

THE **PORTAL**

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



NUMBER 44

Registered Charity Number 1100700
Free To Members £1 When Sold

NEW YEAR 2013



CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Members' Social Meetings	3
Prestige Meeting at The Hayes, Swanwick	3
Chairman's Notes	4
Derbyshire Blue Plaque Scheme	5
FCC News Update	6
Susan White - Derbyshire Waterways Development Project Officer	7
Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days 2012.....	8
Work Parties Report.....	12
Annual General Meeting	15
The Destruction of Lock One	19
News From The North.....	20
Canal & River Trust on the Cromford Canal	21
Archivist's Spot	22
Presentation from the Inland Waterways Association	22
Sawmills Tuesday Group	23
Matthew's Cromford Canal Walks - No. 1	24
Hugh's One-Way Walk.....	27
Pies, Peas and the Red Lion Band	28
Leawood Pump Outlet	29
Waterway Recovery Group North West at Sawmills.....	30
Website and Other Matters	32
Membership Matters	33



FRONT COVER: The Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days weekend at Cromford Wharf in November 2012 saw the canal occupied by an extremely strange collection of craft. These were all being put through their paces by the members of the Nottingham Model Boat Club, whom we were pleased to welcome to the canal. This made a very entertaining addition to our regular attractions at this popular event. See the report on pages 8 - 11.

Photo: Jan Colombo

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. 44

Well, here we are at the start of another year in the FCC campaign towards the restoration of the Cromford Canal. First of all, let me wish all members a happy new year and let's hope that real progress can be made this year towards our aims, although we are still in a frustrating period of having to contend with officialdom. The proposed Cromford trip boat has become our main concern, but at the time of writing is still held up by bureaucracy.

Looking back to my editorial last time, I said that the dredging of the canal from Cromford to Leawood by Derbyshire County Council, a vital pre-requisite to operating the boat, had been deemed to require planning permission because of the canal's SSSI status. The canal is continuing to silt up and unfortunately, this planning application has still not been determined. Many people have registered their support, and no objections had been received by the closing date. However, your committee remain concerned about the final outcome. Hopefully we shall hear some good news on this matter before much longer, not least because the dredging needs to be done before the bird nesting season begins.

The Brian Blessed Boat Fund Appeal is continuing steadily, but more definite news would be reassuring. Our treasurer Bob Bullock will be pleased to receive any donations towards this scheme. The picture below gives some idea of what we hope will become a familiar site between Cromford and Leawood.



The press date for the Spring 2013 issue will be March 11th.



MEMBERS' SOCIAL MEETINGS 2012/13

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.**

The following are scheduled between now and next summer

There is a bar and raffle available at all meetings. Admission is £2

- **February 18th** - THE DERBY CANAL - Doug Flack and Chris Madge
- **March 18th** - BUTTERLEY COMPANY - Gwilyn Roberts. This is a special prestige meeting at The Hayes Conference Centre. (£3) See Below.
- **April 15th** - **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** (free admission). See page 16.
- **May 20th** - THE FUTURE OF THE CROMFORD CANAL - Matthew Rogers
- **June 17th** - THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL - Dr Geraint Coles
- **September 16th** - FAME WITHIN 5 MILES OF ALFRETON - Ray Sunderland
- **October 21st** - BLACK DIAMONDS - Wendy Freer

PRESTIGE MEETING MARCH 18th 2013

THE BUTTERLEY COMPANY 1790 – 2009 The Rise and Fall of an Industrial Superstar.

Venue: The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, 7.30pm.

We are trying a different format for our March public meeting. Because we have been promised a large contingent of former workers from the Butterley Company, from the Institution of Civil engineers, and others, we have arranged a venue with greater capacity than our normal room at Ironville. Please note that this meeting will be held at the Hayes Conference centre in Swanwick (map and detailed flyer on the website).

The Speaker is Gwilym Roberts CBE, a former President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, who is related to the Wright family that ran the Butterley Company for most of its existence. He has extensively researched the Company and its products, and as a thank you for local assistance with his studies, he is giving his talk on Butterley territory – The Hayes was built as a residence for one of the Wrights.

This Prestige Meeting is a new venture for the FCC and we hope you will give it your support. Tickets (£3) in advance at our regular meetings or from Mike Kelley (see inside front cover). They will also be available at the door, but it will help us if you could get yours in advance, and it will guarantee you a good seat. The price includes a cup of tea/coffee from 7.00pm, and there will be a cash bar before and after the meeting. For anyone coming from a distance, accommodation can be arranged at The Hayes.

Further details available on the FCC website www.cromfordcanal.org.uk



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



A belated though Happy and I hope Prosperous New Year to all the Friends of Cromford Canal, supporters and readers of *The Portal*.

I have had to crave the indulgence of our stalwart editor Mike Harrison once again as I am three days late writing these comments. It does not seem to matter when Mike sets the press date, there is always some issue or event that means I need a little more time to comment, or for others to comment or I need to do a bit of research on some subject that has just come up.

This time it is mainly issues surrounding the application by Derbyshire County Council to dredge the canal between Cromford Wharf and Leawood Pumphouse. As with all planning applications there has to be a period of public consultation. For this particular project, this ran from 20th December until the 10th January. I have just checked the Derbyshire County Council website (14:00 Monday 14th January 2013) and did not find one single response that was in anyway critical of the council's need to dredge the canal. The Friends of Cromford Canal have spent hundreds of hours to come up with a boat suitable for use in a World Heritage Site and have also spent hundreds of hours designing alterations to the design of a boat to make it as eco-friendly as possible for use in a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Apart from some small additional dredging to house the boat and to turn it at both Leawood and Cromford, the dredging regime is as was recommended in the Cromford Canal Management Plan dating back to 2007/2008. As of the moment of writing, two key stakeholders and consultee responses are missing from the DCC website, Natural England and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's. What follows is only my personal opinion of course, but I find it appalling that organisations with full time paid employees cannot get their responses returned on time either supporting or opposing the plans to dredge the canal.

Also of great importance to the boat project is our application for grant funding to help with the boat costs. Various members of the FCC have worked very hard on this application and amongst others I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Boucher, Mike Kelley, and Steve Mulholland for their individual contributions. The FCC also received some very impressive letters of support with very pertinent content from a wide range of bodies connected to the area surrounding the canal from Cromford to Leawood and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them as well.

Following this article, you will see that the Cromford Canal Blue Plaque is due to be unveiled by DCC Leader Andrew Lewer and myself on 12th March 2013 at 2.30pm at High Peak Junction. If you are available, please come along and witness this as it sends a message to politicians, friends, supporters and indeed opponents of our plans to restore the canal just how much public interest our project provokes – and now I have said that you had better all turn out!



Another article within these pages is by Susan White, Derbyshire Waterways Development Project Officer. Susan is asking for help in a towpath/footpath (where the towpath does not exist) survey looking at the condition of the path, gates, stiles, hedges, obstructions etcetera. Most of the committee visit various sections of the canal on a regular basis, but we cannot inspect it all. Taking a section under your wing and carrying out the survey would be very useful, as would regularly keeping tabs on it.

2013 promises to be a very vital year for the FCC so if any of you can spare any time to attend events or volunteer to help it would be most appreciated. Of course, if any of you have any money left after Christmas, our boat fund is also still open.

I have come to realise just how important politics is to canal restoration. Perhaps one day the lure of local politics and standing as an independent candidate might just be an itch I will have to scratch!

