

# THE **PORTAL**



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

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**NEW YEAR 2011**



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**FRONT COVER:** Our vice chairman Mike Kelley starting off the FCC petition at Cromford to press for the dredging of the canal to enable the horse boat to operate again. Please use your copy enclosed with this issue to get as many signatures as possible. See also our Chairman's notes on page 4.

Photo: Editor

**BACK COVER (TOP):** The handy little pusher tug (*The Grunt!*) standing by at Whatstandwell Bridge to move mud hoppers to be unloaded. This vessel is the first motor boat ever to operate on this length of canal. See page 8.

Photo: Editor

**BACK COVER (BOTTOM):** Land and Water Services with their very impressive amphibious dredger. This was able to operate regardless of the depth of water or lack of it. *Quick, polish the dredger, the press are here!*

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.36

Another year has now passed and I have to say that it has been rather a frustrating one from an FCC point of view. The proposed small opencast coal operation adjacent to the canal line at Langley Mill, which will result in a length of restored canal and the building of a marina, has been in the pipeline for over twelve years. We were hoping there would be some news last year, since there appeared to be some progress at last towards obtaining the various permissions, but all seems to have gone quiet again. The Smotherfly Saga also rumbles on with still no meaningful progress with UK Coal. Thirdly, as reported elsewhere, the state of the canal from Cromford to High Peak Junction is giving serious cause for concern because of the severe silting and weed growth, which meant the cancellation of the horse drawn boat at the World Heritage Site Discovery Days at Cromford. This was a big disappointment to all concerned.

All is not doom and gloom, however. The sales stall continues to attract interest and provide a steady income. The Inland Waterways Association National Festival is quite local again this year, being at Burton upon Trent, and our stall will be there hoping to repeat the success of Ratcliffe on Soar in 2009. Last year also saw some very welcome dredging of the canal at Whatstandwell, the second phase of which has recently been completed in spite of the very trying conditions caused by the severe weather. See page 8. Let us hope that the money can be found to dredge the Cromford to High Peak Junction section. This is essential if any type of passenger boat is to operate on this length, something which the FCC would very much like to see. Included with this issue you will find a petition to Derbyshire County Council regarding this. Please try to obtain as many signatures as possible and help the FCC on this vital matter.

In the meantime, have a happy, peaceful and productive New Year!

**Remember your AGM - Monday April 18th  
at Ironville Church Hall 7.30pm. See page 13.**

## SITUATION VACANT

**Administrative Assistant** - Following the resignation of Tony Brookes last year, the committee is short of someone to help with the increasing amount of clerical duties. Keeping track of all the correspondence required to keep in contact with the many and varied people and organisations with which the FCC is involved is becoming more demanding. Our chairman is particularly in need of some help with this as he is trying to ensure that no opportunity of furthering our aims is missed through pressure of work. If you have experience of clerical work, are computer friendly and are willing to help, your committee would dearly like to hear from you!

**Please note the press date for the Spring 2011 issue will be March 23rd**



## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



Firstly, a Happy New Year to you all.

I know I am (only!) fifty two but I have never known such a cold spell and the amount of snow so early in the winter as happened last November. There have been some very memorable images captured of the canal during the cold spell, wildlife, snow and ice and poor old Land & Water trying to finish the dredging contract at Whatstandwell Bridge. Some of these are in this issue of Portal.

As reported in the last Portal, a funding application was submitted to LEADER regarding the operation of a trip boat from Cromford Wharf to Leawood starting in the summer of 2012 to coincide with the opening of a new World Heritage Site visitor centre at Cromford Mill. This application was carrying £200,000 worth of dredging that will be required before any boat can operate between these two points. With that amount of cost before the provision of a boat and infrastructure the application faced an uphill struggle to gain acceptance. It is a shame that the opportunity to dredge this section was not taken when emda money was available a year or two ago, rather than spent elsewhere, but at that time the decision was taken by DCC to use the money for a number of access improvements, repairs to retaining walls, the railway footbridge at Whatstandwell station and of course the dredging at Whatstandwell that is now nearing completion. It is a tired cliché, but we are where we are and the FCC were not a party to that decision, hence the need for the Cromford Canal Partnership. This was formed at the end of 2009 and the current scoping study looking at future options for the whole canal prior to a full feasibility study is being carried out by Atkins. This scoping study emerged from that process. Other than this study little progress has been achieved regarding the establishment of a Cromford Canal Partnership as a legal entity in its own right capable of applying for funding and deciding on how to spend that funding for the whole of the canal route. I still get the sense that within DCC some still have a mind-set that sees the Cromford Canal as only the sections that DCC actually own, not the whole route. I will be seeking early meetings in 2011 to pursue this aim. Who knows when and if other waterway funding may be available in the east midlands? All stakeholders need to be well placed to make the very best case for the Cromford if and when any money becomes available – only after we have all paid for the Olympics of course.

One very positive outcome from the LEADER application was that there is a possibility of some money to fund a study looking at the ecological issues of trip boat operation from Cromford Wharf to Leawood. By the time you read this article the application will have been made.

The Discovery Day events at Cromford on the 30th & 31st October 2010 (see article on page 18) were a success with the Derwent Valley looking at its best on the Saturday in the autumn sunshine. The 2010 event included two of the UK's best traditional Rose & Castle painters. Jes Inglis and Keith Hampson are both accredited 'Journeymen' in the prestigious Waterways Craft Guild. They brought along their paints and brushes and demonstrated how this traditional art is done. There was also a display of both modern and 'old masters' painted work and information on other traditional canal crafts.



A whole range of other events took place that weekend based at the Gothic Warehouse at Cromford Wharf, including rope making, traditional street organ, historical photograph displays and other archive material, waterway wildlife, and of course the Friends of the Cromford Canal sales stand was there with our range of books, clothing and Christmas cards. My heartfelt thanks to all involved in this and all other 2010 events, without them our message would be much diminished.

What was not at Cromford was neither the horse drawn demonstration boat nor the horse power. The decision was taken earlier in the year that the depth of the canal and in places the width of the canal was making the operation of the horse boat at this once yearly event increasingly difficult and not wishing to over tax the horse or risk any Health and Safety issues, the FCC would not seek to operate the horse boat at Discovery Days 2010. This boat and horse combination was sorely missed and much comment was made concerning this by visitors from close by and from other parts of the UK.

