

THE PORTAL

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



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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Editorial | 2 |
| Chairman's Notes | 3 |
| Walking the Line | 4 |
| <i>Birdswood</i> Update..... | 5 |
| Strategic Restoration Committee | 8 |
| News from the North..... | 10 |
| New Community Role for <i>Birdswood</i> | 12 |
| A Shadow for the Treasurer | 13 |
| Transporting Cotton During The Industrial Revolution | 14 |
| Chemicals to Ambergate?..... | 15 |
| Reed All About It | 16 |
| Economic Development Study..... | 20 |
| Dredging at High Peak Junction | 21 |
| A Fender for the Winding Hole..... | 23 |
| Taking the Minutes | 24 |
| Jews Ear | 25 |
| Ironville Update | 26 |
| Potter's Pages | 28 |
| Members' Social Meetings..... | 30 |
| Discovery Walks | 30 |
| Leawood Pump Steaming Dates | 30 |
| Letter to the Editor | 31 |
| Membership Matters | 32 |
| New Members..... | 33 |



FRONT COVER: Some of the band of stalwart volunteers ready for the last barrow run of the day transporting reeds from Lawn Bridge to Cromford Wharf. See pages 16 - 19.

Photo: John Guylor

BACK COVER: *Birdswood* looking very patriotic in the spring sunshine at Cromford Wharf ready for the next passengers to load on Saint Georges Day

Photo: Vix Wilding

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.57

The weather is now improving after a wet and cold winter, and we can turn our thoughts to more outside activities on and around the Cromford Canal. You will read elsewhere of the plans for *Birdswood*, ably led by Vix Wilding with a growing band of volunteers. Perhaps I have said this before, but I have to repeat that I am pleasantly surprised by the number of people who are now involved with the boat or shop. It is developing into a significant business which will continue to need a lot of commitment. There is also a new initiative being introduced by Nic Barfield to encourage more groups of people from the local community who for various reasons would not otherwise be able to visit the canal or take a trip on *Birdswood*. See page 12.

The boat operation also received encouragement recently from a report by Derbyshire County Council. This concluded that there has been no detrimental effect caused by *Birdswood* on the wildlife on and around the canal. This confirms what people who go boating have always known - navigable canals all over the country, many of which are very busy with boat traffic, have a thriving wildlife population.

However, as I have also said before, there is much more to the FCC than running *Birdswood*. In this issue, George Rogers has written two articles which show how restoration of the Cromford Canal, which will always be the main aim of the FCC, will be tackled in the next few years. As George says, a lot of behind the scenes work has been done, but a great deal more is still needed. This will be progressed by the newly formed Strategic Restoration Committee, see page 8, and the Economic Development Study, see page 20. Now, I agree that this does not exactly sound too exciting, but such things are vital if we are to see real progress towards the day when boats can once more travel from all over the waterway system and reach Cromford and Pinxton.

Of course, this will take a great deal of money, most of which will need to come from grants of various kinds, but obtaining these will itself need funding to produce applications etc. This is where FCC fundraising comes in, which leads me on to the fact that, in addition to crewing *Birdswood* and manning the shop at Cromford, volunteers are always needed for other means of raising funds. In particular, the FCC sales stand will not be able to attend the various events this summer unless more people can be found.

The other important aspect of FCC activity is work parties. John Barker is always looking for volunteers who like tackling practical work on the canal. Much has been achieved, not only at the top end of the Canal near Cromford, but also at Sawmills, Lower Hartshay and Ironville.

I know we keep banging on about this, but volunteers will always be the life blood of the FCC and it would be good to see some new faces from the hundreds of members.

The press date for the Summer 2016 issue will be August 11th



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by John Baylis BEM



I mentioned in my last notes that the Charity Commission has approved our application to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and we are now operating under the new charity number 1164608. Since we started employing a Boat Operations Manager we have been using Community Accounting Plus to supervise the various tax and other requirements. Now that due to the operation of *Birdswood* our annual income exceeds £25,000, the Charity Commission requires an External Scrutiny Report of our annual accounts and Community Accounting Plus is an approved body. In the production of our accounts for 2015 CA+ decided the old charity 1100700 bank accounts could be closed and so, at the Annual General Meeting on April 18th, the accounts were approved thus being the closing meeting of that charity.

As part of the change to a CIO, the FCC now has a new Constitution. This is available on the FCC website or, as Executive Secretary, I can supply paper copies on request. Contact details inside the front cover.

When I wrote the last notes we were unsure of the election requirements of the trustees under the new charity; this question has been answered by the Charity Commission and the AGM in April 2017 will be the first of the new CIO 1164608. The trustees nominated on the formation of the CIO will require to be re-elected in blocks of 4 trustees over the next three AGMs.

I am very pleased that we have been able to make this change through the on-line connections with the Charity Commission. Three of the Trustees scheduled for re-election were already nominated for 1164608, and David Ratner who was newly nominated for election as a Trustee has been co-opted to fill the vacancy. Finally on the AGM I would like to thank Chris Jacklin who has retired after 8 years as a Trustee; Chris is the key painter on *Birdswood* and will continue in that role.

Most of the present trustees and other committee members have been in office for several terms and some are looking towards stepping down over the next year. Val Roberts has run the sales operation since the start of the Friends and can no longer attend outside events. We are looking for a couple or two people with transport to attend outside events and take the sales stand and displays. Regular attendance at the monthly Committee meetings may not be necessary. Val's husband Mike Harrison has edited *Portal* from issue 24 and is considering finishing in the next year. If anyone is interested in taking over please talk to me or Mike; hands-on use of computer publishing would be an advantage but we can offer help with this.

John Barker has been looking after volunteer work parties at Cromford, Hartshay and Ironville but needs the help of another person with a view to taking over from him. Finally, after Matt Rogers had to resign, I took over as Chairman for a short term, but I am now on my third year. We have over 800 members but we need younger volunteers to start to take over some of the vital jobs needed to keep a successful organisation running





effectively and taking advantage of the grants and opportunities available for canal restoration and trip boat operation.

I also mentioned in my last notes that we were reconstituting what is to be called the Strategic Restoration Committee. As mentioned by the editor, this is covered in separate reports by George Rogers on the SRC and also the Economic Development Study on the Langley Mill to Pinxton and Golden Valley section. The preliminary report on the study will be the subject of an open meeting, probably in Ironville, in the summer; I hope that many of you will be able to attend.

Now that Shires Developments has withdrawn from its plan to opencast a shallow coal seam at Langley Mill and then restore the first part of the Cromford Canal with a small marina, it has decided to put the piece of land previously purchased on the market. Shires have offered the Friends a small strip of land alongside that currently owned by the Canal & River Trust and our engineers are assessing the value of the land in our proposed restoration.

WALKING THE LINE

by Hugh Potter

At a recent committee meeting it became clear that certain members (who had best remain nameless!) were not familiar with the entire length of the Cromford Canal, so it was decided to organise a series of 'guided tours'. It then occurred to us that there may be other FCC members who would like to be shown some of the less-well-known sections of our canal. So we have initially set up two dates in June to explore the main sections.

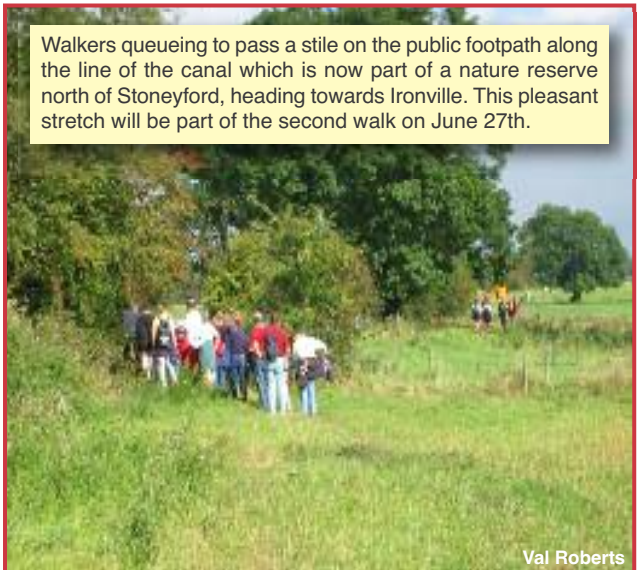
On Monday 20th June we plan to explore from Ambergate to Butterley Tunnel/Ripley with a return by bus or car shuffle. There are ample places for refreshment in Ripley.

