

THE PORTAL

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

NUMBER

60



NEW YEAR 2017

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FRONT COVER: Perhaps there is still time this winter for this sort of scene at Langley Mill. As we move towards the spring, after much delay this area will see progress by joint FCC/ECP&DA work parties towards extending the canal beyond the A610 Langley Mill Bypass. See pages 22-26.

Photo: Hugh Potter

BACK COVER: *Birdswood's* rudder and motor assembly, having been removed from the boat and brought to Langley Mill for work on the hydraulics, is being weighed prior to being dismantled. See pages 28-29.

Photo: John Boucher

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.60

This is something of a significant issue for several reasons.

Firstly, it is the sixtieth edition of the *Portal* since the FCC was formed in 2002. This is quite a landmark, but is also quite worrying, emphasising the fact that we are all getting older. Whilst writing this, I have been looking back to Portal 50, which was also a significant milestone as well as being our first full colour version. I remarked then that in some ways the Cromford Canal had not changed since the FCC was formed, which is still true to some extent, but we are now beginning to see some signs of progress. The *Birdswood* operation is going from strength to strength, see Vix's report on pages 4-5, both raising the profile of the FCC and the Cromford Canal as well as producing a significant income which, in accordance with the grant from DEFRA when the boat was purchased, will be invested in restoring the canal. To this end, negotiations are under way to progress the work on extending the canal at Langley Mill. See George Rogers' report on the Strategic Restoration Committee on pages 20-21 and my report on pages 22-26.

Secondly, in March it will be 15 years since the FCC was formed. Mike Kelley, who was the founding father of FCC, and still a major supporter, has compiled a review of these last 15 years, see pages 6-13, which reminds us all of what has been achieved. It has not always been easy, with various setbacks and disappointments along the way, but there have been the good times as well and Mike is as enthusiastic as ever. The next few years will hopefully begin to see our hopes and plans come to reality.

Thirdly, as many of you will know, at the AGM last year I announced that I may be standing down as *Portal* editor. I have since confirmed this to the committee and this will be my final issue of the *Portal* as editor. I have tried to carry on the good work of the first editor Brian Dominic, starting with Portal 24, the New Year 2008 edition. Since then, membership of the FCC has continued to grow, and as I say above, we are now moving on to more exciting times ahead. My wife Val Roberts and I will certainly remain members of FCC and try to give help and support whenever possible. Having said that, neither of us are as fit as we used to be and need to give more time to try to cross some items off the 'bucket list'. However, canals have always been a major part of both our lives since we first met while working in the bottom of lock 10 at Marple shovelling mud on an early ECPDA work party, so we will never be away from canals for long.

Hugh Potter, who members will know as the FCC Archivist and Cromford Canal expert as well as being a Master on *Birdswood*, but is also a retired waterways journalist, has agreed to be the new *Portal* editor, together with Nic Barfield who's expertise is in publicity, page layout and publishing. Together they will make a good team, but I must also here make an appeal. Any magazine can only be as good as the contributions received. I have always found sorting out the contributed articles and pictures and arranging the pages to be very enjoyable, but by far the most difficult part of this job is getting the material in



on time for the published press date, so that the work can be fitted around other commitments as well as the printer's work schedule.

Please send contributions for *Portal* from now on to Hugh, whose contact details are inside the front cover. It will be quite a novelty for me to send in a contribution, and perhaps more so to be able to look forward to receiving *Portal* in the post and not knowing what will be in it!

Finally, I would like to make another appeal. All canal societies like the FCC are run by volunteers, without whom no canal would ever have been restored. But volunteers are, by definition, strong minded individuals who are determined to see their project succeed. There is no doubt that without such people, there would be very few British canals in use today. But success can only be achieved if they all pull together. I have to say I have been very worried in the last few months by differences of opinion developing within the FCC committee and volunteer work party members. We will never succeed if we fall out amongst ourselves. I would ask everybody to try to resolve any difficulties and communicate properly so that we can all pull in the same direction - towards the day when the Cromford Canal is fully restored to navigation.

Best wishes to all, and thanks to those who have contributed to the *Portal* over the years. Please keep up the good work and support the new editors. Mike.

The press date for the Spring 2017 issue will be April 14th

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by John Baylis BEM



Much of what I needed to say in this *Portal* has been covered in other parts particularly concerning the Annual General Meeting. I am afraid that the land purchase at Langley Mill from Shires Development is moving slowly as our solicitor investigates the Right of Way to the site. Similarly, the Economic Development Study is waiting completion. I hope that we shall be able to report fully on these at the AGM.

