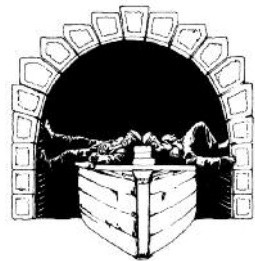


THE PORTAL



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

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FRONT COVER: The very successful working party at Sawmills not only entailed extensive scrub and tree clearance, but also the laying of stone, supplied by Lockwood's Transport, on the towpath. Quite a fleet of wheelbarrows were employed. See page 14.

Photo: Hugh Potter

BACK COVER (TOP): A more relaxed scene on the same occasion as some of the volunteers take a hard earned lunch break. The canal along this length is high above the rooftops of Sawmills.

Photo: Ron Amner

(BOTTOM): The small cast iron aqueduct over the railway at Leawood, at present drained pending repairs to the corroded diagonal braces seen here. Meanwhile the trains continue to rumble underneath. See page 12.

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. 29

This has been a very active period for the FCC, both 'politically' and in terms of practical work on the canal.

Several important meetings have taken place with councillors and others and our chairman and vice chairman have been very busy on our behalf. See Pat's reports on the following pages. I know that Pat is determined to press the powers that be for some progress this year and I'm sure that the committee will support him in this. It is quite evident that there will be problems from various sources, but these can and will be overcome to the ultimate benefit of all concerned..

Whilst this work is vital at this stage, I am also very pleased that the FCC has been able to get on with some 'hands on' activity. Following permission and encouragement from Lockwood's Transport, a successful work party was held on their section of canal at Sawmills. See Dave Tinkler's report on page 14. Another interesting event was the archaeological dig at Jacksdale wharf. See page 16.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Eric and Beryl Singleton for their support on the sales team. They have proved very helpful at many events and have agreed to run the sales stands during the first part of the year when Val and I will be away.

Please note the press date for the Summer 2009 edition will be July 13th

JULIAN RICHARDS' TALK AT CHESTERFIELD

As most of you will know, our Patron is Julian Richards; noted archaeologist, writer, broadcaster and well known for his work on Stonehenge, and his TV programmes 'Meet the Ancestors' and 'Blood of the Vikings'.

On Wednesday 11th March 2009, Julian gave a talk called, 'Stonehenge – The Story So Far.' This was delivered at the large Chesterfield Lecture Theatre and Julian kindly donated all of the proceeds to the funds of the FCC. Some 121 people attended and ticket sales raised £605, with approximately £80 raised from a raffle and donations, less expenses for the hall and ticket printing. This was a kind and generous offer from Julian, for which we are very thankful.

To get a show like this on the road takes a great deal of planning. Dozens of schools, colleges, universities and archaeologist's groups were contacted, along with equal numbers of Women's Institutes, clubs and numerous individuals. All-in-all several months work was involved, but it was worth it to see and hear Julian in full flight, showing us the detailed wonder of Stonehenge. We really enjoyed it Julian and we are glad to have you as our Patron.

Mike Kelley



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



I am writing this in 'ship wreck' hurry as we wanted to update the membership on unfolding events after the AGM which made Mike Harrison's job as Portal Editor a bit difficult as he has had to slip the press date to accommodate it all.

This quarter I may well ruffle a few feathers, but my comments are my own and they represent conditions 'on the ground' as I see them. Anyone who wants to take issue with them please note the disclaimer contained within the Portal!

The AGM was well attended with over fifty members and others present. AGMs are a bit on the dry side and many thanks to all of you who attended. Probably the most interesting part of the evening was the address to the audience by Councillor Brian Lucas of Derbyshire County Council. Councillor Lucas represents the Cotmanhay ward which has the Erewash Canal as a boundary. Councillor Lucas is also a past Chair of the Chesterfield Canal Partnership and represents DCC on that body. Councillor Lucas is no stranger to canals. Both I as an individual and I with others from the FCC committee have had dialogue with Councillor Lucas concerning the establishment of a Cromford Canal Partnership. The FCC has made it abundantly clear that we are not asking for money. Things were bad enough before all this 'toxic asset' nonsense started. If it's an asset how can it be toxic, if it's toxic how can it be an asset? Perhaps some owners of the Cromford Canal view it as a toxic asset? The FCC are not immune to the goings on in the wider world; we do not expect miraculous funding from Derbyshire County Council. Councillor Lucas has always indicated broad and understandably conditional support for the FCC's efforts to restore the canal.

What we need is political, community and broadly based support to enable the FCC to access possible funding sources from all levels from local through national to European, some sort of 'canal partnership' as recommended for the Cromford by The Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC) is vital. Please do not forget IWAC is actually part of DEFRA, a government department. These are not out and out waterways 'anoraks' that back waterway restoration schemes willy-nilly.

The Chesterfield Canal has a partnership, the Derby and Sandiacre Canal has a partnership, the Grantham Canal has a partnership, Lincolnshire has a county wide Waterways Partnership (ooh how we envy Lincolnshire!), so what do we of the Cromford Canal need to do to convince the 'powers that be' that we can at least take the plunge and try to get a Cromford Canal Partnership organised? I have not spoken to one single elected representative at Parish, District, Borough or County level who openly declares that they object to the restoration of the canal, The same has to be said of our national representatives in the House of Commons, not one of the local MP's oppose the restoration of the Cromford Canal. To pick one at random, Dennis Skinner has been outstanding in his



support for the Smotherly/Pinxton restoration. WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO GET OUR MESSAGE ACROSS?

Who makes policy in a democracy? Is it council officials or is it the elected representatives who are elected to serve the people. As Chair of a registered charity I am not allowed to be party political. You will all know that in June we have County Council elections, these occur every four years. I urge you to question each and every candidate throughout Derbyshire, irrespective of party, as to their attitude to the restoration of Derbyshire Canals and the Cromford Canal in particular. Get it in writing or email if you can and then in the future we can hold whoever it is, irrespective of party allegiance, to account if actions do not speak louder than words. Above all go out and vote; democracy is important. As Chair of the FCC I will undertake to publish on our website any letters, emails etc. that we may receive from any elected representative of the people who may wish to contact us either to oppose or support our campaign. I know that the Portal is delivered to various representatives and is read by others, and I'm sure nobody has anything to hide. As soon as this is published I will be donning my tin hat and retreating to my deepest bunker, but please do not misunderstand these comments. They are aimed at all the candidates who wish to represent all Derbyshire seats at Matlock for the next four years, irrespective of political allegiance.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

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

- **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 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 speaking on 'British Canals and Railways'.
- **Sunday 4th October** - Northern Canals Association Meeting, hosted by FCC at Pinxton Village Hall.
- **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.

The following are outdoor events to be attended by the FCC sales stand.

- **Saturday 9th/Sunday 10th May** - Midland Railway Butterley 1960's Event.
- **Saturday 23rd/Monday 25th May** - IWA National Campaign Festival at Kiveton Park, Rotherham (Chesterfield Canal).
- **Saturday 23rd/Monday 25th May** - IWA National Trailboat Festival at Moira, Ashby Canal.
- **Sunday 14th June** - Jacksdale Soldier Day.
- **Sunday 21st June** - Brinsley Carnival.
- **Saturday 29th/ Monday 31st August** - IWA National Festival and Boat Show, Red Hill, River Soar.
- **Saturday 31st October/Sunday 1st November** - World Heritage Discovery days at Cromford Wharf.



AMBERGATE TO CROMFORD MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Patrick Morriss

A considerable amount of money is being spent on the Derbyshire County Council (DCC) owned section of canal from Ambergate to Cromford. See Rick Jillings' report on page 12. On the 31st March, Mike Kelley and I attended the first Liaison Group meeting hosted by DCC to examine the work in detail. DCC have published a ten year management plan for the canal for which they have funding for the first three years.

Let there be no misunderstanding here, the FCC welcome the work being done on the retaining walls, leak sealing, tree removal where needed and the repair work on the boilers at Leawood Pump (due for a steam test on Easter Sunday). We are not the awkward squad. However, consultants' reports have recommended towpath augmentation to help prevent over topping and the FCC have a long standing belief that overall water level should be uniform from Cromford to Ambergate rather than having a reduced level from Leawood to Ambergate which came about due to the overtopping in 1989 that speeded the demise of the original Cromford Canal Society. It is interesting to note that I can find no reference in the published plans to make permanent repairs to the sites of these incidents, or towpath augmentation anywhere else. I will be pleased to publish a correction immediately on our website and in the next Portal if I am mistaken in this view. We may have some issues with the amount of money being spent on the railway bridge at Whatstandwell station as this is not strictly 'canal' expenditure. However, as this is a route for visitors to the canal from the station and it does look rather grand, the FCC will not split hairs. Perhaps we can be informed how much has been spent on this bridge without having to make it the subject of a Freedom of Information Act request?