On Monday 27th June we will walk the section from Langley Mill to Butterley Tunnel/Golden Valley with a return by car shuffle. The Great Northern at Langley Mill is the obvious place for refreshment.

Each walk is about 4 miles (2-3 hours) and will start around 10.30. Whilst the second one is fairly flat, be warned that the first one includes some steep flights of over 60 steps, on account of the infilling around Hag Tunnel and where the A610 crosses at Hartshay. The route is muddy in places, so walking boots are recommended. Dogs on leads only.

There will be no charge for members to join these walks but we will be asking for donations.

If you would like to join one or other walk, then please contact me (preferably by email at hughpotter@icloud.com). Further details will be sent to you nearer the time, around 10th June, once numbers have been established.





BIRDSWOOD UPDATE

by Vix Wilding



We are currently 2 months into a new business plan for *Birdswood*. She may be a narrow boat that gracefully glides along the canal carrying the many passengers who visit her, but she could be so much more. Discussions have opened a new breath of fresh air and we hope to be able to complete four main projects this year alone.

The shop is going from strength to strength and the trip aspect pretty much flows smoothly, excuse the pun! With these things running along, as always it was time to develop the use of our main asset, *Birdswood*.

Imagine you had an empty building and wondered what to use it for, well that's exactly what we did. In the winter Nic Barfield worked with myself and the Boat Committee to put together a plan of action. After submitting this to Trustees for approval the wheels started turning very fast. We asked for the flexibility to increase the use of *Birdswood*, and to be able to give back to the community who support us. The Derby Intern scheme was just the start and I'll keep you up to date with the progress made here in the next issue. (See page 12 for Nic Barfield's report on this.)

Our aims are now focused on increasing the loading figures in the off-season. Some of the suggestions made are here:

- Looking at hire opportunities for static use of *Birdswood* - art/craft workshops, music venue, poetry recitals.
- More off-peak events and happenings; e.g. Forest schools, guided walks, wharf side family craft events.
- More themed events: Story telling, Cream Teas (see the poster overleaf for an example), Photo trips, Wine 'n' Cheese tasting, Folk evenings, Games evening, Pie n Peas supper, 'Boat Bingo', Canal quiz.
- If you have experience with any of these please use my contact details further down to send in any tips. I'm always open to other ideas and would be pleased to hear from you. You are a member of a fast growing Tourist Attraction that raises the money to restore this canal. The more help from you the more we can raise!

If you are a member of a group, large family or association I ask that you remember us when planning your get togethers. Use your imagination and I'm sure we can pull it off! So far we have had parties, music clubs, reading groups and even a wake onboard. With the new comfortable seating and larger tables we are still able to take up to 40 passengers. We have a microphone for group speaking and some very beautiful scenery. All this included in a two hour trip for just £160.

On top of this we are still searching for volunteers in all aspects, especially friendly men and ladies who can make tea and coffees. As always we only ask for a day a month from you at a time to suit so please get in touch if you are willing to do a little more for this worthy charity. With special events on the rise I am looking to create a group of people who cannot commit to every month but would be willing to help occasionally to chaperone or make





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Butler Service

£18 per person

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Cromford Wharf at 12 noon

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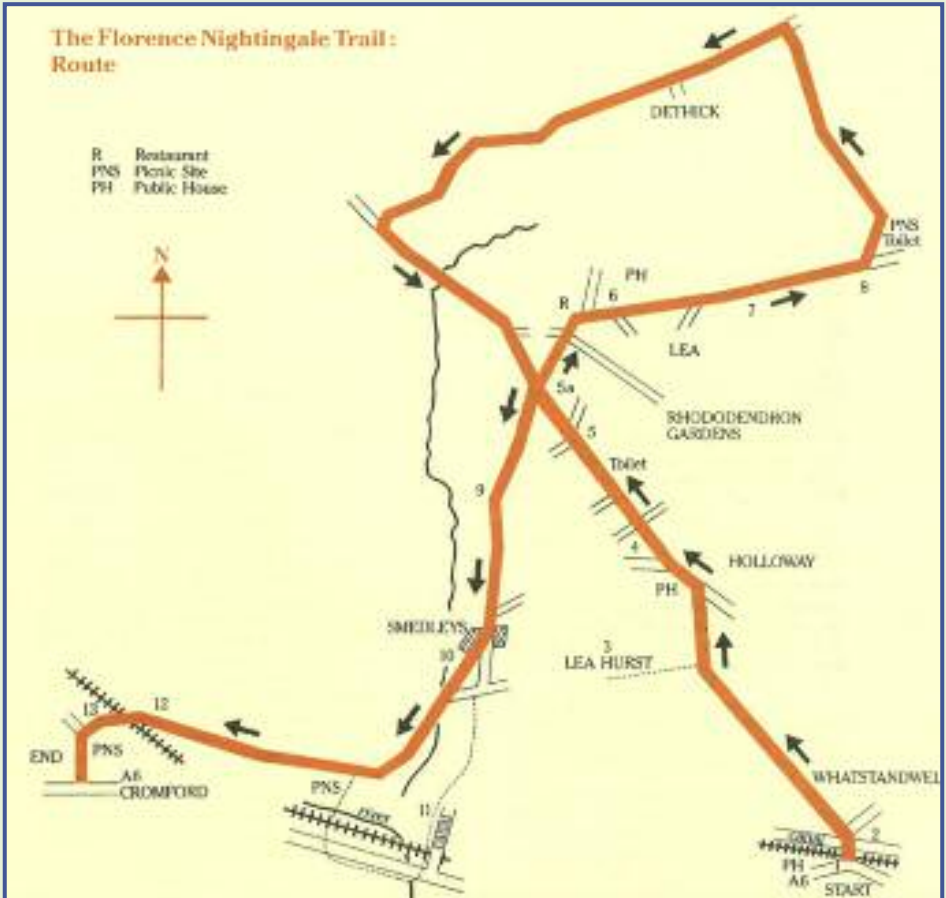


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Food & Rural Affairs
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teas at a one off event. Sometimes the odd extra body on the ground can make all the difference to the smooth running of a function. Something that may be of interest to one or two of you is to expand people's knowledge about the canal and the local walks. Have you ever considered leading a group of interested, like minded, people through the life of a Mill Worker in Cromford or a visit to Florence Nightingale's home? Do you enjoy talking and walking? Stories can be learnt and routes mapped out, as below, or organise it all yourself. This is adaptable and any suggestions welcomed. If you are happy to be contacted now and again please send me your contact details to: victoria@birdswood.org



As you know the new website www.birdswood.org was launched and this has given us a new retail market and there are some very beautiful products now on sale there. Some products have been discontinued and others introduced. Many people have already found it and bookings are coming in for various dates. News articles are updated and events added regularly so keep an eye open for some new items like Bidy's Cream Teas and Rag Rugging Beginners classes.

We are also starting a newsletter that will be issued by email only. This will contain special offers, priority bookings on trips and event listings. If you would like to receive this please drop me a message at: victoria@birdswood.org



THE STRATEGIC RESTORATION COMMITTEE

by George Rogers

This is an edited version of my presentation to the AGM entitled 'An Engineering Update', concentrating on the formation and work of the new Strategic Restoration Committee. I stressed up front in the presentation, and once again here, that all opinions are my own unless explicitly stated otherwise.

'We have the engineering solution to every obstacle that exists to restoration', 'all the hard work is done' and 'you can all sit back and watch it happen' - three things I most definitely won't be writing about. There has been a lot of work done behind the scenes since the formation of the FCC, but the hard work is far from over, indeed some may say it has barely begun. Before we can start large scale restoration projects (basically anything we can't fund from our existing income streams and thus need external funding for), there is much still to do.