The FCC took the decision to launch a petition to DCC requesting that consideration should be given to dredging the canal so as to enable the operation of the horse boat and/or a year round trip boat. The FCC see the provision of a trip boat as an important step to enhancing the 'visitor experience' for visitors to the northern part of the World Heritage Site and of course providing an income to DCC as canal owners, in short helping turn a liability into an asset. Let there be no mistake. The FCC are not 'demanding' anything. This petition seeks to demonstrate the strength of feeling concerning the provision of a trip boat at Cromford, it seeks to remind DCC of such feeling when it comes to setting budgets for future years or perhaps on how to spend some of DCC's reserves, a subject close to the heart of Communities Secretary Mr Eric Pickles, after all, many FCC members are Derbyshire voters. Joking apart, the FCC know that money is tight at all levels of government and the FCC have to demonstrate support for our project and stand willing to help with working parties. The Big Society is not just some politician's dream, making community projects work is part of it, if any local Councillors actually read this, please let the FCC help you to help us! That is why we have organised a Waterway Recovery Group Summer Camp for the Derwent Valley section of the Cromford canal in July 2011 with any overspill working on the Lockwood's section at Sawmills.

A copy of the petition is enclosed with this edition of the Portal. We have over 1000 signatures to date, but if every FCC member could get about fifteen to twenty signatures we could present a petition containing 10,000+ names and that should act as quite a strong aide memoire to anyone. I urge you all to get as many people to sign as possible, I know that for some of you this will be difficult so others will have to collect a few more as many of us have done up to now. If you could return the forms to me by the end of February I would be much obliged.

Petitions are all the rage amongst Derbyshire canal groups you know, the Chesterfield Canal Trust has also launched one because according to their website "The Chesterfield Canal Trust has launched a petition to demonstrate local support. We have been informed by the Heritage Lottery Fund that our canal has little or no heritage value and that there is little or no local support for its preservation and restoration."

You have to laugh sometimes doing this job or else you'd be in tears all the time! My New Year's Resolution is to try and end these articles on a positive note, so to end here are two pieces of good news. Firstly, English Heritage expect to make some recommendation as to the level of protection that will be afforded to Butterley Tunnel and its associated shafts in February 2011. We do not know yet if this will be as a Listed Building or as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Secondly, local solicitors Ellis Fermor & Negus have chosen the Friends of the Cromford Canal as their chosen charity of the year for 2011. They have applied for corporate membership for the coming year as well, welcome!

Bye for now.



## WATER DEPTH SURVEY

Members will remember that, although the World Heritage Site Discovery Weekend at Cromford at the end of October was quite successful from the point of view of the FCC sales stall and various displays in the Gothic Warehouse, one important feature was missing: **the horse boat**. This unfortunate situation was brought about by the lack of maintenance of the canal between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction. At this event in 2009, the horse was struggling to pull the boat in various places along this length due to a lack of depth caused by silting of the channel and the severe build up of weed. It was therefore reluctantly, but quite correctly, decided that the boat could not operate in 2010 after another year of deterioration of the canal.



It was subsequently decided that a survey of this length of canal was required to determine the size of the problem and identify the shallowest or most weed choked areas. And so it was that our chairman Patrick Morriss came to be actually boating on the Cromford Canal in November, as shown above. The boat was provided by Derbyshire County Council and Pat was joined in the boat by Mark Brailsford, a DCC Countryside Services Ranger. They progressed from High Peak Junction to Cromford taking soundings every 50 metres, with Chris Coombs of DCC walking along the towpath making notes. These have since been made available to the FCC. It was found that the average depth was about 600mm with a mostly soft bottom. In some places, usually where small streams carry silt into the canal, the depth was down to 400mm. This could be thought to be better than expected, but weed growth causing narrowing of the channel, particularly either side of Lawn Bridge, was also a major factor, even the small boat having difficulty there.

What is required now of course is for something to be done about it. The answer is a well planned dredging operation. The major obstacle is, as with many things, the cost. There is no doubt that dredging is expensive. On the other hand, if nothing is done the Cromford Canal has no future. Let us hope that all concerned can get together on this situation and at least make the canal passable for the horse boat in October 2011.

Editor



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

from Mike Kelley



As you will expect, the weather affected some of our planned events over winter, but surprisingly not too many. Those who are awaiting more news on Smotherly will again be sadly disappointed as unfortunately the situation with UK-Coal remains unchanged. We seem to be making very little progress with this project.

- **Sawmills Planning** - The planning application for two interpretation [information] boards to be placed at Sawmills, near Ambergate, has been approved and the orders placed for them. They will be installed at Sawmills in February or March.

- **Monday 11th October** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Poet and Castle Inn at Codnor.

- **Monday 18th October** - I was privileged to give the talk for our monthly social at Ironville. My talk was called 'The Hidden Events of 1066' and based on my book hopefully soon to be published.

- **Tuesday 26th October** - Our Chairman attended a meeting with council members regarding the Canal Scoping Study.

- **Thursday 28th October** - Our Chairman Pat Morriss gave a talk at Cromford Wharf as part of the Discovery Days events for the World Heritage Site.

- **Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st October** - The FCC took part in the annual World Heritage Site Discovery Days at Cromford Wharf. It was a packed weekend (see elsewhere in this magazine) with many events taking place; such as canal 'roses and castles' painting, rope making, our sales stand and tombola and our slide show of the whole canal. Unfortunately we could not run the horse boat this year due to the silted condition of the canal. To help clear this silted condition Pat Morriss started a petition to campaign to Derbyshire County Council who own this site. (Petition is here enclosed please sign it).

- **Thursday 4th November** - A meeting was held at Belper North Mill and attended by FCC, to review the running of events for the Discovery Days. Over all it was considered to have been a success.

- **Thursday 4th November** - Our Chairman travelled all the way to London to deliver a talk on the canal at the London Canal Museum. He certainly works hard for us.

- **Monday 8th November** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Poet and Castle Inn at Codnor.

- **Wednesday 10th November** - Our Chairman attended a World Heritage Site Technical Panel Meeting at Matlock.

- **Monday 15th November** - For our monthly social evening at Ironville Church Hall we were pleased to have Barry Joyce, of Derbyshire County Council's Conservation and Design team, Barry, gave us a talk on Richard Arkwright's Rock House, which is situated above the wharf at Cromford.

- **Tuesday 16th November** - Our Chairman attended a further meeting regarding the Canal Scoping Study.

- **Friday 19th November** - I was invited by the Inland Waterways Association to give a talk on the Cromford Canal, at Nottingham, for their Notts & Derby branch.

- **Saturday 20th & Sunday 21st November** - Our Work Party organiser Dave Tinkler arranged for a work party on the canal at Jacksdale. They have made tremendous



improvements there as anyone walking that way will see. See page 24.