THE DERBYSHIRE BLUE PLAQUE SCHEME

by Sally Furness

Many of you lent your support to our campaign to get the Cromford Canal recognised by one of Derbyshire County Council's prestigious blue plaques. [*See Portal 43 page 21 - Ed.*] This campaign was successful, garnering many votes from the Derbyshire public, and the plaque will be unveiled in March. The provisional details are as follows but nearer the time you may want to check them by contacting:

**Communications Officer, Sally Furness at Derbyshire County Council
01629 538202 or email sally.furness@derbyshire.gov.uk**

The plaque will be sited at **High Peak Junction** (not at Cromford Wharf as originally proposed), where it will be seen by canal users and those on the High Peak Trail. The provisional date for the unveiling by the Leader of Derbyshire County Council, Andrew Lewer and our FCC Chairman, Patrick Morriss is

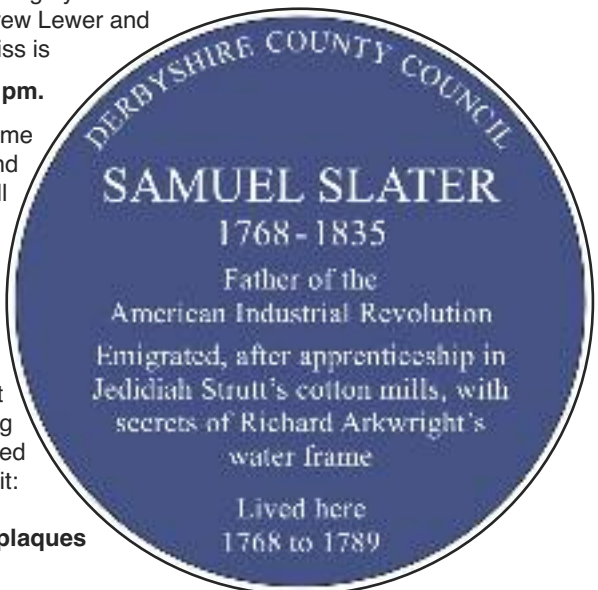
Tuesday 12th March at 2.30 pm.

All are welcome to come along to witness this event, and your support on this occasion will be much appreciated.

A draft layout of one of the six 18 inch Derbyshire blue plaques is reproduced on the right as an example.

For more details about the blue plaque scheme - including a list of the other five to be awarded in Derbyshire in 2013, please visit:

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/blueplaques





FCC NEWS UPDATE - so what *is* happening

from Mike Kelley



This has been a period of intense activity, along with a considerable amount of anxiety, much of it centred around our plans to get a trip-boat running again from Cromford Wharf.

- **Saturday 13th October** - Our sales team attended the Somercotes Heritage Festival.
- **Sunday 14th October** - The very next day our sales team were at the Sainsbury Supermarket in Matlock.
- **Monday 15th October** - Our monthly social evening saw our Archivist, Hugh Potter, deliver an illustrated talk called '1811 And All That', looking at 200 years on the Cromford canal. A journey along the canal exactly 200 years ago, comparing it with the scene today.
- **Saturday 20th & Sunday 21st October** - A work party carried on with their regular clearance activities along the canal at Jacksdale.
- **Sunday 28th October** - As part of the World Heritage Discovery Days events, Hugh Potter delivered his talk on '1811 And All That', at the Gothic Warehouse, Cromford Wharf.
- **Wednesday 31st October** - Several members, including myself, had the opportunity to sail on the trip boat we are hoping to purchase. It's a wonderful boat and a thrill to handle.
- **Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th November** - Our annual Discovery Days weekend at Cromford Wharf; it was a very busy and well attended weekend. All who went along had a delightful day. See also page 8. The highlight, for me, was the meeting on Sunday morning of volunteers who would like to help with the running of the trip-boat. It was gratifying to have 30 people in attendance.
- **November** - Steve Mulholland, John Boucher and myself spent many, many hours producing a Business Plan and Operations Plan for the future trip-boat. These had to be in place in order to get the grant we are pursuing and for the owners of the canal, Derbyshire County Council.
- **Monday 12th November** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Horse & Jockey, Selston.
- **Monday 19th November** - Our Chairman, Pat Morriss delivered for us at our monthly social evening a talk called, 'Sir Arthur Heywood's Duffield Bank Railway', a fascinating talk on a little known former railway at Duffield.
- **Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th November** - Our Work Party continued on with their valuable task at Jacksdale.
- **Saturday 1st December** - Our sales team set their stall out at the Jacksdale Christmas Fair.
- **Monday 3rd December** - Our annual 'Pie and Pea Christmas Dance' to the music and instructions of the 'Red Lion Folk Band'. This was a sell-out, and one of the best nights out you could ask for. If you missed it, get your tickets early for next year.

This same night our sales team were still on the road, this time at the Christmas Fair in Heanor Church.



• **Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th December** - Our Work Party's final bash of the year, this time working with Derbyshire County Council at High Peak Junction.

This same weekend Hugh Potter and his partner Liz Tatam opened their recently extended house for a 'Pots and Pix' weekend. The ceramic artwork of Liz ran alongside a photographic exhibition of the canal and some recently obtained old film cuttings. The FCC sales stall was also there.

• **Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th January** - The Waterway Recovery Group North West New Year Weekend at Sawmills clearing trees. See page 30.

• **Monday 10th December** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Horse & Jockey, Selston.

• **Monday 14th January** - Our monthly full committee meeting held at the Horse & Jockey, Selston.

DERBYSHIRE WATERWAYS NEWS

by Susan White

Derbyshire Waterways Development
Project Officer



Since I last wrote for *The Portal* things have busied up nicely for me; there is plenty to do for the Derbyshire waterways! On the Cromford we have been trying our best to get the dredging done in time for the new trip boat. There have been quite a few unexpected obstacles to overcome – Rick Jillings had to put together a planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment, Chris Coombs has been working on getting the permissions needed from Natural England, there have been issues with bank reinforcement, contaminated waste and trees for example. Each solution seemed to bring up another problem, but I can see an end in sight.

In anticipation of there being a trip boat again we have also had to carefully plan how this could operate without damaging or disturbing wildlife. The western end of the canal is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and there are also threatened species such as water voles and rare invertebrates living there. This brings the trip boat operation into various pieces of UK and international legislation to do with site and species protection. With the help of Cromford Canal Partnership members, not least the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, we hope to have come up with a scheme to reliably monitor how the site and species cope with boat movements.

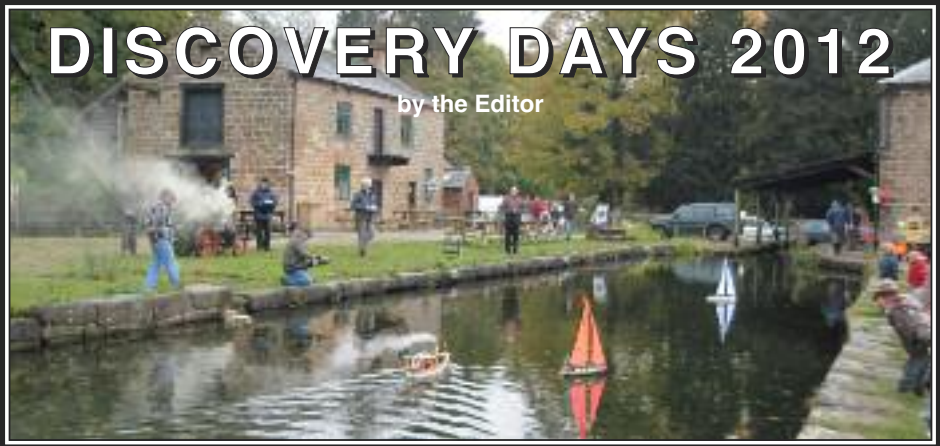
Derbyshire County Council has been able to provide some money towards improvements on the canal, including some practical work at Pye Bridge pond, new interpretation at High Peak Junction, a survey of the lock keeper's cottage and improvements to paths and way-marking at the Erewash junction. The Friends will be leading the first of these and contributing to all of these projects with time and expertise and I think we will all notice the results.

Finally, a request. I would like to have a survey done of the footpath condition along the full length of the canal (including the Pinxton arm) and would appreciate some help. If this sounds like your sort of thing then please get in touch with me for more information.



DISCOVERY DAYS 2012

by the Editor



The Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days Festival was again held in the autumn half term holiday week. As usual the FCC display at Cromford took place on the second weekend - November 3rd and 4th 2012.