That work has taken on new emphasis and direction with the formation of the Strategic Restoration Committee, briefly mentioned by John Baylis in his Chairman's notes in the last issue. It has its roots in a meeting held between the engineers and the trustees in December, the aim being to discuss the future strategy for restoration and the status of the then Engineering Committee. Until that point, the Engineering Committee only existed on a very informal basis, and it was recognised that there was a need to put it on a formal footing with designated responsibilities.

One of my concerns had been that it felt rather like the engineers were expected to restore the canal. However, canal restoration is much wider than just engineering - an engineering solution to the problems has to be accompanied by a financial one, an economic one, an environmental one and a sustainable one. Some other canal societies have developed a Restoration Committee reflecting that, so that as well as engineers they include experts in other fields.

The Strategic Restoration Committee was thus formed, and we now have an accepted set of Terms of Reference. Most of these are about the administrative and reporting requirements, but the important section is titled 'Functions and Delegated Authority', which I have included here.

- The aim of the Restoration Committee is to progress the planning of the restoration of the Cromford Canal.
- This is to include feasibility, engineering, heritage, ecology, hydrology, economics and stakeholder engagement.
- The Restoration Committee will support the work of others within the FCC where required, including the FCC and outside body work parties, grant applications and the Boat Committee. The Restoration Committee will only support these activities where specifically requested and will not be responsible for organising these activities.
- The Restoration Committee will recommend expenditure on specific items (e.g. technical reports) and provide a brief or draft Terms of Reference to the Trustees. If the need for the specific item is agreed by the Trustees, the Restoration Committee will then seek a minimum of three quotes for the work. These quotes will be evaluated by the Restoration Committee and the recommendations presented to the Trustees for approval. The recommendation will consider all relevant factors (including, but not limited to, best value for money, previous experience, technical expertise, resource availability and reputation). The Restoration Committee and the Trustees will be under no obligation to accept the cheapest, or indeed any, of the quotes, and the Trustees will be under no obligation to accept the recommendations of the Restoration Committee.
- No expenditure is permitted without the prior authorisation of the Trustees.



At the December meeting, we also agreed to focus the work of the Strategic Restoration Committee on the restoration east of Butterley tunnel. John Baylis set out the key reasons for that decision in his last notes, so I'd just like to briefly expand on them.

1. It would give access from the national waterway network to the Cromford Canal. The standard approach to canal restoration is generally to start by restoring what you can, where you can. We will have to continue to take action when opportunities present themselves or when the future restoration is compromised, but we have taken the decision to focus, as much as possible, on the section that connects to the existing network. The obvious benefit with connecting to the network is that boats can actually use the canal. It's not actually a necessity - boaters are very rarely, if ever, the primary user of a canal - towpath users such as walkers, cyclists and anglers are generally much more important.

2. It would provide environmental improvements to deprived urban areas of Derbyshire. Clearly true in the urban areas of the canal, it is also true that any environmental improvements will have to be balanced against the impacts of restoring the canal south of Ironville. There has been some work done on this in the past, and there is a lot of work still to do.

3. It would bring potential for economic development along its course. Restoring the canal east of the tunnel will provide an excellent opportunity for urban and economic regeneration of the whole area. This work is the current focus of the new Economic Development Study commissioned by the FCC (more elsewhere).

4. It would potentially provide better drainage and reduce the flood risk for the Ironville and Pinxton areas.

This is a very interesting area because the canal could give an alternative pathway for water to flow to lower areas, as well as being used to catch rainfall runoff and surface water drainage. The other consideration, however, is the reservoir outflow. The construction of the current outflow channel necessitated the removal of lock 1 and the removal of cills at locks 2 to 4. To restore the canal, we will first have to demonstrate the effect on the excess flows from the reservoir.

5. The cost of restoration could be in excess of £25million necessitating external funding. I should point out that the £25 million cost came from the Atkins scoping study and only covers the restoration of the section east of the tunnel. It does make a lot of assumptions but it isn't far wrong. Whilst it is reasonable to assume that some of that money will come from private donations, fund raising campaigns, existing income and in-kind donations, a significant chunk of the money is going to have to come from external funding agencies.

At the moment, I think the Strategic Restoration Committee has 5 main priorities:

1. The Economic Development Study, see elsewhere
2. Re-read all of the existing reports with a view to:
 - a. checking that all the assumptions are still valid.
 - b. whether any additional information is available now that wasn't at the time of the report and whether this has any impact on the conclusions.
 - c. checking that nothing was neglected.
 - d. identifying gaps in the reports.
3. Review the ecological and environmental work done as this goes out of date quickly.
4. Consider the hydrologic impacts of reinstating the canal channel.
5. Write up all of the above into a coherent plan for the next 5 years.

I will be expanding on those points and reviewing the work done to date in my next report for *Portal*. In the meantime, I would be very keen to hear from anybody that would be interested in being involved in some way. We are particularly looking for people with any experience of educational/training provision, and anybody with experience of working with the environment, but anybody with any relevant experience would be welcome.



NEWS FROM THE NORTH

Cromford Canal - Cromford to Ambergate

Update - April 2016

**from Patrick Mountain - West Wider Area Ranger
Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service**

Spring on the Canal

The Countryside service team at Middleton Top are responsible for monitoring and managing the canal from Ambergate to Cromford Wharf. The weekly canal patrols are particularly interesting in the spring as resident and visiting wildlife starts to be more active. The Mute swans, George & Mildred, are nesting next to the towpath south of Whatstandwell for the third year and are now sitting on eggs. Water Vole sightings were worryingly infrequent through the winter but the spring sunshine is now bringing them out and Voles have been seen at all of their usual spots.

A stealth camera has recently confirmed that there are mink on the River Derwent in the Cromford area but our monitoring on the canal hasn't shown any. If you do see a mink on the canal please inform me at Middleton Top.



Hugh Potter

Whatstandwell canal spillway (see above)

As I write this, the team from Allroads are finishing off the construction of the spillway and its associated structures. The temporary diversion and bridge will be removed and the towpath reopened today. The diversion across the canal, though necessary, has been an inconvenience and walkers and cyclists will be pleased to see it go. The completion was delayed due logistical reasons but this important project has been completed to ensure the security of the canal and its surroundings by maintaining correct water levels in the canal at times of heavy rain.



Winding Hole

The depth of water and underwater obstructions in the winding hole at Leawood Pumpouse has been an issue since *Birdswood* started operating. Recently, contractors were employed in order to remove the silt & obstructions which will enable *Birdswood* to turn round more easily particularly at times of low water.

In addition, a bank protector has been installed where the bow of *Birdswood* makes contact whilst turning in the winding hole. Thanks go to the Friends for helping to co-ordinate and fund these schemes. *See report on pages 21 - 23. Ed.*

Volunteer work parties

John Barker and the fortnightly team of Tuesday volunteers have been busy through the winter managing vegetation, reed pulling, silt trap clearing and a host of other tasks to keep the canal in order. Upcoming jobs will include filling and installing bags of clay to repair the area of the canal bank that we call "Dog haul outs". One dog going in and out of the canal does little damage but once a particular favourite place is established then it's not long before there is significant damage. Clay filled hessian bags are pinned in place then covered with vegetation to stabilise the repair.

Towpath improvements

The towpath has now been resurfaced from Ambergate to Cromford so there are no planned closures in the near future.

Tree work

Railtrack contractors, QTS, have undertaken extensive de-vegetation work on the canal retaining wall south of Whatstandwell. This was necessary in order to allow the structure to be thoroughly inspected and limit damage to the wall by tree roots and damage caused by falling trees. Once the barrier of the vegetation was removed, there was a clear danger of people falling onto the track so a wire fence has been installed. See picture on the right.

Countryside Service Re Structure

As a result of the recent restructuring I, Patrick Mountain & Sean Kent are now responsible for the monitoring of the canal with Paul Finn being the Assistant Area manager in overall charge.