The Strategic Restoration Committee await a response from the Environment Agency regarding the Erewash Flood Plain and the new aqueduct. However, the first meeting with the Canal & River Trust to discuss the next part of restoration at Langley Mill, which is still owned by the C&RT, is being held in the next few days.

Finally, I would like to thank Mike Harrison and Val Roberts for all the effort they have put in to the Friends of the Cromford Canal since its formation in 2002. Both have been Trustees, Val was instrumental in running the sales for most of that time and this is Mike's final edition of *Portal*. I know they are not disappearing but we will miss their support and advice from over 50 years boating and restoration. However, I am pleased to report that the publishing baton has been taken up jointly by Hugh Potter and Nic Barfield, with Hugh doing the writing and Nic concentrating on the layout. Our thanks to them both for taking up this important role and please send them items for publication.

Please remember the Annual General Meeting on April 24th. See page 14.



BIRDWOOD UPDATE

by Vix Wilding
Operations manager
07552055455
www.birdwood.org



Hello there and welcome to 2017! Following on from the last report about the funding from Derby University, I'm sorry to say that it was not successful this time but spoke at length to the funding director and they commended my application and explained that there have to be some winners and some losers.

Having said that, I was invited to re-submit the application and I have done this. Fingers crossed for a second time, results in May...This money would provide much needed funds to be able to promote the school trips we provide. We have an excellent couple who have volunteered many hours in several areas of *Birdwood* operations. Nic Barfield and Marie Keane have given a lot of behind the scenes advice and professional advice on many matters including producing the education programme as it stands. They have also committed to the boat committee, who deliver the day to day running of the business and writing of the business plan. Nic has helped with the intern programme and several grant applications. Marie has provided several contacts within the art world who will be attending private workshops this year to raise a new awareness of the use of *Birdwood* as a classroom.

Santa trips have been popular again this year, with several familiar faces from the previous years and from the summer months. It's such a warm feeling to be gaining these regulars as they obviously have a soft spot for the canal and *Birdwood* and want to support our work.

So many volunteers give their free time to help keep the boat trips running and some always go that extra mile. There are too many individuals to mention but without each and every one of them there would be no revenue.

A customer's pleasing review posted on Trip Advisor

"Santa Special Canal boat .. Brilliant!"

★★★★★ 11 Dec 2016



steveclm6 (1 review)
Belper, United Kingdom

Brilliant Santa Special Canal boat trip on the canal from Cromford Wharf. Thoroughly enjoyed by my husband and myself, our 2 sons, 1 daughter in law and 3 grandchildren. Santa and his elf were on the boat and every single child was invited to meet him. Each child was given a present and chocolate coins. Christmas music playing the whole time. Altogether an excellent experience, enjoyed by all of us, from grandparents to the youngest child aged just less than two. Would definitely do this again!



My thanks go out to all of them for their continued support. This winter I must mention Hugh Potter (right) who has covered a lot of the Santa shifts and turned out for so many of the work parties. Aside from being the FCC Archivist, he has been an active crew member since the beginning and is now a qualified master. He always has a welcoming smile even on the dreariest of days.

A newer member of the team, Pauline McAllen, has volunteered at least two shifts per week since her retirement and has made a vast contribution since she joined us. Attending boat committee meetings and assisting me with grant applications has taken pressure off me. She has a managerial background and has a high level of intelligence which is reflected in her work.

These people may have been able to give a lot of time, but it's the regular volunteers who have always been relied upon who have ensured *Birdswood's* success from the beginning - David Bishop, Adrian Minshull, Chris Jacklin, Kerry Green, Martin Howarth, Ian Hooker, David Ratner, Wayne and Wendy Scarle, Brian Dominic and Sean Dodds have all been helping since the public trips began and are reliable and dedicated assets. A huge thank you to every one involved. Keep up the good work we now have 2016 to beat!

Our new recruitment officer is working well. Rob Sutherland has already revamped a lot of our paperwork and attended his first workshop so good luck to him. I



Vix Wilding

hope we see results from his efforts soon. There isn't much else to report other than some maintenance and repairs have taken place over the last couple of months and the new seats were painted.

Policies and safety documents have been reviewed and insurance documents placed on display ready for the sailing to commence again in March. For the time being I've been reorganising the shop and retail side of



A group of volunteers turning their hand to vegetation management

Vix Wilding

things. I for one cannot believe how much growth there has been and my ambition of *Birdswood* becoming a key tourist attraction in the Derwent Valley is on the horizon.