This time, our archivist Hugh Potter had taken on the complex task of organising the FCC's various attractions at what is one of our most important events of the year, both as a sales opportunity and publicity exercise. This is particularly important now that the appeal for funds for the Cromford Canal trip boat has been launched. We had the usual sales stall and photograph displays, tombola, original water colour paintings, archive slide show, traditional canal painting and peg weaving. In addition, mostly as a result of Hugh's efforts, we also had several outdoor attractions not seen before at Cromford. These were all supported by a large number of FCC volunteer helpers, which is very encouraging. The pictures give an idea of the various activities which were available.

We were very pleased to welcome the Nottingham Model Boat Club who brought an amazing variety of excellent models to the canal. These included yachts, fishing trawlers, speed boats, submarines (which actually dived, confusing our resident pike!), Her Majesty the Queen in her 'steam' launch (below), a vacuum cleaner and a lawn mower!



Hugh Potter



Hugh Potter

There was also a fine collection of miniature traction engines (above) which gave a good display chuffing around the wharf and along the towpath. These had been arranged by Eric Singleton and came from quite a wide area.

Also making a first appearance at Cromford was the Inland Waterways Association WOW (Wild Over Waterways) stall (below). This is a whole collection of activities for children to encourage their interest in waterways and was all ably supervised by Hazel and Alan Dilnot and Judy Berry.



Editor



Mike Kelley

Above we see our Webmaster and Waterway Recovery Group enthusiast George Rogers encouraging the children to try their hand at bricklaying. This is part of the WOW activities which is usually only seen at the bigger boat rallies throughout the waterways network. The picture below shows the entrance to the Gothic Warehouse which was busy on both days. Regular stalwart Peter Keating can just be seen behind his street organ with which he kept us all entertained in spite of the cold November weather.



Editor



Hugh Potter



Editor

The FCC sales stall (above left) was impressive as usual, although some of the visitors to the stall were dressed even more eccentricly than the staff.

We were also pleased to welcome Mike Pilling of Focus Activities Ltd (Tel: 01773 831327 www.focusactivities.co.uk) with his mobile climbing wall (above right) and his canoes (below). These were kindly provided free of charge and proved very popular.

Altogether, an excellent and well supported event which made a significant contribution to the FCC funds. A pity that it could not be held in the warmer weather!



Hugh Potter



WORK PARTY PROGRESS

Report and Pictures by
Eric Singleton



Work parties this winter are being based at two sites. One is at Jacksdale where there is still a considerable amount of scrub clearance and tree felling to be done below Codnor Park Locks. Warren Searle has taken responsibility at this site, but is still ably assisted by Dave Tinkler as shown above. Suffice it to say that the efforts produce plenty of fuel for the bonfires as well as logs left ready for the locals to collect for their wood burners. The effect on the canal is very satisfying.





Some of the Jacksdale Gang are seen above taking a break from fire raising and find time to eat, using the luxurious facilities provided.

The other work site which has been receiving attention is near the northern end of the canal at Lawn Bridge. This length is owned by Derbyshire County Council and the work is assisting the DCC Countryside staff to clear weed from the canal. The picture below shows the tools provided by the DCC being unloaded.





Although weed pulling is not the best of jobs, it does have a real benefit to the water channel. The picture above shows FCC stalwarts getting stuck in (!) to the job, and below is the view from Lawn Bridge showing the improved appearance of the canal. Of course, what this length really needs is some serious dredging. Watch this space!



Remaining work parties for this winter are as follows:

On the DCC section - February 16th & 17th At Jacksdale - March 9th & 10th

Please contact Dave Tinkler if you would like to attend. All work parties start at 10.00am. Don't forget your packed lunch and hot drink, bring saws or loppers if you have them, wear suitable clothes and above all enjoy a day out by the canal.

Tel: 01159 635113 or email dtink@supanet.com



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal will be held on Monday, April 15th 2013 at the Church Hall, Ironville commencing at 7.30pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Tenth Annual General Meeting on Monday, April 16th 2012
3. Matters arising
4. Report of the Chairman
5. Report of the Treasurer and presentation of the accounts for 2012
6. Adoption of the accounts
7. Election of Trustees. See Note 1 below.
8. Changes to the Constitution. See Note 2 below.
 - 8.1 To delete Clause G - Election of Honorary Officers at the Annual General Meeting.
 - 8.2 If 8.1 is agreed by the meeting to delete the present Clause H1 and replace by
 - 1a) The Executive Committee shall consist of not less than 9 members nor more than 11 members. The Trustees being elected at an annual general meeting shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting for a period of up to three years.
 - 1b) At the start of the first meeting of the Executive Committee following each Annual General Meeting those Trustees present shall elect Trustees to the positions of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Executive Secretary. Such roles to commence from the election.
- And finally in Clause K 2 to add "or Vice-Chairman" to follow "Chairman"
9. Reports by Officers
10. Any other business

After the official business, our Archivist Hugh Potter will show photographs of the extensive work undertaken by British Waterways at Codnor Park Reservoir in the 1980s, which transformed the scene around the former top lock (See also page 19), and a colour film of the demolition of Bullbridge Aqueduct across the A610.

Minutes of the Tenth AGM are reproduced below. Please bring this *Portal* to the meeting as further copies of the Minutes will not be available. The accounts for the year ending December 31st. 2012 will be available at the meeting.

Note 1 Election of Trustees.

The Friends of the Cromford Canal is managed by up to 11 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. There was one vacancy not filled at the AGM in 2012. During the year Matthew Rogers was co-opted to the Executive Committee; (as specified in FCC Constitution H.2) and has been proposed for election. Peter Stone has left the district and has decided to retire. In order to have rotation of one third of the Trustees as in FCC Constitution H 3, if necessary John Baylis will retire early and is willing to stand for re-election. If there are any further nominations for election as Trustees they must be submitted in writing before March 31st. to:

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

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



Note 2 Changes to the Constitution

The Friends of the Cromford Canal Constitution was written by Sheila Smith (Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association) and myself as Inland Waterways Association representative in 2002-3. The original draft was based on the Charity Commission guidance with local changes as necessary. This was then checked by the Charity Commission and further changes suggested by them. The final version was approved by a Special General Meeting of the Association in October 2003; and in April 2004 the Friends of the Cromford Canal became a Registered Charity. Since the adoption of the Constitution several practices suggested in 2003 have not been used and, following discussion with the Charity Commission, it confirmed that we can put these above changes to a vote of members at the Annual General Meeting. Copies of the Constitution can be viewed on the Friends of the Cromford Canal Website or obtained from John Baylis.

John Baylis BEM

Minutes of the Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal (FCC)

held at 7.30pm on Monday, April 16th 2012 at the Church Hall, Ironville.

1. Present

Patrick Morriss (Chairman), Mike Kelley, John Baylis, Bob Bullock, Yvonne Shattower, Peter Stone, Chris Jacklin, Steve Mulholland, Eric Singleton and David Tinkler (Trustees), John Boucher (Honorary Consulting Engineer), George Rogers, Matt Rogers, Hugh Potter, Beryl Singleton, Howard Smith and Judy Berry. There were 44 other members and 4 visitors.

2. Apologies for absence

The Rev Steve Parish, Val Roberts, Mike Harrison, John Barker (committee members), Mr and Mrs J Stevenson, Bert and June Crump, Chris Stone, Freda Raphael, Sue Johnson, Julie Smith.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the Ninth Annual General Meeting held on April 18th 2011 had been circulated. Their adoption was proposed by Peter Keating, seconded by Steve Mulholland and carried unanimously.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's report

Although the Cromford Canal Partnership remains an unofficial partnership it meets regularly and liaison between interested parties is much improved. Having twice been re-drafted, the Atkins Scoping Study has been adopted by Derbyshire County Council and is now in the public domain. It is hoped that FCC members will be able to see the full report through its publication in the Portal and on the website.

