

THE PORTAL

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



NUMBER 58

SUMMER 2016

Registered Charity Number 1164608

Free To Members 91 When Sold



CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Chairman's Notes	3
<i>Birdswood</i> Update.....	4
Scarecrow Weekend.....	6
News from the North.....	8
Filling Bags with Clay for Bank Protection	10
Work on Geeson's Section at Lower Hartshay	11
Butterley Tunnel Vision	12
Horse Boating	18
Peak Forester	22
<i>Flying Scotsman</i> at Ironville	23
Leawood Pump Steaming Dates	23
Poetry Competition Update.....	24
Early Excursions by Thomas Cook.....	25
Towpath Improvements at Ironville	26
Sheffield Transport Study Group on <i>Birdswood</i>	28
Bridge at the Head of Lock Six	29
Economic Development Study - Open Drop In Meeting	30
Members Social Meetings.....	31
Membership Matters	32
Volunteers Required for the FCC Shop at Cromford Wharf.....	33



FRONT COVER: Mother and Child at High Peak Junction. Should this be 'Dabchick and Dabchick Chick' or 'Little Grebe and Lesser Grebe'. Either way, it's proof that wildlife on the canal can live happily with the *Birdswood* operation.

Photo: Mary Wilde

BACK COVER: Ian and Vix on *Birdswood* in traditional boating attire, re-creating a similar scene to the well known one entitled 'Just Talking' shown in the lower picture.

Photo: Hugh Potter

The aims and objectives of the Friends of the Cromford Canal

THE RESTORATION, RECONSTRUCTION, PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CROMFORD CANAL, ITS ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS, TOWING PATH, STRUCTURES AND CRAFT AND THE CONSERVATION OF ITS NATURAL CHARACTER AS A NAVIGABLE INLAND WATERWAY SYSTEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC



EDITORIAL

from Mike Harrison



Welcome to The Portal No. 58

Well here we are, well into August and most of the summer is past. Val and I feel we have missed out rather in the last few months, having spent quite a long time attending hospital appointments of various sorts, This has included an operation on my spine, which I am pleased to say has been a success. Thanks to those of you who have been asking about my progress. Hopefully we can now spend more time thinking about and visiting the Cromford Canal, in fact canals in general, than we have been able to of late.

Of course, things are still progressing with the FCC. *Birdswood* has been going from strength to strength this year, with quite a few new volunteers. Vix is continuing to do a great job, and passenger numbers are rising, in fact June this year was the busiest since the operation was started, with over 1100 passengers being carried in the month. More volunteers are always welcome and Vix will be very pleased to hear from YOU. The same applies to the Canal Shop which is operated by Vix's team both as a ticket office for *Birdswood* and an outlet for a wide range of sales items. See the poster on page 33.

Although *Birdswood* is perhaps rightly the centre of attention, the FCC's main aim will always be the restoration of the whole of the Cromford Canal. To this end, as reported in the last issue, a Strategic Restoration Committee has been formed and an Economic Development Study is to be carried out. As part of this study, a meeting open to all is to be held at Ironville Church Hall, to inform our members of the FCC's intentions for the future but also to listen to people's views. This was initially intended to be in August, but for various reasons has been postponed until November 12th.

See the chairman's notes opposite and more details on page 30.

Whenever restoration of the Cromford Canal is mentioned, people always say 'But what about Butterley Tunnel', and there is no doubt that this is a fair question. In this issue, I have included an article by Tim Castledine on this major topic. As Tim says, the fact is that the tunnel, with its underground wharf accessed by a vertical shaft from the works site above has great tourist potential. Properly developed, this could turn the tunnel into a tourist attraction, making it an asset rather than a problem. Anyone who has visited Dudley Tunnel, also derelict at one time and now visited by thousands, will understand.

With this issue of the Portal, you will hopefully find a book of raffle tickets from the Inland Waterways Association. This will be the third year that the FCC has been involved with this and it has proved very successful. The idea is that the raffle is to support all the various canal societies who take part. The more tickets we sell, the more of the takings we receive. You may remember that the FCC sold the most tickets on this scheme two years ago, and came second last year. Please help us to maintain this reputation.

The press date for the Autumn 2016 issue will be November 18th



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by John Baylis BEM



In the last Portal I mentioned that Shires Developments were looking to sell its land at Langley Mill following its decision not to carry out the opencast coal extraction. Our engineers have looked at the area of land offered and made some additions which have been discussed with Shires; as yet there is no decision to purchase. The Strategic Restoration Committee have discussed the options for the continued restoration of the canal beyond the Langley Mill Boatyard and are planning a meeting with the Environment Agency prior to making a planning application to Amber Valley Borough Council. We have been trying to get a meeting with Derbyshire County Council Structural Engineers regarding re-routing the canal through the redundant railway bridge under the A610 but they seem reluctant to arrange a meeting.

At the Cromford end of the canal, John Boucher has produced his report and plans for a scheme to replace the sluice in Cromford Mills which controls the feed to the canal from Bonsall Brook. The brook flows through the yard and presently flows into the wheel pit of the old water wheel; the flow to the canal is from a side overflow. In times of high flow the excess water runs into the canal which has caused problems with dangerous over-topping of the banks for a number of years. Recently we have found a paper by the British Transport Commission in 1960 which records the sluice as being serviceable, which goes to prove our ideas, but by now only the slots in the stonework remain.

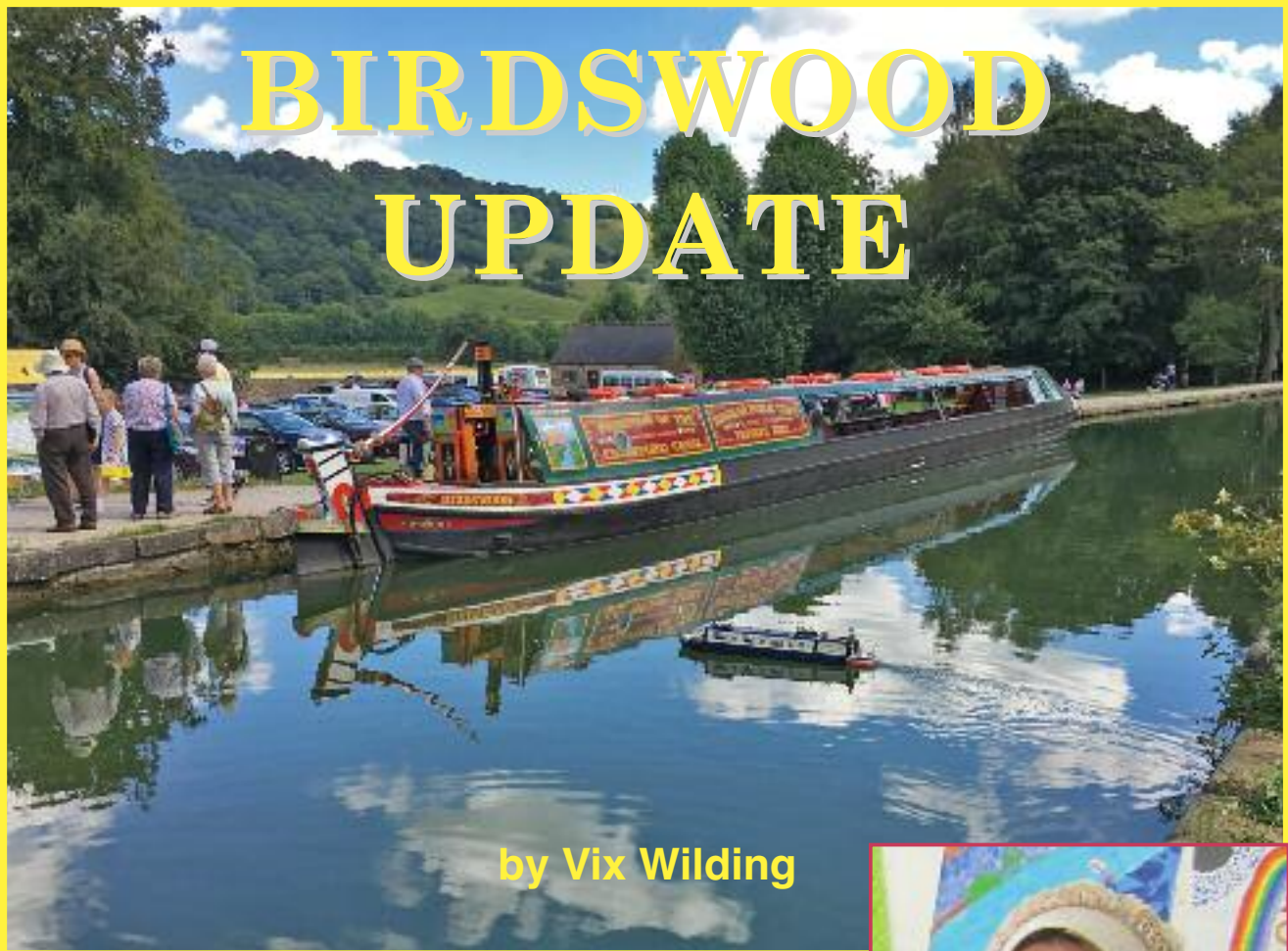
We have the support of Derbyshire County Council Countryside Services and the Arkwright Society to replace this sluice and have applied to Derbyshire Dales District Council for planning permission. If we are allowed to reinstate this sluice it will give better control of water feed to the canal and remove the need for DCC to rapidly lower the water level in times of heavy rain. This doesn't happen often, but when it does the reduced depth has adverse effects on the movement of *Birdswood* and the water supply to the section of canal from Wigwell Aqueduct towards Whatstandwell.