Any dredging work has been postponed to years two and three in the management plan. The FCC are keen to see a navigable depth from a horse boat point of view from Cromford to Leawood pump and if possible beyond. Chris Coombs, DCC Area Countryside Manager for the West Area, made this comment on 1st April - "I would confirm what we said yesterday that 0.5m is the minimum desired when dredging and in fact we would go as deep as local conditions would allow to avoid having to come back again in the near future." Dan Abrahams, Land Management & Conservation Adviser, Land Management - Lowland Derbyshire, Natural England responded with "Thanks for that confirmation. 50-100 cm is the preferred water depth for Broadleaved pondweed. You can see this in action at High Peak Junction, where there is a good depth of water, little shading and where it does so well. As discussed also, dredging should aim to achieve a dish shaped profile so that you have a variety of depth in the water column. Species such as the pond weeds tend to prefer the open water channel. Whereas branched bur-reed/glyceria prefer a water depth of not more than 40cm, the marginal plants like water crowfoot and flowering rush prefer a shallower depth of water. Some of these plants can survive outside of these preferred limits, but they become much more susceptible to stress."

The FCC look forward to these depths being achieved from Cromford to Ambergate. It would of course be a little easier to achieve this if the water level was raised between Leawood and Ambergate as well. The FCC are not just holding out the begging bowl here and making 'demands'. The FCC are more than willing to increase our working party presence on the Ambergate to Cromford section and facilitate the involvement of the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) and other bodies to help DCC get more 'bang for their buck' to quote that reprehensible American phrase. WRG are more than capable of undertaking weir, paddle and other reconstruction work to enable DCC to spend money



elsewhere. This would also help DCC carry out the other seven years of their management plan that the FCC understands remains unfunded at the present time.

What the FCC is not prepared to do is encourage massive volunteer involvement on the canal between Ambergate and Cromford without any sort of 'partnership' in place. This would be wrong and unfair on volunteers who would want their efforts to be counted towards the long term restoration of the Cromford Canal, not its management of decline.

The FCC remains open to any sort of formal working arrangement that would increase volunteer involvement on the Ambergate to Cromford section. So far, the East Midlands Development Association (EMDA) funded work has not to my knowledge made any use of volunteers, and once again I would be pleasantly surprised to be proved wrong. Now, what was it the government, EMDA, British Waterways and other bodies were saying about the importance of the 'third sector' i.e. volunteer involvement in delivering projects across the UK?

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS PARTNERSHIP

You will also be aware that the FCC is represented on the above partnership. The Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) includes over one third of the main line of the Cromford Canal. The DVMWHS has the longest length of canal within a World Heritage Site, certainly in the UK and possibly Europe, courtesy of the Cromford Canal. The FCC annually commit many hundreds of hours of volunteer time to the DVMWHS Discovery Days events that occur at autumn half term time. This year will be no different.

As the FCC face the daunting task of fundraising for feasibility and other studies, the FCC decided that it was time to seek the Partnership's support for our aims. The following item was submitted for consideration at the meeting on 23rd March:

"The Friends of the Cromford Canal seek the Partnership's full support for the restoration of the Cromford Canal as a whole, with specific reference to the canal within the World Heritage Site and its buffer zone. The Partnership recognises the contribution this would bring to increasing the economic prosperity of the World Heritage Site."

The Partnership found that "A number of partners present at the meeting had concerns with the request to give full support to the Canal restoration as the physical works which would be required would have an impact on the SSSI and its wildlife and other wider issues such as tourism, but were happy to work with the Friends of Cromford Canal in commissioning a feasibility study. It was noted that only one third of the Canal's length was within the WHS." This was despite representations that the Partnership might support the restoration in principle.

The Partnership has representatives from Amber Valley Borough Council, Derby City Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Cromford Parish Council, DALC, Belper North Mill, Arkwright Society, Darley Abbey Society, Masson Mill, Derbyshire County Council (who were not represented at all at this meeting, other than by the Chair), Little Eaton Parish Council, English Heritage (again not represented) Environment Agency (not represented) EMDA (not represented) East Midlands Tourism (not represented) Darley Abbey Community Association (not represented) Natural England and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. NE and DWT managed to field two representatives each – I believe the first time this has ever occurred.

I will not detail here who spoke out against the agenda item or who strove to support it. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the Derwent Valley Mills Partnership please feel free to contact the Chair, Councillor J Sanders at County Hall, Matlock or by email- joyce.sanders@derbyshire.gov.uk

Patrick Morriss



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



Spring is here – or so they tell me! Despite the swans and ducks behaving in a spring like way, the weather is telling me that the winter has not totally left us yet.

I thought that membership was going to be very quiet this time, but I was very pleased to receive a late flurry of new members in the last week; a warm welcome to you all. It is good to be back at Ironville Church Hall for our meetings again, and I hope that we will see many of you at one of our events there. Details of the speakers and their subjects are listed elsewhere in this magazine. It won't be long before we are getting our heads together again to organise next year's speakers, so if you have any ideas, do pass on any details.

Those of you who attended the talk given at Chesterfield by our Patron, Julian Richards, enjoyed a good evening. He is a most entertaining speaker, and very authoritative on his favourite subject of Stonehenge. The venue was very comfortable and worth the extra travel.

I know that many of you will be getting your boats ready for the summer, and we wish you happy boating, especially our Sales Team, Val Roberts and Mike Harrison, who will leave us in the capable hands of Beryl and Eric Singleton whilst they are away on a well earned break. I'm sure that we will have some good articles on their travels in the forthcoming editions of 'The Portal'. We have a good number of events that we are hoping to attend this year, and this, of course, leads me to my usual appeal for any members who can help us in any way with the sales stand, especially those who are able to help with putting up and dismantling the stand, including a small marquee, which often needs more than just two people to get it upright. Please let any committee member know if you can help.

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

Mrs J Abraham, Ripley

Mr & Mrs M Molloy, Matlock

Mr A Dodd, Belper

Mr & Mrs R Marsh, Belper

Heather Howard, Ripley

Mr & Mrs G J Smith, Ripley

Mr & Mrs G Smith, Belper

Mr A W Brackenbury, Cheadle

Ms J F Altman, Billingshurst

Miss V Walker, Alfreton

Mr P Bramhall, Matlock

Mrs A Else, Alfreton

Mr & Mrs I J Fletcher, Ripley

SEEKING KENNETH MICHAEL!

Are your Christian names Kenneth Michael? Did your bank pay your Friends subscription on 9 December 2008? If so, would you please get in touch with me (contact details inside front cover) as the bank statement doesn't give your surname, and I don't know who to credit with this payment.

Many thanks, Yvonne



FCC NEWS UPDATE - so what *is* happening?

from Mike Kelley



• All-in-all this has been a very busy period for the FCC. Many things are happening. UK-COAL and Derbyshire County Council have both written concerning the implementation of the planning permission we have for the Smotherfly site.

• UK-COAL wrote to Dennis Skinner MP who asked them to respond to us, which they have said they will do. They also said if certain criteria can be reached they could start on Smotherfly THIS SUMMER. Our MP's Dennis Skinner, Judy Mallaber and Geoff Hoon have been a big help in this matter.

• Derbyshire County Council wrote to say they GRANT US PERMISSION for canal restoration to proceed on their land. This is a major step forward, even though they have required a great many restrictions on this.

• **Monday 12th January** – Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Devonshire Arms, Somercotes.

• **Friday 16th January** – Dressed in traditional boatman's clothes, I delivered a PowerPoint talk to the Alfreton Scout group. If you know of other young people's groups who would like to hear this – just ask. (Contact details inside the front cover).

• **Saturday 17th January** – Pat Morriss and John Boucher attended John Hett's funeral on behalf of the FCC. John was GM of the Midland Railway at Butterley for over 30 years. A tribute to John was in the last edition of this magazine.

• **Thursday 22nd January** – Pat Morriss attended a Golden Valley Partnership meeting with AVBC officers, to discuss a beneficial planning application for this site.

• **Sunday 25th January** – Mike Harrison, Val Roberts and Eric & Beryl Singleton had the FCC sales stall and collection at Sainsbury's supermarket, Matlock.

• **Tuesday 27th January** – Pat Morriss and Hugh Potter attended a Derwent Valley Discovery Days meeting for this year's proposed events.

• **Tuesday 3rd February** – Pat Morriss, Tony Brookes & myself had a meeting with DCC at County Hall. We met with a senior councillor and officer to discuss closer working ties and the Canal Management Plan.

• **Monday 9th February** – Our monthly full committee meeting, held at the Derwent Hotel at Whatstandwell.

• **Wednesday 11th February** – I gave a talk on the Cromford Canal to Whatstandwell Women's Institute. It was very well received.

• **Friday 13th February** – Pat Morriss, Tony Brookes & myself had another meeting with DCC officers, this time at their Darley Dale offices. We sought to establish better working relationships, which in the past have not been as good as we wished. Things are greatly improving.

• **Sunday 15th February** – Dave Tinkler organised a work party at Ironville locks. Many trees growing into the canal structures were removed.