FIFTEEN YEARS AND COUNTING

by Mike Kelley

Ups

Fifteen years ago this year on March 13th 2002 saw the inaugural public meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal at Ironville Village Hall, with over 200 people turning up. Preparation for this meeting had started some months before, with a meeting between my wife Valerie and myself and Howard and Sheila Smith. Howard was then Chairman of the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association (ECP&DA) and was keen to support the development of the Cromford. (As stated in an earlier article they are the proud owners of FCC membership numbers 1 and 2). From that initial meeting I carried out a letter writing campaign when over one hundred hard copy letters were sent out, to anyone and everyone who we thought would listen.

Sub committee meetings of the ECP&DA were held. With Howard Smith concentrating on the Erewash side of things, additional willing volunteers stepped forward to help; some of whom have worked steadfastly on the FCC committee from that day to this; namely John Baylis, Hugh Potter, Yvonne Shattower, Jack Brown, Mike Harrison and Val Roberts, plus some who have now sadly passed away. The-salt-of-the-earth would be an understatement for such people.

This sub committee of the ECP&DA had expected around 40 people to turn up to our first meeting, so were delighted to see such unexpected numbers attend. Additional offers of help at this meeting came and so we were up and running. But what a task lay before us! Restoring a derelict canal was one thing, but first we had to have a recognisable organisation to head such a task, which was easy to say, but much harder to do. Firstly we had to have a Constitution and then become a Registered Charity. Our members' addresses had to be recorded. Over the years Yvonne has had to deal with 1700 members since start-up, currently with 980 Members, including 170 Life members, 3 Parish Councils and 5 affiliated charity groups - a lot of work. Then a bank account had to be set up, our first magazine written and printed, monthly committee meetings put in place, and members assigned to jobs. This was in place by the summer of 2002. We scarcely had time to breathe.

One of the most important tasks before us was to get the line of the canal protected. Developers had been allowed to build on parts of the canal and other parts had been completely destroyed. We had to prevent any further destruction of this, our industrial heritage. By October of our first year Amber Valley Borough Council placed a recommendation to protect the route of our canal. This in itself was a major achievement. Right from the start we used an email campaign to help us communicate and get established, something which other societies had been slow to see the value of, but which helped us to progress rapidly. I personally carried out many visits to people and organisations and on one occasion I went to the offices of Derbyshire County Council. There a senior council member turned his back on me whilst saying, 'Go away. We have heard all this before. It will never happen'. Well they are not saying that now.





In only the second edition of our magazine, *The Portal*, we inserted a sponsorship form to help us raise much needed funds via a sponsored walk. This was held on 8th September 2002 with over 100 turning out to walk the whole length of the canal (about 15+ miles). This greatly helped raise much needed funds. In fact we were to have several such walks between 2002 and 2009. In 2006 we had 223 walkers who turned out to walk from Langley Mill to Pinxton; an amazing achievement in itself, but we also had a donation of £1,500 from the Managing Director of Hardy Hanson's Brewery and a free pint of beer to anyone who completed the walk. On this same walk, two local

Resting at Cromford after the first sponsored walk in 2002.



Mike Kelley

MPs, Geoff Hoon (who was then Leader of the House of Commons) and Judy Mallaber, turned out to walk with us. The following year 229 walkers strode forth on this sponsored walk; a brilliant effort to get so many of the public to support us. However, it was possibly our new president that they had come to see - Brian Blessed. Having his name as our president has been a great help to us. In 2009 a total of 114 walkers came along to walk the 14+ miles from Cromford to Pinxton, including our patron Julian Richards, who actually carried the FCC banner for us for a while.

Valerie and Mike Kelley with FCC President Brian Blessed at Langley Mill about to set off on the sponsored walk in 2007.



Another source of income came from our Sales Stand Team, Mike Harrison & Val Roberts and Eric & Beryl Singleton. This team would venture out for many weekends throughout the years, to set up their stall at canal events and the like, all over the country.



The award winning FCC sales stand at the IWA National Waterways Festival at Burton on Trent in 2011.



Julie Arnold

In fact for two years they won the IWA prize for being the best canal society stall on site at the Inland Waterways Association National Waterways Festival. This raised our profile to a greater audience. The sales team used every occasion they could to sell a booklet, published by the FCC, which Mike and Val had written called *A Walker's Guide to the Cromford Canal*. There have been two editions of this booklet which has sold an amazing total of over 5,500 copies and is still available. On top of this are the approx. 3,000 packs of Christmas cards they produced and sold.