The Economic Development Study commissioned by the FCC Strategic Restoration Committee in April has not progressed as quickly as we had hoped and the planned meeting mentioned in the last Portal had to be postponed. The new date will now be November 12th at Ironville Church Hall. It is proposed that members of the Strategic Restoration Committee and Coles Baxter Associates will be giving presentations and answering questions between 1000 and 1600. It is hoped that members of the FCC, the public, local authority and other organisations will be able to attend for an hour or so during the day. This meeting will be a very important part of progressing the restoration of the Cromford Canal. Please come along to find out about the FCC's plans for the future and to make your views known.

**Remember Ironville Church Hall Saturday November 12th
See Page 30**



BIRDSWOOD UPDATE



by Vix Wilding

Since the last Portal we have seen some new crew members and they have become a solid part of the team. They have learnt fast and have pulled their weight. I'd like to welcome Pauline, Tony, Judy, Jan, David, Bob, Linda, Anita, Jamie, Christopher and Nicholas. We have another lady who enjoys the data inputting, Bernadette, and she has done a sterling job in keeping things up to date.



The management of the shop and ticket sales was becoming a large task and as such I needed support in this area. The post for an assistant was advertised internally because of the bespoke requirements and I'm very pleased to say that Mrs Cindy Stokes, wife to one of our Masters, Clive is now responsible for all the retail aspects at the Wharf. From stock reconciliation and re-ordering and financial balances and displays Cindy takes the pressure from me to enable me to run a smoother boat trip business.

The Boat Committee analysed the seating capacity from the last 2 years of operation and the loading figures could be improved a lot so we advertised to over 750,000 people using Groupon. The deal was costly in the sense that they take around 36% commission. On the other hand the seats were previously empty so even a penny for them was an increase to the revenue! This project was managed by Nic Barfield and he made a sterling job creating the advert and managing the computer systems and monitoring the offer and figures. *Birdswood* carried over 2000 extra passengers and created over £4000 for the charity. As manager and with full support of the Boat Committee it was decided to run this deal again in September and October to keep the numbers up at the tail end of the season. Keep an eye out for the offers and travel for a reduced rate and a free drink.



Cream Teas have become a favourite for charters and it puts a lot of pressure on the staff to deliver a smooth service. WELL DONE TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED. We have received some excellent reviews and promises of recommendations, see below. As such I already have 4 charters booked for next year.

Charter Cruise on *Birdswood*

A group of transport enthusiasts and friends from the Sheffield Transport Study Group chartered *Birdswood* for an evening cruise. The whole process of organising the hire was simple and straightforward. On arrival we were made very welcome. During the course of the cruise we were given an interesting and informative commentary as the pleasant countryside slipped by. (See also a report on pages 28-29. Ed.)

The Rotary Club of Ilkeston responded to a challenge to support local tourist attractions on Friday last when a party of members, partners, and their guests visited the canal at Cromford. Pictured are participants enjoying the sights, including the pumping station and old railway buildings at the turning point of the trip. Far more 'aah's' and 'oo's' were heard when families of day-old ducklings were passing. Nature at its best!!



Followed by an excellent buffet at the nearby cafe, the evening was a great success, votes of thanks being passed to our hosts, the Cromford Canal volunteers and the catering staff by President Chris Smith.

This season has been the hardest to manage so far. With many away on holiday and with injuries of all kinds we have repeatedly been left short and I have had to step in to be many extra sets of hands! *Birdswood* is in fine condition and the new seats and backboards have made the experience more comfortable. The room created has enabled extra leg space and larger tables. Apart from general maintenance the only work that has been completed has been to move the PA system that was too close to the throttle control and creating feedback. A fairly new volunteer Kieth Bailey has donated his time and expertise in this area and has solved the problem for us all.

And then the unthinkable happens..... I'm become injured. My Flymo lawnmower won and I have received surgery to re-attach my big toe and now just have to wait for the bones to rebuild and repair. Not really what I had planned for the beginning of the school holidays with young children! Thankfully three weeks on, as I write this I am hobbling around on one crutch and able to take my son and grandson down to Cromford to play.

Our thanks are due to Vix for carrying on with what is becoming a very full time job managing the Birdswood operation in spite of her injury. At least she will be able to do a Long John Silver impression on the Pirate Days! - Ed.



SCARECROW WEEKEND

by Mike Kelley



Hugh Potter

In the early years of the FCC we only had one annual event at Cromford Wharf and that was the Discovery Days Weekend. This is still our big event of each year, and has been since October 2005. In order for that very first event of the FCC to happen our intrepid volunteers had to 'cut' their way through the hundreds of overhanging branches along the canal, in order to hand-pull the rusty hulk of the 'Duchess' to Cromford Wharf, from where our first horse boat departed a few days later, thereby demonstrating to the public the possibility that this canal could be reopened.

We have come a long way from those early days. Now we have several regular 'special weekends', such as the Cromford Festival, Pirate Weekend and Scarecrow Weekend as well as the original Discovery Weekend.

In conjunction with the Arkwright Society a scarecrow trail was installed for children to hunt for, and discover, various scarecrows in and around the mills and wharf. Hundreds came along which was gratifying to see.

Vix Wilding





Photos: Vix Wilding



There were also model boats keeping *Birdswood* company on the canal, courtesy of Nottingham Model Boat Club, (see also the picture on page 4), plus a traditional canal painting display, and of course *Birdswood* pulled by Arraslea Shires' faithful Chelsea. As well as all this there was a new event by Zoe's Party Animals. Zoe had all sorts of weird and wonderful creatures, not only on display, but they could also be handled, if you were brave enough! African snails, millipedes, spiders, snakes, very big bunnies and tortoises. Zoe also had pony rides set out for the many children there.



All-in-all it was a popular occasion ideal for the children during the summer school holidays. A few 'crazy' individuals also dressed up as a scarecrow and wandered around both the Arkwright and Wharf sites. I can't think who would be daft enough to dress up as a scarecrow wearing a plastic nose for two days -- can you? Anyway it frightened the ducks!



NEWS FROM THE NORTH

Cromford Canal - Cromford to Ambergate Update - August 2016

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

Summer on the canal

It has been a busy summer on the canal with large numbers of visitors enjoying walking on the towpath. As usual the canal and its surroundings have been a hub for resident and summer visitor wildlife. Grass snakes have been seen regularly on the towpath at Derwentside and south of the railway aqueduct. The mute swans, George & Mildred, have been successful in rearing three cygnets and can be seen on the canal between Cromford Wharf & Ambergate. Water Voles, although not as regular as previously, are still being seen. Dabchicks appear to have had a good breeding season. Signs that otters are present on the Derwent at Cromford are increasingly being made. Otters tend to out-compete Mink if they become established in the area so this could be positive. Please can I ask that if you do see a mink on the canal please inform me at Middleton Top.

Water levels

It is a constant concern to try to ensure correct water levels in the canal throughout the year. The top section between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction needs to be kept high in order to allow *Birdswood* to operate but at the same time water needs to go into the section below Wayfarers to keep levels up for the wildlife. Most of the time, when there is enough water coming into the system from the Mill Yard, the levels are quite easy to maintain. The late summer period can be problematic when the amount of water coming down from the Mill is reduced. At this time it is essential to ensure that there are no leaking paddles or other avoidable water loss. It is, after all, this very problem that the Leawood pump was installed in the 1840s to address.

Times of heavy rain can be equally challenging when levels can rise to dangerous levels quite quickly. Plans are currently being made to adapt the water control system in the Mill Yard to automatically account for high water flow into the horseshoe weir and better control water flow into the inlet arm.

Tree work

Through the summer period there have been several trees that have fallen over the canal or close to it. Of particular note are an oak, ash and a couple of birches north of Gregory tunnel (see right). The trees are in the Derbyshire wildlife trust reserve and a joint DCC DWT work party is planned in late September to remove them. Additional limited tree removal is planned for the autumn and winter season to open the canal to light and prevent damage to the structure.





Volunteer work parties

The fortnightly team of Tuesday volunteers have been busy through the summer managing vegetation, balsam pulling, silt trap clearing and a host of other tasks to keep the canal in order. Filling & installing bags of clay to repair the area of the canal bank that we call “Dog haul outs” is also underway. (See the report by John Guyler on page 10 - *Ed.*)

Whatstandwell canal spillway

In addition to the construction of the new spillway close to Sims Bridge, while the canal was drained down, the section of the canal had a clay bund installed by Countryside staff and volunteers from Clay Cross (see below). The objective is to seal a leak that issues onto the railway line below the section. Flow of the leaks has been reduced and more work is planned for the winter.





Towpath issues

The towpath has been resurfaced from Ambergate to Cromford and is in good condition so there is no planned work. The 100 metre marker posts that are installed between Ambergate (1) and Cromford Wharf (83) have been surveyed and the posts that had been vandalised or rotted have been replaced.

Countryside Service on the canal

Patrick Mountain & Sean Kent responsible for the monitoring of the canal from the Middleton Top Visitor Centre on 01629 823204 with Paul Finn being the Assistant Area manager in overall charge from Hayfield Information Centre on 01629 533345

BAG FILLING AT HIGH PEAK JUNCTION

by John Guyler

The Friends of the Cromford Canal special offer - a free one day workout. What could be better than exercising out in the open air, pleasant surroundings, very good company and a feeling of achievement at the end of the day. All free.