- **Tuesday 17th February** – Pat Morriss had a meeting with DCC manager Chris Coombs regarding the Cromford Canal Management Plan.
- **Monday 16th February** – Our regular social evening featured a talk by Mick Golds at Ironville. Mick spoke on the restoration of the Erewash and Cromford Canals. That same night I was at Burton-on-Trent Women's Institute giving a talk there to over 60 ladies.
- **Tuesday 17th February** – Eric Singleton, Val Kelley and myself attended a meeting at Ripley concerning funding avenues. The meeting was run by AVBC.
- **Friday 27th February** – Pat Morriss, David Tickler and Mike Harrison met with Rob Lockwood concerning an FCC working party on his part of the canal at Sawmills.
- **Saturday 28th February & Sunday 1st March** – Val Roberts and Eric & Beryl Singleton manned the FCC sales stand, collection and display at Morrison's supermarket at Eastwood. A very successful two days.
- **Monday 2nd March** – Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Devonshire Arms, Somercotes.
- **March** - Pat Morriss had numerous meetings with councillors, developers and others concerning events on the central section of the canal, mainly around Bullbridge and Sawmills.
- **Sunday 8th March** – Hugh Potter, John Baylis and Pat Morriss went to Boston for the Northern Canals Association Meeting.
- **Monday 9th March** – I gave another talk to the Women's Institute, this time it was at Mickleover in Derby. There were about 60 in attendance again. I'll soon be well known by the WI movement!
- **Tuesday 10th March** – Pat Morriss met with Director of the Arkwright Society, Sarah McLeod, to discuss several items of mutual interest. A very positive outcome.
- **Wednesday 11th March** – 121 people attended the special talk held by our Patron, Julian Richards. A sum of £605 was raised (less expenses) which Julian kindly donated to the FCC. Thank you Julian. See also page 2.
- **Saturday/Sunday 14th & 15th March** – Our work party organiser Dave Tinkler was able to arrange, for the first time, a work party at Sawmills, near Ambergate. 28 turned out on the Saturday and 26 on the Sunday. Several of the Waterway Recovery Group also came along. A great amount of work was done, with the local population delighted to see us. Well done all. See Dave's report on page 14.
- **Saturday 14th March** – Hugh Potter and Pat Morriss attended the Railway and Canal Historical Society meeting in Birmingham.
- **Wednesday 18th March** – I was invited to talk about the canal to the inaugural meeting of a new Civic Trust for the Sawmills and Bullbridge area. Over 70 attended and I was well received. These people are solidly behind the restoration of the canal, especially in their area, and will not let developers spoil this aim. They have a number of planning issues which have forced the formation of the local body. I wish them well.
- **Wednesday 23rd March** – Our Chairman Pat Morriss attended a Derwent Valley World Heritage meeting. Pat sought support from the other partners. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust made clear their opposition to the restoration of the canal, but all agreed to support a full Feasibility Study.
- **Monday 30th March** – Our AGM at Ironville Church Hall. As reported by our chairman, this well attended meeting was addressed by Councillor Brian Lucas of Derbyshire County Council. A useful discussion was held and various issues raised by members. This is the type of liaison which we need to encourage to establish common ground so that we may move forward with our relationship with the DCC.



AN UNUSUAL WEDDING RECEPTION

by Robin Ward

(Now living in Brora, Sutherland, Scotland and FCC's most northerly member)

Twenty-one and a half years is quite a long time ago, but I vividly remember where I was on 21st September 1987. Perhaps you too were in the vicinity of the Cromford Canal on the afternoon of that day? If so, do you remember seeing me, Robin Ward, and my wife, Sally? We were wearing unusual clothing for a canal related expedition. Not working overalls, walking gear or even canoe wetsuits ... but wedding outfits!

Early that morning, Sally and I had been married at the Doncaster Registry Office. We then drove to the Cromford Canal to hold our wedding reception in the beautiful horse pulled narrow boat *John Gray* (see photos). The sun was shining, the birds were singing and fluffy white clouds were rolling by as we glided smoothly and quietly along the canal. The favourable weather was especially appreciated ... the *John Gray* being open topped and our umbrellas having been accidentally left behind at my home in Chesterfield. We admired the tranquil scenery, and ate a three-part wedding cake and a buffet meal, both cooked by ourselves, whilst watching the occasional dabchick and kingfisher seeking their own food in the canal.



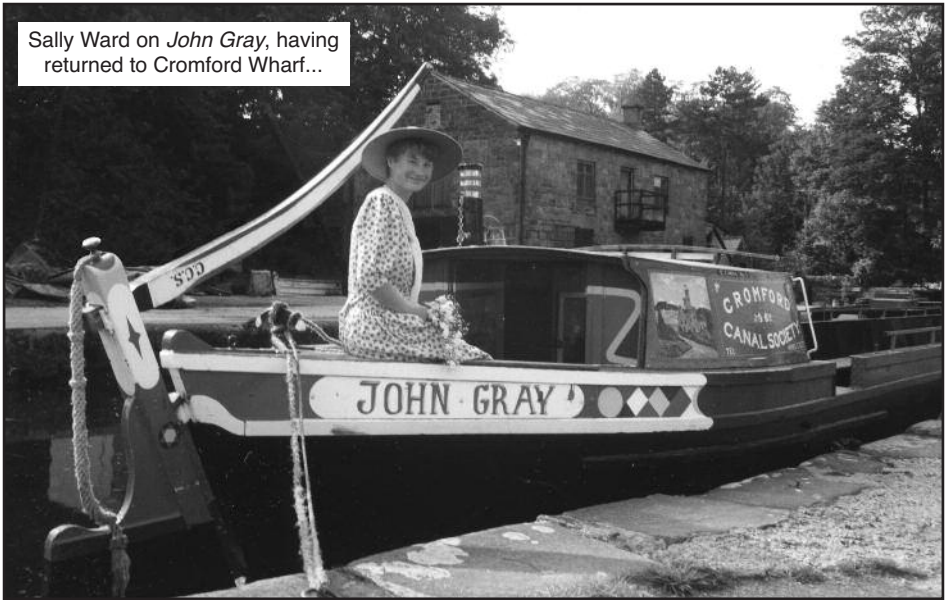
The new Mr and Mrs Ward with their guests en route to Leawood on board *John Gray*.

All of our guests, a few members of our families and friends, had been kept completely in the dark about our plans. "Meet at the main car park in Matlock Bath at 11am. A light lunch will be provided ... and be sure to wear flat shoes!" (Apparently, 'Health and Safety' regulations were in their infancy in those days. This was the only H&S rule that I remember being mentioned).

Behind the scenes, a small army of Cromford Canal Society members had been



Sally Ward on *John Gray*, having returned to Cromford Wharf...



busy preparing the *John Gray* for our arrival. Also its horse - someone had thoughtfully decorated it with some beautiful ribbons for the occasion. Others were firing up the numerous small steam engines in the adjacent museum (now the Cromford Wharf conference centre) ready for our return from the Leawood Pump House. Perhaps you were one of those helpers/members of the Cromford Canal Society that contributed to this most wonderful and happiest day of my life? If so, thank you.

Sally and I are still happily married but we have never been on a narrow boat since our wedding reception. A pity. However, we do have our own (horseless) 'boats' these

days: *Cinclus*, a seventeen and a half foot open canoe, and *Tub*, a 30 foot Bermudian ketch yacht built by Sally's father. Sally and I have regularly taken them out to sea on the West Coast of Scotland and we have had many wonderful experiences together. Sally and I hope to continue to do so for many years to come. Hopefully, another twenty one and a half years or so. How lucky I am.

...and thanking 'Tina', the suitably decorated boat horse, in the charge of Simon Stoker, manager of the Cromford Canal Society.





NEWS FROM THE NORTH

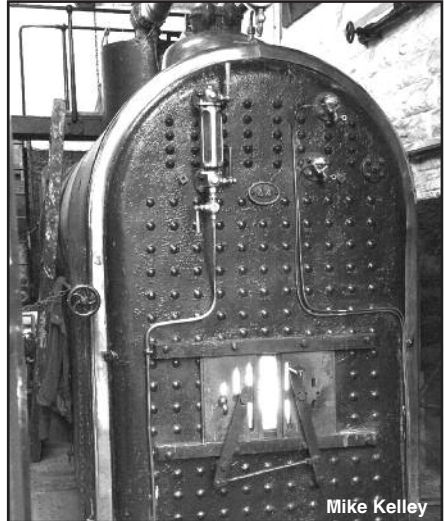
from Rick Jillings - Assistant Area Manager
Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service

Cromford Canal Improvement Works – Update Spring 2009

Over the winter much work has been undertaken and completed by Derbyshire County Council on the Cromford Canal. Working down the canal from Cromford towards Ambergate the following works have been undertaken:

The Middleton Top and Leawood Pump volunteer group have been working regularly every Monday night over the winter in order for the magnificent steam engine to be in a condition ready for operation for Easter Sunday and Monday when they will pump water from the River Derwent to the canal. Alton Engineering have carried out work on the two steam boilers, replacing many of the boiler rivets that were showing signs of corrosion. The boilers now await tests prior to the Easter open days. A wooden ground paddle opposite Leawood Pump has had its frame and paddle board replaced and is working again.