Patrick Mountain

**West Wider Area Ranger Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service
Middleton Top Visitor Centre on 01629 823204.**

Paul Finn

**Assistant Area Manager Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service
Hayfield Information Centre on 01629 533345**





NEW COMMUNITY ROLE FOR *BIRDWOOD*

by Nic Barfield

Following three months of planning by *Birdswood* Boat Committee members this Spring, FCC Trustees have given approval for a new Community Engagement Project to be launched this summer.

The project will see *Birdswood* being made available to groups from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire who might not otherwise be able to visit us. Proposed users who will benefit from the project include people with physical, mental or learning disabilities, and groups who suffer social, economic or cultural disadvantage.

With two seasons' experience of running commercial public trips and private charters with growing success, Boat Committee volunteers felt it was time to look at offering something to people who so far haven't had much opportunity to engage with the Cromford Canal. Volunteers have been impressed by how much pleasure *Birdswood* and the canal have given some of our more vulnerable and disadvantaged visitors – the Chernobyl children's groups in 2014 and 2015, for instance, shown in the picture below, and some



adult assisted living groups who found us by chance when looking for new outdoor activities locally. So Vix Wilding and I hatched a plan to raise funds to pay for a 'community cruises' programme to be run on days when *Birdswood* is not in public service or booked for commercial charters.

Examination of a long list of funding agencies identified quite a number of charities which provide money for community and educational activities. We've already had some small-scale success with fund-raising, most recently with two generous £250 awards from Derbyshire Dales District councillors Joyce Pawley and Garry Purdy. But we realise that grant-chasing is a laborious business, so we went looking for some extra help.

First call was to the University of Derby, where Employer Engagement Officer Sally Bryan helped formulate an approach to would-be student interns looking for a challenging and absorbing project to add to their cv's. The Derby Intern Programme allows enterprises like ours to employ an intern worker for a minimum of 100 hours, so we set the



intern's initial project input at this level. The £720 employment cost is being met by a £500 subsidy from the University of Derby plus generous cash donations from three Boat Committee members.

Job ads were drawn up, candidates were shortlisted, and Vix and I interviewed five students in April. By early May, the temporary part-time post of Community Engagement Project Worker had been offered to a candidate with lots of drive and confidence who already has extensive experience in the voluntary and social care sectors. At the time of writing, we're hoping for a late May start date with the first phase of the project running through to the end of July.

The Phase One project plan is straightforward: research available funding sources; examine their funding criteria; engage with target user groups and social care/health service providers and investigate their needs; formulate projects that match users' needs while also matching funding criteria; and then write the grant bids. It sounds simple but we're aware that we'll be just one of many organisations asking for funding in an austere climate where budget cuts are biting hard.

If Phase One works out to plan, we should be running fully-funded or subsidised community cruises by Autumn 2016. Feedback from these will enable us to compile case histories as we move on to Phase Two, which will be to make the case for 'community engagement' becoming a permanent part of the *Birdswood* vocabulary and our future business plans.

At this early stage, we have no firm agenda about selecting community groups with which to engage - inner city kids, mums and children via local SureStart initiatives, health support groups, people in residential care... you name it. So if you know of people who you think deserve our support and whose lives would be a bit brighter after a *Birdswood* cruise, why not drop a line to me at nic.barfield@w3z.co.uk or go to www.birdswood.org and use the online contact message form? Same applies if you know of companies or organisations in your area which might like to join in funding this programme. Thanks a lot!

CAN YOU SHADOW?

by Mike Kelley

At the last AGM a member of the audience asked, "Why don't we have people 'shadowing' key positions within our society. Then if someone becomes ill, leaves the area, or becomes too old to continue, we will have someone who has been shadowing that position to take up that role. This way we will have a smooth transition, without disruption or putting undue stress on others."

What the member said is indeed true and I wish it were so. However the short answer to this question is we do not have enough members willing to give their time to help in this regard. Having said this though, our Treasurer, Bob Bullock, who has been in that role for around twelve years, would now like to have someone to shadow him, so he can hand over his role by the end of this year. (We thank Bob for giving us enough time in this matter)

So, if you feel you can, or would like to try, and shadow for the position of Treasurer, then please give it a try. The Treasurer of the FCC is an important and respected position, but not one which cannot be learnt. It may only be two to three hours a week of your time that we need, but without such volunteers, we could not run our society. So if you are willing to give it a go, then please contact me on

07745 206958, or at mgkelley@hotmail.com



TRANSPORTING COTTON DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

by Mike Kelley

Some time ago I was privileged to see one or two old Log Books from the original Cromford Canal Company. They made fascinating reading, each one being over two inches thick for just one month of records. They recorded the tonnage carried, points of origin and destinations as well as the product being carried. What surprised me the most when looking through them, was the lack of cotton being carried on the Cromford Canal. Why was this surprising? Well this canal did go up to and serve the oldest cotton factories in the world, the Richard Arkwright mills.

I was therefore pleased when an FCC member, Andrew Wager, gave me a photocopy of an Oxford University study called, 'Transporting Methods in the British Cotton Industry During the Industrial Revolution', written by Michael Freeman. (No I don't have the date of this publication, but I suspect c 1970s) I shall quote freely from this document from now on.

For an industry of the size and importance of cotton it comes as rather a surprise to discover that so little has been written on the methods of transport used in the different stages of its operation. We know from studies that at the Strutt mills in Derbyshire in the 1820s cotton supplies were brought in almost entirely by water; cotton brought at Liverpool was carried to Derby by canal. That from London also reached Strutt by canal, or was sent by sea to Gainsborough and then transferred to canal for Derby. How far this applied before 1820 is not clear. In the winter months bad roads and frozen canals often prevented cotton dispatched from London from reaching its destination in good time, inferring some division between transport modes. From researches by Albert Pawson and others, it seems that the road system carried a far greater range and volume of traffic than had previously been thought.

From the log books of the John Horrock's mills in Preston, Lancashire, between 1798 and 1812, we find they favoured road transport as much as canal, perhaps in part due to the high cost of canal charges. At this early stage in fact up to 45% we find was carried by road. Later in 1806-12 we find a marked prominence of public road carriers, with a marked absence of payments to official canal carriers. Further studies have revealed very little cotton was carried by water to the Lancashire mills.

In marked contrast to Lancashire, for the Strutt mills at Derby, Belper and Milford, it is found canal carriage was by far the dominant mode of transport in the industry. By the 1820s Strutts' cotton found its way to Derby almost exclusively by water. The difference between Lancashire using mainly road and Strutts water, as a means of conveyance is down to geography and the increasing network of canals around the Midlands

Sometimes though the methods of conveyance became blurred. Pickfords for example ran both canal and road services, and we have mention of yarn being carried destined for export via Hull or Liverpool. In the early days 'carriage' meant by land and 'freight' by water. However, where the same carrier, such as Pickfords, used both means of conveyance whether by land or water became blurred.

With the mills in Manchester and Liverpool as the primary source of cotton supply after 1810, one would have expected the two lines of water communication between Liverpool and Manchester - the Mersey and Irwell Navigation and the Bridgewater canal - to have formed the channels of cotton movement. In reality though there were many occasions when land carriage was used instead.

In 1827, for the Nottingham lace industry transport of yarn by canal was the norm. Yet just some three years later wagon transport was frequently being used, and by 1831



it seems that Johnsons, regular road carriers between Manchester and Nottingham, had acquired a monopoly to supply the trade.

Studies of this period show that for direct sales in Lancashire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire the principle method of distribution was by road wagon. In 1812, for instance, John Mellor of Holymoorside, near Chesterfield, took some 4,500 pounds of yarn from Manchester which was all carried by road. Similarly Samuel Cartledge of Matlock purchased 2,200 pounds of yarn all of which was transported by road. There are records of smaller amounts even being carried into Derbyshire by stage coach.

The cost difference between road and water was remarkably small. However, many of the broker's invoices included a note stipulating a time by which the cotton was to be delivered; the penalty for missing this time was the forfeiture of the carriage charge. So research shows that transport by road on wagons meant less time in transit for the cotton, thereby less likelihood of penalties being paid.