- **Monday 22nd November** - Two men in a (little) boat! Our Chairman together with council management took to a boat to take a canal depth survey from High Peak Junction to Cromford. This is the section we want to see dredged. See page 5.

- **Sunday 28th November** - Dave Tinkler and work party company braved the weather and said, 'A big thank you to the hardy volunteers who attended the work party with DCC at Cromford Wharf this Sunday. My apologies if any one turned up on Saturday but I cancelled it due to the road conditions with the snow. I didn't think that it was worth the risk of anyone having an accident.'

- **Monday 6th December** - Unfortunately our Christmas Folk night had to be cancelled due to the weather. A pity, as I really enjoy these folk nights, they are great fun.

- **Friday 10th December** - Our Chairman met with Ian Parkin regarding implementation plan for the World Heritage Site.

- **Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th December** - In spite of the bad weather our work party team tackled the trees and scrub at Jacksdale again. Well done all.

- **Monday 13th December** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Poet and Castle Inn at Codnor.

- **Monday 20th December** - Our Chairman attended the unveiling of a Derbyshire Blue Plaque to Joseph Paxton at Chatsworth. (It is time Alfreton had a similar plaque to Benjamin Outram).

- **Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th January** - Another work party was held below the locks at Jacksdale. I suggest you take a walk down there and see the great work Dave Tinkler and his team have done. (And maybe join in yourself – don't keep putting it off).

- **Monday 10th January** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Poet and Castle Inn at Codnor.

### SPRINGTIME WOODLAND WANDER

This year's FCC Sponsored Walk will take a circular route through the woods from Ambergate.

Contact John Barker 07860 632837

## MEMBERS' SOCIAL MEETINGS 2011

The Friends of the Cromford Canal welcome everyone to their Social Meetings, held on the **Third Monday of the Month at Ironville Church Hall at 7.30pm.**

There is a bar and raffle available at all meetings. Admission is £1.50.

- **February 21st** - RAILS TO RIPLEY - Talk around his book on steam railways to Ripley – by FCC member Howard Sprenger

- **March 21st** - WINGFIELD MANOR - The story of this local manor – by Clive Holiday

- **April 18th** - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Your input will be welcomed.

- **May 16th** - FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE - Her life and story - by Clive Tougher

- **June 20th** - THE BUTTERLEY TUNNEL - From someone who has actually been into and through this tunnel – by Tina Cordon

- **September 19th** - ENGINEERING ON THE BRITISH CANAL SYSTEM - by George Rogers

- **October 17th** - CANAL BOAT PEOPLE - by Wendy Freer

- **November 21st** - THE HIGH PEAK TRAIL - by Andy Pollock

- **December 19th** - OUR CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - Do come along its great fun.





# DREDGING AT WHATSTANDWELL - PHASE TWO ...THE RETURN OF *THE GRUNT*

by the Editor

We were all very pleased when Derbyshire County Council engaged Land & Water Services Ltd. to carry out dredging work on the Cromford Canal at Whatstandwell in March and April last year, see Hugh Potter's report in Portal 34. Unfortunately, during this work, a pipe to Whatstandwell sewage works was discovered crossing the canal just 2ft below the surface. This pipe could not be crossed by the dredger or the tug and hoppers, meaning that the 350yard length between the pipe and Whatstandwell Bridge had to be left until the second visit of the dredging team, which started in mid November, following DCC again obtaining permission from Natural England.

Land & Water Services Ltd. have recently been appointed exclusive dredging contractors to British Waterways and have a very impressive range of plant and specialist equipment. Some of this has been used to good effect at Whatstandwell.

The first job was to clear the channel under Whatstandwell Bridge. A long reach land-based excavator dredged a short section each side of the bridge to enable scaffold and fabric dams to be erected, see below.



Hugh Potter

LEFT; Looking South from Whatstandwell Bridge, the excavator is just starting to clear a short length of the channel adjacent to the former wharf. The towpath was closed during the works.

BELOW: The silt is loaded into trailers to be taken by tractor to the previously prepared field at Spinney Farm.



Hugh Potter



The fabric dam on the north side of the bridge is seen on the right. The length of canal under the bridge between this and a similar dam on the south side is being pumped out. This has enabled the small excavator to work in the canal bed and drag the silt from under the bridge where the large machine cannot reach. The idea was, when this part is refilled, the tug and mud hoppers can pass through between the dredging site to the south and the unloading wharf to the north.

During this process, a problem appeared. A concrete ledge was found 800mm below water level at the point where the stop plank grooves are, as shown below. This may have meant that the tug was unable to pass over it, or the mud hoppers cannot be fully loaded. Consideration was given to removing this obstruction, but it was decided to avoid this if possible.



Hugh Potter

Hugh Potter





When this preliminary work was completed, the dredging could start in earnest. This is when Land & Water brought in their amphibious dredger. The machine used on the previous visit ran on tracks similar to a conventional 360 degree excavator and simply 'waded' in the canal. The machine used this time ran on larger tracks which are mounted on what in effect is a large buoyancy tank. When on dry land or in shallow water, the tracks operate conventionally. When the water is deep enough, the machine simply floats but the tracks still drive it forward through the water. This meant it was ideally suited to the site at Whatstandwell. What was not really anticipated was the Siberian-type weather!



The dredger crunching its way through the ice under Whatstandwell footbridge and rapidly filling the mud hopper. Note the large blocks of ice in the lower picture. The pusher tug - *The Grunt* - is standing by to take the hopper to the unloading wharf. Interesting to think that the last ice breaking on this stretch of canal was done by a horsedrawn boat.

Photos: Chris Morris





Editor

ABOVE: The dredger in floating mode working near Whatstandwell bridge. The silt is being loaded into the hopper which is then pulled through the bridge by *The Grunt* with some difficulty caused by the concrete shelf mentioned earlier.

BELOW: The car park was pressed into service as an unloading wharf and works compound north of the bridge. The two mud hoppers were able to keep the unloading machine busy.



Editor



The shallow pipe crossing the canal at the sewage works meant that the loaded hoppers could not be taken south to the tipping site by water with the tug as would have been preferred. The silt was removed off site along Main Road Whatstandwell to Spinney Farm in sealed agricultural trailers pulled by tractors. Tractor and trailer movements were planned so as not to conflict with school drop off and pick up times and road cleansing was also scheduled.



Editor

ABOVE: Road transport of canal dredgings is not the ideal situation. However, the trailers are designed to carry semi-liquid material without spillage.