Unfortunately the cast iron aqueduct at Leawood which carries the Cromford Canal over the Derby to Matlock railway line has structural problems, with considerable corrosion of the tie bars that help to take the load



Mike Kelley

One of the boilers for the Leawood Pumping Engine



Hugh Potter

The cast iron aqueduct over the railway at Leawood. Checks have revealed extensive corrosion to the diagonal tie bars shown here and the canal over the aqueduct has been drained pending further investigations and remedial works.

of the structure. To reduce the load the canal has been drained from the junction with the Leawood Canal Arm, known by many as the old Wayfarers Cottage, through to the aqueduct. For public safety the towpath has been closed from Wayfarers Cottage through to Gregory tunnel. A diversion is signed on paths and pavements through Lea Bridge and Holloway. It is hoped that a temporary pedestrian bridge will be



provided to enable the towpath to be re-opened shortly. The aqueduct repair may be some time away; it will require a solution that meets all the engineering requirements and the requirements of English Heritage to keep the structure's heritage interest. It will also involve negotiations with Network Rail to enable safe work above the railway.

Just south of Leashaw Farm, a high section of retaining wall which had poor foundations has been stripped down and rebuilt. As with most repairs on the Cromford Canal, logistics were not easy. Materials and small plant had to travel in a distance of approx. 1km on a narrow section of towpath.

A possible weakness in the canal structure around Simms Bridge at Duke's Quarry Whatstandwell is being investigated. A leak has been repaired, however, further excavation and clay fill is required.

The towpath is also closed south of Whatstandwell while tree work, bridge and wall repairs are underway. At Whatstandwell another retaining wall repair is near completion and the bridges over both the canal and railway have been stripped back to bare metal, treated and are to be reassembled shortly.

Tree felling has been carried out between Whatstandwell and Thurlow Booth Farm. This section of canal was heavily shaded, so much so that few aquatic plants are present, the leaf fall from the tree canopy along with silt washed down by streams has resulted in silt bars that stop the canal water flow. Work is planned for next winter to remove silt and reed between Whatstandwell and Crich Chase.

For more information on when the towpath will be re-opened please contact Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service at Middleton Top on 01629 823204.



Hugh Potter

Derbyshire County Council
Countryside Service staff rebuilding the
stone retaining wall near Leashaw Farm.

ROBIN HOOD B&B

For those of you who admire the canalside house at Robin Hood as you walk by, the owner David Spray is now offering bed & breakfast. For more details contact David on 01773 852952, www.theoldsawmillcottage.co.uk. What you cannot see clearly from across the canal is the huge stone-lined pit in the garden, down which the local brook, which once powered the stone sawmill, falls around 20ft to then pass in a culvert under the canal. David has invited FCC members who would like to see this engineering feat to contact him to arrange a visit (at own risk).



WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



First let me apologise for the change of venue of the March work party. This was because the FCC received an unexpected offer of a donation of £2000 from Derbyshire County Council which had to be spent in the Ward of Councillor Geoff Carlile before the end of the financial year. We therefore decided at short notice to work at Sawmills on March 14-15th rather than Ironville locks as previously arranged. The work party was on the stretch of canal owned by Mr. Robert Lockwood adjacent to his company's site. I sent an email out to the FCC group and all those who have signed up to it received the message. If you have access to a computer and are not signed in then why not email our web master and he will connect you. Apart from using the slow mail, at a great cost, I have no other way to let you know of any changes to the dates and venues published in the Portal.

Lockwood's length of canal is partly filled in and is very overgrown. There are many fairly large trees both in the canal bed and along the towpath and offside, including many growing through the stonework of the waterway walls. This section also includes the



interesting remains of a stone-built narrows where the boats would have been gauged to determine the weight carried and therefore the toll payable. This originally had a toll keeper's cottage alongside, only the front boundary wall and gateposts of which remain.

On Saturday 14th March we had a total of 28 volunteers and the weather was very good so we had a very productive day. The Sunday was even better weather and we had



a total of 26 volunteers. This willing crowd made quite an impression on the “jungle bashing”. Mr. Lockwood kindly loaned us his chipper machine and even let us use his quad bike to move it. With the chipper we disposed of the cut down brush, as we couldn’t burn it due to being too near to some dwellings, and a lot of trees were felled which were in a dangerous state. We had a fleet of wheelbarrows to transport the rubbish of all types which was removed from the canal to two hired skips. The donation also enabled us to hire a portaloos for the comfort of the volunteers.

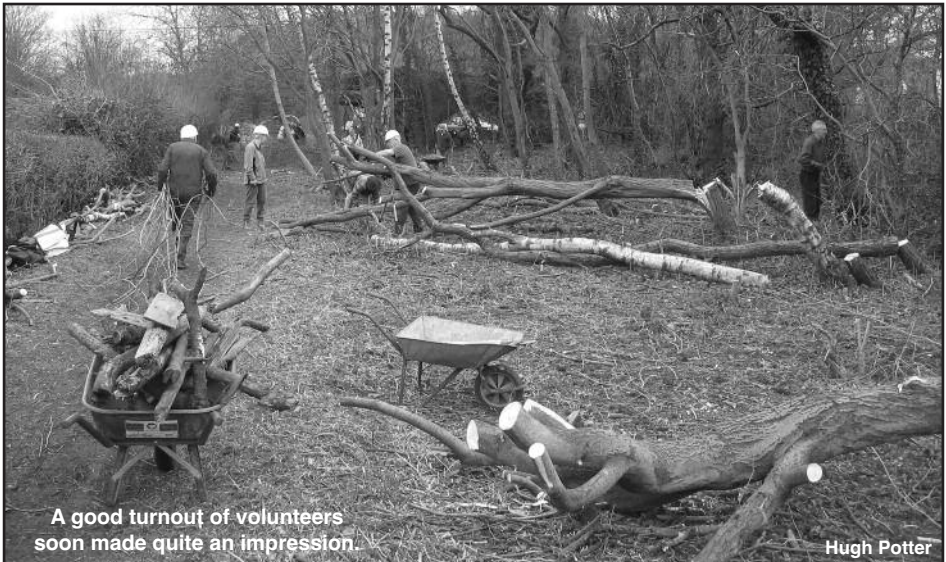
We were also given a load of stone which was carried as a backload by the wheelbarrow gang and was used to repair the towpath which, in places, was very muddy. Together with the scrub clearance, this made the towpath much easier to walk on. See front cover.



The chipper was a bit noisy but made short work of the brush

Jan Columbo

There is still a lot of work to do on this site and I intend to organize some spring and summer work parties there, which will involve cleaning out the canal bed but no more tree felling as the birds are nesting and we leave them alone until the autumn. So watch this space for future dates.



A good turnout of volunteers soon made quite an impression.

Hugh Potter



PORTLAND BASIN, JACKSDALE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG

Report and pictures by John Boucher - FCC Honorary Consultant Engineer.

The Portland Paths Project, backed by the 'Living Selstonia' lottery grant and Ashfield Council in Nottinghamshire, seeks to provide a walkway along the route of the old Portland Colliery tramway, interpreting visible remains en route. The tramway originally ended in Jacksdale at the Portland Basin of the old Butterley Company (constructed about 1822), just across the county boundary from Codnor Park and the main line of Canal. The tramway was extended across the canal into the Codnor Park Forge, and even later connected the Mexborough Collieries at Selston with the Midland Railway Main line.

As part of this, the PPP promoted an archaeological dig at Portland Basin. The work was arranged as part of the Building Better Communities of Nottinghamshire County Council and undertaken by the county's community archaeologists who carry out archaeological work designed to draw in the local communities. The concept emphasis was on re-discovering the housing at the wharf known as 'Stone Row', which was demolished in the 1960's, but we managed to persuade them that there were some important canal remains of even greater interest, and these certainly provided the more interesting 'finds'.



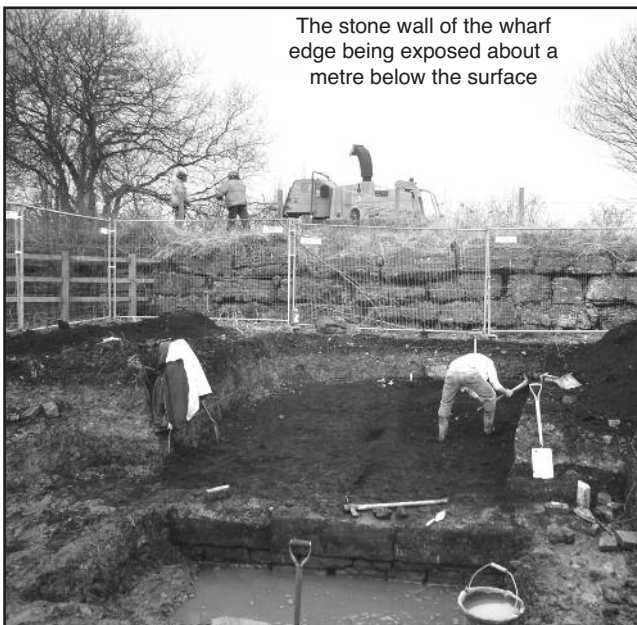
A number of FCC volunteers took part, starting in the appalling weather conditions at the beginning of February, and lasting just over three weeks. The original housing of Stone Row was uncovered, but not a lot was found there. However, some remains of floors of old buildings were found closer to the wharf, which appear to have been canal associated, possibly stables, warehouses or wharf offices. Later pathways and drainage restricted the extension of these interesting finds, and more work is required in this area.