Four of us filled, we estimate 130 hessian bags with clay, weighing possibly 2.5 tons, in one workparty (see below). Marvellous how the time flies when you are busy.

The next task is to transport these bags to various points between lawn bridge and High Peak Junction, to fill, what we term, dogouts. This is where dogs have been in the canal and have scraped the bank away when exiting, causing erosion to the bank.

So if you want a good free workout in the open air, please join us, I can guarantee you will sweat, may lose some weight and generally feel better!



John Guyler



John Guyler



TOWPATH IMPROVEMENTS AT LOWER HARTSHAY

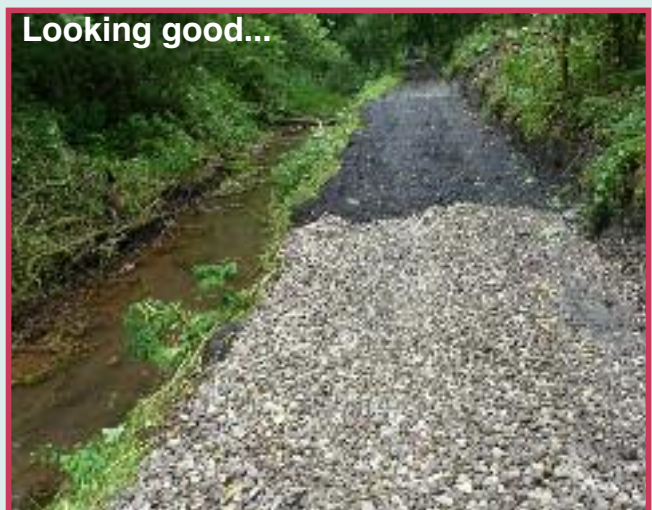
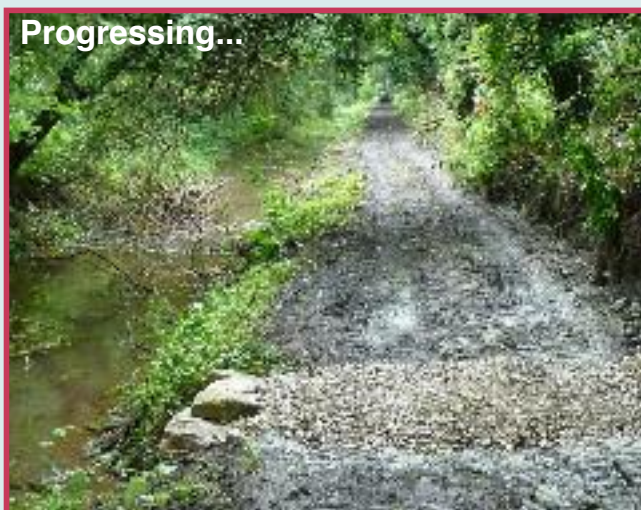
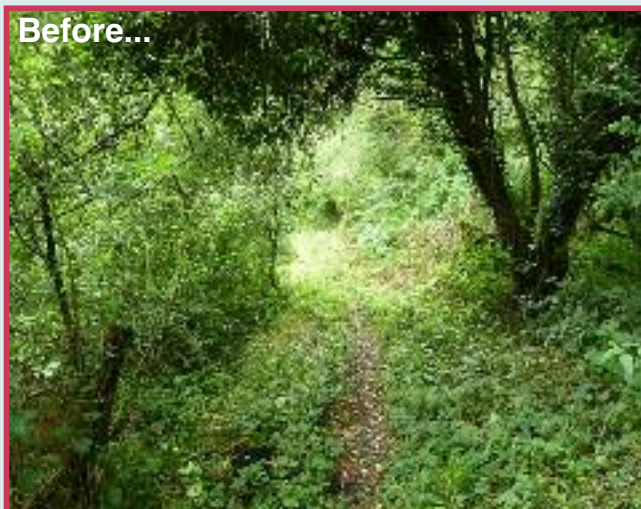
by Hugh Potter

I recently received a report that work was going on with a mini digger in the canal cutting between the A610 and the west portal of Butterley Tunnel. This was both surprising and welcome news and I went to investigate.

This length is owned by R.D.Geeson (Derby) Ltd., who are commercial vehicle and plant dealers, whom the FCC has not previously had contact with. Those of you who came on my walk on 20th June will know that this is (was) the worst section of canal that is recognisable as a canal. The path was narrow, muddy and treacherous, and the canal virtually full of fallen trees and undergrowth. Those of you who don't know it should.

The machine had been in, from the track that comes down to near the sewer works pipe crossing, and not only made a good path but also dragged out all the trees from the canal, and maybe even dredged it a bit. Easiest access to see this work is over the barrier on the A610 embankment just south of the A38 roundabout and down the steps.

Tim Lane, a Geeson employee, thinks it ought to look like a proper canal as he remembers it in his youth so is making a level digger-width path and clearing as much in the way of fallen trees etc from the canal line as he can. He has put in hardcore on boggy bits and new drainage where a spring flooded the towpath. This is a massive and totally unexpected transformation. Our thanks must go to Geesons and Mr Lane for this work, which has greatly improved both the towpath and the canal itself in a few days. See my pictures below.





THE BUTTERLEY TRUST'S TUNNEL VISION

by Tim Castledine

The Butterley Company began life in 1790 as Outram & Co. The founder was a young 26 year old surveyor from Alfreton, a town three miles north of Butterley. At an early age he was taken under the wing of a family friend, local landowner and lawyer, Mr Francis Beresford. Beresford had recognised Outram's talent as an entrepreneur and eventually entered into partnership with him to form Outram & Co, buying Butterley Hall in 1790 which included two hundred acres of mineral rich land.

They were joined in 1791 by a Plymouth born surveyor and engineer, William Jessop, who since the age of sixteen had been apprenticed under the watchful eye of John Smeaton, famed for many engineering projects including building of the new Eddystone lighthouse. Jessop had moved to Leeds with Smeaton to concentrate on canal building and it was because of this that he became involved in the planning and construction of the Cromford Canal. During this work, he became a partner in Outram & Co. A fourth partner was also co-opted, namely John Wright, a member of a wealthy Nottingham banking family and owner of more mineral rich land at Butterley Park, lying adjacent to that surrounding Butterley Hall. More mineral rich land was leased in Codnor Park, the Canal forming the northern and eastern boundary, later to become the site of the Forge and Wagon Works. In 1807, Outram & Co.'s name was changed to 'The Butterley Company' following the death of Outram in 1805.

In 2009 the Company closed its doors for the last time after 219 years of engineering excellence, exporting structures and other products worldwide from as early as 1816, beginning with a very large bridge to India. Many famous structures had been built and projects completed during those two centuries, at one time the Company employing over 10,000 men in its ironworks, coal and iron ore mines, brickworks and other subsidiary industries. It had survived four wars, (the Napoleonic and Boer Wars and two World Wars), major national strikes and international depressions.

Its demise probably began with the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1947. At that time, the Company was one of the largest coal producers in the country with 80% of its profits coming from its coal mines which in fact represented only 30% of its total assets. Further problems arose with the massive reduction in the demand for wrought iron resulting in the closure of its Codnor Park Forge and Rolling Mills in 1965. After coal nationalisation and also Dr Beeching's infamous (railways) Axe in the 1960's, the Wagon Works also closed in 1975. The final years of the 1960's saw the end of the Wright family's control of the business with the first of many take-overs which occurred throughout the next four decades. The Foundry at Butterley, the backbone of its early development, closed in 1986, being demolished the following year. However, the Company continued as Butterley Engineering, completing iconic projects such as the Falkirk Wheel and the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth.

In 2013, the Blast Furnace Wall and the Cromford Canal's Butterley Tunnel and Wide Hole lying beneath it were designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument by English Heritage (now Historic England) officially recognising the valuable heritage of the Butterley Works site. Several other buildings which dated back to the first few decades of the 19th century had already been given Grade II listed status, perhaps the most important being the Octagonal Gatehouse, the site of the confrontation in June 1817 between the Company Manager George Goodwin and Jeremiah Brandreth, leader of the Pentrich Revolutionaries.



After closure, the new owners demolished the Bridgeyard (Constructional Dept.) which lay adjacent to Butterley Hill, a sad end for such magnificent fabrication workshops. In theory, as they were pre-1948, they should have remained standing as they were in the curtilage of the listed buildings.

Between 2010 and 2015, ownership of the site changed several times, but finally the site went into administration, eventually being auctioned off in October 2015. The new owner is a London based property developer, Aquarius Estates, who from recent communication with their representative suggests a lack of knowledge of the complexities of the site related to its unique industrial past and the requirements of Ripley Town Council's Local Plan.

Following the 2009 closure, several members of the Ripley & District Heritage Trust, all former Company employees, were very concerned about the future of the site although with the exception of keeping a watchful eye on it by monitoring and reporting its deterioration and increasing vandalism, very little could be done to give it a guaranteed future. With the help of the Matlock Records Office, some old documents were retrieved from one of the buildings in September 2015, but no further action could be taken after the site's sale in October of that year. Following the sale, it was decided to set up an independent trust to formulate some possible ideas for use of the site's remaining buildings, archaeological remains and the Butterley Tunnel. The Butterley Trust was formed comprising of the Ripley & District Heritage Trust, Ripley Town Council, Derbyshire County Council, Friends of the Cromford Canal, Midland Railway Trust, and the Pentrich History Society with other co-opted independent advisors.