BELOW LEFT: Twenty first century vehicle crossing eighteenth century canal bridge.

BELOW RIGHT: The tipping site at Spinney Farm as seen from the towpath. This had been prepared for the previous dredging operation last spring. A series of lagoons have been made to contain the silt whilst it dries out. It will eventually be spread evenly over the fields and be ploughed in to form a fertile area which will be reseeded to create a wild flower meadow.



Editor



Editor



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is hereby given that the  
Ninth Annual General Meeting  
of the Friends of the Cromford Canal will be held on  
Monday, April 18th. 2011 at the Church Hall, Ironville  
commencing at 7.30pm.**

## AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Eighth Annual General Meeting on Monday, April 19th. 2010
3. Matters arising
4. Report of the Chairman
5. Report of the Treasurer and presentation of the accounts for 2010
6. Adoption of the accounts
7. Election of Trustees
8. Reports by Officers
9. Any other business

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

The accounts for the year ending December 31st. 2010 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 12 meetings a year. The Trustees are responsible to the Charity Commission for the organisation 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 Patrick Morriss, John Baylis, Mike Kelley, Bob Bullock and Eric Singleton have served either 1 or 2 years and will continue as Trustees. This year Yvonne Shattower, Peter Stone, David Tinkler and Christopher Jacklin retire by rotation and are all willing to stand for a further term of three years. During 2010 Tony Brookes retired for personal reasons and there was one vacancy not filled at the AGM in 2010.

This means that we have four trustees willing to stand and we have an additional two vacancies. Nominations for election as Trustees must be submitted in writing to:

**John Baylis, 215 Clipstone Avenue West,  
Forest Town, Mansfield, Notts. NG19 0HJ  
Tel.01623 621208**

before March 31st. The nomination must be signed by the proposer, seconder and the nominee who must all be FCC members.

Please come along and support the committee and ask any questions you may have. After the formal business, it is hoped the meeting will be addressed by the new director of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Otherwise, Hugh Potter will present some more of his impressive collection of images from the FCC archives.

John Baylis



# Minutes of the Eighth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal

held at 7.30pm on Monday, April 19th 2010  
at the Church Hall, Ironville.

## 1. Present

Patrick Morriss (Chairman), Mike Kelley, John Baylis, Bob Bullock, Yvonne Shattower, Peter Stone, Chris Jacklin, David Tinkler, Eric Singleton (Trustees), John Boucher (Honorary Consulting Engineer), Giles Metcalf, Val Kelley, Hugh Potter, Beryl Singleton, Jan Colombo, Meg Tarlton, 50 other members and 4 visitors.

## 2. Apologies for absence

Tony Brookes, The Rev Steve Parish, Val Roberts, Mike Harrison, Howard Smith (Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association representative) Judy Berry, Trevor and Dorothy Robson.

## 3. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the Seventh Annual General Meeting held on March 30th 2009 had been circulated earlier. Their adoption was proposed by Peter Keating, seconded by David Ratner and carried unanimously.

## 4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

## 5. Chairman's report

Pat Morriss started by recording the highs and lows for 2009. The changes in Derbyshire County Council resulted in the proposed formation of the Cromford Canal Partnership, similar to that on the Chesterfield Canal. DCC have also accepted the need for a full feasibility study of the whole canal. The DCC owned section between Cromford and Ambergate is the subject of a £500,000 grant from the East Midlands Development Agency and work is planned for the first dredging in nearly 20 years at Whatstandwell. In that section the iron aqueduct taking the canal over the Midland Railway line is suffering from old age and the FCC is keeping a watching eye on the restoration work.

The FCC has benefited from increased publicity in 2009 and the Level Pond Plod sponsored walk in which over 140 people walked 14 miles from Cromford Wharf to Pinxton was very successful. In addition to the sponsorship, additional money was raised by the sales stand and a tombola at the finish. This highlighted to Pinxton residents the FCC work on the Smotherfly site leading to restoration of the Pinxton Branch of the canal. Work has finally started at Smotherfly with the construction of a nursery pond to conserve flora and fauna during the landscaping work. The FCC has also provided a method statement, management plan and landscape details to Amber Valley District Council to comply with the planning approval.



The Stevenson's Dyers factory site at Bullbridge is in the process of planning and we are trying to persuade the designers to bring a restored Cromford Canal into the development. With the nearby Sawmills section of canal, the Bullbridge & Sawmills Civic Society is encouraging the local residents to work on the Cromford Canal and in the surrounding area. The working parties had continued on the section of the canal at Sawmills currently owned by Lockwoods, the local transport company. Working parties have also been held below Ironville in co-operation with the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

On the downside, the redundant Butterley Company works at Ripley had been partly demolished before the FCC persuaded English Heritage and the local authority to take a greater interest to safeguard any original stone buildings and the Butterley Tunnel, which runs under the site and is accessed by loading shafts from the site. At Ironville, the Golden Valley Partnership appears to be suffering from the recession and the proposals, which included a new section of canal round Codnor Park Reservoir, are on hold at present.

With regard to increased publicity, the FCC has welcomed Brian Blessed as its new President. Brian, who lives in Derbyshire, is keen to see progress towards restoration on the Cromford Canal.

After several years, Giles Metcalf has resigned as FCC Webmaster as his work is taking him out of the area. Pat thanked Giles for his improvements over his term of office.

The sales stand has been in frequent use in 2009, with Cromford Wharf being a popular venue. Pat thanked Val Roberts, who was retiring as a Trustee, and her helpers for their work since the formation of the FCC. Finally, Pat thanked all the other Trustees, committee members and the membership for their help and support of him and the Society during the year.

## **6. Treasurers Report**

Printed copies of the accounts had been circulated at the start of the meeting. Bob Bullock, the Treasurer, explained that although the income was slightly up on last year at £15,386, expenditure was larger resulting in a loss for the year of £2,291. Some details were that the problems with the bank making multiple deductions for membership had been resolved, interest income had been decimated by the change in the bank rate, the talk by Julian Richards raised much of the £3,192 from talks, and the Level Pond Plod resulted in an income of £1,981. He finally thanked Terry Miles for examining the accounts at no cost to the FCC.

## **7. Adoption of the accounts**

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Jack Brown MBE, seconded by John Barker and carried unanimously.

## **8. Election of Trustees**

Valerie Roberts has retired as a Trustee and did not wish to be re-elected. As there have been no other nominations there was no election, but the Chairman welcomed the possibility of co-option up to the next AGM if any members were interested.