The trend for increased publicity continues with the Cromford Canal regularly featuring in newspaper articles and on the radio.

There has been very little progress at the Butterley Engineering and Stevenson's sites which remain in a derelict state. Outline planning permission is currently being consulted on at the Stevenson's site ahead of its potential sale. However, the canal route is now recognised and should feature in any future development there.

The High Peak Aqueduct has been restored and renovated and officially reopened for navigation at some point in the future. This is particularly important to the FCC's



plans for the passenger trip boat.

There remains a lack of progress at the Smotherfly site. Despite reassurances and willingness offered, nothing tangible has come from UK Coal.

In 2011 the Cromford Canal received its first national Waterway Recovery Group summer camp. The week-long camp centred on renovating the Gauging Narrows at Sawmills. In 2012 the Waterway Recovery Group will return for a 2 week-long camp with work being carried out at Derwentside Weir and Sawmills being a secondary work site.

Looking forward to 2012, Derbyshire County Council has set aside funds for dredging the canal to a navigable depth between Cromford Wharf and Leawood Pump House. This will enable the FCC to operate a passenger trip boat and has brought greater involvement with the World Heritage Site. An extension to the dredging from Leawood to the south side of Gregory Tunnel would enable the trip boat to go further and wind at Gregory Wide. There will be a major campaign in 2012 to raise money for the trip boat.

At Langley Mill, the former ProLogis site is to be re-developed and background engineering work has been undertaken. The developers can see the benefits to the overall development of the site of restoring the canal.

The Chairman thanked those who give freely of their time to the FCC; the Sales Team, Working Parties and their organisers, the Membership Secretary, the Treasurer, the Social Events Team, those who give talks, with Mike Kelley alone giving 20+ a year, the Waterway Recovery Group including WRG North West and to the membership for its continuing support.

Jack Brown thanked Pat Morriss for his work with, and Chairmanship of, the FCC.

6. Treasurer's Report

Printed copies of the accounts had been circulated at the start of the meeting. Bob Bullock, the Treasurer, explained that although income was down on last year at £12,392, expenditure was also down at £8,202. This was mainly due to there being no spending on the Smotherfly site. A donation of £1,284 had been received from the Jessop Monument Trust as well as £100 award from the Inland Waterway Association. Although the IWA Insurance appeared to be a lot less than in 2012, it represented just one year's payment rather than the 2 paid in 2010. All grants had now been spent. At the 31st December 2011 the FCC account balance was £29,658.

It was asked whether the FCC might invest in a bond to increase interest, but this is not an option as the Charity Commission does not enable charities to access this type of bank facility. Bob Bullock is to seek information on the Charities Aid Foundation Bank.

He finally thanked Terry Miles for examining the accounts at no cost to the FCC. Bob Bullock was thanked for his work as Treasurer.

7. Adoption of the Accounts

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mike Kelley, seconded by Steve Mulholland and carried unanimously.

8. Election of Trustees

John Baylis, Robert Bullock, Michael Kelley, Patrick Morriss and Eric Singleton all retire by rotation and are willing to seek re-election. There were no new nominees. As there were five nominations for six vacancies Hugh Potter proposed that these should be taken en bloc; this was seconded by John Boucher and carried unanimously.

9. Membership Report

Yvonne Shattower reported a total of 845 members which is an increase from 783 last year. This includes 112 Life Members, 3 Corporate Business Members and 7 Corporate Charity Members.



The FCC has been heavily hit by the increase in postal costs over the last few years and can no longer sustain the current fees. The committee delayed as long as possible any increase and discussed several options before deciding an increase of £1 on all personal annual memberships; with pro rata increases on Life memberships.

The programme of monthly talks at Ironville continues to flourish with a wide range of speakers. Sometimes the hall is full to capacity.

Yvonne thanked all those members who help deliver the Portal to their local areas.

10. Archivist's Report

Hugh Potter reported that 2 large collections of slides, photos and negatives had been loaned by Mike Higginbottom and also the Railway and Canal Historical Society. These have been scanned and put on the FCC website.

Four Cromford Canal Company permit books have been given to the FCC. In addition, June Crump visits the Derbyshire Record Office weekly to transcribe the permit books there. The permit books record every boat and its load going through Langley Bridge Lock and, so far, 20,000 entries have been added to the database. Hugh Potter thanked June Crump for her very hard work.

Cliff Beard of Selston donated a book of annotated OS maps at 6 inches to the mile which record the names of lock and toll keepers.

David Fearn has donated an original bridge number plate 9 which came from the Midland Railway bridge at Pye Bridge.

Hugh Potter encouraged everyone to keep looking for historical matter relating to the canal.

11. Webmaster's Report

George Rogers reported that the new website enables easier access with more information being provided on the front page. An emailing list has replaced the Yahoo group and, in future, a forum will be added for discussion purposes. There are new photo galleries and all old editions of the Portal are now online. George is working on a new map.

12. Sales Report

Eric Singleton reported that, due to the economic situation, income from sales is not as good as it might be. However, attendance at venues is not just about sales but about promoting the canal restoration. The sales team have ordered a range of new stock and are actively seeking new venues to attend.

13. Special Resolution - To consider a Resolution to incorporate the Friends of Cromford Canal as a Company Limited by Guarantee as provided for by the FCC constitution item X.2.

The Chairman provided background information and the need for the resolution including the potential risks to Trustees. Solicitors Ellis-Fermor and Negus had been consulted and believed that a company limited by guarantee was the best way forward for the FCC to own land and property. Current Trustees would be the Directors of the new company. The Chairman advised the meeting that, should the company fold, each individual member would only be required to contribute £1. The FCC would retain its current charity number and would be a charitable company limited by guarantee.

The special resolution to incorporate the Friends of Cromford Canal as a company limited by Guarantee was proposed by Mike Kelley, seconded by Peter Stone and carried unanimously.

14. Any Other Business

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

The meeting closed at 20.30 hours.



THE DESTRUCTION OF LOCK ONE - LEGALISED SABOTAGE

by the Editor

Older members will remember a time when the top lock chamber of the Cromford Canal at Ironville, immediately before the junction with the Pinxton Branch, was still intact, as it had been for 200 years. Then in the late 1970's, along came British Waterways quoting the Reservoir Act. It was claimed that in order to comply with this, the top lock must be removed and the canal converted into an overflow channel for the adjacent Codnor Park Reservoir. This was to provide enough capacity to cope with a 100 year flood.

What happened next is now history. Suffice it to say that this ludicrous decision created just another of the problems to be overcome by future canal restoration. The reason for mentioning this again now is that our archivist Hugh Potter has just been given some pictures by David Brown of the Canal and River Trust (recent successors to British Waterways). Hugh will be showing these at the AGM, but here is a sample preview.



ABOVE LEFT: The intact top lock chamber as seen from the junction bridge in the 1970's. The entrance to the arm to Codnor Park Forge is in the right background.
ABOVE RIGHT: In 1983 the machines move in to remove all signs of the lock and canal arm and excavate the 'relief channel' to prepare for the biblical flood.

BELOW: The completed flood channel with the junction bridge standing as it does today in isolation. It was later admitted that the flood calculations were flawed.





NEWS FROM THE NORTH

Cromford Canal - Cromford to Ambergate Update - January 2013

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

Canal dredging scheme Cromford to High Peak Junction

A planning application has been submitted for maintenance dredging on the canal between Cromford Wharf and Leawood Pump. During the consultation period the planning details will be available on the County Council web site via the following link:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_applications/current_applications/application_details/app-details.asp?AppCode=CD3/1112/114&AppType=2

A copy of the application is available at Wheatcroft's Wharf café on Cromford Wharf (open daily) and at High Peak Junction Workshops (open weekends only in the winter). Planning permission and Natural England consents are required before the scheme can start. Some bankside tree felling and thinning is proposed as part of the scheme. This will require the towpath to be closed at times to ensure public safety. Closure periods will be kept to a minimum and we plan to have this section of towpath open for public use at weekends. It is hoped that the dredging contractor can be appointed promptly to enable dredging to take place during February and until the end of March 2013.