Such consumers within the cotton trade often waited on the receipt of bills for goods they had produced before new supplies of yarn could be purchased. This resulted in the difference between success and failure being measured in the speed with which such orders could be received and dispatched. One mill owner wrote in 1912, "I have yours of the 18th, but am very much disappointed in not having the invoice as I expected receiving the cotton today and now we shall be standing (down) in two days for it".

This clearly demanded a form of transport which only the road sector was capable of providing, until the onset of the railways. So even though cotton mills had a canal close by we find that many times road transport was the preferred method of shipment.

CHEMICALS TO AMBERGATE?

Another question on the subject of cargoes from our Archivist Hugh Potter

In his excellent new book *The Trent & Mersey Canal: Trade & Transport 1770 - 1970*, author Tom Foxon refers to a previously unknown traffic on the Cromford Canal. He mentions an entry in the Stoke Boat Register for 26th November 1884, when the boat *Charity* was registered with the T&M. She belonged to the Riverside Carrying Company, Phoenix Alkali Works, Widnes, and was intended to carry chemicals in 'bottles' (carboys) between Ambergate and Widnes.

It is not clear which way the chemicals would have been travelling and I have wracked my brains but cannot think of what the chemicals might be. The use of carboys suggests a liquid. The only thing that comes to mind is that Richard Johnson & Nephew established a wire works at Ambergate a few years previously and I believe used some rather nasty chemicals in their processes.

The Trent Gauging Tables and the transcribed Cromford Canal permits do not offer any relevant entries, but the latter are far from complete, especially at this relatively late date. Does anyone have any ideas?

A horsedrawn narrow boat carrying chemicals in carboys leaving the Trent & Mersey Canal to join the River Trent en route to Nottingham c.1920. Any similar traffic on the Cromford Canal to Ambergate would have been ended by the closure of Butterley Tunnel in 1900.



Shardlow Heritage Trust



REED ALL ABOUT IT: WE HAVE A CONVOY - OF WHEELBARROWS

Report and Pictures by John Guyler

Since the middle of January this year, as reported in Portal 56, FCC work parties have been removing weed from the canal at Lawn Bridge, (bridge number 1 between Cromford and High Peak Junction). Over the last year the growth of reeds has been of concern, because the channel used by *Birdswood* on the regular trips to Leawood was becoming very restricted. There was a serious risk if left for another season that *Birdswood* would not be able to get through. Also the Boat Masters reported that *Birdswood* slowed down through this section because of restricted water flow around the boat. There had also been a small number of comments from passengers on *Birdswood*, of not being able to see anything but reeds on that section. The request was made last December that clearance was required and urgently, so the work parties were prioritised to this task.

Work on pulling the reed out started on one Sunday in the middle of January and continued until the first weekend of March. That first session was an eye opener in respect to the enormous task ahead and the techniques required. As well as working from the towpath, the small workboat was employed on reeds on the opposite bank, see below.



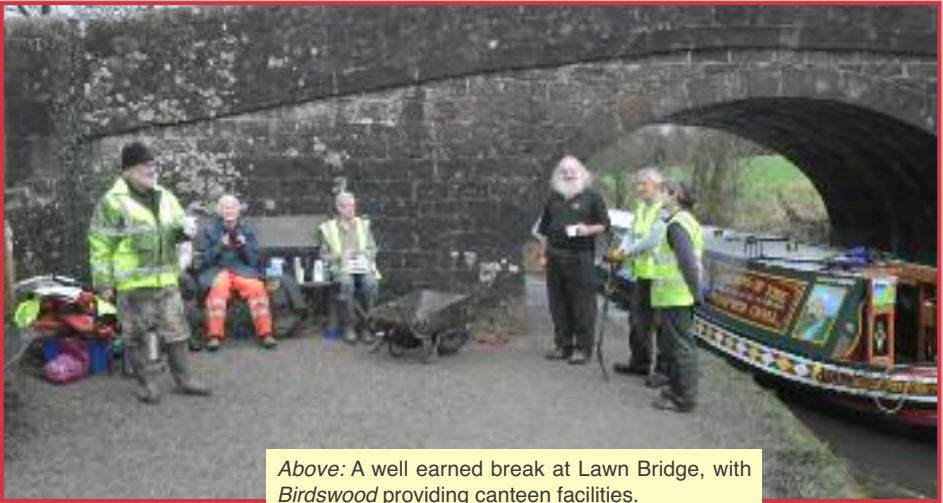
Two methods on the workboat were employed, lifting the reeds vertically with a crome, (a type of large rake) and pulling vertically by hand, which I thought was the easiest, as I was doing it. The two of us in the boat managed three full boat loads during the day, clearing a section that allowed *Birdswood* to line up the exit from Lawn Bridge when returning to Cromford, better than before.



The problem with using the workboat was that pulling the reeds on to the boat meant a lot of water came in as well and we had to bail out at regular intervals, to avoid sinking. Also when we unloaded the reeds, they were so heavy that it took a lot of physical effort to discharge them on to the towpath.

Birdswood was also used as a platform to pull weeds out and perhaps more importantly for the volunteers, as a base from which to dispense regular supplies of hot drinks. I didn't realise how big *Birdswood* is, until working in a small boat with her stationary alongside us and having to manoeuvre around the bow to unload.

The main effort was from the towpath using manual labour, some volunteers worked out a method of working in pairs and pulling the reeds up onto the bank, Mike Kelley's method was to use a grappling hook and determined effort. The whole exercise was extremely difficult and a very tiring, It was remarked that it was a better workout than



Above: A well earned break at Lawn Bridge, with *Birdswood* providing canteen facilities.

Below and overleaf: Dragging the reeds out by hand is hard work but gave very satisfying results.





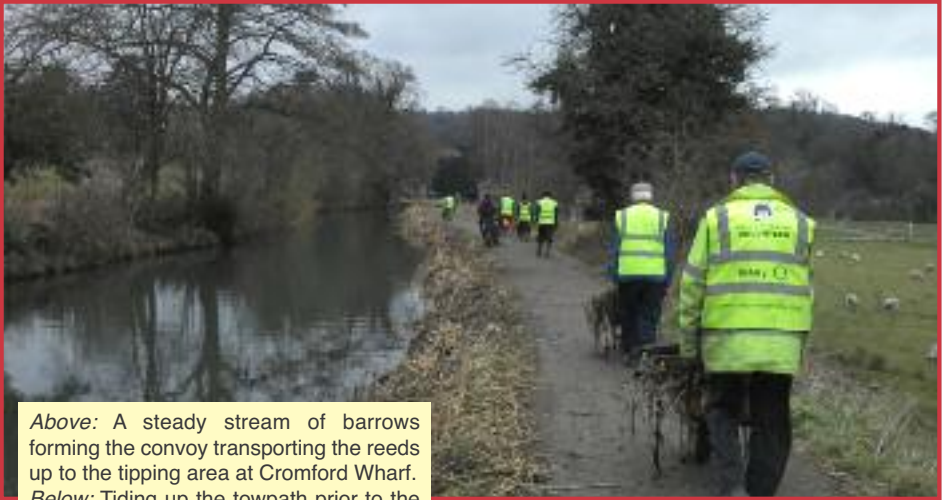
going to the gym and cheaper. On the second Sunday, Chelsea (our boat horse) was brought into action with a rake that had been designed and built by Lance, Chelsea's joint owner. Some very good results were achieved until one of the tines on the rake snapped, which brought things to a premature halt.

The reeds were left on the edge of the towpath, to allow them to drain and allow any wildlife to make their way back into the reed margin that we had left between the towpath and the channel. After six separate work days the reed pulling was finished, with volunteers having given 345 hours, with 58 hours travelling to and from site. On the best day there were 19 volunteers, most of the other days there was an average of 11.

The main thrust of the clear up then commenced. Derbyshire County Council wanted all the reed on the towpath removed and disposed of, before the Easter bank holiday started.

