restoration on at least one of the sections of the canal which have been occupying the committee's attention for some time. These include the Ambergate to Cromford section, Ironville Locks, the Smotherfly/Pinxton site and the opencast site and marina leading to the new Lock 13 and passage under the A610 at Langley Mill. Please come along to air your views. Your support is vital and will be much appreciated.



WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



Firstly may I wish all our members and volunteers a very happy and prosperous new year.

We have had a number of work parties over the last three months, which have been divided between two different sites. We have been carrying on with the clearance of scrub and young trees in and alongside Ironville locks and also working on the Ambergate to Cromford section assisting the Derbyshire County Council Rangers. Whilst some good progress has been made at these projects, I have been disappointed with the very low attendance. Considering the number of members that we have I would have hoped for more of you to help. Some new faces on our work parties would be more encouraging, rather than having to rely on the few regulars.

We have three more dates for you to come and help us to protect our Canal so that one day we can reopen it. They are:

Sunday 15th February
Saturday 14th March
Sunday 15th March.

These are all at the Ironville flight of locks from 10.00am to 4.00pm.
Meet at Lock 6 with your packed lunch and bowsaw or loppers if you have them.

Contact me for further information. Details inside the front cover. After these dates we have to refrain from cutting down trees and vegetation so that the wild life can nest and bring new life to the world.

To those of you who are not able to attend our work parties, due to ill health or other infirmities, then perhaps you would like to help in other ways. I am sure there is a task that you can do even from your own living room. Why not ask one of the Committee members and I know they will have a job that you can do. We desperately need more volunteers in every field so contact us and let us know what you can do to help.

Here's hoping to see a lot of you soon on the above dates.

Typical 'scrub bashing' work party at Ironville Locks with the all-important bonfire.

Dave Tinkler





CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF CODNOR PARK AND THE CROMFORD CANAL

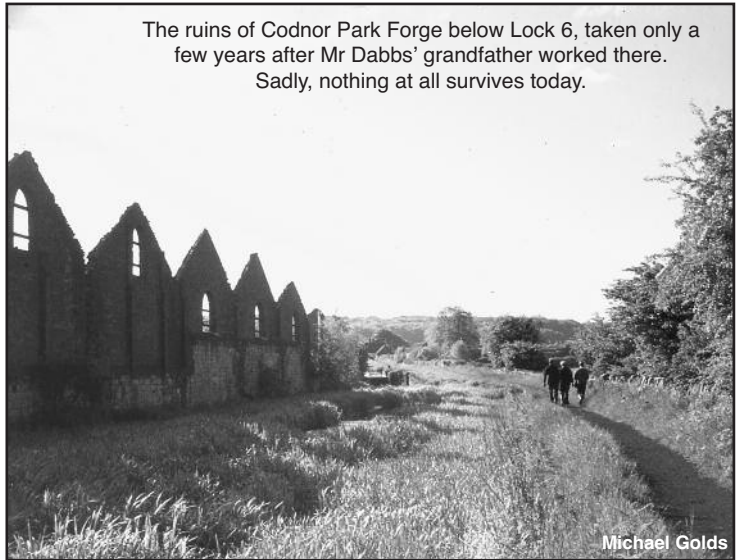
by Simon Dabbs

I am now in my early fifties and have settled in Southampton with my wife, Evelyn and son, Peter who is now 17. I was born and raised in Birmingham, but both my parents are from Derbyshire; Dad from Ripley and Mum from Codnor Park.

All through my childhood, several times a year, we would visit my Mum's parents, my Nana (Constance) and Grandpa (Bill) Hanson at 22, New Road, Codnor Park. Indeed, I was christened in Ironville church. Both of these places are literally a stone's throw from the Cromford Canal. I also had one rather prolonged stay during the winter of 1960, when my brother Tim was being born, back in Birmingham. Whilst being looked after by Nana and Grandpa, several feet of snow fell, and my parents couldn't come up to collect me for three weeks! My recollections of the canal in the 1960's are that it was in a sad and neglected state, though most of the lock gates were in place (though mostly rotting behind stop-planks) and most stretches of this section of the canal were not silted up, and would have been navigable by canoe.