Channel clearance

Volunteers from the The Friends have provided much appreciated assistance with work party weekends reed pulling and clearing the water channel near Wayfarers cottage and around Crich Chase.

Thank you to all involved.

Derwentside Spillway

Following on from the Waterways Recovery Group project to extend Derwentside weir, further work was completed in November by DCC Allroads. The towpath was reconstructed to cross the weir and the boundary wall rebuilt. The extended weir should help to maintain water levels on this section of canal and protect the banks here that have previously overtopped and breached.

Canal bank protection

Work has continued to protect the canal edges and curb erosion to sections of eroded canal bank. Clay repairs have been undertaken on bank edges at Cromford and near Whatstandwell.

Towpath improvements

Work is underway to continue the resurfacing of the canal towpath. A towpath closure is currently in place from Gregory tunnel through to Whatstandwell. Once this section is finished the work and closure will then relocate from Whatstandwell southwards towards Crich Chase. The Whatstandwell canal car park is closed to the public, as this is being used as the site depot. Apologies for inconvenience during the resurfacing. Work is expected to take until the end of March but when complete it will provide a surface suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs from Ambergate all the way through to Gregory tunnel, a distance of approximately 3 miles.

**For further information please feel free to contact me at
Middleton Top Visitor Centre on 01629 823204.**



THE CROMFORD CANAL - AS OWNED BY THE CANAL AND RIVER TRUST

by Sean McGinley,
CRT East Midlands Waterway Manager



The sections and assets of the Cromford Canal still owned by the Canal and River Trust are an odd mixture of the weird and the wonderful and it's probably worth a few minutes explaining what we do own on the Cromford Canal with a brief description of the works we have done in recent years.

From the end of Langley Mill Basin, the Trust owns a section of the Cromford of about 250 metres in length. It's not a section we have done much with ourselves but has been the subject of various mineral extraction and marina development planning applications over the years.

Moving upstream, our ownership does not begin again until Ironville. At Ironville we own Codnor Park Reservoir and approximately 600 metres of canal. This extends downstream to just past the railway bridge and upstream to about 100m past the footbridge at the top side of the reservoir. This section includes Lock 2 (Boat Dock), Lock 3 (Pottery) and Lock 4 (Smiths). We have carried out minor works to these locks over the years, but this has generally been limited to fence repairs and the odd bit of masonry work.

With regard to bridges, we own four in this area. These are: Bridge 13 - King William Bridge; Bridge 20 - Pinxton Arm Bridge; Bridge 7 - Footbridge from the car park to across the reservoir weir and Bridge 5 - Footbridge at the far side of the reservoir. Although the other bridges in this area may have our numbers on or near them, this is simply to comply with our minimum safety standards which say that all bridges over our property must be numbered so that members of the public can identify their location in an emergency.

Moving upstream, we do of course own Butterley Reservoir and have carried out numerous works to it over the year, most notably a few years ago when we replaced the draw off valve and carried out some works to the head bank. The works to the valve ensured that we retained the ability to discharge water into the tunnel.

Butterley Tunnel is the subject of periodic principal inspections. We only inspect the western end of the tunnel, up to the section that sits underneath Butterley Reservoir as the tunnel essentially supports this corner of the reservoir. The inspection involves two of our tunnel team entering the tunnel, either from the western end or down one of the access shafts.

Just beyond the reservoir, there is a short stretch of the canal that we own, about 230m in length, at Lower Hartshay. It is not a length that has been the subject of much work in recent years. The only regular work is vegetation management.

At Buckland Hollow we own the short tunnel and have carried out some works in recent years on the vegetation around this structure.

The most westerly or upstream part of the canal that we own is Bull Bridge. Our ownership in this location extends no further than the Bridge itself. It's a grade II listed bridge that we strengthened in 2007 to increase its capacity. This was achieved by grouting voids under the bridge by drilling through the road surface.

I am grateful to Sean for providing this information at what is a busy period for him. We look forward to further updates, particularly on the forthcoming Butterley Tunnel survey. - Ed.



ARCHIVIST'S ACTIVITIES

Our archivist Hugh Potter is constantly on the look out for any historic material on the Cromford Canal. Here is another of his many efforts:

This is a reference to the Cromford Canal in the Inland Waterways Association *Bulletin* No 37 in May 1953. It was written by Mr. L.A. Edwards, then the Association's Honorary Secretary:

Through the kind co-operation of our Member Mr. G. W. English I was able to make a short routine inspection of the Cromford Canal. The neglect of the canal running through such wonderful scenery at the top end is nothing short of scandalous. It seems amazing that no enterprising firm has started motor boat trips on the top end which unfortunately is isolated owing to the collapse of Butterley Tunnel due to colliery workings. There is water in the canal throughout to almost normal level, and the stone masonry of the locks and other canal works is in perfect order. It would need very little work to re-open the canal to Pinxton Colliery via the Canal Branch at Butterley, but the canal has been abandoned under the notorious L.M.S. Railway Act of 1944. Nevertheless the demand to use the canal continues and only recently a London firm asked if they could ship limestone via the canal. Of course we are always told that there is no demand for canal traffic, but our mail bag refutes this almost every day. I inspected the East end of Butterley Tunnel and found it in perfect order, but outside in what could be a glorious glen of trees and flowers, I found silt, smell and hundreds of cans. [*sounds familiar - Ed.*] This lovely valley so utterly desecrated and foul with sewage is called ironically enough the Golden Valley, as when the Canal was made it cost a pound an inch even in those far off days, when money went much further than it does to-day.

To bring you nearer up to date with matters concerning the Inland Waterways Association, Mike Snaith (left) and Graham White (second right), of the IWA's Notts and Derbys branch are seen here at our November social meeting presenting a cheque for £500 towards the Brian Blessed Boat Fund to our chairman Patrick Morriss and vice chairman Mike Kelley. Thank you gentlemen.

Jan Colombo





THE TUESDAY GROUP

For some time now, Tuesday lunch has started with a group of guys assembling at our place to give a hand with our smallholding. Over the last three years they have come to share our interest in the canal and have been keen to get involved in clearing work on “our” stretch at Sawmills.

During the summer this involves strimming around the interpretation boards, cutting back overhanging branches, litter picking and cleaning the boards. The winter sees some scrub clearing and burning, digging out tree roots and more litter picking!

We all enjoy talking to walkers about the canal and we now ensure that we have FCC leaflets to give out.

Latterly we have made ready for the Waterway Recovery Group and on one extremely wet occasion tipped out to help clear up and finish off a weekend session by the WRG. (Just when George and his dad thought they could head off home for a well deserved hot shower, our lot turned up – they didn’t know whether to laugh or cry!) The whole area resembled the Somme for some weeks after that weekend.

Working on the canal has given us the opportunity to engage with local people, explaining what is happening and righting many misconceptions. As often as possible we have engaged with and involved young people.

Recently we have noticed that someone in the village has started to trim and clear another small stretch of the canal and the amount of fly tipping has reduced quite dramatically. Now, does anyone know how to reach out to dog owners who don’t pick up?!

So what is the reward for the group ? - helping to preserve the line of the canal for the future and copious amounts of tea and cake!!