The reed had drained sufficiently to make handling easier but it was still a demanding job. On two days DCC, who own the section, supplied a tractor and trailer, with a driver, to move the reeds that were furthest south beyond Lawn Bridge. Unfortunately after only two trips on the first day the tractor had a puncture, so that was that. The second day was more successful for them.

However, the bulk of the work was manual with wheel barrows. On a couple of days 9 wheelbarrows were in action, 2 volunteers loading and the others barrowing to the disposal point which was the rough scrub area adjacent to the toilet block on the car park at Cromford Wharf. You could say we had a convoy of wheelbarrows in action. The problem which numerous barrowers pointed out was that we had started nearest to the tipping point instead of starting at Lawn Bridge, (this was because, we were hopeful that the reeds furthest away would all be moved by DCC). Every trip therefore was getting that little bit longer, but whichever way we did it there was still a lot of walking.



Above: A steady stream of barrows forming the convoy transporting the reeds up to the tipping area at Cromford Wharf.
Below: Tiding up the towpath prior to the last run after a very successful day.



On the first barrow day we actually had two people helping who were originally out for a walk, but changed their plans and joined in for the day, One of them came back for 2 more days barrowing; we must have looked desperate! On the best day barrowing in numbers, there were 11 and the least was 3. It took 4 separate days amounting to 124 volunteer hours with 27 travel hours. The number of miles walked, a lot. It is estimated that 5 tons of wet reeds were pulled from the canal, which also meant, that 5 tons of reeds had to be moved!

Thanks go out to all those that got involved in this project, a really physical challenge. It left the canal looking a lot better.

Here's to next winter, when it all will have to be done again. Start in November, this time to spread the load!!



PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY FOR THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

by George Rogers

The Economic Development of the Cromford Canal Corridor will be critical to the success of the restoration. If you review any funding agency guidance, you will nearly always find something about economic development. As an example, two of the (many) outcomes that the Heritage Lottery Fund look for in their evaluation of funding applications are the economy is boosted and the organisation is more resilient.

The last two points on the HLF list are in an area that we have started to look at recently. The FCC has commissioned a small local company, Coles Baxter Associates, to carry out an Economic Development Study. They are a relatively new company, but the personnel all have significant experience in heritage led regeneration. Our main point of contact, Dr Geraint Coles, was the development manager for the Chesterfield Canal Trust for a number of years and so has a deep working knowledge of canal restoration.

Quoting from the project tender documentation:

The aim of the study is to deliver an economic development plan for the Southern Cromford Canal.

The objectives of the study are to:

- * Set out a range of options for economic development along the canal corridor.
- * Investigate potential waterway and non-waterway development opportunities.
- * Identify both waterway and non-waterway business opportunities.
- * Ascertain the potential local, regional and national audience (users) for the waterway and seek to quantify likely engagement.
- * Examine the development of income streams to make the waterway sustainable.
- * Explore the economic and social benefits which would result from each option for development. This will include updating of the cost-benefit analysis in previous reports using current metrics.

We are not doing this report just to aid a future funding application. One of the objectives listed is to 'examine the development of income streams to make the waterway sustainable'. Once upon a time, a canal society restored a canal and then gave it to British Waterways who then looked after it. At the time, BW was a government funded agency who had the resources (possibly) to maintain the extra stretch of canal without significant assets or additional funding being provided.

Since BW have become the Canal & River Trust, they will not take on additional maintenance liabilities without it being a cost neutral exercise (and preferably a cost positive situation so they can feed the additional funding elsewhere on the network). Whoever eventually takes on the maintenance of the canal, whether it is CRT or the FCC, we have to know that it can support itself.

The Economic Development Study kicked off properly in mid April and is scheduled to take about 3 months. As part of the study, we want your views and as such there will be a public consultation meeting. I would encourage as many of you as possible to come along and give us your views on how the canal corridor could be developed and enhanced by the restoration of the canal. At the time of going to press, the date of this meeting, to be held at Ironville Church Hall, has not been finalised, but will be announced on the web site as soon as we have a firm date, possibly July or early August 2016. Or contact any committee member.



SPOT DREDGING AT HIGH PEAK JUNCTION

by the Editor

After some discussion, Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service agreed in February to some dredging at High Peak Junction. This had become necessary after steerers of *Birdswood* were finding it more and more difficult to turn the boat round there. The boat needs to be turned in the 'winding hole' ie the place on the canal which is built extra wide to allow a full length boat to turn round. (To 'wind', pronounced to rhyme with 'sinned', rather than 'find', is a boater's term for turning the boat round).

Turning has always been difficult here ever since the *Birdswood* operation started because of the general shallowness of the water near the edges as well as some large stones and other underwater obstructions. The FCC have carried out some manual removal of these in the past, but we were all very pleased that the use of some mechanical method was finally agreed upon.

Following an agreement by all concerned, the contractor was engaged and a small 360 degree excavator soon appeared on the scene. There was some urgency because any such work needed to be done before the start of the bird nesting season. Quite an impression has been made, although progress was rather slow, because the dredgings had to be taken away some distance by road. Also, in the more relaxed days of the old Cromford Canal Society, dredgings were piled on the bank here, making quite a mound. Some of this needed to be removed to allow the machine to gain access to the water's edge before the dredging could start. This is shown in the following pictures

Mike Kelley



The excavator digging its way along the waters edge past the pile of old dredgings prior to starting on the actual dredging.





Mike Kelley



Above: Very good to see, having made a way in, the machine is able to get down to the real business.

Below: Dredgings on the bank in the cleared working area, with the machine waiting for the lorry to return from the tip.



Editor



After the dredging was done, another situation which had been causing some concern at the High Peak Junction winding hole was the possible damage caused to the bank by the fore end of *Birdswood* when winding. The bow of the boat needs to be pressed into the bank so that the stern can be driven round. A large coir fender from Water Lines Solutions fitted with tyre segments was therefore fitted in the vee of the winding hole to protect the soft bank. This was obtained by our chairman John Baylis and fitted in place by a joint work party of both Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association and FCC members as shown above. The finished job is shown on the right. The new fender helps to guide the front of the boat into the vee of the winding hole and also absorbs the pressure.





PAPERWORK – DON'T YOU JUST LOVE IT?!

by Judy Berry

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a successful charitable organisation is in want of a plethora of paperwork - a constitution, policy statements and, above all, MINUTES of meetings.

I am the Minutes' Secretary for the Friends of Cromford Canal and have been for the past six plus years. Like any charitable organisation, it is a requirement of the Charity Commission that the charity's meetings are minuted whether these are Annual General Meetings, Trustee, full committee or sub-committee meetings. The meetings must be minuted accurately, approved by those who were present and then signed by the Chairman before they are properly stored. Meeting minutes comprise the only legal and historical record of the business of the charity and the decisions made, so they are required to be kept during the whole of it's existence. I maintain three full sets of stored minutes; one hard copy, one CD copy and one on my computer with a fourth set being held by our Chairman, John Baylis. Whilst the Charity Commission recommends that AGM minutes are made available to the public and that general meeting minutes are made available to the membership, Trustee meeting minutes are not open documents but may be made available in an anonymised form.

There are a couple of items which must appear on the agenda of each and every Trustee and Committee meeting and these are the names of those present and also a report from the Treasurer on the society's finances. Perhaps not widely known is the need for two other items to be included on all full and sub-committee meeting agendas. They are 'Health and Safety' and 'Conflicts of Interest'. For the FCC it is essential that any health and safety issues are recorded should anything untoward have happened perhaps at a work party or on *Birdswood*. This is because the minutes must record the incident in case there is to be future litigation against the FCC. In addition it is a requirement of the Charity Commission that committee members advise of any private interest they may have in an agenda item to be discussed. At FCC meetings a person advising of such a conflict of interest may be requested to abstain from any discussion of that particular agenda item and they cannot vote on it. Indeed, they may be required to leave the room entirely whilst the item is being discussed or there is a poll.