The stone walls of the basin were found to be in good condition, lying under about one metre of fill. The width of the basin was 14 metres (46 feet), enough for three barges plus a little clearance. The standing ground water was at about the original water level, and a test hole with a JCB bucket found the original bottom about 1.7 metres below coping level. However, a large quantity of thick black oil was struck which mixed with the water and flooded the area and prevented any more meaningful excavation. A remediation problem for the future (perhaps we should re-open the Pye Bridge oil refinery!)

The remains of two lines of sleeper track were found on the embankment side of the basin, together with a lot of coal spilled there, but no stone sleeper blocks. One iron rail chair was recovered, which appeared to be of the Midland Counties Railway 1839 pattern, although it awaits cleaning up to provide more information.

The massive embankment constructed of blocks of blast furnace slag that can still be seen today was built a little later. Initially





it was intended to extend the colliery tramway at low level across the River Erewash and across the Cromford Canal by means of a lift bridge. Construction of this bridge was started by Butterley, but was soon stopped by the Canal Company, who insisted on a high level crossing. A high embankment was therefore constructed across the plain and the tramway then made use of an existing arch bridge across the canal. The final link from the tramway into the works does not appear to have been completed until the 1840's, nearly twenty years after the basin was brought into use.

The construction of the embankment is most interesting. It is constructed of massive iron slag blocks, the slag becoming available in large quantity after the construction of the new blast furnaces in the 1830's. Although copper slag blocks had been used in a few areas of the country before this, it seems to be the first use of large iron slag blocks in this country, and would fully warrant being designated as a scheduled ancient monument. Not until the construction of the Tees Breakwaters in the 1860's was it again used on such a grand scale.



Although only three layers of blocks are fully visible today above the later fill, the embankment was found to be five blocks (about 2.5m) high, and founded on the compact gravel and boiler ash base (over a foot thick) which also formed the wharf base. This appears to confirm that the embankment was an afterthought, and that the ground was fully prepared and compacted for the low level tracks first. It is also possible that the original pre – basin road from Codnor Park Forge (via Lawn Bridge) to Selston ran along this alignment.

It is our ultimate aim to re-open the basin as part of the canal restoration, and fortunately, although the area is now in use as a public park, no major physical obstacles exist, apart from the requirement for a new aqueduct over the River Erewash. Records show that in 1825 an average of two barge loads of coal (about 90 tons) was being loaded each day, but it was last used commercially about 1893. At least the side walls exist in good condition, and would make excellent moorings linked to the rejuvenated village centre.

A full archaeological report, giving more details of this project, will be published in due course.



CROMFORD CANAL INSPECTION 1959

Hugh Potter, our indefatigable archivist, has come across this report by members of the Inland Waterway Protection Society, first published in their official journal *Onward* in December 1959 and March 1960.

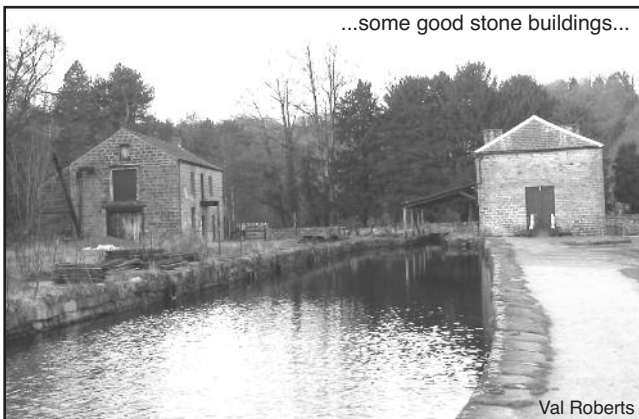
I have added some contemporary pictures.

Hugh has also added some explanations and corrections shown in *[italics]*.

Cromford Canal Inspection (First Stage 12/9/59) By L.E. Watson.

The Cromford Canal, which goes from Cromford to Langley Mill where it joins the Nottingham Canal and the Erewash Canal, runs through some most delightful countryside, full of interest to the historian and the progressive modernist alike. The head of the Canal at Cromford lies just above the famous bridge with its ruined Bridge Chapel over the River Derwent, and near the original Arkwright Mill, now used as a dye works. Not far away is Lea Hurst, Florence Nightingale's home. We are reminded of that vigorous period in our history when the spinning jenny was invented by Arkwright. It was the same Arkwright who was one of the chief promoters of the construction of this Canal. The construction began in 1789, the engineer being William Jessop, whose skill enables the Canal to run without need of locks for 11 of its 14 mile journey to Langley Mill.

The first sight of the Canal environs is an overhead flume carrying water from distant lead mines at Wirksworth across the road from the Mill and into what appears to have been an arm-terminal feeding the Canal. *[I take it this is referring to the cast-iron aqueduct, sadly demolished by an over-height lorry a few years ago. If so, my understanding is that this delivered water to the mill from where it returns in a culvert under the road].* Through gates the wide yard is entered, where is the excellent wharf which needs well dredging. There are some good stone buildings which are being allowed to deteriorate rapidly, and there is good access to the road alongside.

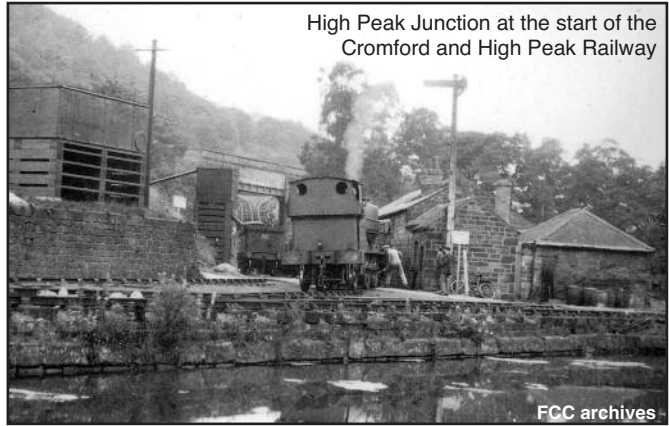


For much of its length the Canal is nicely elevated, and again and again there are superb views over the lovely countryside. For the first few miles the Canal is terraced along the hillside, creating the impression that it is part of a Georgian landscape architect's design, rather than a commercial venture. Being built on to the limestone hillside rather than "cut out", the Canal seems to be naturally free from silting and the banks are quite firm and rocky, the only signs of damage to the retaining walls being caused by people, and not time. A bad example of such damage was found about a mile downstream where stone dust from a quarry storage yard has been swilled into the Canal, reducing the water to a trickle. The bridges are interesting, one side of the arch being stilted where the path is, the other side



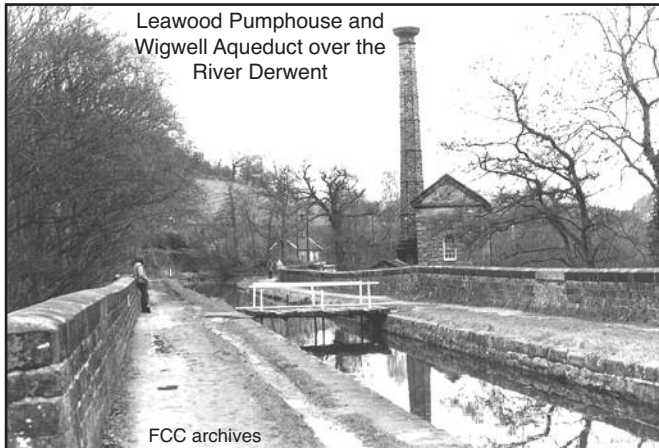
carrying round in a horseshoe shape, and most of them are numbered.

Bridge No. 2 is a swing bridge leading to the foot of the interesting incline railway built by Outram [*Josias Jessop; Outram died in 1805*], which runs over the hills joining the Cromford Canal with the Peak Forest Canal at Whaley Bridge. The 'Halts' on this



Cromford and High Peak Railway were called 'wharves'. Just beyond the swing bridge we could see the buildings housing the beam engine, used to lift water up to the Canal from the River Derwent, when water was needed. Here we met Mr. Gregory the Canal Inspector, who had kindly given up his Saturday afternoon in order to show us the works.