Gill Hirst
Woodlands, Sawmills

Group members left to right are – Nick Bennett, Mick Hall, David Hirst, Rob Vane, Carol Biggin, Bryan Biggin.
Kneeling – Josh Bircumshaw



Gill Hirst

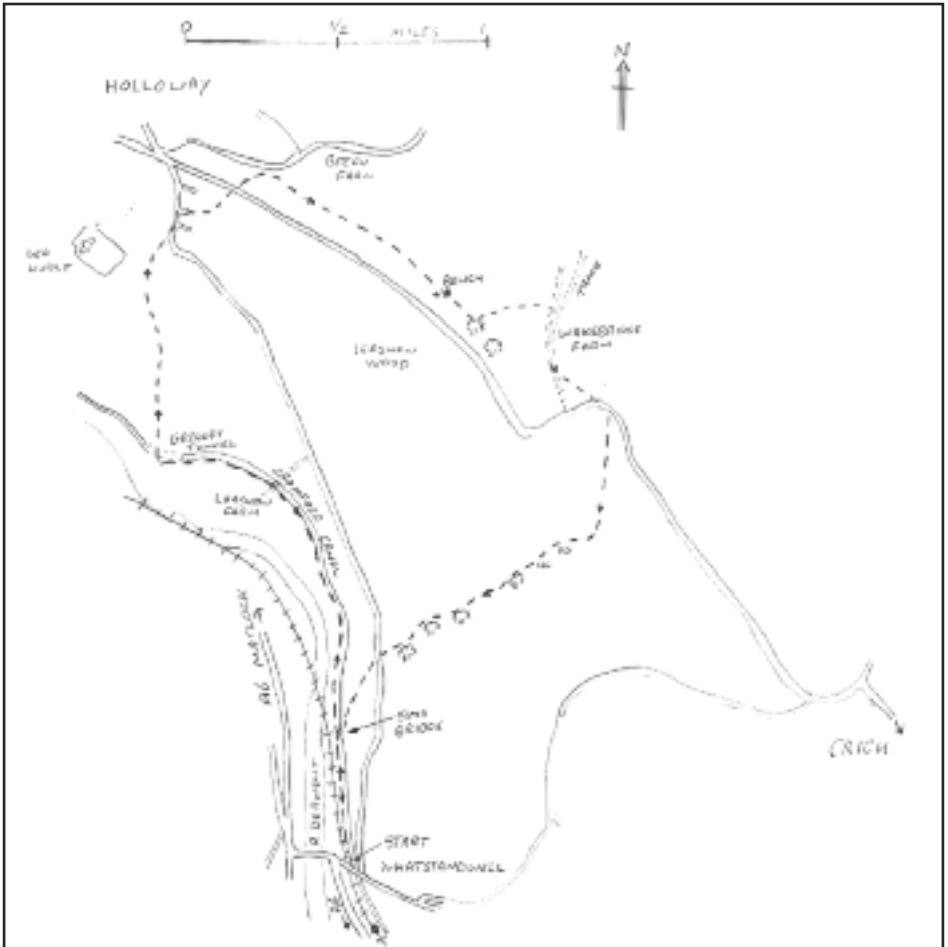


MATTHEW'S GOSPEL ON CANAL WALKS - No.1

by Matthew Rogers



This is the first of a series of walks that are to be developed based around the Cromford Canal. I have started with one of my favourites that I can regularly be seen doing with our little dog Jaffa. If you have any particular favourites that you would like including in future issues please let me know (contact as for George Rogers, see inside front cover).





This walk starts from the canal car park at Whatstandwell GR332543 and can be followed on OS 1:25,000 Maps 269 or OL24. This is a very convenient place to leave your car whilst going walking or indeed to arrive by train since Whatstandwell station is nearby.

The route takes in about a mile of the canal, views of Lea Hurst (the former home of Florence Nightingale), Crich Stand and the Derwent valley. The route includes the climb out of the valley at Gregory Tunnel up to Upper Holloway but the views make it very worthwhile. Note: is not suitable for pushchairs.

Proceed as follows:

- Leaving the car park head north along the canal (canal on right!) for approx. 1 mile passing under Sims Bridge No 12 (metal footbridge) and the Stone bridge No 9 at Lea Shaw farm.

- At Gregory Tunnel take a moment to turn around and admire the view back to Crich Stand - one of my favourite views in Derbyshire with the ever-changing seasons. Just before the tunnel entrance take the path up to your left to reach a wooden signpost and double metal pedestrian gate for Holloway 1/2 mile. (Note: You can go through the tunnel and then take the left hand path that doubles back on yourself to reach the same point).

- Pass through the gates and head uphill keeping the fence on your right. (Dogs must be on a lead as there are sheep and deer in the fields). As you climb you can see Lea Hurst up on your left.

- After 500m you will reach a second set of double gates. Pass through these, ignoring the path off to the right, and go through the wooden gate on your left and continue up the hill with the fence on your right towards the houses. In 80m at a 7 bar metal gate take the gap in the wall, cross the road and turn left uphill along the footpath.

- After 60m turn right at the footpath sign and as the road ends continue on the track bearing to the left and up a flight of stone steps emerging on to the road through a small metal gate in Holloway. Cross the road and take the footpath opposite passing through a gap to the left of a black gate initially on a path which then becomes a set of steps that zig-zag to the top. Someone has very kindly set a bench about half way up for a rest! You'll be pleased to know that's most of the climbing now over!

- At the top of the steps the path turns right and follows the ridge just below the houses with a path joining from the left. We continue straight ahead and very soon the path crosses a small stream. After about 300m pass through a squeezer stile and continue straight ahead with the wire fence on your left to another squeezer stile.

- Pass through into the field with the boundary on your right. (Dogs to be on a lead as there are often sheep present). Take your time to enjoy the magnificent views of the Derwent Valley with glimpses of the canal below.

- At the field boundary pass through another squeezer stile with a small metal gate and continue straight ahead maintaining the boundary to your right. Note Crich Stand ahead (which will be the focus of a future walk!)

- Just after the wooden bench follow the field boundary as it turns left to a gap where you turn right, cross the stream and pass to the right of a metal gate and continue ahead for 100m up a slight incline with a dry stone wall to your right. At the end of the wall do not go through the wall opening but continue straight ahead dropping quickly to a stone farm track. Turn right for 200m passing Wakebridge farm on your left.

- As you join the main farm track at the entrance to the farm buildings continue straight ahead crossing the small field diagonally to the far corner. Pass through the squeezer stile, cross the road and turn left for 30m.



- Take footpath on right passing through a squeezer stile with a concrete post set behind and descend through the field with the stream on your left. As the field narrows, keep straight ahead to a stile and wire fence. Continue along a woodland path to a metal kissing gate and through the open field keeping to the centre to a second kissing gate.
- Re-entering the woods you will soon cross the stream and keep straight on along a descending path ignoring any paths off to the left or right to meet the road. Cross straight over and continue descending bearing left as you see the canal. Turn right at Sims footbridge and then turn left to re-join the towpath. (The canal should now be on your left!) and retrace your steps back to the start.

The map will help you to follow the route described. I have also prepared a set of questions below to check if you are being observant during your walk!

1. Who are the wooden benches in memory of between the walk start and the first bridge?
2. What is the typical journey time from Whatstandwell to Beeston by train?
3. What is the bridge number displayed over the railway line at the first stone bridge?
4. What are the two dates inscribed on the gable end of the first canalside property?
5. What is the second stone bridge called?
6. Between markers 3 & 4 what number do you need to call if you smell gas?
7. How many pipes are carried across the canal on the pipe bridge?
8. There is a concrete chamber on your left. What initials has someone sprayed in blue?
9. What does Fritchley School value?
10. What is the telephone number of 'The Green, Fritchley' telephone box?
11. What trade has the home on Chapel Lane on your left taken as its name?
12. How many steps are there each side of the wall to form the stile?
13. What type of bird is the cottage named after?
14. What is the phone number for Traveline?
15. In what regiment did 20600 Private F Curzon serve?
16. What two counties are displayed on the gate?
17. How many flower tubs are there made from old barrels on your left?
18. How much did Francis Hurt pay to build the limestone tower in 1788?
19. In what 3 languages are the brass plaques inscribed on the Sherwood Foresters memorial in Italy? Bonus Question: Who made the light at the top of Crich Stand?
20. What should STOP in the Crich Tramway Village?
21. What is the name of the cottage on your left? (Clue: This is the same as the area you are now in)

I shall be pleased to receive your answers to this friendly quiz, either individually or as a team. Hopefully this will all help to encourage more people to walk along the Cromford Canal and around the adjoining area. It is after all one of the most scenic lengths of canal in the country and well worth the effort. Watch out for further installments.