Not to be outdone, our indefatigable Archivist, Hugh Potter, also put together a well illustrated book showing the canal as it was. This book, *The Cromford Canal*, was commercially published and has sold over 3000 copies nationally, including 120 copies on the FCC sales stall. Hugh has put together a pictorial archive that any museum would be proud of.

In October 2005 we took part in our first Discovery Days weekend at Cromford Wharf. As part of the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site celebrations we did our bit. A rickety old rusting hulk, The Duchess, was moored up at High Peak Junction. 'What a good idea it will be to have a horse boat demonstration,' we said, as part of our display. That was easier said than done. Weeks prior, hundreds of overhanging branches were cut down and loaded into a punt (right) and the old Duchess, until eventually we had a channel, (well sort of!). So, on Saturday 29th October the first horse boat for 15 years traversed this route, but not for passengers; it was only for show. Later we spruced the old boat up a bit, but soon the canal became so silted up that 2009 was the last time we could do this.





Mike Kelley at the helm of *Duchess* on an early horse boat demonstration.

At the AGM in 2007 Pat Morriss took over from me as Chairman. I was working in the Sudan at the time and unable to get back to England enough to continue as Chair. Pat ran things very well until the AGM of 2013 when Matthew Rogers took over for a short time, after which John Baylis took over the helm in 2014.

From November 2002, monthly public meetings were held when visiting speakers were invited to deliver their discourse for us. We tried several venues, but soon settled on Ironville Church Hall. These meetings have been going on ever since and are a way to help us communicate with the members who can get there.

Downs

From the onset of our society, a company called Shires Developments was seeking to carry out opencast coal mining on derelict land just north of Langley Mill boat yard. The original route of the canal had been destroyed there but the company said, 'We will rebuild the canal for you after we have taken the coal'. Wonderful we thought; but year after year, nothing happened. In effect this had stopped us seeking planning permission to move the canal north of Langley Mill. Shires did not finally quit until 2015. [See also *Onward and Upward* on pages 22-26 - Ed.]

Then came Smotherly! For the next few years this was to take a great deal of our time and money. And now, even with hindsight, I don't know what else we could have done. This former opencast coal site had destroyed the Pinxton Branch of the canal and UK Coal were set to landscape it, without putting the canal back. We approached UK Coal with the suggestion that the money they would have spent in landscaping the site, they give to us, and we would use that to get further funds, and so restore the site and canal at the same time. After several meetings they seemed OK with this, so we went ahead with the long and tiresome process of obtaining planning permission. Not only did we need planning permission, we also needed several expensive reports and studies to be put in place, such as Landscape Scheme, Ecological Management Plan, Flood Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the Protection of Site Ecology During Development. These studies were a drain on our coffers.

All this took several years, but finally we got planning permission. The bulk of this background work was carried out by Pat Morriss, Rev. Steve Parish, John Boucher and



myself. Our society carried this load by ourselves with very little help from the councils concerned. Then UK Coal went bankrupt and the money they were to spend on this site went with them. However, these studies remain in place as does the planning permission, but up till now, the new owners are not interested and the land has never been landscaped.

We now have many studies in place to support the restoration of the canal, in addition to those mentioned above. Oh for the days when you could just get an Act of Parliament and start digging.

Ups

From the very beginning we have carried out 'work parties'. To start with work parties consisted of clearing rubbish out of the canal at weekends. Then later under the initial direction of Dave Tinkler and later John Barker and George Rogers more ambitious work was carried out. Many times we utilised the services of the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) under the direction of George Rogers and John Baylis. Projects like the rebuilding of the walls at the historic 'narrows' and towpath at Sawmills, the clearing of dense overgrowth at Ironville, putting a new foundation in a couple of locks, clearing out and levelling the top forebay of Lock 4 at Ironville, along with refurbishing the towpath there. Then in the summer of 2012 a new overflow weir was built by WRG between the Leawood Arm and Gregory Tunnel (see below). This was necessary because in periods of heavy rain, the excess water had nowhere to go and could burst the banks of the canal. So this was a valuable undertaking.



Through an agreement with Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways) we have adopted a stretch of canal at Ironville. John Baylis directed operations (several times) around the rebuilding and operation of Brown's Bridge - the swing bridge at High Peak Junction. Without doubt we have some wonderful people who devote much of their time to this work; but the more canal we get, the more maintenance work is required.



The much needed dredging under way in 2013. This was very expensive but the end result turned out to be rather disappointing.



Hugh Potter

The northern section of the canal from Cromford Wharf to Leawood had become so silted up that in places it was only around 6" deep. As owners of this SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) Derbyshire County Council (DCC) are required to keep a suitable water flow through the canal and so they announced that dredging was to take place in early 2013, see above. So maybe a trip boat could operate once again along this stretch? It just so happened that Mike Harrison had come across a suitable boat for sale, just at the right time.