The Trust's vision is to develop a masterplan for the northern portion of the site (see Fig.1 below) which is encircled by the 1838 Pattern Shop, the Octagonal Gatehouse, listed offices, the former Stores with the Canteen above, Machine shops and the Blast Furnace Wall with its Cast-house arch (see Fig.2 overleaf). The Trust's objective is to develop complementary commercial and public amenities on the site based upon its

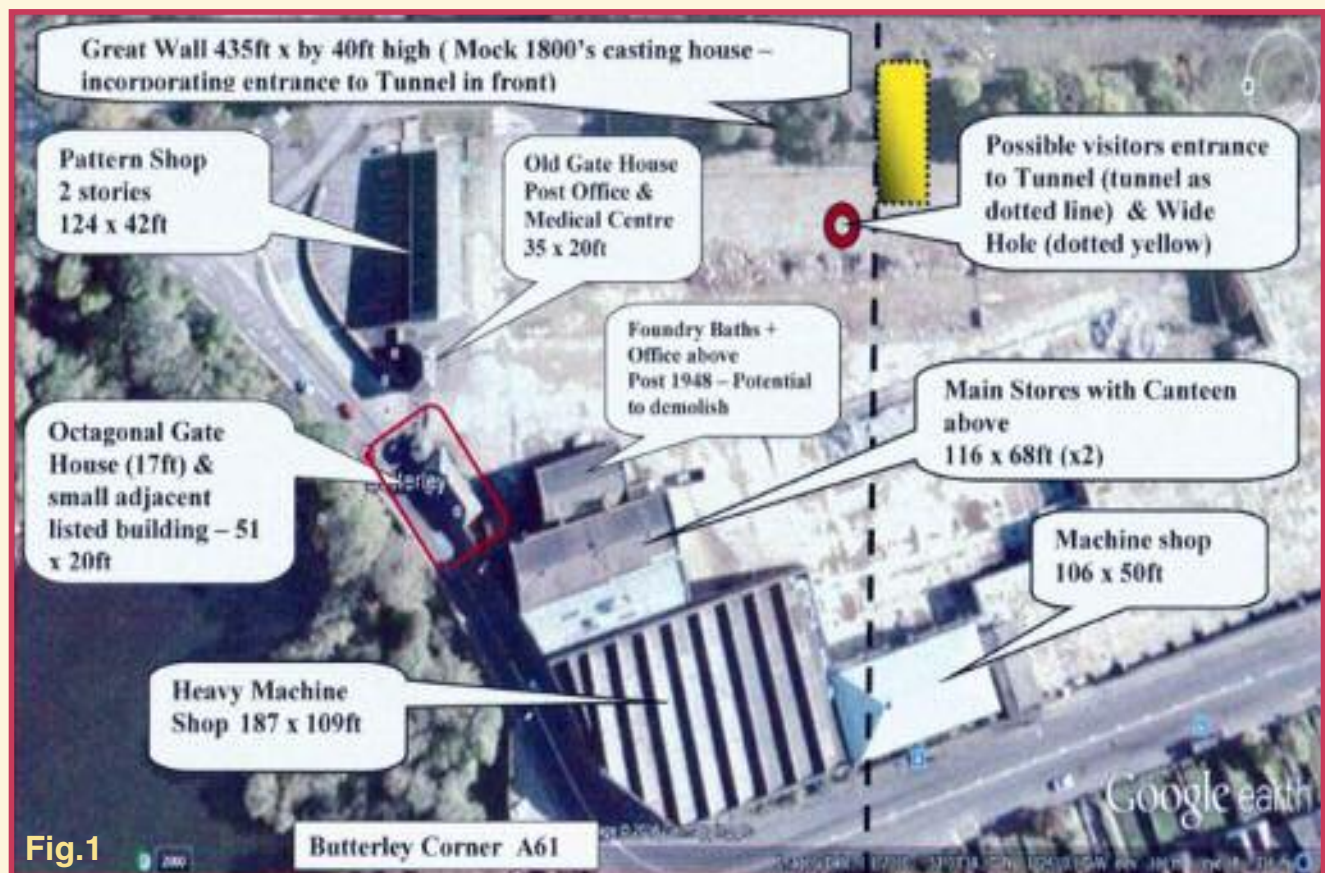


Fig.1





Fig.2

archaeological and industrial heritage. Such a development would create an important tourist attraction complementing the nearby Midland Railway Trust at Butterley Station.

The initial action has been to put together some ideas for developing the site's buildings, the Wall and the section of the Canal Tunnel and Wide Hole lying some 40 – 50 feet below the Works Yard, should the new owners decide to discuss its future with the Trust. The Trust is well aware that such a project may take several years to come to fruition and in addition to being a revenue-generating tourist attraction it also needs to provide commercial facilities such as offices and engineering workshops for other potential users. The envisaged centre piece of the development (and probably the main revenue generator) would be to provide visitor access to the section of the canal tunnel beneath the Works Yard. It is known that a shaft already exists leading down to an adit located just in front of the section known as the Wide Hole. Here the tunnel was dug double width to enable a boat to moor alongside a wharf formed at the base of two vertical shafts up which raw materials such as limestone could be craned to the raised ground above and behind the Wall from where it would be charged into the blast furnaces. Finished products were also craned down the shafts to be transported by boat out of the tunnel most probably to the East Portal at Golden Valley.

FCC's Trust member, Mike Kelley wrote in his 'Ideas for Tunnel Vision' - "The aim of this part of the Vision is to give tourists a unique experience whilst learning about the achievements of the Industrial Revolution by making the Tunnel an aspired destination in a similar way to that achieved at Dudley. Safe access to the Tunnel would be via a flight of stairs or lift situated in the Works Yard. The access would be on a grand scale so as to make it attractive and safe showing large illustrations of the canal and of Butterley's past. Once at water level, visitors will board an electric boat in which they will



proceed into the Wide Hole, the only underground harbour of the Industrial Revolution and the only one of its kind anywhere in the world. The Tunnel will be fully illuminated with audio presentations and music, with life size images of men working in the Wide Hole and of 'leggers', the men who, whilst lying on their backs, manually propelled the boats through the Tunnel with their legs (see Fig.3, Simon Waller's impression, and Fig.4, taken by Robin Witter on his expedition into the tunnel in 1959 showing the west end of the Wide Hole).