## **9. Membership report**

Yvonne Shattower reported that it had been a very satisfactory year for membership numbers which now stand at 677 with 102 new members in the year. There are now 92 Life members, 7 Corporate Charity members and 2 Corporate Business members. Yvonne thanked all who helped with the distribution of Portal and leaflets.





## **10. Archivist's Report**

Hugh Potter reported that during 2009 he had continued to acquire images and documents relating to the Cromford Canal, and had been allowed to scan some photographs and documents owned by others. June and Bert Crump had completed transcribing the manuscript copy of the 3 volumes of the Cromford Canal Company Minutes from 1789 to 1852 into Word format which can now be searched for specific topics. The first volume is now with the publisher Philip Riden of the Derbyshire Record Society. Transcriptions of over 2000 documents photographed in various archives at Leeds, Birmingham and Derby continues, thanks to Phil Aspley and Dave Ratner. This is revealing some fascinating details, particularly about Butterley Tunnel between 1900 and 1920. Hugh finished by requesting members to be on the look out for old photographs and documents on house clearances.

## **11. Webmaster's report**

Giles Metcalf said he was sorry to be leaving the area to move to South Wales for work but he had completed the new FCC Website which with 70 pages was one of the largest for similar canal societies. He had located a new webmaster, George Rogers, and had passed the working documents on to him. It is hoped that back issues of Portal will soon be available on the website.

## **12. Sales Report**

Eric Singleton reported that despite the recession sales continued to be buoyant and he thanked those who had helped with the stand and purchases during the year.

## **13. Any other business**

Val Kelley thanked all those who brought prizes for the raffles.

In response to a question about the World Heritage Organisation, Pat Morriss said that the Cromford Canal formed part of the WHO site between Cromford and Ambergate. He was now Deputy Chairman of the World Heritage Site with responsibility for volunteer groups.

In response to a question, Pat Morriss and others reported that the Cromford Canal is largely in the ownership of Derbyshire County Council, British Waterways, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Wildlife Trusts and private individuals. Although ideally the restored canal might be taken over by British Waterways, this might be difficult in the present financial climate.

Delivery of Portal by the internet has been discussed but previous investigation had revealed that there was little actual saving as most people preferred a paper copy. However, the webmaster agreed to have another look for those who specifically requested an electronic copy.

The FCC currently has a Facebook page with about 30 members. The new webmaster will look at enlarging this.

The meeting closed at 20.45 hours.



## WEBSITE MATTERS

from George Rogers

Email. A blessing or a curse, dependent on your point of view. This is particularly the case with the 'cromfordcanal' Yahoo group currently used as a forum and general means of contact between the committee and the membership. Any of its members will be aware, however, of its limitations – and getting around this is one of the key aims of the new website currently in development.

The big problem with the Yahoo group is the amount of email traffic it has the potential to generate. This came to a head recently, when the petition to DCC regarding dredging at Cromford (see elsewhere) was advertised – and numerous people responded indicating they would like a copy. All of these replies were going to everyone on the group – with members understandably annoyed and it resulted in several members leaving the group.

The new website will include mailing lists which members will be able to sign up to. These will be one-way, i.e. only certain people will be able to email these lists, and replies will only go the person who sent the original email. It is expected that this will significantly reduce the number of emails members receive, and will hopefully encourage more of our members to join. More about this next time, by when they will be up and running.

In the meantime, can any of you who changed your email address since joining the Friends please contact either me or our Membership Secretary, Yvonne Shattower, so that we can note this in the records.

Until April, however, we are stuck with the current system. For that reason, we feel it is necessary to introduce some general guidelines. Please try and follow these when possible, it should make everyone's life a bit easier!

**1. Consider carefully whether the email you are sending needs to be seen by everyone, or is it really for a certain person. If it is for a certain person, please send the message direct to them. If you do not have an address, contact me at the webmaster's address and I will forward on.**

**2. When replying to a message, again think whether the message is for all or just the sender. If just the sender, use the 'reply to sender' link that generally appears at the bottom of the email (note it doesn't always) or copy-and-paste the sender's address. Please do not hit 'Reply' – this will send to the whole list, and does the whole membership really need to know that you will be attending the work party?**

Elsewhere, website development is in full swing. I would like some volunteers to test the website when it first comes online in March (full launch in April). If you're interested in helping out with this, please send me an email including your name, contact details and the internet browser you currently use (e.g. Internet Explorer 8). It would also be helpful to note your current versions of Flash, Java etc.

Finally, keep sending me Q&A ideas or any ideas for the website. Most importantly, a belated Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.



# WORLD HERITAGE SITE DISCOVERY DAYS

by Patrick Morriss

The ever popular Derwent Valley World Heritage Site's Discovery Days events were held over the school half term holiday period in the last week of October 2010. Attendance figures for the sixth Discovery Days Festival held in East Midlands' only World Heritage Site nearly doubled in 2010. Organisers were delighted that October 2010's ten day event for the Derwent Valley Mills saw over 11,500 attendances across 120 events – over 5,000 more than in 2009. Although the main FCC involvement is centred on the last weekend of the period - this last year it was 30th and 31st of October - a huge range of events take place on the previous weekend and during the week between. Forgive me if I digress, but in 2010 one of the best opportunities provided by the event was the chance to go to the 4th floor of the East Mill in Belper and as there are windows on each of the four sides of the buildings. The views were superb on a sunny autumn day. There were also a couple of events with FCC input during the week preceding and during the main weekend which were outside the normal run of canal events. Firstly, I gave a talk on Thursday 28th October which was titled the 'Cromford Canal in Nightingale Country' looking at the links between the Nightingale family and the Cromford Canal corridor, taking full advantage of the centenary of Florence Nightingale's death. This was well attended with about forty people present. Secondly, we had a book auction. The Friends of the Cromford Canal had been given some first editions of Alison Uttley's books which were auctioned to raise funds at the talk at the Gothic Warehouse, Cromford Wharf, on Saturday 30th October by Dennis Judd. The books were: Plowmen's Clocks (1952), Wild Honey (1962), Cuckoo in June (1964), Something for Nothing (1960) and Ambush of Young Days ("new illustrated edition" 1950). The proceeds amounted to £111 for FCC funds, which was more than had been offered by the book dealers, a relief for me as I was the auctioneer!

Concentrating on the weekend of the 30th and 31st of October 2010 when events were held at the north end of the valley, which of course includes the canal from Ambergate to Cromford, the weather was glorious on the Saturday and the Derwent Valley looked at its best in the autumn sunshine on the Sunday. There was cloud but at least it stayed dry.