The buildings are late Georgian, elegant to the top of the tall chimney stack. The engine has a plate bearing the legend 'Graham and Company, Melton Ironworks 1849', and it appears that the engine is in sound working condition though the pump "needs a new washer". There are two horizontal boilers in the adjoining boiler-house, of the locomotive type, to provide steam to power the engine. When the pump operated, it was capable of



lifting a considerable volume of water from the River Derwent, and it was used only when the Canal needed water. The water feed via the flume at Cromford is available for only 48 hours at weekends. As stated in the Act, the Arkwright Mill has the use of that water throughout the rest of the week. It can readily be seen, therefore, that the pump was essential to maintain the statutory

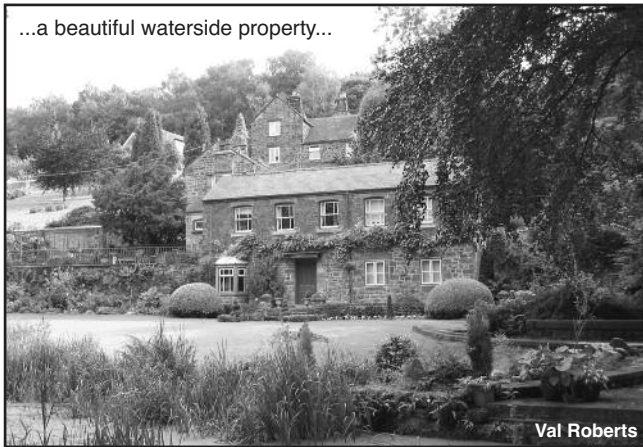
depth of water in the Canal. And here are facts whose significance cannot be overlooked, namely, the opening and closing of shuttles controlling the feed via the flume is strictly observed as laid down in the Act, but the use of the pump to maintain statutory water level is discontinued. And the Act is still in force! [*This is not quite correct*].

We found an old ice breaker on the Canal nearby. Inspector Gregory explained how these were operated by about ten men throwing their weight on to a cross-beam to rock the boat as it rode up over the ice. The boat has attractive lines, something like a large steel canoe.



Leaving the pumphouse, we were at once on the aqueduct taking the Canal across the River Derwent far below. This masterly construction of Jessop's carried the Canal over the river on a wide, single span, with a much smaller span over the ground each side of the River to take the extra water in time of flood, and to provide a dry-land cartway in normal conditions. The scenery hereabouts is lovely beyond description.

Bridge No. 7 is an aqueduct over the railway which bursts out of a tunnel almost alongside, passes under the Canal and immediately crosses a bridge over the river. The



...a beautiful waterside property...

Canal continues in peace, however, along its wooded terrace – steep hill on the left, river down below through the trees on the right – and soon reaches Gregory Tunnel, 42 yards long, soundly built and in excellent condition. In the vicinity of Bridge No. 9 are stop-planks, one side of which there is a fair depth of water, the other side being dry. Nearby is a beautiful waterside property, with well-kept

garden, and weeping willows overhanging stone steps leading down to the Canal. Bridge No. 15 is Whatstandwell Bridge, and here we decided, reluctantly, to call it a day.

Stage 2 - 26/9/59

Again the weather was warm and sunny when we met at Whatstandwell Bridge, looking forward to another delightful walk. The Canal continued along the side of the hill, terrace fashion, but we were now on the other side of the valley. The water level continued low – about 3ft below normal. We continued to glimpse the valley through trees and to pass beneath attractive stone bridges with horse-shoe arches. There was evidence that de-weeding had been carried out by farmers to allow their cattle to drink – and what a blessing the Canal must be in a summer like this.

The bed, walls and towpath of the Canal were sound, and several times we met good roads skirting the Canal, which would be ideal launching places for boats. Scores of people come to this part of Derbyshire to enjoy the countryside – and what better way of travelling through it than in a boat? This canal might have been made for those people who love Derbyshire, and boating on a quiet waterway.

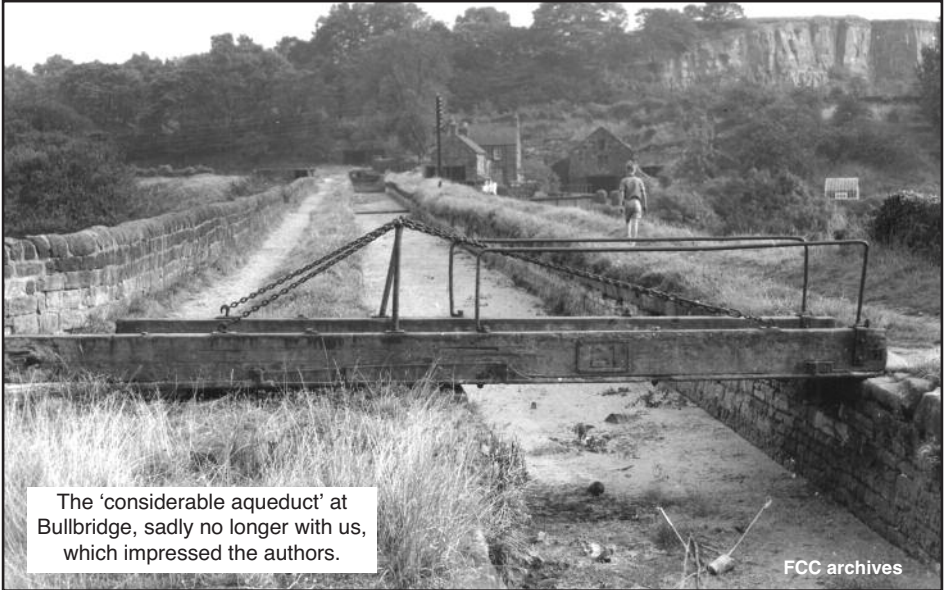
Near Ambergate we came to the Stevenson [*Stephenson*] Lime Works, and here found the top of a rope-incline railway, probably connected with the Canal at some time [*it never did*]. Bridge 17 carries their light railway from the quarries, over the Canal to the works, is of latticed, ironwork construction and in a sad state.

Structure No. 18 is the Hagg Tunnel, about 92 yards long and in excellent condition except for one piece of fencing between the towpath and water.

A short way further on is a large modern factory [*Stevenson's Dye Works*], and here can be seen a properly constructed run-off taking water, it appears, to large storage



tanks. Evidently industrialists as well as farmers appreciate a convenient source of water. *[The fact that this is now infilled may account for the frequent flooding of the short section of canal east of Bullbridge].* Hereabouts the Canal's environs are a little more built-up, though by no means urban. Most of the bridges carry pipes, some are carrying large water or gas mains, and the old stone horseshoe bridge at Bullbridge has pipes strung along both sides. Shortly after Bullbridge we came to the considerable aqueduct which carries the Canal over river, railway and main road. The first part of the aqueduct would be built by Jessop, and the second part, many years later, probably by George Stevenson. The



change in architecture between the stone and the brickwork sections is evident; Jessop used deep, effective clay-puddling for the Canal bed on his section, whereas Stevenson used an iron trough. The bridges throughout the length of this canal are meticulously numbered on cast iron plates, and the aqueduct carries a rare collection, from No. 20 to 24 – the latter being the part over the road. *[What a shame that all these have been stolen from the entire length of the canal].* Bridge No. 26, a big bridge carrying a minor track to Wingfield, is relatively modern, and less attractive than the old horseshoe structures. *[This is the 4-arch 1875 bridge by Lockwood's].*

Here the landscape begins to change, and the close, steeply wooded hillside opens out, so that from our still elevated position we have views of undulating grassland to the north, with clumps of trees dotted, in studied casualness – obviously the Wingfield Park shown on the map. Immediately below us is the A610, with the river further away, beyond the road. The Canal has changed over again to a north-facing hillside, with a railway branch line (Ambergate and Pye Bridge) alongside. And still there are no locks.

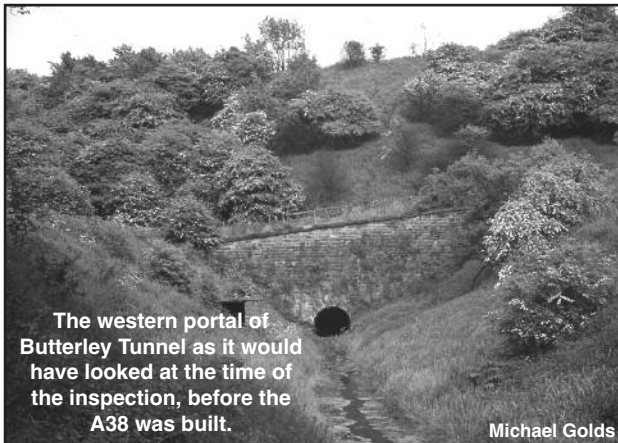
At Buckland Hollow is yet another short tunnel, similar in pattern to the previous two, with fine portals, good wide towpaths, and clear, deep cuts running through. It was here that a passer-by told us of delightful pleasure trips which could be taken along the Canal at one time, to various places of interest. Our Members Mr. and Mrs. Hopkinson also informed us that the new organ for Cromford church was transported by Canal.