Our Chairman, Pat Morriss, found a suitable grant source from the government department of DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). They were looking for projects that would bring employment to rural areas and this project fitted in well with their aims. The paperwork for this grant was immense, and not only that, but we also had to get permission from Natural England (NE) who oversee Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) and DCC; all of whom wanted details of the operation. I was asked to be the Project and Operations Manager, but it was a team effort, with Pat Morris, Mike Harrison and John Boucher. As if this was not enough, because the boat could carry up to 50 passengers we came under the jurisdiction of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA). Yes, these are the same people who deal with cross-channel ferries! And their standards were rigorous and high. Not to mention expensive. It is not just the boat they have to issue certificates for after testing, but anyone who wants to be a Skipper must pass their theory and practical tests as well as having attended three set courses.

Including the purchase of the boat, it's restoration, replacement of diesel power for electric and transporting it by road to Cromford, in total we needed around £80,000 and DEFRA were to give us £27,966; so we had to find the rest. Members were very generous and the funds were eventually raised. Then in the midst of all this preparation, Pat stood down as Chair; I had a terminally ill wife, so Matthew Rogers kindly took over with everything buzzing and no one quite sure if it was all going to come together alright.

We got a team together and over two or three days cruised the boat from Stone, where the boat had been surveyed, to Langley Mill boat yard. The summer of 2013 was hot and most of it we spent inside a hot steel boat stripping her down and refurbishing her up to MCA standards - hard work. Then on Saturday 27th July, with TV and radio there,





Birdswood being repainted on the dry dock at Langley Mill.

Editor

Birdswood was transported from Langley Mill to Cromford Wharf. There was a great deal of excitement and publicity over this event, but we hit three snags: (i) The water had not been dredged as deep as we understood it should have been (ii) Coots were nesting in the middle of the canal and (iii) The future skippers had to get their MCA licence before we could take passengers. With item (i) DCC agreed to raise the water level, but it was not until mid September that we became operational carrying our first passengers. (Ironically on the very first passenger-carrying trip the Government's Minister for DEFRA, Dan Rogerson MP, and his entourage came aboard). Since that date to the end of 2016 we have carried nearly 19,000 passengers and become a popular tourist attraction.



Saturday July 27th 2013, *Birdswood* finally arrives at Cromford Wharf.

Val Roberts



The official launching ceremony of Birdswood on November 3rd 2013 with FCC Patron Julian Richards cutting the ribbon....



Derick Spencer

..and then joining Mike Kelley on the stern of Birdswood for the trip down the canal with a party of VIPs.



Liz Tatam

In 2014 Vix Wilding became our first part-time employee, taking over my role as Boat Operations Manager. And what a wonderful job she has done and is doing. Control of the bookings is no mean feat with the phone ringing at all times. She went on to oversee the canal shop we opened in the premises of the old Weighbridge Office which has now become a central feature of our operations at Cromford. Over the last two years there has been an Intern from Derby University to develop community projects. The business has also employed two other part time assistants for Volunteer Recruitment and Sales.



Boat Operations Manager Vix Wilding and her office and shop in the former Weighbridge Office at Cromford Wharf.



The money generated from the boat is being used to buy a parcel of land north of Langley Mill to extend the canal through there. (This was the land which had held us up for so long waiting for the failed opencast mining). With so much involvement in so many areas our monthly committee meetings have become rather long! But with people like John Baylis, Jude Berry and Bob Bullock on the team, a tight rein is kept over legal matters.

So here's to the next fifteen years, with your committee working hard to keep our business moving on.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is hereby given that the
First Annual General Meeting
of the Friends of the Cromford Canal,
Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number 1164608,
will be held on Monday, April 24th 2017
at the Church Hall, Ironville, commencing at 7.30pm.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual General Meeting of Charity 1100700 on Monday, April 18th 2016.
3. Matters arising.
4. Report of the Chairman.
5. Report of the Treasurer and presentation of the accounts for 2016.
6. Adoption of the accounts.
7. Appointment of Community Accounting Plus as auditors.
7. Election of Trustees. See Note below.
8. Reports by Officers.
9. Any other business.

The accounts for the year ending December 31st. 2016 will be available at the meeting and prior to the meeting on the website.

Minutes of the Fourteenth AGM of the FCC Charity No.1100700 are reproduced on pages 15-18. Please bring this copy of the *Portal* with you to the AGM as further copies will not be available.