As you will have read in my Chairman's comments there was no horse boat this year. I will not dwell on this subject as enough has been said elsewhere, except to say that

Editor



There was quite a lot of interest in our petition to bring back the horse boat.



my words from this time last year, “Unless there is some dredging of this stretch of canal it is unlikely that the FCC will be able to stage this event in 2010 and subsequent years. This would be a great pity as the horse boat is an outstanding attraction rain or shine.” turned out to be prophetic.

The FCC and its volunteers put hundreds of hours into this event each year as it highlights the canal and what it was used for and should be used for again and also because it is a valuable showcase for our organisation and its aims. The sales team were there in force and as again mentioned elsewhere, we had traditional canal painters who had travelled a considerable distance and gave their time and materials free of charge. The FCC would like to have a still wider range of ‘canal’ activity represented such as traditional rope and knot work being demonstrated. Do you know anyone who is able to volunteer?

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who volunteer to make the FCC presence at this event such a success. The FCC will do their utmost to attempt to get the horse boat operational for 2011 and to get a full time trip boat established that will be able to take passengers for the tenth birthday of the FCC in 2012.

Please sign the enclosed petition and get a couple of dozen others to do so as well.



TOP: The sales stall was kept busy all weekend.  
BOTTOM: Jes Inglis and Keith Hampson demonstrating their canal painting skills.

Editor



Hugh Potter



# BEWARE WHAT YOU VOLUNTEER FOR, IT COULD BECOME ADDICTIVE

by Dave Ratner

Having just completed transcribing a chunk of the British Waterways correspondence file of 450-odd documents, covering the period when the Butterley Tunnel was to be closed, I thought a résumé of them might be of interest. This correspondence file was copied by our doughty archivist Hugh Potter from the BW archives held at Leeds.

I surprise even myself with my enthusiasm for this transcription work, I detested history at school. My mark in the exam was so low that the history teacher just put a question mark in the comments box on my last report. And that level of interest would have remained but for a chance stroll down to the Langley Mill basin one weekend, where there just happened to be a rally.

Before I knew it, I was answering Hugh's call for volunteer transcribers, though not quite sure what I was letting myself in for. At first I had some difficulty deciphering the words let alone the English. These pages were photocopies of the Cromford Canal Minute Books. But after a while I began to get into it in pretty much the same way as you might with a foreign language. I even began to think in Old English!

In the early stages I was content to leave gaps or question marks if I couldn't 'see' the word, but soon I got quite obsessed. I found myself doing a 'photoshop' on the copies to see if I could make them clearer. I would take seriously slanted handwriting and de-slant it with the 'skew' facility. Tiny elongated scrawl would be squashed up by 10 or 20 per cent then stretched vertically. At one stage I even projected it on to the wall to get the letters anything up to 2ft high! On another occasion, a photo of the next page was missing and I was obliged to read it through the previous page.

Since completing these documents, Hugh and I have paid a visit to the John Goodchild collection at Wakefield. Mr Goodchild made us welcome and we were able to browse through a set of papers covering a later period than heretofore. Though not directly concerned with the tunnel closure, they are letters prepared by Mr. J. Winson, the local Inspector with superb diagrams and concern the day-to-day running of the canal and as such are a priceless slice of social history. Maybe one day we'll be able to transcribe those and record another piece of the canal's history jigsaw.

As a result of this work, I am now fascinated by history particularly the period covering the life of 'our' canal. I find myself looking at what was happening at the same time a bit further afield, nationally and internationally. The Pentrich Revolution now has a larger meaning, having come across the name of at least one of the protagonists among the letters and memos.

## **The following extracts will give some idea of what has been involved.**

The first memo in the file (by date 12th September 1906) is from Fellows, Morton & Clayton, who describe themselves as "Canal Carriers, Boat Builders & Merchants". It calls the attention of the Board of Trade to the state of the Cromford Canal and asks them to inspect it. The Trent Navigation, the Erewash Canal Company, Joseph Boam Ltd and the Derby Canal Company all put their oar in as well. Basically, there is not enough water to run the boats.

The Engineer-in-Chief of the Midland Railway, William Barton Worthington and John Argyle, his assistant, (who seems to be the one doing all the leg work!), in reply to



the BoT, give a brief history, “In July 1900, a portion of the tunnel fell in, - due to the working out of the Furnace Coal from beneath it by the Butterley Company, and since that date has been closed to traffic”. He blames the lack of water presently being experienced, on the “current drought” – “during the present summer which has been the worst experienced for drought”, leaving two out of the three Reservoirs empty ie. Codnor and Butterley Park. He goes on to say that on the 26th August, an experiment utilising that water which was left in the Butterley Reservoir, was to be let into the canal (via the tunnel). The west end of the tunnel was stanked off (temporary dam) and the water in the tunnel raised 6ft. [*surely inches!?* - Ed] The result was water in the high level pond at the east end was raised about 4½ inches. Raising the level in the tunnel another 1ft 7in., raised it to within 7½ inches of its full height. This enabled traffic on the high level pond to resume on the 15th September. Later it emerges that ‘the curious headings leading off from the wide hole’ meant they were filling much more than they knew!



The ‘wide hole’ referred to was the underground wharf in the tunnel used by the Butterley Company. This picture shows one end where the tunnel widens out to form the wharf. This enabled boats to be loaded with goods from the works directly above via vertical shafts without obstructing the passage of other boat traffic.

The Erewash Canal Company insisted on their right to ‘two locks of water’ (per day) on the 8th, 10th, 11th & 12th of September, which prevented the Midland Railway from sustaining the level and owing to the continued drought, the supply in the Reservoir failed. And no water was taken from it after the 18th September. To alleviate the problem, they began to pump water from the west end into the tunnel to maintain the 6ins. head and refilled the western leg of the canal from the ‘pumping engine’ at Cromford. Mr. Worthington believed that this arrangement would be all right so long as the tunnel didn’t become completely blocked.

The drought was so prolonged that at one stage the MR Secretary was obliged to write to traders along the canal and tell them to stop taking any more water from the canal, whether they were entitled to it or not! In October the General Manager of MR writes to the Board of Trade explaining the arrangements that have been made and mentions that “The wet weather we are now having will help”.

An inspection of the canal was scheduled and eventually carried out, and at some point between then and December, MR proposed a Bill to Close Butterley Tunnel and substitute it with “two conduits” by-passing the tunnel altogether. There was some



opposition to the Bill by parties who thought the closure would also mean the closure of the canal and the loss of boat trade or water supplies.