Fig.3

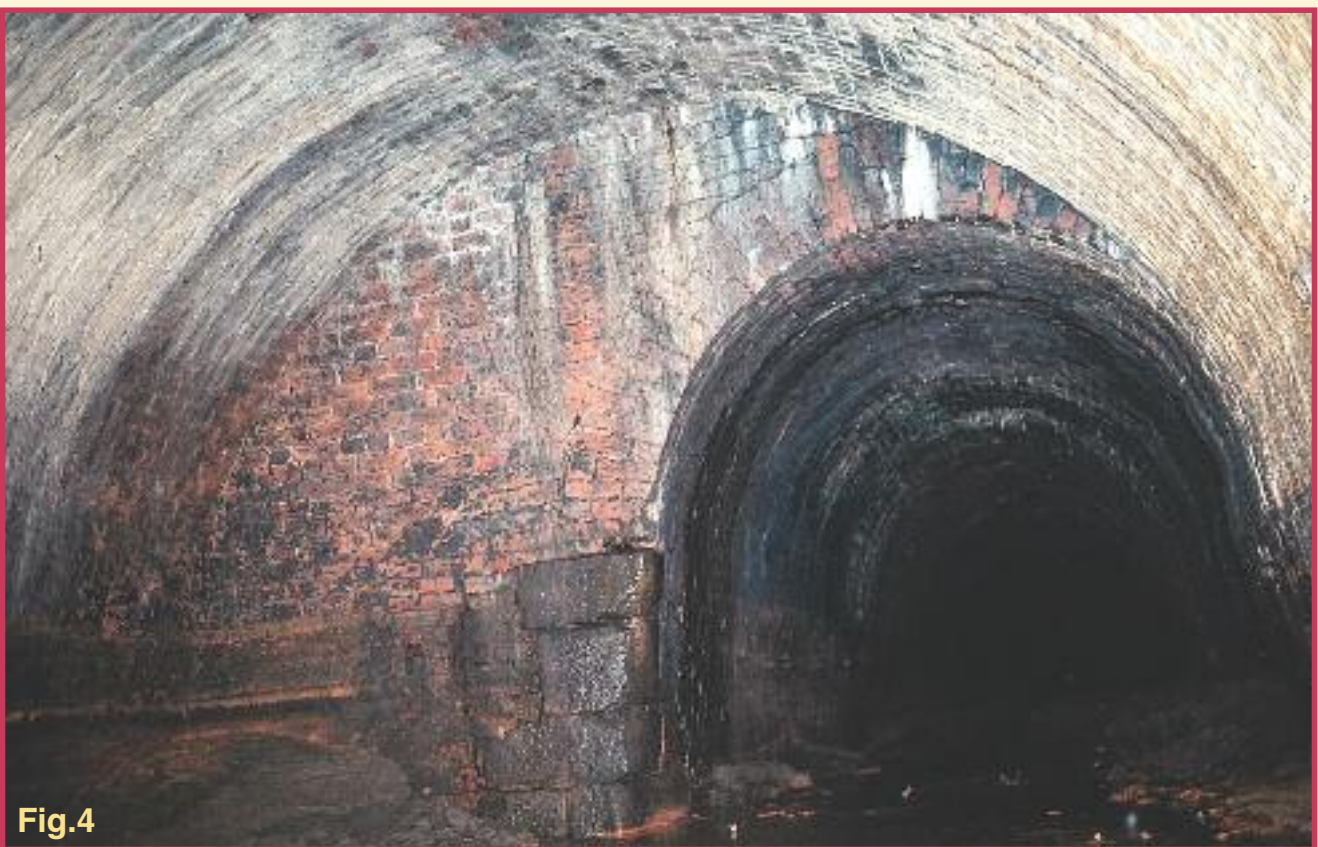
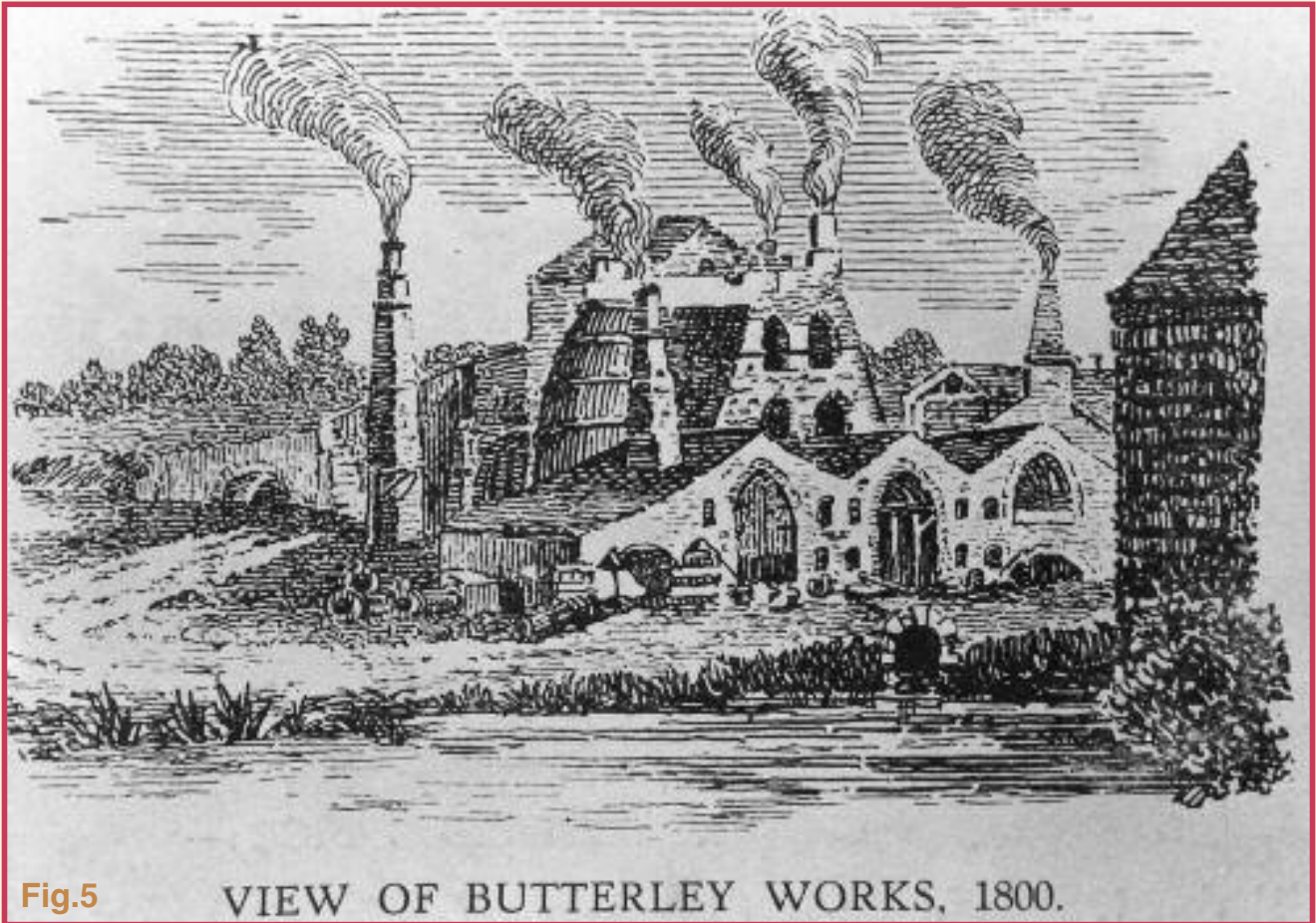


Fig.4



The visitors will also see how the Company's products were lowered down the shafts into the waiting boat and how coal from the nearby Carr Colliery was not taken to the surface by the traditional way, but loaded onto boats and transported directly down the canal"

An engraving of the Works made in 1800 (see Fig.5 below) shows a detailed view of probably the first blast furnace and the pitch roofed cast house located in front of it with Butterley reservoir in the foreground.



The gritstone wall is approximately 450 feet long and 40 feet high (see Fig.6 opposite) and marks the eastern boundary between the lower Works Yard and the former Top Plain, now a housing estate. The wall was not built overnight as a single structure but evolved over the first 130 years of the Company's development. A study of the structures contained within the wall and knowledge of the development of it has emphasised its importance as part of any future visitor experience. The main arch within the wall formed a connection between the front of what is believed to be the first or second blast furnace built in the 1790's and the cast-house. It is envisaged that the cast-house could be reconstructed in front of the wall, possibly including the entrance to the Canal Tunnel experience.

Referring again to Fig.1, the Pattern Shop is a fine two storey stone building built in 1838. During the final decade of the 20th century it was modified to accommodate other engineering facilities and offices. During the final few years of the Company's existence, the building was entirely used as offices. The building lies on the perimeter of the main site and has its own external car park, making it an excellent choice for a multi-organisation heritage centre.

The Octagonal Gatehouse is central to Butterley's famous history as it is believed to pre-date the 1817 Pentrich Rising. Both it and the adjacent office block are the listed buildings from which all other buildings on site are listed as being in the curtilage of them.



It stands directly at the Works entrance, opposite another similarly old stone building, formerly a house incorporating the old post office in its basement. Both buildings could be restored to their former glory to become the main entrance for visitors and a security facility for commercial businesses on the site.

The oldest part of the Machine Shop is believed to date back to the mid 1800's when it was known as the 'engine manufactory' with the newest part built as an extension in the first decade of the 20th century containing a railway turntable. The buildings also contain two of the last remaining Butterley overhead travelling cranes, which could be easily restored to full working order. The crane tracks are supported on magnificent cast iron columns which in many respects (height and diameter) resemble those in the undercroft of St Pancras Station, built in the same era as the main Machine Shop. Up until the early 20th century, the machines were belt driven and the structure which supported the belt shafts is still attached to the main cast columns. The central area between the 'old' and the 'newer' parts of the building is a mezzanine floor above which the roof is supported by beautiful cast iron arches. The Cromford Canal passes approximately 40 feet beneath the Machine Shop, the exact location being accurately known. However there is no known access to the canal from within the building although a large shaft of approximately 8 feet diameter exists outside the remaining buildings. However, this does not connect with the canal, but lies approximately 20 feet to the south of it.

The Machine Shop could become an excellent revenue generating venue as a Heritage Engineering facility, for example, for the repair and maintenance of items such as steam boilers for traction engines and locomotives. (One company has already shown some interest). It would be rented out to specialist companies and organisations, whilst at the same time being developed as a further source of revenue by installing internal visitor viewing platforms on the central mezzanine floor to overlook the ongoing operations.

This then is what the Butterley Trust's 'Tunnel Vision' is all about. 'Pie in the Sky' or a realistic vision - time will tell. They succeeded at Arkwright's Cromford Mills, so why can't we at Butterley!



HORSE BOATING

by the Editor

When thinking of boating on canals, we tend to think of motor driven boats of various types, and whenever we see a horse drawn boat, as on one of the very popular horse days with *Birdswood*, we see it as a very unusual novelty. Indeed, that is just what it is nowadays. The days of horse drawn commercial carrying on canals almost all came to an end before the second world war, and the places where a horse drawn pleasure trip of the type provided by *Birdswood* can now be experienced can be counted on the fingers of one hand. This is despite the fact that haulage from the towpath is a very efficient means of moving a boat, as passengers on *Birdswood's* horse trips will appreciate.

And yet, what also tends to be forgotten is that all canal boats were pulled by horses for over 100 years before the internal combustion engine was invented. This means that canals were designed and built specifically with horse haulage in mind. A good example of this is shown in the picture below.

This was taken from the deck of a Thomas Clayton horse drawn tar boat entering Spon Lane Top Lock on the Birmingham Canal Navigations in 1955. Note that the towpath changes sides here and the white horse pulling the boat has just crossed the bridge which carries the towpath across the tail of the lock from left to right. The bridge consists of two halves with an open slot in the middle, a design later used on some other canals. The slot is being used to pass the tow line without disconnecting it as the horse changes sides. This lock and bridge date from 1769, so there is a good chance that the bridge is the earliest of this type still existing. It was certainly the last to be used commercially for its designed purpose, as horse boats passed here into the 1970s.





HNBC Weaver Collection



The picture above shows the same white horse with the young boatman posing for the camera while the lock is filling. Note also the deep grooves in the upright of the lock gate handrail made by the towlines of the thousands of horsedrawn boats which have passed this way. The horse looks very smart, but it has to be said that this was not really typical of the average canal horse. Many were either ex army or ex railway company and were bought cheaply by the canal company or boat operator when they had already had a hard working life. The mule shown below is probably more typical, being smaller and not in such good condition as the one above. It must also be realised that many canals could not accommodate big horses because of the low bridges and relatively narrow towpaths.