Matthew Rogers

I look forward to further reports in this series of canal-based walks from Matthew. He is obviously very appreciative of the fact that this area of the Derwent Valley surrounding the Cromford Canal is indeed excellent walking country. On the next page is a report by our archivist Hugh Potter, another regular canal walker, pointing out the usefulness of the good local public transport which can be used in conjunction with planning these walks.

Editor



ONE-WAY WALK

Our archivist Hugh Potter has some useful information.

Most of you will know that you can easily do a one-way walk along the Cromford Canal between Cromford, Whatstandwell and Ambergate using the hourly train or Transpeak bus for the outward or return journey.

What you might not know is that there is a local bus that serves the canal route between Whatstandwell, Ambergate, Bullbridge, Buckland Hollow and the A610 crossing just west of Butterley Tunnel. It is the Doyle's 144 service between Crich Tramway Museum and Ripley and it only runs three times a day in each direction. But then again, you only need to catch it once! Unfortunately, it does not run on Sundays.

Living in Ambergate I often catch it out to Buckland Hollow where you can pick up the canal line in the Excavator pub car park for the return walk. If I am feeling more energetic I go two stops further on to alight at the second 'Lower Hartshay' stop, towards the top of the A610 hill before the big roundabout with the A38.

From here a short walk further uphill brings you to where the road crosses the canal on its huge embankment, with 60 steps down each side. If you go down the steps on your left you will can walk the towpath to the portal of Butterley Tunnel.

If you carefully cross the busy road to the right you can descend to follow the canal through Hartshay. All along this length the canal is still well defined, often with water in, the banks having been built up in concrete in the 1930s to counteract subsidence.

From Hartshay you follow the footpath across reinstated opencast fields, then a former railway line to reach the Excavator. Here the canal line once again becomes distinct as it passes through Buckland Hollow Tunnel and parallels the A610, passing impressively high above the nearby houses. Note the Sawmills Gauging Narrows along this length. This is an interesting piece of canal architecture which is being restored by the FCC, having been the site of several Waterway Recovery Group work parties.

Where Bullbridge Aqueduct used to stand you have to descend to cross the road (look out for the FCC information board to see what it used to look like). Since the demise of the aqueduct, one must also cross the main railway line via a boardwalk. Do take care as this is the Midland Main Line and trains pass here rather rapidly! *[This bit will be safer when the new aqueduct is built! - Ed.]* Climb up again then to the remaining embankment over the River Amber and Drovers Way. The path skirts two houses built on the line of the canal before reaching a short watered section and the Canal Inn (sadly often closed at the moment) at Bullbridge. Downhill though you should find the Lord Nelson open!

From here on the canal route suffers from the diversion around the former Stevenson's dye works site (which has stood derelict and partly demolished for several years now) and the National Grid (formerly Transco, formerly East Midlands gas works) site. If you follow the diversionary path up through the wood and over the fields you will rejoin the better-known length of canal at Ambergate.

Full walking details of the trickier bits are in the FCC Walker's Guide (available for £4.50 from the sales stall at the Ironville social meetings or by post from the sales department for £5.50) See inside front cover for contact details.

The bus runs at around 1110, 1310 and 1510 from Whatstandwell/Ambergate and 1035, 1235 and 1435 from Hartshay/Buckland Hollow. You are probably best to time your arrival to catch the bus outward then walk leisurely back, but you could link it to a longer walk towards Cromford. Whichever you do, enjoy your one-way walk!



CHRISTMAS JOLLY

by the Editor

Those of us on your committee who have been members of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association for longer than we care to remember are very familiar with the ECPDA annual Pie and Pea Supper. It was therefore suggested in 2011 that the FCC could hold a similar event as our Christmas Social meeting at Ironville.

This turned out to be very successful, and it was decided to repeat the exercise in 2012. Therefore the Red Lion Folk Band (a group of musicians with strong links to the ECPDA) came again to Ironville in December. They were well received and their caller encouraged members to join in with a ceilidh. Our membership secretary Yvonne organised the excellent pies, which, together with mushy peas, gravy, mint sauce and tea & coffee, were served by a group of FCC ladies doing sterling work in the kitchen.

There was also the usual licensed bar and raffle and all together this made for a very nice get together with the added bonus of helping towards the FCC funds.

Editor



Members enjoying the dancing and chance to chat and the Red Lion Band simply enjoying themselves



Editor



LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates

We have completed another year of steaming without any major issues and now settle down again to some routine maintenance. The year has gone fairly well despite the weather, usually fine on the Saturday and rain on the Sunday which has had an effect on the visitor numbers, one good day and one poor day.

The new pipework to the boiler feedwater tank seems to be working fine as we have had no repeats of the tank running out of water this year. The new sealing blocks were fitted to the air pump piston and it was all put back together, this seems to have cured the sticking point. The steps into the basement were repaired by DCC joiners which has made a great improvement.

The only problems we have had this year are concerning the feed water pump and the boiler fire bars. The feed water pump had developed a bit of a knock so we suspected the big end bearing. On stripping it down we have found the big end bearing to be good but the pin at the top which connects the banjo to the pump plunger was worn and knocked each time the pump changed direction. This has been removed and a new bespoke pin is being manufactured. At the same time we are going to fit grease nipples to the oiling points to try and prevent ingress of water and dirt and to make servicing easier due to the guard being in place during running sessions. The firebars are giving us a great problem. Despite ensuring an adequate gap at each end when replacing, once the fire is lit they expand and lift up causing a hole to form and we lose the fire through this point. The only solution seems to be to shorten the bars a bit and new ones will be made shorter. We think the issue is caused by the coal we are burning but it is now difficult to get good graded coal most going for power station use and not much graded out for domestic use. We have a steam leak on the lower joint of the equilibrium pipe which we are also attending to, not in an easy position and it also needs some accurate bits of wood cutting to act as a plug.

On a point of Health and Safety the County are having a safety line professionally fitted around the gantry where we oil up and maintain the parallel motion above the pump end. This will enable us to clip a belt onto the line and adjust it to a point where we cannot fall off. The idea of using a harness and lanyard was rejected as if someone falls off they would hang above the pump with no easy means of rescue, nowhere to put a ladder or steps, and probably suffer worse than the fall.

Donations have not been too bad over the year and have again nearly kept up with the coal cost. We have put up some small notices suggesting a minimum donation per person to help with the coal cost after seeing this on another site. These do seem to be working, we think people did not realise that such a small donation would have such an effect. We hope this will continue into the new season.

Hopefully these notes will now resume on a regular basis, the case of a mild stroke midyear caused a bit of a problem but hopefully this is sorted.

STEAMING DATES 2013

The engine will be in motion from noon to 5pm on each of the following days (except Discovery Weekend - 11am to 4pm).

MONTH	SAT	SUN	MON	PERIOD
MARCH / APRIL		31st	1st	Easter
MAY		5th	6th	May Bank Holiday
JUNE	1st	2nd		First Weekend
JULY		7th		First Sunday
AUGUST	3rd	4th		First Weekend
		25th	26th	August Bank Holiday
OCTOBER	5th	6th		First Weekend
NOVEMBER	2nd	3rd		Discovery Weekend



WRG NEW YEAR AT SAWMILLS

by George Rogers

Mike Kelley

The first weekend of the year is not traditionally the time to celebrate Christmas. But for the North West regional group of the Waterway Recovery Group, aka WRG NW, tradition is not always the way forward. Thus, on Friday 4th January 2013, the Waingroves Community Centre welcomed 12 WRG NW volunteers - there ostensibly to continue the tree felling at Sawmills, but perhaps more accurately for their Christmas/New Year meal (the kitchen, and in particular the large oven, lending itself to the production of a feast).