Note. As this is the first Annual General Meeting of The Friends of the Cromford Canal as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, one third of the Trustees nominated to the Charity Commission need to retire and seek re-election. There is one vacancy, David Ratner was co-opted and must resign, Jude Berry and Patrick Morriss also retire. The Trustees are elected for a three year term of office, and so far David Ratner and Jude Berry offer themselves for re-election. Nominations for these persons and any further nominations for election as Trustees must be submitted in writing before April 3rd to:

John Baylis, 215 Clipstone Avenue West, Forest Town, Mansfield, Notts. NG19 0HJ

Nomination forms are available from the Executive Secretary and must be signed by the proposer, the seconder and the nominee who must all be FCC members. The full list of nominees with a short CV will be on the Website in early April; a paper copy can be requested from the Executive Secretary. The remaining nominated trustees will retire at the Annual General Meetings in 2018 and 2019.

John Baylis BEM, Executive Secretary

The Annual General meeting will be followed by a presentation by George Rogers on engineering aspects of restoration on the Cromford Canal.



Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal (FCC) held at 7.30pm on Monday, April 18th 2016, at the Church Hall, Ironville.

Present

Committee: John Baylis (Chairman), John Barker, Judy Berry, Jack Brown, Bob Bullock, David Martin, Pat Morriss, Yvonne Shattower, (Trustees), John Boucher (Honorary Consulting Engineer), Mike Harrison, Mike Kelley, George Rogers, Hugh Potter, Val Roberts and Howard Smith.

There were 51 Members, 15 Committee and 0 visitors.

1. Apologies for absence

Ian Hooker (Trustee), Dave Ratner, The Reverend Steve Parish and Sheila Smith.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the Thirteenth Annual General Meeting held on April 20th 2015 had been circulated. Their adoption was proposed by John Barker, seconded by Jan Columbo and carried unanimously.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Report of the Chairman

During the year the Trustees had been progressing the new Constitution for the Friends of the Cromford Canal based on the Charity Commission draft for an Association Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This was completed at the end of November when the Commission gave us the new CIO Number 1164608. The old Charity 1100700 was used up until December 31st 2015 and the CIO accounts started being used on January 1st 2016. So this is the final Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal Charity Commission Registered Number 1100700; and this will be registered with the Charity Commission.

The first Annual General meeting of Friends of the Cromford Canal Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1164608 will be in April 2017.

The Trustees have also taken the opportunity to change the bank accounts to the Charity Aid Foundation; which gives a better interest rate. *Birdswood* bookings can now be collected using plastic cards and off-peak boat trips are now being advertised on Groupon.

The passenger trip boat *Birdswood* has had another successful year with a small increase in passengers and takings from 2014. The employment of a part time Boat Operations Manager, the Maritime & Coastguard Agency examination and new seats and windows have been additional costs in 2015. However, the employment of local people was a requirement of the Defra grant from the Rural Development Programme for England. In addition to the Boat Operations Manager, the FCC has employed the local Arraslea Shires and their towing horse as well as a part time sales person. Following changes to the Arkwright Society café at Cromford Wharf the FCC has been able to lease part of the



Gothic Warehouse as a boat office and sales outlet. John Baylis thanked Vix Wilding for her support with the whole of the *Birdswood* operation and the new base. This was applauded by the members present.

Several new Boat Masters have been approved by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency and crew members are being trained. In November the boat was craned out at Cromford for its biennial inspection by the M&CA following which new hydraulic pipes were fitted and the hull blacked. Then, towards the end of the year, new roll-up plastic windows were fitted and over the New Year break new seats have been fitted. John Baylis thanked Ian Hooker and Dave Ratner respectively.

It is a requirement of the Derbyshire County Council licence for *Birdswood* that the final profit is spent on work on the Cromford Canal. The profit of about £11,500 accrued in 2014 has been spent on volunteer work on the section of the Cromford Canal used by *Birdswood* and on the rest of the canal. This year, work has been carried out on Brown's Swing Bridge at High Peak Junction aided by the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association, a Waterway Recovery Group Canal Camp at Ironville, support of the DCC Waterways Officer and some dredging is planned at High Peak Junction.

The FCC working parties have continued agricultural and tree maintenance work on the section of the Cromford Canal in and below Ironville and this has been with the co-operation and help from the owners, the Canal & River Trust and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. In addition FCC working parties have carried out work at Hartshay and on the Cromford to Ambergate section.