The Butterley Company was initially against the closure because they wanted to ensure continuance of their water supplies, even though they were then getting a fair amount of water from their pits with any excess being allowed to flow back into the canal. Once they had been convinced and entered an agreement with MR, they withdrew their objection. They then began regular dialogue with MR as to how and where they would pump the water from the canal and reservoirs, and researches were done into known existing water supplies and agreements. MR was obliged to put the Butterley & Butterley Park Reservoirs into "Good Order".

An 'expedition' to inspect the tunnel was to be arranged for the Butterley Company's Managers – but they had to wait until the ice broke up by February 11th 1907, the party eventually entered the east end of the tunnel on the 28th Feb. They went in at 9.15 am by boat as far as the 38 chains point where H. Eustace Mitton, Butterley Co's Colliery manager and Fred J. Gray of the MR Engineer's Office continued on a raft a couple of chains further to the 'open rock portion where the coal seam is seen in the roof'..... 'this was the point beyond which we did not go, Mr Mitton agreeing that it looked sufficiently dangerous to warrant our return'.

A second party went in on the 12th March 1907 again including Mitton, this time paying attention to the 'Wide Hole'. The boatmen were ganger Bradley and labourer A. White. A third party for the Trent Navigation also went in on the 30th April and Sir William Mathews' Party went in on the 6th June 1907.

During this time Worthington of MR is still considering by-passing the tunnel altogether as, according to estimates, a new tunnel or a deviation in the old one involves buying the coal underneath (£24,000) and would cost £104,000, (about £8,000 more than it cost to buy the entire canal from the CCCo). The work would take around 2 years and would not be able to start until subsidence from the mines already worked had ceased. A note in previous correspondence suggests that this could be between 5 and 6 years.

Part of the cause of the collapse of the Butterley Tunnel was due to the Butterley Company's removal of the coal from beneath the tunnel. Midland Railway (or their predecessors) paid for some of the coal, but the miners seemed to have ignored the fact and removed some of it anyway (See transcription of *The Butterley Company v The Cromford Canal Company 1838*). This resulted in many thousands of pounds worth of repairs to the tunnel and partial collapses through the late 1800's to its closure to navigation in 1900. (Average repairs £1,100 p.a., average income around £700 p.a.)

Around this time, four further seams were being mined even lower, the last one being the 'furnace coal', this causing a sizeable section of the tunnel to sink and large areas of the brick lining to break away. It would seem that MR had a continuous programme of repairs going on inside the tunnel, as Amos White's evidence suggests in his description of the tunnel collapse in June 1906 (*see Portal 28 - Ed.*), presumably in connection with their obligation to keep the water flowing.

Railways were now steaming ahead, but yet to have their boom years, so canals were still being used to move a fair amount of freight around the rest of the country. Parliament accepted closure of the tunnel to through traffic, but that the tunnel must remain as a water conduit and MR must provide some means of passing the water through. Worthington had old records scoured for earlier agreements relating to the supply of water. Numerous experiments were carried out to find out if boats were enabled to travel with the modified water supplies.



Repair work within the tunnel continued and further inspections took place, During one repair session in Oct 1907 there was heard 'three loud reports' and an inspection of the tunnel later from the eastern end at 67 chains revealed 'a piece of the crown 9ft long by 1ft wide was found to be entirely fallen out'.



These two pictures from the FCC archives give some idea of the very extensive work carried out on the interior of the tunnel by the Midland Railway in the years following the closure to boat traffic in 1900. They were fighting a losing battle against mining subsidence.



The rest of 1907 appears to have been taken up with more research into levels of reservoirs, outlets and inlets and flows and the examination of shafts around the wide hole. There is then a dearth of correspondence in this file for the years from 1908 to 1911. On Feb 11th 1909 a memo suggests that Mr. Johnson may go ahead and install struts to support the roof at the collapse and that they may be able to judge much better the problem ahead, but does not say which one or where, presumably the collapse of No. 2 shaft. And on the same day John Argyle of MR is asking the Butterley Company to pay for removal of silt brought down to the Gas Hole by water from the blast furnace.





## WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



By the time you read this, the work party season will be in full swing, but there is plenty of work to keep us busy all winter so there is still time for you to come along and help out. If you cannot do manual work, perhaps you could come and give us a visit and introduce yourself and see what we are doing.

We have had several on the canal at Jacksdale and one with Derbyshire County Council at Cromford. The work party with DCC in December was shortened to one day only due to the snow. I had to cancel the Saturday one as I didn't want to risk anyone having a road accident just getting to the work site. Six of us did show up for the Sunday whom I would like to thank for their eagerness and tenacity in attending. These pictures show the scene that greeted us that Sunday morning.



Photos: Dave Tinkler





The work at Jacksdale is going well with the help of Dave Wright, our chainsaw man, to whom we are very grateful. Without him the job would have been impossible. The following pictures illustrate the work involved. The work site is on the offside of the canal below the junction with Portland Basin.



There is plenty of scope for 'jungle bashing' on this site and plenty of fuel for the inevitable bonfire. These pictures show that this is the site of an old wharf. The lay-by arrangement with a stone-walled edge is being exposed as work progresses.

Photos: Editor





A lot of trees have fallen into the canal along this stretch. Dave Tinkler is seen on the left wading out into the 'swamp' to attach a strap so that the tree can be removed. Note the dog is supervising the operation and is wearing the regulation high viz jacket.

A turfor is attached to the strap to take the weight of the fallen tree. Dave Wright will then move in with his chainsaw as shown on the right. The tree can then be pulled out of the cut and is soon reduced to handy sized logs. A large number of trees have been cleared in this way.



Photos: Editor

The next work parties with DCC will be at **High Peak Junction** on:

**Saturday/Sunday 22/23rd January.**  
**Saturday/Sunday 19/20th March.**

The next work parties at **Jacksdale** will be on:

**Saturday/Sunday 12/13th February.**  
**Saturday/Sunday 26/27th March.**

I hope to see a lot more of you in the coming weeks even if it's just to see us.  
 May I wish you all a very happy and fruitful new year especially on the Cromford Canal.

Dave Tinkler ( Work Party Organiser )



# WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP COMES TO CROMFORD (OR SAWMILLS?)

by George Rogers

Regular readers of *Portal* will have noticed that this WRG report is becoming a regular spot. This is intentional, as I feel it is important to remember that Cromford is far from being the only waterways restoration project currently ongoing, and as the major group linking them, WRG gives a good insight into what is happening elsewhere, and as such what can be achieved with the work of volunteers.