CRT Archives





However, on canals such as the Grand Union down to London, which was wider and deeper than most of the narrow canals of the Midlands, large horses were used to tow two narrow boats at once. The picture below shows two horsedrawn pairs of boats meeting each other at Three Locks near Stoke Hammond in Buckinghamshire in the 1920s. The southbound pair of boats coming out of the lock are carrying coal, quite possibly loaded at Langley Mill. Notice that the coal is stacked up higher than the cabin and the boats are very low in the water. There must be at least 50 tons on the pair, being pulled by a single horse, which is out of sight on the right. There is a towpath on both sides on this short pound between the locks and the towline from the boat's mast to the horse can just be seen. The northbound empty pair on the left are 'breasted up', ie tied together side by side, and are being steered as one boat by the lady in the hat. Note that the rudders and tillers are also tied together. Another lady on the towpath is pushing off the fore ends of the boats which have been waiting for the other pair to clear. Meanwhile what looks like a third lady is leading the horse forward to pull the boats into the lock.



Perhaps surprisingly, one of the last places where boat horses were used was in the London area. This was because much of the traffic was wide beam unpowered barges and lighters which were loaded from ships in the docks and taken short distances to canalside factories.

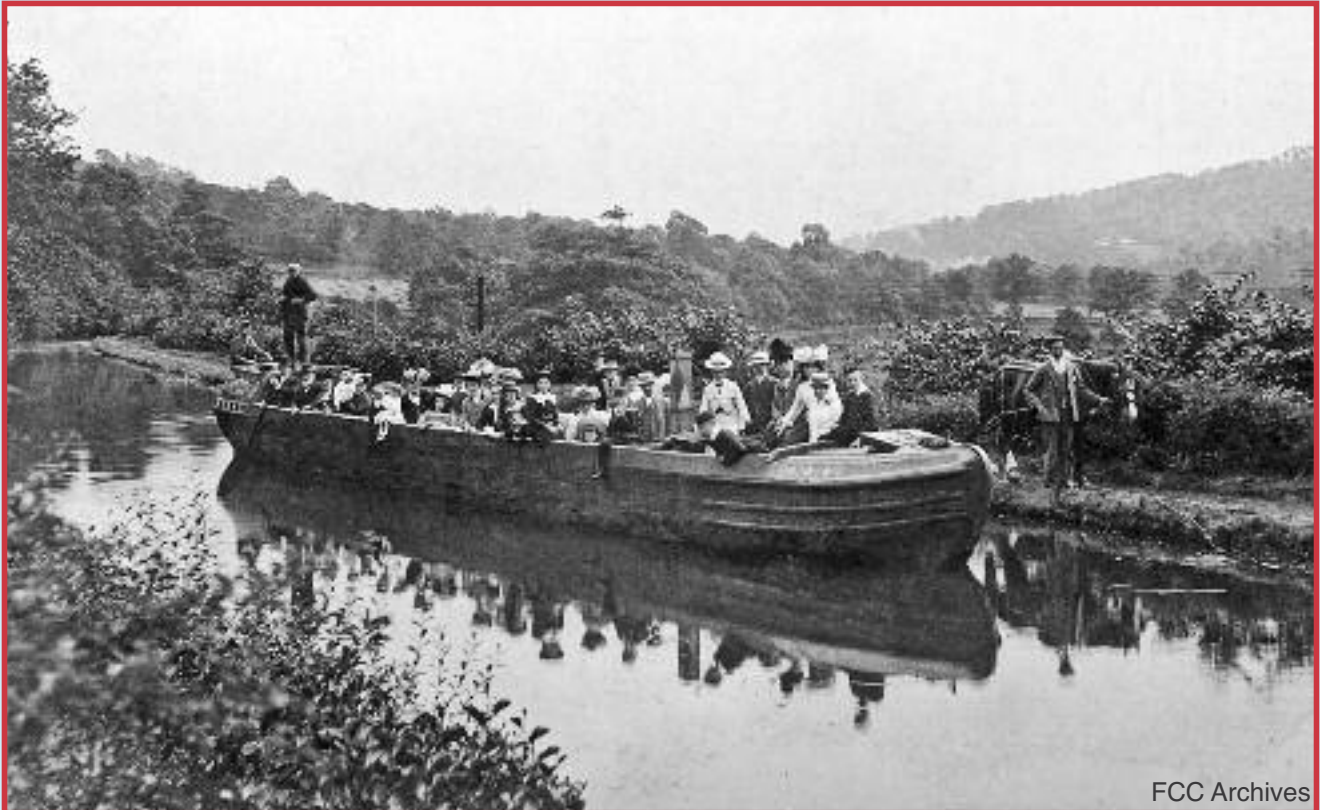
Horses were eventually replaced on this traffic by small tractors as shown on the right. Again, these were very efficient, pulling maybe 70 tons in a lighter with a small 20hp engine.



HNBC Weaver Collection



Pleasure boating on canals was also not unknown in the horsedrawn era. On special occasions such as Sunday School outings, boats usually used for cargo carrying were swept out and pressed into service for passenger trips. The Cromford Canal was no exception to this. See the smartly dressed party south of Whatstandwell below.



Finally, I thought I would include the picture below of really stylish horse boating, where the horse driver gets to ride in a cart! However, this is rather a long way away from Cromford, operating from the Erie Canal Museum in New York State USA.





ENTHUSIASTS CHUFFED BY A BLAST FROM THE PAST

by the Editor



After missing out last year, the Peak Forester steam excursion again visited the Derwent Valley Line on May 22nd. The locomotive was to have been *Britannia*, but in the event was changed to the ex Southern Railway West Country Class Bulleid Pacific *Braunton*. To further confuse non-experts like me, this loco now carries the name *Lord Dowding*. This latter was a similar Battle of Britain Class loco which was cut up for scrap in 1968, but the name has been revived to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Serious railway folk would argue that this loco does not really belong on Midland Railway metals, but all went well for the eleven coach trainload of enthusiasts. The excursion had started from London Kings Cross and had a trouble-free run, being on time when I took the above photo just south of Whatstandwell.

Now that a large number of trees have been cut down from the embankment between the canal and the railway along this stretch, (see page 11 in Portal 57) an excellent view across the Derwent valley has been opened up from the towpath. As the picture shows, looking to the south, the three main transport routes need to squeeze together at this point to fit the canal, railway and road in the gap between the River Derwent in the trees to the right and the higher ground at the east side of the valley. It must have been quite a challenge to build the railway between the road and the canal, necessitating the large retaining wall which can be seen in this view.

The train paused at Matlock before carrying on up the preserved section of the line to Rowsley and later returning to London. Very good to see.



FLYING SCOTSMAN STORMS THROUGH IRONVILLE

by Pete Clark

Flying Scotsman does not cross the Cromford Canal very often. In fact it may not have crossed it for donkeys' years? So the opportunity to get a shot of it going over the Midland Main Line railway bridge (Bridge 38 above Lock 5 on the Cromford Canal), not far from the old Codnor Park & Ironville station was not to be missed.

It was an hour late but I hope you'll agree worth the wait. It was pulling 'The Yorkshireman' from London to York and went over at some fair old speed. The ironic thing was that the bloke walking under the bridge as it went over is a keen photographer!

(Pete did very well to get the locomotive in the shot, albeit without the famous nameplate visible, in the split second that it crossed the bridge, considering the amount of foliage obscuring the view of the bridge from the towpath, as shown below - Ed.)



Pete Clark

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
SEPTEMBER	17th	18th		
OCTOBER	1st	2nd		First Weekend
	29th	30th		Discovery Weekend



POETRY COMPETITION UPDATE

by Adrian Minshull

Following the announcement of this competition in Portal 56, the number of entries has been rather disappointing. It has therefore been decided to extend the deadline until October 31st to give potential contributors a bit more time.

The judges would very much like to see some more entries from among the FCC's 700 plus members. To give you a bit of encouragement, two of the poems submitted to date are reproduced below. The winner will be announced in Portal 59.

Highs and Lows

By Sue March

T'was a dank winter's morning down Ironville Locks
My wellies were leaking, urghh! Cold, soggy socks!
Reed pulling, brash clearing, and chopping back trees,
Burning the rubbish, mud up to our knees.

The Work Party Leader fell in with his barrow
Whilst crossing the dam, as the wall was so narrow.
We rushed to his aid, he popped up like a cork
We laughingly recalled his H & S talk!

At the end of the day we had finished our task
Dirty and frozen, coffee drained from the flask
On the way home, we stopped off for tea
"WHAT IS THAT SMELL??" "It's YOU, dear, and ME!"

Fast forward to summer, crowds stand on the side
The FCC members all beaming with pride
Crane whirls into action and *Birdswood's* afloat
Delivered by lorry, our lovely trip boat!