Stage 3

Again the weather was warm and dry when we assembled at Buckland Hollow. The water in the Canal was still very low. One girder bridge, three horseshoe bridges, opencast coal workings taking water from the Canal, and then the surroundings change; the last horseshoe bridge is built of different stone, and shows slight signs of erosion. This is at Hartshay, near where the old Roman Road 'Rykneld Street' crosses the Canal. Here we found the water reduced to a mere trickle 2ft wide, in a channel recently cleared through silt. Near where the Canal passes under the Ripley road is a 9" drain outfall entering the Canal, and on the other side a weir discharging into a stream. Just beyond, the banks are being raised, necessitated by subsidence damage; this accounted for the shallowness of the water, the maintenance men having partially drained the Canal to allow their concrete to harden. The Canal here is wide and very beautiful.

Approaching Hammersmith the Canal enters a deep cutting. A 12" pipe crosses about 20 feet above – and then we see the diminutive portal of the Butterley Tunnel. The towpath directs the horses up and away overland, whilst the boats are "legged" through the



The western portal of Butterley Tunnel as it would have looked at the time of the inspection, before the A38 was built.

Michael Golds

tunnel. The portal has stepped voussoirs of stone in a high brick retaining wall, and the construction of the tunnel is interesting, having permanent centring for the brick vault in the form of stout planks supported on curved railway-line sections built into the tunnel sides. This is doubtless evidence of the repairs to overcome subsidence damage to the tunnel which were carried out many years ago. The horse track over the tunnel is via

the Butterley Company's private road. Near the Ironworks is a large reservoir of some 66 acres. It is interesting that the Benjamin Outram connected with these Works and this Canal was the first to project "Tramways", which were called Outram Roads [*This is not now generally thought to be true*]. The cost of building the Canal was about £80,000.

At Golden Valley we descended into a cutting and there found the far portal of the Tunnel. This east portal is partially stopped-off with boarding, but nearby is a good, wide concrete flume delivering a steady flow of water into the Canal from the terrain above. This water is from a lake immediately above the Tunnel.

Here our third 'inspection' ended. It had been a little more strenuous than usual, but that was due to the fact that almost two miles of our walk had been by road over the top of the tunnel, instead of the gentler, more interesting towpath. But we rested happily in the gathering dusk, eating our sandwiches and planning our next 'inspection'.

The second part of this report, covering the southern half of the canal including the Pinxton Branch, will be published in the next issue - Ed.



Following on from the item in the last issue regarding Amos White and the final collapse of Butterley Tunnel, it seems that Amos White had a cousin John White who was also a 'Bargee' (*sic.*). Dave Ratner has sent in the following newspaper article from March 1926:

OVER 70 YEARS ON THE CANAL - DEATH OF PYE BRIDGE BARGEE

The death of Mr. John White, of Canal Cottages, Pye Bridge at 80 years of age has removed a well-known figure from the district. For over 72 years the deceased was a bargee and had plied practically the whole of England's waterways. There was no greater authority in England on canals and "voyages" (as he invariably called them). Coming from Bullbridge to Pye Bridge, deceased's family followed the same calling and for 200 years (long before the Cromford Canal was made) had travelled with merchandise from as far as London. In the early days, deceased's grandfather made London journeys via Birmingham, but the opening of a new canal shortened the route. (*This is a reference to the time before the Grand Junction Canal was built and the only waterway route to London was via the Oxford Canal and the River Thames - Ed.*) One of deceased's proudest and earliest recollections was the conveyance (with his father) of shot and shell made by Oakes and Co. at their foundry for use in the Crimean war. The site of Oakes' works was then what is now known as Burnt Row, Somercotes Hill; and the ammunition carried was absolutely solid iron balls. The journey was commenced at Pye Bridge, down the Cromford Canal to Langley Mill, then via the Erewash Canal to Trent Lock. Here the horse was ferried across the River Trent and the boat towed to the River Soar, up which it proceeded to Leicester, joining the Old Union Canal to Foxton, where the Grand Union Canal was plied to Norton (Northamptonshire), the Grand Junction Canal followed up to Paddington, then the Regent's Canal to the city. Here the barge was unloaded and the ammunition embarked.

The best known bargees in the district were the Whites, the Shaws and the Foulds, and when Mr. John White came to man's estate he married a Miss Shaw, a family with almost as long a record as his own. There was a son and daughter of this marriage (Miss White died seven years ago) and as Mr. and Mrs. White had an ambition for their children to be educated (which was somewhat unusual in their calling), every effort was made and for some years Mr. W. White (now of Ivy Cottage, Pye Bridge) followed the occupation of engineer, but later took up work on the waterways and is now assisted by his son, Mr. John White; six generations who have plied the canals.

During peace time most of Mr. White's journeys were occupied with the carriage of pipes made by Oakes, to whom the barges belonged, and the boats were invariably full both ways. An empty "voyage" was not in accordance with deceased's ideas. Amongst the goods brought from London was the first billiard table used in Riddings Working Men's Club, and the barges in Mr. White's father's days were also used for the conveyance of pipes for the first organ in Riddings church.

With the development of the railways, Messrs. Oakes sold their barges and then forty years ago [1886] Mr. White worked for the firm of Kempson (chemical manufacturers), an association which continued until his death.

Although of such advanced age, Mr. White retained all his faculties and worked up to last Christmas. Indeed a few weeks prior to then Mr. White travelled to Leicester on business concerning a motor boat which Messrs. Kempson proposed purchasing. After the many thousands of miles Mr. White must have walked leading his horse, the prospect of a motor barge appealed strongly to him and it is to be regretted that Mr. White did not live to see this project materialise. Most of his journeys of late years had been from the chemical works to Loughborough, the barges being constructed for carrying fluid chemicals.



Hundreds of journeys have been made under the tunnel from Golden Valley to Hammersmith, and here the horse went overland, while Mr. White lay on his back and propelled his barge with his feet on the tunnel roof, a process known as "legging it". Occasionally Mr. White was held up by frost, an experience which his active mind did not enjoy and during the great frost of 1893 his barge was laid up three months at Cromford, unable to proceed.

His school of experience had been a stern one so that the love of pleasure shown by younger generations met with little sympathy from him. Though he thought no method of merchandise transit was as safe as a barge, he did not despise the railways and spent a holiday every year with his sister at Scarborough.

He enjoyed the confidence and respect of both employers and employees at Messrs. Kempson's, his sterling honesty and uprightness being his finest characteristic. With his passing goes one of the old school, who served his employers with strict fairness and who received in return the consideration which such service deserves. The little cottage by the canal, with stable for the horse, is empty now; deceased had made up his mind to retire, but as his health was failing the home of his son Mr. W. White (Ivy Cottage) was opened to him and here he was devotedly nursed by his daughter-in law, Mrs. W. White, to whom he was greatly attached. The late Mr. White had been a widower for many years.

The interment took place from Ivy Cottage, Pye Bridge on Thursday last, the first part of the service being in Riddings Church, before interment in Leabrooks Cemetery.

The article then included a list of mourners, including John White's cousin Amos.

The Records of the Cromford & High Peak Railway Company

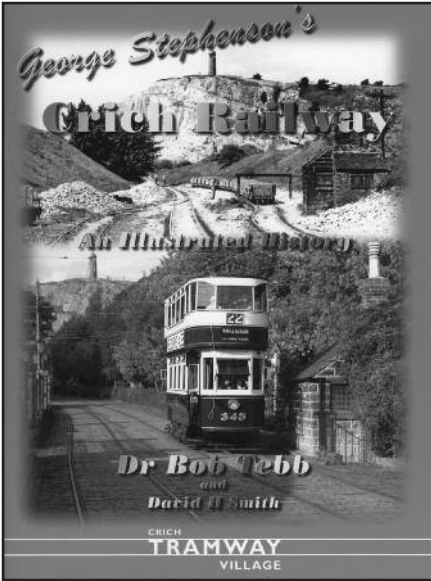
**A new book from the Derbyshire Record Society
of interest to all Friends of the Cromford Canal
Edited by David Hodgkins**

The Cromford & High Peak Railway was one of the most ambitious of the schemes projected in the boom in railway promotion of 1824–5. Completed in 1831 as a 30-mile link across the Peak District between the Cromford Canal and the Peak Forest Canal, the line never fulfilled hopes that it would become part of a trunk route from the East Midlands to the North West, although it did provide a stimulus to local trade, especially the export of limestone and import of coal. In 1862 the company was absorbed into the London & North Western Railway, which later abandoned the northern section of the line. The southern portion remained in use until 1967 and has since become the High Peak Trail.

Much has been written on the C&HPR but no previous writer has placed its early history in its social and economic context. Here at last is a definitive edition of the company's own records, with a detailed commentary on the building and operation of the line, and the traders who used the railway. The book has been edited by David Hodgkins, a retired senior civil servant who is well known for his knowledge of the High Peak and early railways generally.