Policy documents and statements are another requirement of the Charity Commission. *Birdswood* has its own 'Safety Policy' but the FCC also holds a 'Health and Safety Policy' which I will have completed reviewing by the end of May 2016. The FCC has a 'Conflicts of Interest' Policy which again will be reviewed by the end of May 2016. In 2014 the Charity Commission introduced a new policy requirement for charities; 'Safeguarding Children and Young People'. The FCC's policy was developed with support from the Safe Activities For Everyone Community Interest Company (SAFECIC) whose role it is to support charitable organisations in the development of their child protection policies. This was reviewed in January 2016. Canal & River Trust has just developed a 'Dignity and Respect' policy which might be very useful for the FCC to adopt as we have so many members and volunteers from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences.

I am making arrangements for the FCC policies to appear on its website but if you feel there are other policies we should have please do let me know because, whilst others might hate paperwork, I actually quite like it!!

I am sure I speak for all of the FCC Committee in adding our grateful thanks to Judy for so efficiently carrying out this vitally important job - Ed.



AURICULARIA AURICULAR-JUDAE

by John Guyler



There are two places on the Cromford Canal I have found a brown fungus that looks a lot like a soft jelly ear. One area is at Ironville Locks and the other is mid way between Lawn Bridge and High Peak Junction; both are growing on dead trees. The Ironville fungus is in an area with a very sheltered and damp environment and the Cromford specimen is just about at water level. Having never seen this fungus before I enquired as to its name, which is *Auricularia auricular-judae*, known as Jews ear, wood ear, or jelly ear and is a species of edible *Auriculariales* fungus found worldwide.

The fruiting body is distinguished by its noticeably ear-like shape and brown colouration. It grows on wood, especially elder.

Its specific name is derived from the belief that Judas Iscariot hanged himself from an elder tree. The common name 'Judas's Ear' eventually became 'Jews Ear', while today 'Jelly Ear' and other names are sometimes used. The fungus can be found throughout the year in temperate regions worldwide, growing on both living and dead wood.

In the West, *Auricularia auricular-judae* was used in folk medicine as recently as the 19th century for complaints such as sore throats, sore eyes, jaundice and for checking blood flow.

Although it is not widely consumed in the West, it has long been popular in China, to the extent that Australia exported large volumes to China in the early twentieth century. Today the fungus is a popular ingredient in many Chinese dishes, such as hot and sour soup and also in Chinese medicine. It is also used in Ghana, as a blood tonic.

Modern research, into possible medical applications, have variously concluded that *Auricularia Aurricula-Judae* has anti-tumour, hypoglycemic, anticoagulant and cholesterol lowering properties.



IRONVILLE IMPROVEMENTS

by the Editor

There are two pleasing items to report from the canal scene at Ironville. Firstly, two volunteer members of the Midland Canoe Club came and launched their canoe and used it to good effect clearing floating rubbish which was inaccessible from the bank. This was arranged by local councillor and FCC member Pete Clark who has organised a group of local people to help keep the canal through the village, which includes the Ironville lock flight, in a more presentable condition. See below.





The other pleasing job to be done at Ironville recently is the repair of the unique towpath wall made from blocks of local blast furnace slag. This had been in a broken down state in places for some years, see above. Following pressure from the community, again led by Pete Clark, the local authority Social Housing Provider has carried out sensitive repairs, see below. Unfortunately, due to past experiences of vandalism, a guard had to be provided to keep watch on the wall until the cement had set.





POTTER'S PAGES

A look at three more items from the extensive collection of historical material concerning the Cromford Canal from our archivist **Hugh Potter**

(1) LOADED BOAT AT CODNOR PARK

This rare photograph of a laden boat on the Cromford Canal was loaned to FCC for scanning by Dave Rawson, whose sister Jean found it in her family album. Jean believes the photograph was taken by their grandfather Arthur in the early 1930s. Arthur used to be landlord at the Corner Pin pub at Westwood. The identity of the children in the photograph is unknown, but they appear to be well dressed and the two lads are presumably 'messaging about on the boat' at a weekend when the crew had gone away. *[Note that the chimney is at the front end of the cabin in the centre, rather than at the stern alongside the slide as in a conventional living cabin, suggesting that the cabin layout was only suitable for 'day boating' and the crew had a house ashore. Ed.]*



The boat is loaded with what appears to be limestone, but what it is doing in this short stub of the arm on which boats could once take limestone right to the Butterley Co lime kilns above Locks 6/7 can only be guessed. The arm was shortened when the railway was built in the 1840s and terminated in a dry dock above Lock 2. The origin of the stone is also a puzzle; it would originally have come from Crich, but any such trade was stopped by the final collapse of Butterley Tunnel in 1900. *[John Boucher has since suggested that this is a maintenance boat loaded with sandstone blocks for towpath wall repairs. - Ed.]* The former toll collector's cottage is seen in the photograph, and this was known to be still there in 1932 (do any members know when it was demolished?).

There are three other children in the background: two girls in dresses in front of the bridge and one sitting on the wall in front of the cottage. There are two wordy notices just to the right of this child which have not been seen on previous photos but cannot be deciphered. The photograph measures $3\frac{3}{8}$ x $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches and is printed on Velox paper, so is probably a contact print from something like a 'Box Brownie' camera.

If any members can throw any light on this wonderful image, or can maybe even identify some of the children, please get in touch with the Editor.



(2) AQUEDUCT INSCRIPTION

I have walked over the Derwent (aka Wigwell, aka Leawood) Aqueduct countless times, but only the other day noticed this inscription in the parapet wall not far from the pumphouse. It appears to read “GR FXD 9/1900” which I take to mean that someone with the initials GR fixed something in the area in September 1900, but more than that I have not yet been able to find out. Do any members have any ideas who GR was or what he did?

Hugh Potter



(3) PICK AND CHOOSE

Information about traffic on the Cromford Canal in its last years of trade is available through a report on canals by Frank Pick in 1941 to the Minister of War Transport.

Pick quotes no traffic west of Butterley Tunnel in 1941 and recommends closure. To the east of Butterley the tolls were £154 for 16,218 tons in 1938, and £304 for 29,211 tons in 1941. Despite almost all this traffic being on the southernmost half mile - coal from Beggarlee Wharf - Pick proposed to transfer all the length east of the tunnel to the Grand Union Canal Company, which already had control of the Erewash Canal. The other traffic, gas tar to Pye Bridge, was only 1,303 tons in 1941. The annual deficit on the whole canal was around £3,000.

These figures came to light in an article by L.J. Boughey in the November 1989 Journal of the Railway & Canal Historical Society discovered by our member Brian Key. In a footnote, the author states: “Kempson & Co of Pye Bridge had collected gas tar from Loughborough Gas Works in their own tank barges up to December 1942, and claimed that traffic only ceased because of crew shortages. The trade recommenced in April 1944 and was still running in July. The tar distillers did not oppose the Bill, no doubt due to cost, but it is clear that the cost of road service was greater and unloading plant would be lost. It would be valuable to know if any negotiations with LMS took place.”

What amazes me is that not a single picture of this traffic has ever come to light. Surely someone somewhere must have taken a photograph. Can I ask all readers to ask around? There must be some somewhere!

In the end, the LMS Act of 1944 closed the entire Cromford Canal except for the southernmost half mile, where traffic continued until July 1952. The last load was coal from Beggarlee Wharf to Long Eaton. Again, where are the photographs of these boats loading at Beggarlee Wharf or passing through Langley Bridge Lock?

Hugh Potter



FORTHCOMING MEMBERS' SOCIAL MEETINGS

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, tea & coffee and raffle available at all meetings. Admission is £2.