Grandpa worked at Codnor Park forge. Sometimes he'd take me inside. We'd peer into the furnaces where the large pig iron ingots would be heated until bright orange. Then we'd stand aside whilst strong men would grab them with tongs and carry them a

short distance to the left, to place them under the mighty steam hammer. With a tremendous noise, sparks would fly and the ingot would be pummelled into a sausage shape. Then the sweating men would place the ingot back into the furnace until white hot. Tongs would then be used to feed the ingot repeatedly t h r o u g h



progressively smaller pairs of rollers. This would squeeze impurities out of the metal (a process known as puddling), whilst reducing its form to rods about an inch in diameter. I can remember vividly the sight of the glowing rods, probably 40 feet long, spewing across the floor of the forge like so many demented, orange snakes. This was all very frightening for a 5 year-old boy, but at the same time utterly brilliant! When my brother and I got a bit older, we'd also enjoy playing around the ancient disused blast furnaces built into the hillside to the south of the site. Our favourite trick was to go inside the furnace and climb

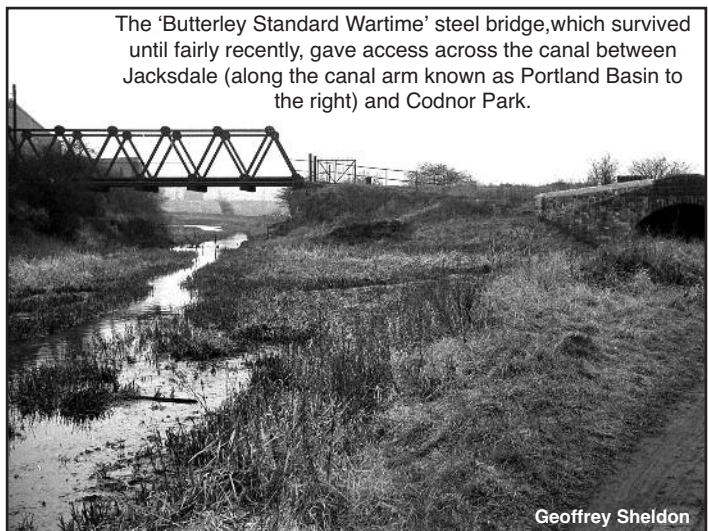


up the chimney, to emerge into the bramble-strewn fields in front of Forge Row. Little did we know at the time that these old furnaces were of great historic interest, being the first to be built outside of Coalbrookdale, in the very early part of the industrial revolution.

My Grandpa was just brilliant with kids. After he retired, he would keep me, my brother and cousins entertained for hours, day after day. He knew just about everyone in Ironville and was quite a countryman, teaching me a lot about birds, wild flowers, trees, insects, tadpoles, frogs, sticklebacks. Sticklebacks!.....this brings me to one of my earliest memories of our canalside adventures. One sunny afternoon, Grandpa said, "Come with me". We headed into the back garden and he cut a straight piece of elder branch. He then produced a tailor's pin from his lapel, clenched it between his teeth and bent it almost double. "Don't tell Nana", he said as he pinched a yard from her reel of black linen thread, and tied it, linking pin to rod-end. "It's a fishing rod!" I cried, excitedly. Next thing I know, I'm digging in a border with a trowel, putting earthworms into a jam jar. "Let's go!" says Grandpa and we're heading down Monument Hill, across the level crossing over the old mineral line which ran along Golden Valley, past the toll gates and bearing right at the crossroads to head down to Codnor Park Pottery on the south bank of the canal. There, we'd cross the canal by a footbridge and turned right along the towpath. We passed the old Mechanics Institute and continued down to lock 4, nestled under the wide bridge that carries the old LMS four-track Trent Junction to Chesterfield railway. Grandpa said the fish would be more plentiful in that shaded area. He was right! The bent pin and worm proved highly effective! Ever resourceful with knots, Grandpa converted the linen line into a carrying handle for the jam jar, and I went home with three red-breasted sticklebacks swimming around in purest Cromford Canal water; fine new pets.

Holidays spent with Grandpa tended to fall into a bit of a routine. Thursdays would see us heading to Jacksdale to collect Grandpa's pension. We'd walk down the canal as far as lock 7 and then along the "old tramway path", raised above the flood plain of the Erewash, to Jacksdale. My recollections of the Erewash are a milky, foamy, rather smelly affair. I don't think we'd have found many sticklebacks in there! On the way home, we'd often pause to admire the puffs of steam rising from the exhaust pipe of the steam-hammer in the forge. On calm days, it would often produce perfect "smoke" rings! Sometimes, we'd cross the canal by clomping across the 1943 Butterley "Standard Wartime" steel bridge, continue through the forge and return home, passing Codnor Park station and, via Forge Row, through a short cut to New Road, known as "The Rabbit Hole".