The Records of the Cromford & High Peak Railway Company, a hardback of 396 pages, including three maps (ISBN 978-0-946324-31-6) will be published on 23 April 2009 at £30. To find out how to buy a copy of this important new book for a lot less than £30 go to: www.derbyshirerecordsociety.org.uk or write to:

Derbyshire Record Society at 9 Owen Falls Avenue, Chesterfield S41 0FR
for full details.



George Stephenson's Crich Railway

by Bob Tebb & David H Smith

published by Crich Tramway Village

64 pages. £6.95.

Both of the railways that carried Crich limestone towards the Cromford Canal had good pedigrees. The earliest was the Butterley Co's line down to Bullbridge, where the stone was burnt or loaded directly into boats. The second, the subject of this book, was built by George Stephenson.

When digging Clay Cross Tunnel for his North Midland Railway from Derby to Leeds, he discovered significant coal reserves. The poorer quality small coal and slack were ideal fuels to burn lime, so he built a bank of 20 massive lime kilns alongside the Cromford Canal at Ambergate. Of course, being

Stephenson, they were entirely served by railways, and the canal was probably considered more a hindrance than a help!

When it opened in 1841, the metre-gauge line was partly worked by horse and partly by self-acting inclines. The entire traffic was downhill, so the descending wagons could pull up the empty ones. When steam locomotives were introduced, all but one of the inclines were taken out of service. With a gradient of 1 in 4, this was one of the steepest in the country and was appropriately known as 'The Steep'. It lowered wagons down the escarpment that the canal tunneled through by Hag Tunnel. The wagons then crossed the canal to load the limestone directly into the top of the kilns.

This very well produced, well-illustrated softback follows the development of the railway for over 100 years through to dieselisation and the sudden closure of the quarry in 1957. Although it is hard to trace remnants of the track today, some of its bridges still exist. Indeed so does its track, but not locally. The track was 'exported' to Wales for use on the restoration of the Talylyn Railway. Meanwhile the quarry itself has been commandeered for the home of the National Tramway Museum. Although not on the same track, the trams today use part of the route of Stephenson's railway 160 years ago!

The book is basically a major update of the well known *Crich Mineral Railways* by 'Dowie', but without reference to the second railway – the Butterley Co's earlier line to Bullbridge. The authors are specific in their coverage, and say little about the working of the quarries or the lime kilns, so there is potential for a further three related titles!

It is disappointing, however, that among the many photographs included, there are none of the important bridge that took the railway across the canal, nor of the stockpiles of limestone that were stored close by. Friends can, however, see views of these in my book *The Cromford Canal*.

Hugh Potter

George Stevenson's Crich Railway

will be available from the FCC sales address for £6.95 plus £2.20 p&p.



THE RED WHEEL SCHEME MARKING OUR TRANSPORT HERITAGE

Peter Stone reports on a scheme to recognise sites of significance in transport history.
Several sites on the Cromford Canal come to mind...

A major new initiative has been launched to commemorate Britain's rich and globally important legacy in the development of transport and present it to a new and wider audience. A new website is bringing together the best of 'Our Transport Heritage' (OTH) and putting each site in its historical and geographical context ... and the most significant of these locations will each be endorsed with a bespoke plaque, known colloquially as a 'Red Wheel'. Some OTH candidates e.g. the Forth Bridge and Channel Tunnel, are household names but many more are little known and their importance unappreciated.

The scheme is being administered by The Transport Trust – a national charity which, for more than 40 years, has been successfully promoting the preservation of Britain's heritage in all modes of transport – on land, by water and in the air. The Trust's supportive Patron is HRH Prince Michael of Kent (pictured at the launch).

The OTH website will eventually carry information on some 1,000 heritage sites and has recently 'gone live' at www.transportheritage.com with the first 400. With its national coverage and links to a wide variety of other sources, it is expected rapidly to become the preferred point of reference for students, teachers and those planning a holiday or stimulating day out - in addition to transport enthusiasts and historians. It is hoped that highlighting the great achievements of our forebears will also encourage future generations to consider engineering, logistics and related careers.

Taking advice from local historians, industrial archaeologists and other experts, Transport Trust County Coordinators are taking a closer look at our heritage to determine the sites of greatest significance. [Whereas the English Heritage 'Blue Plaque' scheme highlights places associated with famous individuals, Red Wheels will highlight key locations of engineering and transport importance.] Nominations will be evaluated for their importance, rarity, public awareness and access / 'something to see'. On the awareness criteria, we will rank a 'hidden gem' higher than a site already nationally recognised. Most sites will be unique but a few may be chosen because they are particularly good regional examples of an important category within the built environment e.g. Roman roads, or turnpike roads & toll houses. Finally, a Red Wheel will exceptionally be awarded to remind the current generation of an important former use of that location, which has since been obliterated. The OTH scheme and Red Wheel plaques are initially being funded by the Transport Trust and private sponsorship. Additional corporate, trust, private and legacy sponsorship are sought, to facilitate their national roll-out. The first Red Wheels will be unveiled in Derbyshire in time for the start of the 2009 tourist season at Easter.

The Transport Trust, 202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW www.transporttrust.com
Registered Charity No. 280943



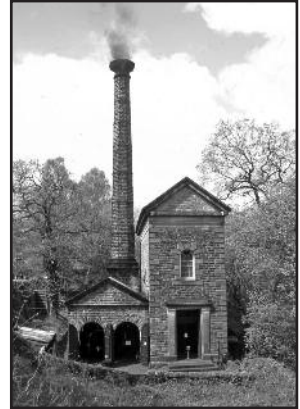


LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates

Work is now well under way with the boiler repairs mentioned last time and we are hopefully on target to have the two boilers complete for the Easter Steaming. The steam test is booked for Easter Sunday morning. The boiler engineers have worked very hard and completed boiler 44 very quickly which has enabled us to put it back together ready for the hydraulic tests.

Boiler 43 will hopefully be ready as this is being written (week commencing 23rd March), which will enable us to put that one back together as well. The two boilers have undergone NDT testing to enable plate thicknesses to be assessed and areas around rivets checked for cracking. The results were very encouraging as both boilers show very little signs of corrosion due to use and the plates are still in good condition; not bad for 109 years old. The firehole door rivets on both boilers were definitely in need of replacement especially on 43, the heads having been totally worn away on the inside. Hydraulic tests to one and a half working pressure (60 PSI) will be carried out next and then the boilers can be lagged and the cladding replaced ready for the steam test.



The pump inlet was inspected and, much to our surprise, did not seem in a very bad condition, certainly not as bad as suspected. With all the other works required it was decided to leave it alone for the time being. The outlet has also been left alone and will hopefully last for another season. If works are required mid-season so be it.

The air pump is still out as a source of thick copper wire has not yet been found but hopefully a search on the internet has brought up a possible source which will be contacted.

With just three weeks to go to the first steaming of this year at Easter it is certainly all hands on deck. The normally tidy engine and boiler houses are a real mess and the coal store is blocked with the steel boiler cladding sheets. If all goes well the pump should be up and running again for Easter with hopefully a new set of visitors coming to see it. With the towpath temporarily closed due to structural problems with the railway aqueduct, the engine is a bit isolated from the south but it is hoped to re-open the towpath with a temporary bridge in place soon.

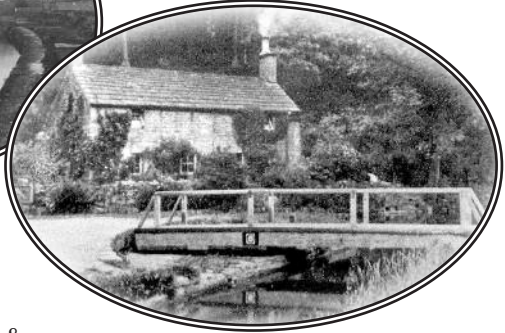
LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING WEEKENDS 2009

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

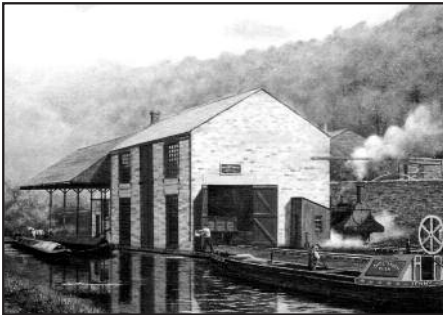
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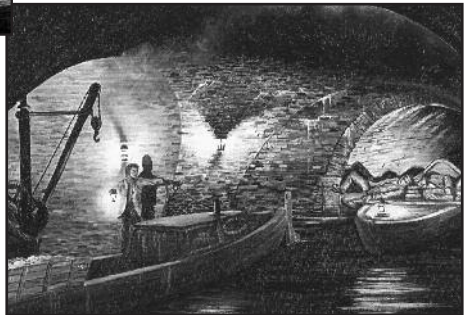


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