Saturday morning dawned, and after all were supplied with a hearty breakfast it was off to site for the majority. Once there, we met up with a couple more volunteers and it was on to site for a (brief) health and safety briefing - basically, please don't stand under trees that are being felled, and it would be helpful if you didn't chop the wrong trees down! With the formalities out of the way, the chainsaw operators got busy, the "I-much-prefer-to-use-hand-tools" volunteers were scything (well technically they were using a bill hook,

but I'm not sure about "bill hooking") their way through the undergrowth, and the fire starters were, well, starting fires. Before long, smoke was drifting over the site and trees were starting to fall.

And thus the day went. After lunch, having been fortified by fresh soup thanks to Matthew Rogers, and having been strengthened with the addition of a second chainsaw operator, work started on some of the trickier trees close to the

John Hawkins



Always plenty of scope for a good bonfire on this type of work.



telephone cable. Anyone walking the stretch between the Brick Yard Bridge (26) and Bullbridge may have noticed this cable passing over the canal into Lockwood's Yard. Whilst a cable is no problem if the trees are naturally falling away, we would prefer not to bring it down with a tree falling into it. The solution: a winch attached part way up the tree to pull it the correct way. All this meant each tree took longer than normal, and so progress slowed somewhat - although at least it gave the fires a chance to catch up.

By the end of the Saturday, considerable progress had been made, and so the volunteers retired to Waingroves for a well deserved Christmas feast thanks to the catering team led by Liz Chase - complete with crackers, party hats and "jokes". More amusing to many was the fact that I had lost my voice thanks to a combination of a cold and shouting too much, which was a blessing to some and entertainment to others!

Sunday dawned, and on site we welcomed our final volunteer for the weekend. The order of the day was much as before, although with the addition of a second fire. By the end of the working day, many trees had been removed, although there are still plenty remaining for a future weekend.

A huge thank you to the usual culprits of these weekends - the WRG NW volunteers, Rob Lockwood for allowing us to work on his land, Gill & David Hirst (without whose help the Sawmills work parties would never run so smoothly), the local people who kept the site clear of logs for us and to Matthew for the soup. A personal, humungous thankyou to Liz Chase for the dinner. I have eaten or cooked 5 Christmas dinners this season, and yours was definitely the best (albeit possibly tied with my own...).

George Rogers



ABOVE: The fall of the tree being controlled with a winch whilst the chainsawing proceeds.

BELOW: Logging the trunk after felling.



George Rogers



Some other matters from George...

1. The Website The website now includes photo galleries of the work done by WRG at Derwentside last summer, and also of the WRG NW weekend reported above. In addition, the full reports from Portal are available to read on the news pages. The gallery of Derwentside also includes pictures of the completed structure, which was finished by Derbyshire County Council before Christmas. They have done a very good job, and it is a fine example of what can be achieved by collaborative working. I hope it is a forerunner to many more interesting projects.

Otherwise, I can only continue to remind you that the mailing lists are out there for news, events and work parties, and that you can get your copy of the Portal electronically – contact me if any of those are of interest.

2. WRG in the future Last time I wrote I said we were awaiting news on WRG Canal Camps in 2013. Well, now I can confirm that WRG will be back with us for the first two weeks of August, with the aim being to complete the work started in 2011 on the offside wall of the Gauging Narrows at Sawmills. We need to finish the offside so that we can set up a temporary footpath diversion before starting on the towpath side (hopefully in 2014).

These camps are run by WRG, so any FCC volunteers wishing to join in are advised to book onto the camp through the WRG website. If you only want to be on site and not sleep in the accommodation / eat the food, then I would advise that you ring Jenny Morris in WRG head office to discuss. All that said, it is great fun!!

3. A Canal Lock for the Future Readers will remember I wrote an article about a survey for my final year university project in the last edition. I am very grateful to all who responded and completed the survey – I have had well over a hundred people fill it in. The survey is now closed and I am in the process of analysing the data – and I hope to be able to provide you with some results in the next issue. Thank you to all who have helped!

4. And finally.. A belated Happy New Year - I hope you, your families and friends and the Friends of the Cromford Canal all have a happy and fulfilling 2013. Enjoy it.

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

Mr & Mrs D Lake, Nottingham	Mrs S Taylor, Matlock
Mr & Mrs L McMeeken, Matlock	Mr & Mrs. R Phillips, Ilkeston
Mr J Guylar, Nottingham	Mrs T Brock, Selston
Ms J Maggs, Wigton	Mr & Mrs M D Leggett, Swanwick
Mr A J K Hickling, Kegworth	Mr J Riley, Ripley
Mr & Mrs A J Piper, Matlock	Mr & Mrs J Glass, Birmingham
Mr & Mrs N Reed, Ripley	Mr A Daunt, Matlock
Mr & Mrs C Spence, Belper,	Mr D Millhouse, Ripley
Mr & Mrs D Marsh, Ambergate	Miss F Beastall, Birmingham
Mr & Mrs J Beastall, Alfreton	Mr & Mrs D Smith, Ripley.
Mr R Vane, Ripley	

Also Mrs A Robinson of Matlock and Mrs B Parkin of Kirkby-in-Ashfield who have rejoined us.

And finally

Apologies to Mr B Howitt, Belper, and Mr & Mrs T Castledine, Ripley, who joined us some time ago, but whose names were missed off the list.



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



I hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year celebration. What will 2013 bring for the Friends of the Cromford Canal? Hopefully a boat on the dredged canal at Cromford, maybe some more work at Sawmills, and a general move towards getting our lovely canal back into use.

Our December Social Pie and Pea evening seemed to go very well, and I would like to thank the ladies who made it all possible by helping in the kitchen, especially Freda who has the all important hygiene certificate and a very long wooden spoon. All the pies were eaten and lots of people seemed to be dancing to the Red Lion Band. Our thanks must go to them, as always; they give their time free of charge to us, although we do give them a pie and some peas! We have a full programme of talks for this year, with something different in March, when we have a special talk by Gwilym Roberts on the Butterley Company. We shall be selling tickets in advance for this event, which will be held at the Hayes Conference Centre at Swanwick as we feel this will attract a much wider audience than our usual talks. Tickets will be £3.00 each, and are available from Mike Kelley (details inside front cover), or on the night. See also page 3. In February we will have an update from the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society and in June Geraint Coles will bring us up to date with progress on the Chesterfield Canal. On 21 October we have a return visit from Wendy Freer, who will tell us about 'Black Diamonds' – the story of the Leicester and Nottingham coal industry. The usual charge of £2 will apply for all these talks. From January we will be offering tea and coffee during the break as an alternative to a drink from the bar. We are not sure how viable this will be, but several people have suggested it so we will see how it goes!

April 15th 2013 is your VIP free admission evening - in other words the Friends AGM. This has always been very well attended, and is your chance to hear our plans for the future and for you to volunteer to help the Friends. You will find the Minutes of the last AGM and full details for this year elsewhere in this magazine. Do come along and have your say.

With best wishes to all our Members for a Happy and Healthy 2013.

The latest list of new members is shown on the previous page

Unless specifically stated, any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the formal policy of the Friends of the Cromford Canal. The FCC accepts no liability for any matter printed in this newsletter nor any advertising that may be included. Reproduction of extracts from this newsletter welcomed provided that a full acknowledgement is given.

BLANK CARDS

We have produced a series of full colour cards A5 folded to A6 and left blank inside for you to add

Your Own Greeting or Message

Available in 8 different designs, including envelopes, as a single card £1.00 or a pack of 4 for £3.50

Postage & packing: Single cards add 60p for up to 6 cards. Packs of 4 cards add 60p per pack.

Please make cheques payable to: Friends of the Cromford Canal and order from the Sales Address



PACK ONE

contains

Bows at Alveate, Narrow Boats, Slides & Chimneys and Leawood Pump

PACK TWO

contains

Morning Mist, Fore End, Boat Horses at Cromford and Rudder



These cards can be seen in full colour on the website