On Fridays we'd often walk over the "Cinder Bank" (the area of glassy spoil from ancient furnaces in an area



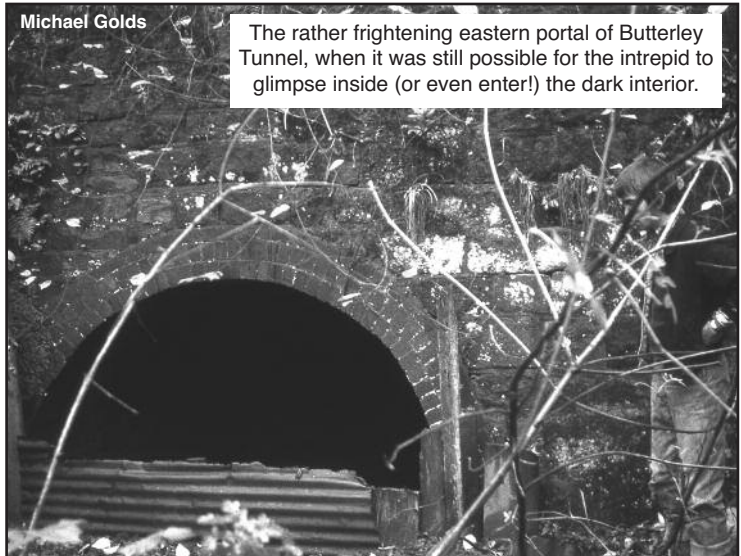
The 'Butterley Standard Wartime' steel bridge, which survived until fairly recently, gave access across the canal between Jacksdale (along the canal arm known as Portland Basin to the right) and Codnor Park.

Geoffrey Sheldon



the other side of The Avenue, known as The Rodneys) to Codnor Park reservoir and from there, along the canal towpath all the way up Golden Valley and thence to the New Inn [*Newlands Inn? - Ed.*]. This is where Grandpa would meet with some of his mates for a lunchtime game of dominoes and a pint or two. He'd often let me have a few swigs of Hardy Hanson's (no relation) Golden Guinea ale. To this day, I am a great lover of real ales.

One time, he took me to see the eastern entrance of the mighty Butterley tunnel. I recall how its dark portal rather frightened me. On the way back, we'd often pause near the junction of the canal's main line and the Pinxton Branch. Here, just east of the stone bridge which would take the towpath over the branch, there was



Michael Golds

The rather frightening eastern portal of Butterley Tunnel, when it was still possible for the intrepid to glimpse inside (or even enter!) the dark interior.

an overflow where the water disappeared under a series of wooden boards. We'd play "pooh-sticks" and wait for the bits of twig to emerge into a pipe, which discharged the water into the garden of a canalside cottage. Incidentally, in high summer, Codnor Park reservoir was a popular place to go swimming. Our favourite spot was the corner at the north end of the dam, where the shore had a pleasant slope into the chilly but clear water.

Some days were spent train-spotting. One favourite spot was Grandpa's allotment, which was besides the railway embankment near Codnor Park station (also the site of a small stream where Grandpa would sometimes pick watercress for our tea). Another good place was from the "monkey bridge" further to the east, along the lane that went towards Stoneyford. On many occasions our faces were blackened by the sooty smoke belched out from a passing "Black Five" or "8F" steam loco, as we stood on the bridge directly above the line. Nana would make us wash before bed, lest we made the pillows dirty! Sometimes we would go for evening walks in the grounds of Codnor Castle, and one thing that sticks in my mind is the smell of coal smouldering as it lay in the ground. Apparently, it had been set alight decades ago by a woodland fire, and had become impossible to extinguish.

I hope people will have enjoyed reading this, and I like to think it might have jogged a memory or two. But there is another reason I have written this. There are those who say that we British are a bit over-obsessive about preserving things such as canals. Some have even gone so far as to say "you should not preserve anything unless you would consider making love in it"! So, in the unlikely event that no one has ever done so in or on the Cromford Canal, I have written down my memoirs to show beyond doubt (as if proof were needed!) that the Cromford Canal does indeed have a soul and must be preserved!



BUTTERLEY TUNNEL - the final collapse

FCC Archivist Hugh Potter finds an interesting letter

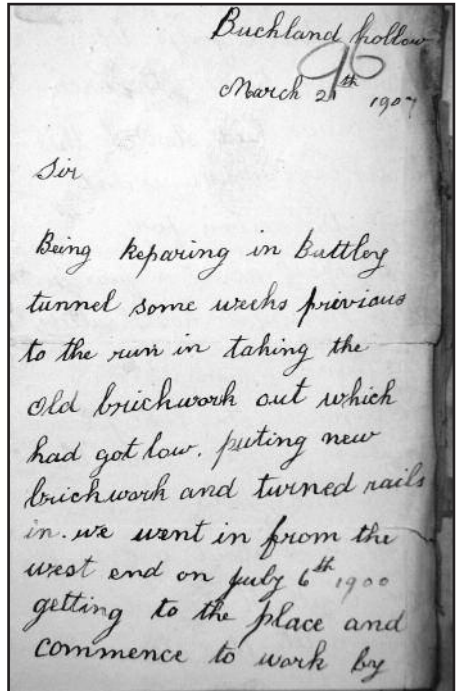
In the extensive British Waterways Archives at Leeds is a handwritten letter from the Cromford Canal foreman, penned some seven years after the collapse of Butterley Tunnel in 1900. A copy of the first page is shown on the right. The full text is transcribed below verbatim to show that it was most probably 'his own work', although presumably written for the inquiry into the closure of the tunnel which took place that year.