Expendable Words

by David Bartrop

I love English and its correct pronunciation
As a Friend of the Cromford Canal, I want its complete restoration
Parents and children, we need to be discerning
For much of television fare, is not learning

Our ancestors left us their rounded mossy heritage behind
But only some can see it, others seemingly are blind,
We like brave green shoots that push up through the paving
Must show the unseeing minds Sawmills aqueduct is worth recreating

Fortunately world heritage people, espied the canal lying in the grass
Their vision of the rare jewel, long valued by the locals may now come to pass
They treasure the beauty a restored canal will bring
Plus all the visitors who its praises all will sing

Rejoice in *Birdswood* pulled by Chelsea, with willing crew
While you can take in the scenery and enjoy a refreshing brew
We have some dedicated leaders, who move along the dig
Plus Brian Blessed (Grampy Rabbit) our President who stars in Peppa Pig



EARLY EXCURSIONS ON THE CROMFORD CANAL

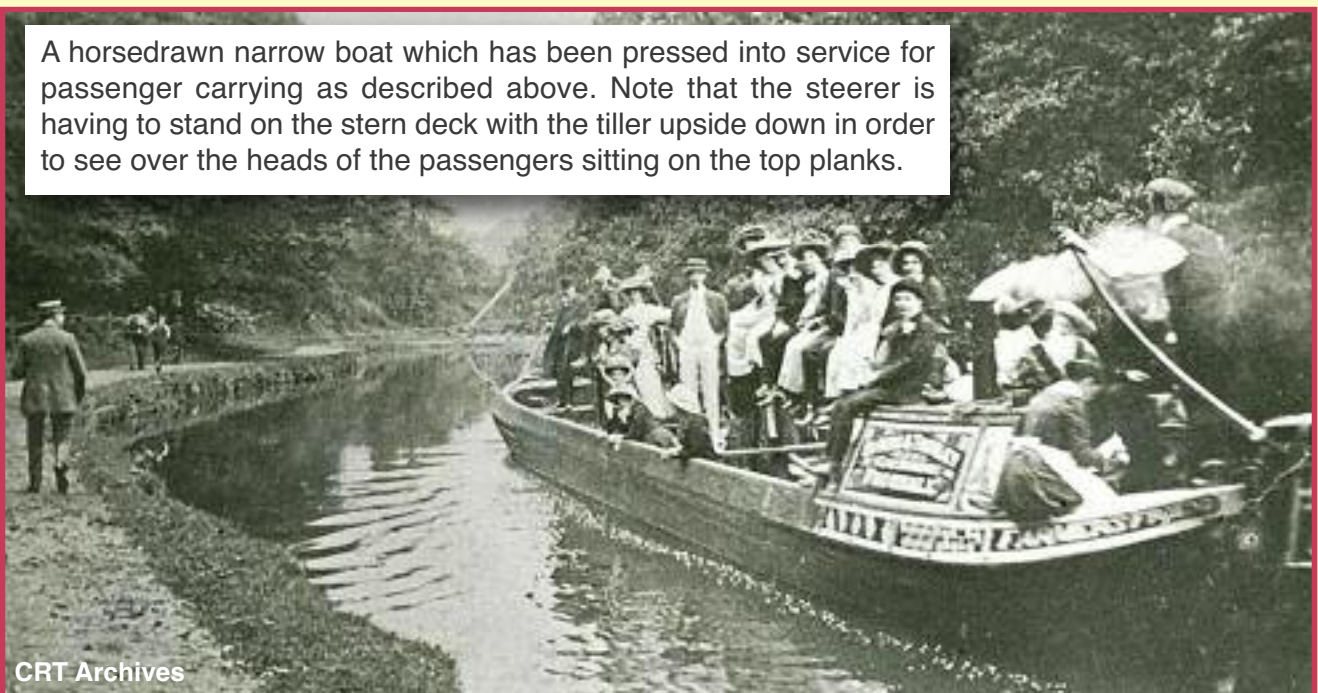
by Nic Barfield and Hugh Potter

This year, 2016, marks the 175th anniversary of Thomas Cook's first mass rail excursion from Leicester, and it is remarkable how quickly this idea caught on – it even involved the Cromford Canal.

Only a year after Thomas Cook's enterprising venture, Mr J.F. Bell laid on a special train of 33(!) carriages from Leicester to Matlock Bath on Wednesday 22nd June 1842. The party of 700 passengers reached Ambergate at 11am. But this was before George Stephenson's North Midland Railway line had been extended north from Ambergate, so a number of "fly boats had been elegantly fitted up, with every regard to accommodation and appearance, with seats, awnings, decorative flags etc, and thus, preceded by a band of skilful musicians, making the valley ring with their harmony, the party proceeded to Cromford." So wrote the effusive Derby Mercury of 29th June 1842. This enabled them to enjoy the "enchancing scenery which is continuous from the station to Cromford." The paper continues in a vein that is supported by our own *Birdswood* operation today: "Nothing . . . can be finer than this short voyage on the smooth surface of the canal, and a more appropriate mode of conveyance could not have been selected."

The fly boats mentioned were almost certainly German Wheatcroft & Sons boats that operated regular cargo services to Derby, Nottingham, Birmingham, London etc, rather than local coal boats. To carry that many passengers would have surely needed at least a dozen boats allowing for 60 passengers per boat, and it is surprising that so many were available at one time.

A horsedrawn narrow boat which has been pressed into service for passenger carrying as described above. Note that the steerer is having to stand on the stern deck with the tiller upside down in order to see over the heads of the passengers sitting on the top planks.



CRT Archives

From Cromford, "omnibuses and flies" were offered to take passengers on to the "fairy village" of Matlock Bath, but most preferred to walk. After being fed and watered and having explored the famous caverns and museums the party departed "after six hours thorough enjoyment among the most delightful scenery the mind can imagine". The paper also reports briefly that "a party of a similar description from Derby and Nottingham to Matlock, took place yesterday" (28th June). It is believed that Thomas Cook himself organised at least one such excursion but we have not yet ascertained when.



IRONVILLE TOWPATH RENEWAL, STAGE 1

report and pictures by John Guyler

Since the Ironville section of the Cromford Canal was first adopted by the FCC, the condition of the towpath from the bridge at lock 3 down to the railway bridge at lock 5 has caused a series of discussions on the poor state under foot.

This first stage renewal was approximately 120 metres south from the bridge at Jack Brown's (lock 3), towards the railway bridge, almost to the towpath gate at lock 4.

The work was undertaken by a group of fifteen from the North West Waterway Recovery Group (WRG). They were aided by members of the Friends of the Cromford Canal work party. The WRG (Wergies) Northwest group came from places such as Lancaster, Manchester, Bolton and Wigan.

The towpath had a closure order which was to ensure safety of the public due to movement of machinery on the worksite. Work started on Friday 1st July and finished on Sunday 3rd July with the Wergies group billeted in the Church hall at Ironville for two nights. The cost of the materials, 80 tons of aggregate and a supply of timber for the side boards was covered by The Canal & River Trust. The Friends of the Cromford Canal paid for the hire of two dumper trucks, a mini digger, a roller and the cost of the billeting of the WRG. The money was from the Inland Waterways Association 2015 raffle. In total, the FCC received £1500 from this, all of which will go towards the towpath upgrade at Ironville.

Training was given to some FCC volunteers on the mini digger, roller and dumper trucks with the intention that with further training they will be qualified to work these machines on future projects.

The first stage was to remove the existing towpath surface to a depth of 200mm (8 inches) with the mini digger. The line of the towpath was laid out with sighting strings, with vertical 2ins x 2ins pegs sledge hammered in against the sight lines. The side boards were set in place and nailed to the pegs after levelling, there was then a need to set the width of the towpath surface with a width gauge where the opposite board was levelled and nailed in position. This procedure was carried on until enough boards were in place and a plastic membrane had been laid, the dumper trucks brought the first layer of coarse aggregate, which was then hand levelled by shovels and compressed by the roller. The

second level was then brought up, levelled and rolled, later a top dressing would be added. The width of the boards only just allowed the dumpers to operate and it took some very skillful driving.(right)





Friday saw a short distance scraped and boarded, Saturday was when the intensive effort activated with all teams getting into a rhythm. There were teams scraping with the mini digger, the boarding teams, the levelling team and then the compacting crew, who had to use hand tampers up against the walls of Jack Brown's house.

The weather on the Saturday was at times awful, but it did throw up a serious long term problem, the drain pipes from Jack Brown's workshop were either broken or blocked, causing the site to flood. One of the Wergies spent a long time clearing a blocked pipe under the towpath, only to be rewarded by a pipe full of stinking water shooting all over his arm and shoulder.

Day 3, Sunday went a little quicker in terms of distance relaid because

it was away from the buildings and the dumpers and mini digger had more manoeuvring room. The day finished at about 2pm, with most of the Wergies making a long trek north. The job of back filling behind the boards and clearing the site was left to us locals who had remained and the towpath was reopened about 3.30pm.

The total volunteer hours over the three days was 429, with a large number of travel hours. Special thanks goes to the Wergies who had a food truck organised, supplying us with hot tea, coffee and various sandwiches and cakes.

Stage 2, which will be onwards towards the railway bridge at lock 5, is being planned now, but an exact date is not yet known. The hope is that it will be this year but that is subject to availability of WRG volunteers and other constraints.

The Friends of the Cromford Canal thank everyone for their support and patience on this ongoing project.





ANOTHER REPORT FROM A SATISFIED *BIRDWOOD* CHARTER CUSTOMER

from Sheffield Transport Study Group

The Sheffield Transport Study Group caters for people with an interest in any form of transport, particularly in Sheffield and the surrounding area. Each year a number of outings are organised, being a mix of day trips and summer evening trips.

Whilst waiting to photograph a charter train to Matlock I saw *Birdwood* and thought that a cruise on the canal would make a pleasant summer evening trip, and thus planning started. I made contact with Vix and she soon confirmed that a cruise would be possible on the date that I had selected, 20th July.

Giving the outing more I thought I realised that Cromford had more to offer than just a cruise. An afternoon departure from Sheffield would avoid the peak time traffic and would give an opportunity to visit the historic Cromford Mills, including the new Gateway and Arkwright's Experience Attraction, a buffet at Wheatcroft's Wharf Café and cruise on *Birdwood*.