The two become even more closely linked when we look at the recently published list of WRG's summer camps. Whilst the full list is available online at [www.wrg.org.uk](http://www.wrg.org.uk), the highlight for the Friends is camp number 2011/10 – Cromford, running between the 16th and 23rd July. This camp is actually the second week-long camp held on the canal, as the Christmas camp in 2005 was held at Codnor Park reservoir, clearing scrub from the line of the Pinxton Arm. With this summer's camp, we start building.

The team leading the camp is in place, with me leading my first WRG camp, and a good friend of mine, Dave Salisbury, assisting. Steve & Sue Johnson complete the team as MUP (Most Useful Person) and cook respectively.

Work for the camp is currently uncertain, as we wait for confirmation of several factors from Derbyshire County Council on the intended site – working to remove and rebuild the spill weir between Gregory Tunnel and High Peak Junction. Most notably this includes whether the ongoing work on the Leawood Aqueduct will be complete by then (as we need the towpath for machine access to the site).

If this work isn't completed, then the backup plan is to move over to the Narrows at Sawmills, and make a start at removing the tree stumps and rebuilding the walls. Either site will lead to a fun filled week for the team of campers coming in from outside.

Hopefully, the idea of a camp might inspire you to take the plunge with WRG (and once you've done one you may just get addicted) and join us. If so, I implore you to book on soon with WRG head office, especially as the camp is rapidly filling up, and we do have a limit of around 15 - 16. Arrangements for any members wanting to join in on a day-to-day basis can be made, please contact me at the webmaster's address beforehand. Note that as any volunteers will need to have a health and safety briefing and receive all the correct PPE before being allowed on site, volunteers just turning up will not be convenient (a WRG camp is a little different to our normal work parties) - but if you contact me I will do my best to fit you in!

Away from Cromford, a good array of projects on other canals will be receiving attention this summer: continuing improvement works to the Basingstoke and Chelmer & Blackwater, completion of restoration on Eisey Lock on the Cotswolds, slipway building on the River Avon, trialling different techniques for lining the canal channel on the Montgomery (one for us to watch very closely), and continued investigation works on the Mon & Brec. Also on the Cotswolds, Inglesham lock sees the commencement of restoration works, and our neighbours at Chesterfield get two weeks to start the building of the new Staveley Town lock. Complete the list with the National Festival being held at Burton in the summer, and WRG has a busy year. I'll be out and about, so watch this space for updates on how all the projects (including our own) are progressing.



# LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates

We are at the start of another year and as last year have been frozen out of the pumphouse! The last year went quite well, the pump worked and the new blocks did seal saving us having to drain the outlet at the end of every steaming. There seems to be a problem with the outlet valve sticking at times causing the engine to stop or at least not change the valves over as it should. The driver gets a bit tired latching the valve lever over every stroke.



The video was made just after Easter and can now be seen at the workshop. This was one of the most frustrating days we have had, waiting about for the crew to get it just right. It is not easy keeping the boilers in steam for about two hours before we could start warming the engine. One boiler is bad enough but with two it gets difficult to keep a fire in each and not produce any more steam.

The rest of the year went fine including the Discovery Days which were quite busy, the weather was better as well on the Saturday but Sunday was not so good. The visitor numbers were still adequate however.

After the Discovery Days we were into November and we had just managed to finish cleaning down and putting the engine away for winter before the snow and cold arrived. The snow brought a tree branch down onto the power supply line which cut off the engine house. Derbyshire County Council and Eon managed to get the supply back just before Christmas, which meant the boilers were warm but the engine house was a cold wet mess on 31st December when we visited. The canal was frozen outside the pumphouse and nearly up to the workshops. The condensation inside the pumphouse had rained down from the beam and soaked various items below including the heaters. These have been put in the boiler house to dry out.

We are not planning any major works this year, just working out how to replace the blocks on the inlet valve which we will then hope to do during winter 2011 / 2012. We also intend to do some work on the boat to replace the boarding with something more suitable than ply which has rotted and delaminated badly.

We have decided to only do one day's steaming in July, the Sunday, as visitor numbers are usually poor and do not cover the cost. We will be open on the Saturday as we warm up for static viewing. There is no early May steaming either as it is too close to Easter which this year is very late. We do not want to run on consecutive weekends. The engine will therefore be in motion from noon to 5.00pm on each of the following days:

MONTH	SAT	SUN	MON	PERIOD
APRIL		24th	25th	Easter
JUNE	4th	5th		First Weekend
JULY		3rd		First Weekend
AUGUST	6th	7th		First Weekend
		28th	29th	Bank Holiday
OCTOBER	1st	2nd		First Weekend
	29th	30th		Discovery Weekend



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



A Very Happy New Year to all our Members. As on every 1st January, I wonder what the New Year will bring for the Friends of the Cromford Canal.

The cold weather certainly caused chaos, and we were far less 'snowbound' in Long Eaton than many places only a few miles up the road. However, the Erewash Canal has been frozen for several weeks now; once or twice we thought the thaw was on its way, only to find that the ducks and swans were still struggling to walk on the skating rink that their home had become. I have to say I am amazed at the amount of bricks, stones and other items that have been mindlessly thrown onto the ice, presumably to see if it can be broken. All this debris will, of course, sink to the bottom once the canal thaws. No wonder there are problems with the depth on canals. However, enough of the Erewash.

We were very sorry to have to cancel the last event of 2010 – the Christmas Social – due to the weather. The Friends have a full programme of talks on varying subjects arranged for this year, so I hope many of you will find something of interest at some point. The only date not filled is the December slot, and there has been discussion in the Committee meetings as to what style of Christmas meeting we should arrange. The Red Lion Folk Bank was not well supported in 2009, but those who did come thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We were hoping that better advertising would bring a larger audience last year, but we need you to tell us what you would come and support. Contact me or Val Kelley with your ideas!

This is a quiet time for our Sales Team, but they are getting their diaries out for the rest of the year. Please do come along to the events and visit them if you can. We can always do with extra help, especially in setting up and taking down the stand at the start and end of the day.

Our Webmaster, George Rogers, is working hard on our Web Site; there will be lots of new things coming in the next few months. George is also hoping to re-organise the on line discussion list. We would like as many members as possible to join an E mail list so that we can keep you up to date with important events and news. It is a very easy way of spreading good news. An E mail address is also useful if I need to contact Members regarding their subscriptions etc., so if you have changed yours but not let me know, please contact me at [membership@cromfordcanal.org.uk](mailto:membership@cromfordcanal.org.uk)

We acknowledge with grateful thanks the £120 donation from the Derwent Hotel in Whatstandwell. This was the proceeds of a raffle held by the new landlords.

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