Buckland hollow
March 24th 1907

Sir

Being repairing in Buttley tunnel some weeks previous to the run in taking the old brickwork out which had got low, putting new brickwork and turned rails in, we went in from the west end on July 6th 1900 getting to the place and commence to work by setting the lagings by which we turned the arch. When we has started the bricklayer, we went into the cabin for breakfast about a quarter of a hour after he shouted the tunnel running in. It came on the boat forend putting it down and the sternend up to the arch that was about 9 O clock. The boat slowly went down at the sternend. When all was still I went to see what I could. There was a piece of old brickwork down. It was about 9 or 10 yards from the new brickworks toward the west end. There was about 50 tons of bind down on the left hand side from the west end leaving the right hand up. It was badly crushing toward the west end. We stop in the cabin till halfpass one O clock, when the Lea and holloway Co-operative boat came to us. We then went out at the east end, reaching the east end about four O clock.

Yours Truly
Amos White



This must have been a terrifying experience! Imagine being on the boat in the dark in the tunnel when the roof collapsed. The weight of brickwork and 'bind' (back fill?) which fell on the boat was sufficient to press the front end down and caused the stern to rise and hit the tunnel roof. The boat then slowly sinks. The crew then have to wait several hours to be rescued by another boat from the east end, access to the west end being blocked by the fall.

Editor



THE BUTTERLEY COMPANY

versus

THE CROMFORD CANAL COMPANY

by Dave Ratner

On October the 23rd 1838 at the Lion Hotel, Nottingham, complaints against the Cromford Canal Company were begun by the Butterley Company. Held before Sir Fortunatus Divarris, Barrister at Law as Umpire, with B. Macaulay Esquire as advocate and referee and with Messrs Percy, Smith and Percy in attendance as solicitors on behalf of the defendants.

In a nutshell, the Butterley Company was claiming value for the coal and minerals left under Butterley Tunnel for the protection of the canal, and compensation for the costs of draining the mines of water they claimed came from the canal. The claim would appear to have been between £8000 and £11,000, and in today's terms I would guess at roughly £2-3 Million.

The 'hearing' took a week and was held at various locations. The Sun Inn, Eastwood (the pub where discussions on forming the Midland Railway were to be held some years later), the Lion Hotel Nottingham, and the Exchange Rooms.

The evidence given by the plaintiffs was heavily weighted in their favour of course, but despite knowing the canal was there, having built an underground wharf to it to distribute their goods, they continued to mine below it and then complained when water drained into the mine workings from the canal!

Great store was set by the witnesses as to the protection they afforded to the canal by leaving coal and minerals under it, but then went on to say what they did to support it as they passed beneath it. Some described a pillar of rock but one said that it was 'packed with dirt'. And, 'We had got a considerable distance under the tunnel before the order came to stop'.

One cost claim by the plaintiffs was for work done to avoid the canal; the making of 'new headings', in other words a change of direction. If the Canal Company was prepared to pay for material to be left, the Butterley Company could hardly claim for not having to work it. But claim they did, and included in the claim was for work which they would have done to 'win' the coal if the canal had not been there!

In their defence the Canal Co talked of experiments done to determine whether the water came from the canal. This involved draining the canal to determine the rate of flow in and out of the mine workings. Knowing the amount of revenue that the Canal Co. would lose, this would seem quite an altruistic act. But in reality, it had to be drained for other purposes, not made clear in the minutes of evidence.

The experiments involved someone timing the rise and fall of water between two points in a shaft and someone else monitoring the use of a 'fire engine' (pump) to drain the water. Naturally, there was less water when the canal was empty. There were other sources of water entering the pits, but Butterley Co. was determined to prove that most of it came from the canal (surprise, surprise!). There was a brief mention of an 'accident' when scaffolding collapsed but no further details.

In 1826 masons employed by the Butterley Co were sent in to repair brick-work and 'stop-up holes'. The masons described the brick-work as being very decayed and doing their best despite the original brick-work being 'very old' (all of 30 years!). It is surprising to note that despite the tunnel sinking (at that time) about 6 inches, that this was not considered to be an 'injury to the canal'.