The Friends have been meeting with Bullbridge And Sawmills Amenity group to discuss possible plans for the old Stevenson's site and also with Derbyshire County Council regarding the Smotherfly site. The FCC is represented on Ripley's "Tunnel Vision" looking at prospects for the Butterley site redevelopment and recently a FCC Strategic Restoration Committee has been set up to progress restoration northwards from Langley Mill towards Pinxton and Butterley Tunnel.

No untoward incidents have occurred during the reporting period that required notification to the Charity Commission, the Health & Safety Executive or any other competent body. John Baylis thanked Chris Jacklin who is retiring after 6 years as a trustee and thanked all the trustees, committee members, boat crew, working party and other volunteers for their continued efforts.

5. Treasurer's Report

Bob Bullock reported that the income for the year was £54,597.57 with an expenditure of £46,029.15 leaving an end of year balance of £8,568.42. The total income for *Birdswood* was £34,712.50 with a total expenditure of £26,968.39 plus a further £3,348.32 for replacement seats, lights and windows. Included in the *Birdswood* expenditure was a full year's pay for Vix Wilding and also the cost of the new *Birdswood* website. Increased profit is hoped for in the coming year with the recent introduction of Paypal, internet booking and Groupon.

Bob thanked all volunteers who continue to spend many hours preparing and getting *Birdswood* onto the water and to the volunteers who crew her. The cost for the year of printing the *Portal* and distributing it by post was £1,579 and £1,466.71 respectively. In response to a question from the floor as to whether the cost might be reduced by having the printers send it out, Mike Harrison advised that this had been looked into previously but he was prepared to look at the matter again. Yvonne Shattower advised that enclosures, including membership reminders, were often sent out with the *Portal*. Having the printers distribute it could lead to additional costs as these enclosures would have to be sent



separately. Again the matter is under review.

The FCC paid £2,500 to support the salary of the Derbyshire County Council Waterways Development Project Officer; other waterways' organisations also contribute. John Baylis responded to a number of questions from the floor. As part of the agreement with DCC, a percentage of the *Birdwood* profits must go to the DCC and this can be given to support the salary of the Officer concerned. The Trustees feel that this is money well spent because the Officer is a useful contact within the DCC and monitors the *Birdwood* operation, its effects on the Site of Special Scientific Interest and provides written reports on the same.

Bob Bullock advised that all internet donation web sites to which the FCC had signed up to had been re-registered with the new Charity Commission number.

Bob Bullock thanked Councillors Paul Jones and Steve Marshall Clark who each gave £200 to the FCC from their community funds towards the cost of display boards at Cromford and equipment used by work parties at Ironville. The grant of £250 from Ashfield District Council was also put towards the cost of equipment for the work parties at Ironville. The £2,500 awarded by One Severn Trent was scheduled to be spent on the narrows at Sawmills but the Waterway Recovery Group camp had to be cancelled due to problems with the accommodation and a new date for the work is to be set.

Bob Bullock thanked Community Accounting Plus for auditing the accounts.

6. Adoption of the Accounts

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Yvonne Shattower, seconded by John Boucher and carried unanimously.

7. Election of Trustees

This being the last AGM of Charity Commission number 1100700, the election of Trustees was not a requirement. Under the constitution of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the Trustees who were in place at its commencement on 28th November 2015, remain as Trustees and will do so until the first AGM of the CIO. This will take place in April 2017 when a third of the Trustees will retire.

8. Reports by Officers

a) Membership Report

Yvonne Shattower reported another increase in the membership from 967 in 2014 to 996 in 2015 which included 176 Life Members. The FCC has 8 Charity Members (including Parish Councils) and 2 Business Members.

Yvonne thanked those who helped with the distribution of *The Portal*.

Although the FCC now has a new bank account, Yvonne advised that the old account would remain active until all the standing orders have been sorted out. She noted that some standing orders are still being paid at the old rate but thanked all those members who had been in touch and updated their payments, this being very much appreciated.

During the year some Members had been lost for various reasons and Yvonne expressed her condolences to the families of those who had died. A special mention was given to Val Kelley who died following a debilitating illness. Val and Mike Kelley were founder members of the FCC with Membership numbers 3 and 4. A very great deal would not have been done in the early years had it not been for Val, especially when Mike was working abroad.



b) Archive Report

Hugh Potter reported that it had been another busy year with various acquisitions and answering queries, this year majoring on the Duke's quarries at Whatstandwell. The mystery of Simms Bridge remains unsolved.

As promised at the last AGM, the first volume of the Minutes of the Cromford Canal Company by Derbyshire Record Society has been published and is available at a special price of £20 to FCC members.