- **May 16th** - AMBERGATE UNDERGROUND RESERVOIR - Anthony Healey
- **June 20th** - TOP GEAR AT THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY - Bill Devit
- **July/August** - No Meetings
- **September 19th** - RESERVOIRS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL - David Brown
- **October 17th** - THE PENTRICH REVOLUTION - Michael Parkin
- **November 16th** - CANAL RESTORATION AND CRUISING - Michael Golds
- **December** - CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - To be arranged

DISCOVERY WALKS

This year's Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Walks will be from 28th May to 12th June and several will feature the Cromford Canal. Walk Number 1 'South From Matlock Bath by Boot and Boat' is led by Nic Barfield and includes a trip on *Birdswood* on the route south to Whatstandwell for a return by train or bus. Walks 11 and 14 are circular walks from Heage Windmill including a length of the canal. Walks 27 & 28 'Tales of the Canal Bank' are specially aimed at children who are invited to join a storyteller on a leisurely walk along the canal from Cromford to High Peak Junction, with the opportunity of a return by horse-drawn boat. Walk 30 explores the canal links to the Crich limestone quarries by two railways. Walk 48 explores Florence Nightingale's connection with the area and the canal. Booking in advance for all walks is recommended.

As a finale to the walking festival, FCC is organising a Celebrating Cromford Canal weekend on June 11th & 12th based on the Gothic Warehouse at Cromford.

Details in the Discovery Walks Booklet, which can be downloaded via this link:

<http://www.derwentvalleymills.org/discovery-days/>

LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING DATES 2016

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

These dates are the same as those for horse days on *Birdswood*.

Why not take a ride down the canal to the pumphouse by horse drawn boat?

| MONTH | SAT | SUN | MON | PERIOD |
|-----------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| JUNE | 4th | 5th | | First Weekend |
| JULY | | 3rd | | First Sunday |
| AUGUST | 6th | 7th | | First Weekend |
| | | 28th | 29th | August Bank Holiday |
| SEPTEMBER | 17th | 18th | | |
| OCTOBER | 1st | 2nd | | First Weekend |
| | 29th | 30th | | Discovery Weekend |



LETTERS

Dear Mike

Thank you for sending me a copy of *The Portal* Autumn 2015 edition. I read with interest the item on the proposed new Lawn Bridge at Codnor Park on page 20.

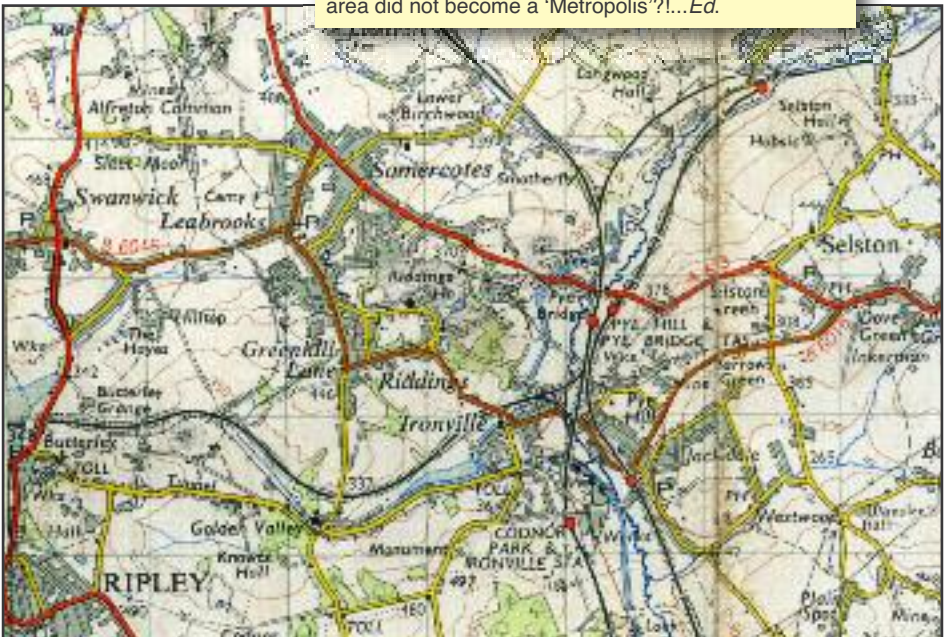
I had no idea where this location was but eventually I found it, in the South West corner of Ordnance Survey Landranger Map No.120 Mansfield and Worksop. I also found the location in my British Railways pre-grouping (and pre-Beeching) Atlas. There are as you know two North South Rail links in this valley, the more easterly link was a Great Northern branch line running to Pye Hill and Pinxton (now closed) and the more westerly link was the Midland Main Line running onwards to Alfreton and Chesterfield, a connection which is still open. There also used to be a connection from this line through Butterley onward to Ambergate and thence to Cromford. According to the atlas, Codnor Park used to have two stations, one on each line. There was a link between the two lines at Brinsley Junction. All this you know. The routes of these lines can be traced to some extent by close examination of the Ordnance Survey map. Presumably, to get there by public transport, I would have to go to Langley Mill and make my way from there.

This location is just north of DH Lawrence's birthplace at Eastwood, and it was at one time a heavily industrialised location, (canal basins, collieries etc.) as readings of DH Lawrence, especially his short stories, will clearly show. So my query to you, is what happened? Why didn't this area become a Metropolis (as did Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield etc.)?

Anyway, thanks for the magazine and best wishes to you and all at the Friends of the Cromford Canal.

Andrew P. Blunden
FCC Member

Below is a section of an older OS map than the one referred to by Mr Blunden, showing the two railway lines then still existing. Can any members suggest why this area did not become a 'Metropolis'?!...Ed.





MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

A good way to help the FCC is to recruit new members. Just to remind you, the membership rates are shown below. Also, anyone who is a UK taxpayer can use Gift Aid to increase the value of their subscription by 28 pence in the pound. Application forms are on the FCC website or contact Yvonne.

Individual: £7.00 Life: £110.00

Couples: £10.00 Life: £165.00

Corporate Business: £35.00

Corporate Charity: £17.00



from
Yvonne Shattower

How time flies – it seems only yesterday that I was writing my report for the New Year edition of *Portal*, and here we are again.

There have been comments recently about making more use of electronic methods of communicating with our Members, both from the point of view of cost and convenience, so I would like to remind our Members that we are able to send them the *Portal* by email rather than as a hard copy. If you would like to receive the *Portal* by this method, please contact me at membership@cromfordcanal.org.uk and I will arrange for your name to be added to the list - and here I would like to appeal again for Members to keep me informed of changes to their address details, both for mailing and email. It does help if I have any Membership queries.

You will have seen elsewhere in this edition of *Portal* that we need to find a new Treasurer and *Portal* Editor, as both Bob Bullock and Mike Harrison have told us that they will not be standing next year. Can you help – or do you know someone who could? If we can make appointments now, the new appointee will have plenty of time to shadow the post so that they are well versed in what is needed. Both Bob and Mike have given us many years of unstinting service, and we cannot thank them enough for all their efforts. We are still seeking a Sales Team to take our merchandise to non FCC events, which means that we are not getting the Friends known in other areas. We have managed to present some sales at most of the events we attended at Cromford, but we really would like to be able to ‘spread our wings’.

Don’t forget that we still have our regular monthly meetings at Ironville Church Hall on the third Monday of the month. Our May talk will be on Ambergate Underground Reservoir, then on 20 June, we will have Bill Devit telling us about the ‘Top Gear at the Great Central Railway’. After a break for July and August we start again in September with a talk on the Reservoirs of the Cromford Canal. There is tea and coffee, a bar and raffle, and admission is only £2.

Important notice about Gift Aid eligibility

From 6 April 2016, treatment of investment earnings changed - there will no longer be a tax credit on dividends paid. If you receive dividends but pay no other income tax you may well find that you are no longer a tax payer, which would invalidate your Gift Aid declaration - possibly causing HMRC to demand the Gift Aid tax credit back!

If you think your entitlement to claim Gift Aid no longer applies from 6th April, please let me know at: membership@cromfordcanal.org.uk



**Volunteers are
not paid.
Not because
they are worthless,
but because
they are priceless.**

Anon.

**Our membership continues to grow and
we give a warm welcome to the following new members
who have joined us since the last edition of *The Portal***

Mr & Mrs M Butlin, Somercotes

Ms B Richell & Ms V Kilbourne, Ilkeston

Mr J Drinkwater, Nottingham

Mr & Mrs P Castle, Belper

Ms E Cunningham & Mr B Green, Chesterfield

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