The mason tells of using 'barrow mortar' to repair the tunnel walls. This could have been what we now know as Portland Cement, since it had been patented by Joseph Aspdin in



1824, but was more likely the usual lime mortar which the Romans knew would 'set' under water.

Some of the 'expert' witnesses were not local people and had no experience of mining in this locality. By today's standards, most of the 'evidence' would not have been accepted. The records used and the costing methods would have been laughed out of court. William Jessop (Jessop Jnr that is) was both flippant and a little arrogant in some of his comments.

It is assumed that the plaintiffs won their case, as the Butterley Co. continued to undermine the canal and tunnel almost until the pits were worked out. Perhaps this may come to light as the CCC's minutes are transcribed.

I found transcribing this document fascinating as it contains little insights into life in the 1800's and more so because it's local. A 'workman tending an engine may receive a guinea a week, whereas a boy would receive 5 shillings'. An estimate of the usage of coal for the steam pump over the period in question, was 16,200 tons at 5/- (25p) a ton. A horse gin was used to haul water, waste and coal to the surface from bell pits and the preliminary pits sunk to reach the coal. One is mentioned at 153 yards deep!

Bell pits could be 7 feet wide at the top and 9 yards at the bottom and then tunnels (headings) run in many directions from the bottom of the pit. The remnants of the bell pits can be seen today as large dark pools when walking from Codnor Castle down to the canal. According to one witness there were 10 or 12 of them alongside the canal 'near to Mr. Moorwood's wharf'.

The claim was made 12 years after the event (presumably there was no applicable statute of limitations then), and part of the delay was due to the fact that the Cromford Canal Company's articles meant it was necessary for a committee to be called before an answer to any correspondence could be given. The committee met on average 4 times a year, whereas the Butterley Company consisted of just two (three?) individuals.

It is a shame that the plan and model referred to in the text is not available to study along with this transcription, but who knows, one day a copy may turn up. In the meantime, if you want to read the transcript, buy the CD. Price yet to be determined, all proceeds to FCC funds.

NEWS FROM THE NORTH

Walkers along the canal between Cromford and Ambergate, the section which is owned by Derbyshire County Council, are likely to see various types of work underway in the next few months. The towpath around Whatstandwell footbridge may be closed from time to time for repair work to the footbridge to take place. This will include redecking and repainting. Meanwhile, the adjacent footbridge across the railway is also to be refurbished. It is believed that this is not a public right of way and that Railtrack have no further use for the bridge. As a compromise, Railtrack are contributing to its repair, after which it will be 'adopted' by DCC.

Repair work to the swingbridge at High Peak Junction has been postponed till the next financial year, and is now likely to take place between April and June. A large crane will be brought in to remove the bridge for repair. A team of engineers will examine the base before proceeding with any work to determine how best to renew the bearings etc. Once complete the crane will return to replace the bridge. In the interim a scaffolding footbridge will be in place to allow pedestrians to cross.

Plans for dredging lengths of canal have been delayed by environmental requirements including provision for water voles and silt disposal. Although the silt is from natural run-off into the canal, toxicological tests have to be carried out on it before it can be disposed of at a licensed site.

There will also be more tree clearance work around Whatstandwell. FCC working parties have assisted DCC on this work in the past, but for this larger scale work contractors will be used.



A TRIBUTE TO JOHN HETT

John Hett, General Manager of the Midland Railway - Butterley for over 30 years, passed away on New Years Day. When John started, the project was little more than a great plan with very little on the ground, but after 30 years of continuous progress the railway is now one of the leading Heritage Railways.

The Midland Railway – Butterley has developed in a very different way to most Heritage Railways with an emphasis on its huge 57 acre Museum Site, although the railway itself despite its short length of 3.5 miles is not short of interest with its famous embankment across Butterley Reservoir and its route through some very pleasant Derbyshire countryside. Over the years a great deal has been achieved with the railway now a long established tourist attraction with over 130,000 visitors each year. As well as the Railway, the attraction includes a Country Park that is about to be extended, a Farm Park and of course the Museum Site. This was the most daunting task for John and his team of volunteers. The site was a recently landscaped former colliery with no facilities at all and no resources to carry out any work. Now there are two railway museums, the narrow gauge Golden Valley Light Railway with its own running shed, the Butterley Park Miniature Railway, diesel locomotive depot, a road transport museum, a fork truck heritage centre, a static power gallery that is now being extended, a shop, buffet, a carriage and wagon workshop and a very comprehensive locomotive workshop.