The South Yorkshire Transport Museum provided one of their historic vehicles for our transport in the form of Doncaster Corporation 188, 388KDT, a Leyland PD2/40, new in 1963, carrying bodywork by Charles H. Roe, Leeds, built in 1955 and originally fitted on Sunbeam W trolleybus 395 which was new in 1943. (*I was particularly interested to see the photograph below of this fine vehicle at Cromford Wharf. In the late 1950s, I travelled to school each day on one just the same - Ed.*) On arrival at Arkwright Mills there were a couple of hours to look round before our buffet. The manager and her team at Wheatcroft's provided an excellent meal. Tasty food, well presented and brilliant service.



Two historic forms of transport seen at Cromford Wharf.



Having satisfied the inner man it was time for our cruise. *Birdswood* was all ready for us and we were made most welcome by everyone. Thankfully we were blessed with a warm summer's evening, adding to the enjoyment of the cruise. As we made our way to High Peak Junction we were able to sit back, relax, and enjoy the views. A most interesting and informative commentary added to the pleasure of the cruise.

At High Peak Junction those who wished were able to get off for a leg stretch whilst *Birdswood* was turned, giving an opportunity to view the Leawood Pumphouse. All too soon we were back at Cromford Wharf and on our way back to Sheffield after a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon/evening.

BRIDGE AT LOCK 6

by Hugh Potter

On our recent guided walk, I was asked when and why the concrete bridge across the head of Lock 6, see below, had been put in. At the time I could not answer, but I have just discovered a document in the Waterway Archives at Ellesmere Port that answers the question. The document, compiled by the British Transport Commission, is dated December 1960 and is summarising the state of the canal with a view to its potential 'redevelopment'. BTC was the overarching body under which 'British Waterways' operated. The entry states that the bridge (38a), span 15ft and width 10ft, was "only recently constructed to make easy vehicular access to the Commission's works and sheds". This suggests that rather than accessing the workshops above the lock by the narrow route along 'Red Road' from Jacksdale, access was made across the former Forge site. Can anyone offer any more information about this?





**COLES BAXTER ASSOCIATES
FOR FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL
OPEN DROP IN MEETING**

Options for the Regeneration and Economic Development of the Cromford Canal Corridor. Drop in and help us develop new ideas about how we can improve the canal corridor and bring investment, employment and affordable housing. You are invited to a Drop in Meeting to explore options and express your views.

Come and Have Your Say!

Ironville Church Hall 10am to 4pm Sat. Nov.12th

Why are we doing this?

In many parts of England, the restoration of a canal or river has driven new investment and economic regeneration. It can do this directly - through income and employment generated by businesses based on the waterway (boat hire, boat building, etc.) and it can also do this indirectly - through increasing visitor numbers and footfall which in turn supports businesses off the canal - local shops, pubs, etc. It can also help change the image of an area and this makes it more attractive to external investors. The Friends of the Cromford Canal believe that the same sort of economic and social benefits could come from re-building the Cromford Canal.

The FCC have asked independent consultants Coles Baxter Associates to produce a plan for the economic development of the Cromford Canal. The plan identifies the ways in which the restoration of the Cromford Canal could contribute to economic development and employment creation in the canal corridor from Pinxton to Ironville and Jacksdale to Langley Mill.

What will happen at the meeting?

Our consultants have come up with a number of ideas - we would like you to explore those ideas with us and give us your opinion. Is the proposal right for the area? In your view do you think it will improve the area? Are there problems we have missed? Would you support it? What ideas do you have? You can make your comments to our stewards (who will take notes), by drawing on the maps and plans provided and/or by filling out comment sheets. If you feel strongly about any particular aspect of these plans, then this is the opportunity to come along and discuss it.

How long will it take me?

The meeting is an open house meeting - you can drop in at any time between 10am and 4pm. You can stay as long as you want, but we expect the average visitor will spend around 20 to 30 minutes with us.

Will the kids be bored?

We hope not as we want to hear from all ages - after all this will be their place in the future! We therefore have special opportunities for youngsters to comment and make their own contribution to the process.



DON'T FORGET WE HAVE A SOCIAL LIFE TOO!

by Dave Ratner

I wouldn't have thought the membership needed reminding, but the Friends of Cromford Canal holds a social evening once a month, except for July and August. These evenings could be your chance to catch up with events and progress if you happen to be an 'armchair' member. Nothing wrong with that. Your subscriptions go a long way toward the running of the FCC and without you, the work of the Committee would be so much harder. But if you visit us infrequently, do you realise that you have been missing out on some really interesting talks? May be, for instance, you might have been put off by some of the titles?

The last one, for example, was a talk and presentation about 'Top Gear's' visit to the Great Central Railway. I must have missed the screening on the tele because I knew nothing about it. Basically the TG team wanted to film a spoof train made up of caravans instead of wagons, pulled by a car instead of an engine. Bill Devitt's presentation of this talk to us was fascinating and supremely entertaining. Normally I give TG a miss, it doesn't do anything for me. Perhaps I should get out more! But wait a minute, I do get out more which is why I don't get to watch much tele! But I regret missing this episode after watching how the TV technicians put it together. In a nutshell it was daft but very funny.

So, after your two-month sabbatical, what have we lined up for you after the summer break? On Monday 19th September, David Brown, who is a Chartered Civil Engineer and Head of the Reservoir team for British Waterways/Canal & River Trust, for over 30 years, will tell us about the Trust's reservoirs, the engineering, (and failures!) legislation, modern standards and the management of reservoirs such as Butterley, Butterley Park and Codnor Park.

Now for your homework, David says that Codnor Park is one of only three reservoirs in Britain with a canal on the head bank (there is another in Ireland) and the question is, can you name them?

For the October meeting on Monday 17th, Michael Parkin will talk to us about England's last revolution and the part the Cromford Canal played in it. This talk is quite significant as 2017 marks the 200th anniversary of the Pentrich Revolution. This is your chance to learn quite a bit more about the events leading up to it and the gory aftermath.

Michael Golds, who until recently was the Work Party Organiser for the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association, and is well known in the world of Canal Restoration, as well as having cruised the British canal system extensively for over 45 years, will give one of his informative and amusing talks.

So, no excuses for not knowing the content of the next quarter's Social Evenings. There's always a raffle with oodles of prizes and teas and coffees at the break. We look forward to seeing you again and perhaps seeing some new faces.

To sum up, this is the Programme for the rest of 2016

Third Monday of the Month at Ironville Church Hall at 7.30pm.

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

- **September 19th** -RESERVOIRS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL -David Brown
- **October 17th** - THE PENTRICH REVOLUTION - Michael Parkin
- **November 21st** - CANAL RESTORATION AND CRUISING - Michael Golds
- **December** - CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - To be arranged



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

I have had a real flurry of new Members in the last couple of weeks, which has done well for our numbers. We would like to extend a warm welcome to you all. Now that we do not have our Sales Team going to various venues, the rate of new Members has dropped somewhat, so if you know anyone who would like to join us, Membership forms are available on our Website, or I can put one in the post for you.

We did attend a couple of events at Cromford Wharf in June and July, with mixed results, but it was good to meet some of our Members there, and I would like to thank those Members who supported us. We are sorely in need of a Sales Team to boost our presence at these and other events in the area, so if you are able to help with this, or know someone who could help us, please let us know.

We have had our usual summer break from the Members meetings at Ironville, but we will be starting again on 19 September with a talk by David Brown on the Reservoirs of the Cromford Canal, which should be very interesting and worth hearing; I am sure we will all learn something. On 17 October Michael Parkin will tell us all about the Pentrich Revolution, which took place two hundred years ago next year and saw twenty three local men severely punished for their actions. 16 November will see Mick Golds telling us about Canal Restoration and Cruising. Those of you who know Mick will know what to expect - for those of you who do not know him, put the date in your diary now, and make sure you come along to hear Mick's unique presentation.

All meetings are at Ironville Church Hall, Casson Street, Ironville, NG16 5NN, and start at 7.30. Refreshments and a raffle will be available.

Many of our Members are away boating at this time of the year, and I trust you are finding the various canals on the system working well. It is a shame the weather seems to be so unpredictable this year. Perhaps we will have a glorious September.....

**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 A R Sharpe, Belper

Mr I Montgomery, Hull

Mrs P McAllan, Sutton-in-Ashfield

Miss M Derome, Edinburgh

Mr & Mrs D J O'Grady, Derby

Mr & Mrs S P Bostridge, Leeds

Mr & Mrs R J Brown, Peterborough

Mr D A Widdison, Sheffield

Mr A Watson, Belper

Mr C Sunning, Stockport

Mrs A Rolfe, Holt

Mr & Mrs R B Bilbie, Nottingham

Mr & Mrs R T Stanger, Matlock



The Canal Shop Needs You! Volunteers Required



The Canal Shop was opened last year and plays a supporting role to Birdswood, our trip boat, as well as selling souvenirs

- Want to be part of a friendly and enthusiastic team of volunteers?
- Want to make new friends and enjoy meeting people?
- Want to learn new skills or hone existing ones?
- Do you have one day per month to spare?

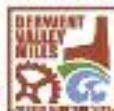
Then why not give Vix a ring on: **07552 055 455**

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

No experience needed as full training is given



The Boat at BIRDWOOD is owned and operated by
The Friends of the Cromford Canal
Registered Charity 1164626
www.cromfordcanal.info Visit us on Facebook at Birdswood



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

This project is supported by the
Rural Development Programme for England,
for which Centre is the Managing Authority,
part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development - Europe Investing in Rural Areas.



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.