As well as moving locomotives and rolling stock to the railway, the Midland Railway - Butterley has moved historic buildings such as Butterley Station itself, moved from Whitwell, the current project at Swanwick Junction with the former Syston Station and even the replica of Broom Junction Station. There continues to be progress and currently the Swanwick Junction Station project and the extension to the Country Park are prime examples.

John was very keen to involve the local community in the project and as a result the Midland Railway - Butterley has been in the forefront of involvement in unemployment relief schemes for many years and is now a leading provider of New Deal Training in areas such as construction and environmental work. The Railway is also involved with a scheme to help youngsters that have been excluded from school and has seen some great success.

John was also a director of the Heritage Railway Association and its predecessor for over 20 years and was chairman of Amber Valley Council for Voluntary Services. John will be a difficult act to follow; a great deal of the Midland Railway - Butterley is here because of John's efforts and it is thanks to his dedication and commitment over 30 years that the railway is such a leading enterprise both in the heritage railway movement and the local area. He will be greatly missed by all those who have worked with him over the years and his lasting monument will be the Midland Railway - Butterley.

Alan Calladine

We were also sorry to hear of the death of Percy Wilson, a former employee of Johnson's Wireworks who lived in a cottage by the Cromford Canal at Mold's Wharf for over 50 years. We understand that after some repairs (and installation of sanitation!) the owners (Litchfield Plastics) intend to re-let the cottage, but in the meantime we'd ask anyone passing to help keep an eye on the property.

Steve Parish



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



Well, here we are in 2009, and I hope you will all have a Happy and Prosperous Year. If only we could have a crystal ball, and see what is in store for the Friends of the Cromford Canal! Let us hope it is a year of progress in the campaigns ahead of us.

I recently had a 'blitz' on sending out reminders to those of you whose Membership had lapsed, and I am very pleased to say that I had a good response. For those of you who, like me, tend to put renewal forms in the filing cabinet (wherever that may be!), don't forget that we can accept payment by standing order if you prefer.

This has been a quieter time for new Memberships, but it was good to get back to Ironville Church Hall for the Christmas Social Evening in December. This venue seems to suit everybody, and we had a great evening with the Red Lion Folk Band – many thanks to them and their caller. For those of you who didn't make it, you missed a good evening, with some of your Committee actually getting up and dancing. I'm sure there are some pictures elsewhere in this magazine. Now that we have the hall booked for the year, you will be able to put the dates in your diary. We have some good speakers lined up for you, so do come and join us. If you know of anyone who can talk on a canal related subject, please let us know, as we are hoping to build up a list for future use. Don't forget to get your tickets for the talk by Julian Richards at Chesterfield, it should be an excellent evening, he is a very entertaining speaker. Mike Kelley, Vice Chairman is dealing with these.

As usual, we are looking at outside events for the forthcoming year, and will welcome anyone who is able to help our sales and display teams in any way. As well as help with the sales stand, we also need people who can help with transport, or come along early and help put up the display, erect the marquee etc. This year there are several important National Rallies in our area, so it promises to be a busy time. Contact any Committee Member if you want more details.

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

Firstly, my apologies to Mrs P Straw for omitting her from the list in the last edition.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Mr N Cockayne, Westwood | Mr W Proctor, Kirkby in Ashfield |
| Mr & Mrs M Fox, Belper | Ms S Day, Ashton under Lyne |
| Mr & Mrs P Spencer, Ashbourne | Mr D T Bailey, Malmesbury |
| Mrs J Abrahams, Ripley | Mr A Brackenbury, Cheadle Hulme |
| Mr & Mrs M Molloy, Cromford | Mr & Mrs R Silverwood, Oxford |
| Ms J Altman, Billinshurst | Mr A Dodd, Belper |
| Miss V Walker, Alfreton | Mr & Mrs R Marsh, Belper |
| Mr & Mrs R Ward, Brora (our most distant UK members by a short head!) | |

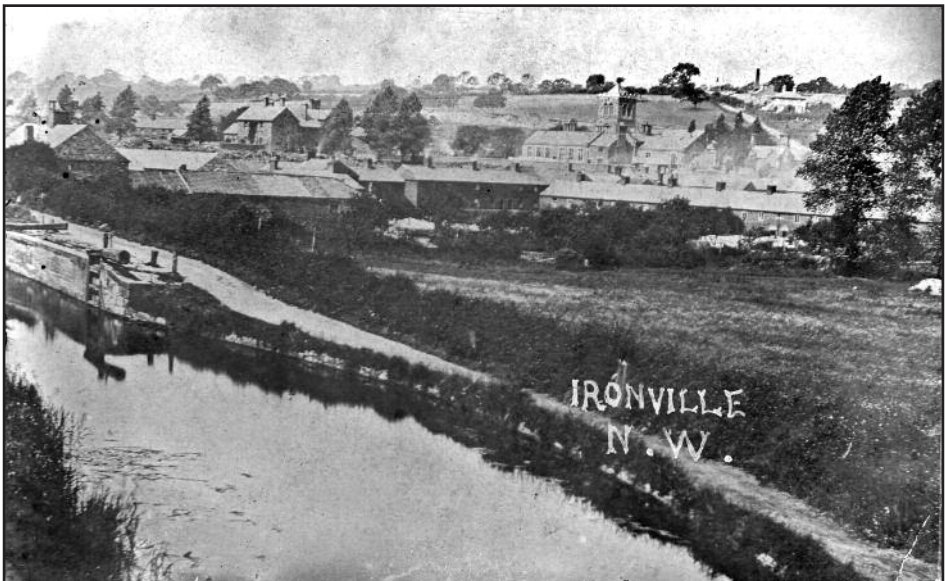
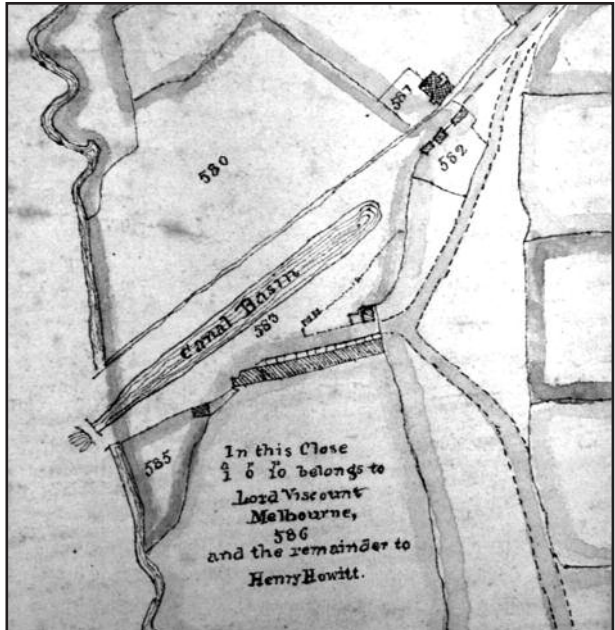


ARCHIVE REPORT

Hugh Potter reports on some new acquisitions

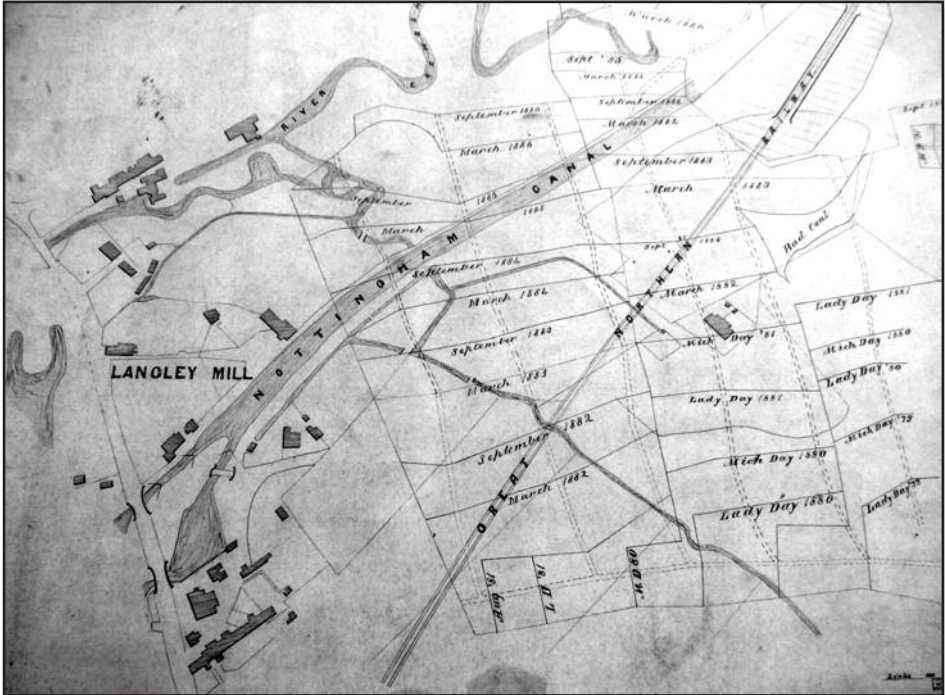
I am delighted to say that the New Year began well for the FCC Archives, when I received an email from Mike Costigan who had 'discovered' us through our website. He had been asked to sort out four trunks of documents, photographs and books that had belonged to the late Selston historian Ronald Storer. Ronald specialised in coal mining history, but in one trunk Mike had discovered a map (right), which included a canal basin and wondered where it might be. It turned out to be Portland Basin, and the map appears to be based on a title map, probably from the 1840s. The row of houses by the basin is 'Stone Row'.

Mike was keen that relevant material went to where it would be most appreciated so invited me to look through the collection. This revealed a previously unseen postcard (below) taken





of the canal and Lock 4 from the railway bridge at Ironville and a framed plan of the canal at Langley Mill around 1880 (below) with all watercourses shown and the progress of coal workings below the surface. The canal has been incorrectly named the Nottingham Canal. The map appears to have been drawn to show a pillar of coal to be retained beneath the adjacent Great Northern Railway. There are also several articles about the Butterley Company, and various other items.



This selection of the images are reproduced here in black & white, but to see them and others in colour visit our website. The Friends would like to record their gratitude to the Storer family and to Mike Costigan for the generous donation to the Archives.

LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING WEEKENDS 2009

This impressive 1849 beam engine will be in motion from noon to 5.00pm on each of the following days.

MONTH	SAT	SUN	MON	PERIOD
APRIL		12th	13th	Easter
MAY		3rd	4th	Bank Holiday
JUNE	6th	7th		First Weekend
JULY	4th	5th		First Weekend
AUGUST	1st	2nd		First Weekend
AUGUST		30th	31st	Bank Holiday
OCTOBER	3rd	4th		First Weekend



LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates

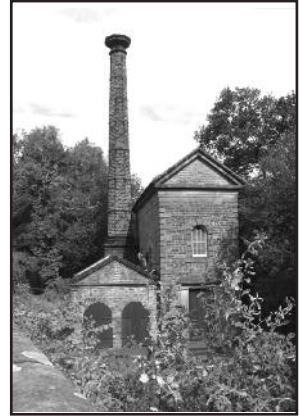
Hopefully the New Year will bring a better season with regards to weather and visitors. As mentioned last time, attendances in July were down and this continued up to the end of the season. Whilst August was good, October was poor and the Discovery Days were a real loss. The weather was poor and along with a lack of visitors, the takings over the two days did not even cover one day's coal cost. This is in complete contrast to the previous years which have been very good. Considerations will have to be made regarding this weekend for this year and see if things can be improved.

Now for the good news. When this appears in print the order should have been placed by Derbyshire County Council with the boiler engineers to commence the repairs on the two boilers. The contract has been awarded to Alton Engineering from Kirk Ireton near Wirksworth so it is nice that a local company will be working on the boilers. The volunteers have been hard at work stripping off the cladding, lagging and removing the crown valves and safety valve covers for the boiler inspector. The boiler inspector Doug Warren has had a good look around both boilers and thinks they are in very good condition for their age, 109 years this year. Work is to start on Boiler 44 as this needs the least work and if problems do occur a boiler will be ready for Easter, hopefully though both will be complete.

The air pump on the engine has been removed ready for the new wood blocks to be fitted. There were hardly any left so it was a miracle that the engine was able to produce and keep a good vacuum. The blocks are made of red cedar and fit around the air pump piston to form a kind of piston ring to seal the piston to the casing. The blocks are quite intricate to make and our thanks go to Peter Baines Ltd for their assistance; it gives their joiner a break from doors and window frames!

The next major step is to inspect the pump inlet and outlet valves and consider how to carry out the repairs needed. These items are both difficult to access and the works are in a confined space both in Health and Safety terms and also with regards to the room available to move the items around in. These items are heavy and lifting equipment has to be used, the main problem is where to hang it from. The outlet valve, despite its leaks causing a problem, can be left but the inlet valve has not been inspected for some time and is leaking badly allowing water to run back from the canal to the river, whoops! Whether new blocks need to be made for the valve (different to the air pump) or carry out some other kind of repair is left to be seen. The pumphouse will only be open when the volunteers are there but if anyone wants to see a pair of naked old boilers they will be made welcome and probably press ganged into joining in the works, normally on a Monday evening. So if anyone wants to get (very) cold, do come along.

The steaming dates for 2009 are shown on page 27.



Mike Kelley

A warm job on a cold day.
Stoking the one operational boiler for the Discovery Days steaming weekend

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



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

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

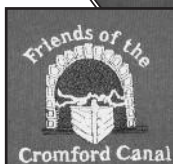
Polo Shirts (with collar) Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL,
£13.50 plus £2.20 p&p

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

All items Burgundy colour

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

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



Shopping Bag £7.50 plus £1.50 p&p

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

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



Tote Bag £6.50 plus 60P p&p

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

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