Another large batch of 19th and 20th century papers, this time from the Midland Railway Archives, have been transcribed thanks largely to Kate Hobson, Sue March and June Crump.

The transcription of permits (of boats through Langley Mill) continues with thanks, as always, to June Crump. These give a fascinating insight into boat movements and cargoes carried and the list now totals 40,000 movements.

The most exciting project at the moment is the putting together of a small book based on the recollections of the late Des Greenwood's father-in-law, Les Mason, about his journeys as a schoolboy on the coal boats from Hartshay to Cromford. It is hoped the book will be published later in the year.

'New' photos continue to turn up with Facebook being a notable source. One excellent photo, showing a loaded boat beside the top lock at Ironville, came to the FCC via a work party member. A series of photographs of the long-lost Martha's Bridge at Hartshay came from a family photograph album.

c) Webmaster Report

George Rogers reported that the *Birdswood* website had been completed and work was underway with the main FCC website. He thanked Hugh Potter and Chris Wilding for all their work and for keeping the website going whilst he continued with the hosting issues and emails.

d) Portal Report

Mike Harrison reported he had been the editor of Portal since 2008 and was now considering stepping down from that position but requested more good contributions.

e) Work Party Report

John Barker thanked all the work party volunteers for their work in 2015 which exceeded 1700 hours split between the Derbyshire County Council section between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction and also Ironville. John thanked Pete Clarke for his efforts not only on the Canal & River Trust section at Ironville but also for his splendid work in the village.

The FCC has adopted the sections of canal at Ironville and Lower Hartshay from Canal & River Trust for a further year.

10) Any Other Business

a) Nic Barfield advised that the 2016 Birdswood trip schedules and school trips were in place and asked for those present to take the advertising leaflets to distribute in their local areas.

b) It had been noted that two FCC Officers were seeking to step down. To prevent potential future gaps in the FCC work, Marie Keane suggested people be paired up.

The meeting closed at 20.50 hours.



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES of the FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL FOR 2016

January 1st. 2016 saw the start of the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number 1164608. The final accounts of the old Charity 1100700 were approved at the Annual General Meeting on April 16th, and the Charity was finally removed from the Register by the Charity Commission on November 21st.

The passenger trip boat *Birdswood* has had another successful year with an increase in passengers and takings from 2015. During the year arrangements were made for payments for passengers and in the shop through PayPal as well as cash. In addition passenger numbers were greatly improved by the use of an on-line system called GroupOn, resulting in a 30% increase in passenger numbers over the previous year.

The shop continues to be a visitor attraction to the wharf and a shop assistant has been employed on Sunday afternoons during the summer. This is a continuing requirement of the Defra grant from the Rural Development Programme for England. There was no out of water Maritime & Coastguard Agency inspection this year but all the seats and tables have been rebuilt and refitted by volunteers.

The requirement of our Derbyshire County Council licence to spend the profits from *Birdswood* on the Cromford Canal was somewhat depleted this year following additional expenses reported in 2015. However, the winding hole at High Peak Junction was dredged by contractors, the winding hole bank strengthened and vegetation work for DCC Countryside Services carried out, plus financial support of the DCC Waterways Officer.

The section of the Cromford Canal to the west of Butterley Tunnel is still in water and the short section owned by the C&RT has been adopted by the Friends. In addition, at the request of the owner, we have been removing some dead and damaged trees from the canal channel at Lower Hartshay. The volunteer working party has also supported DCC Countryside Services at Pinxton, but final restoration of the Smotherfly opencast coal site and re-building the canal channel and habitat has still not been accomplished. Awards from the Inland Waterways Association from its national Restoration raffle have been used to re-surface the canal towing path through Ironville. This work has been supported by volunteers from Waterway Recovery Group and the purchase of materials by the Canal & River Trust.

Following the decision by Shires Development not to carry out its planned opencast coal extraction at Langley Mill, it has offered for purchase by the Friends a piece of land to allow for a sufficient turning circle to get through the Moorgreen Railway Bridge; this is prior to the auction of the rest of the site. Included with the land is the Right of Way from Cromford Road which will allow access to the site for building the new locks and future canal maintenance. With the planning approval lapsing, the Friends have reformed the Strategic Restoration Group and have engaged Coles Baxter Associates to carry out an Economic Development Study from Langley Mill to Golden Valley and Pinxton. Initial discussions have also started with the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency and Amber Valley District Council. Finally, in November, the Friends received a donation of £4,000 as a result of an Enforcement Undertaking which was given to the Environment Agency. This money has been used to purchase a Thwaites two ton dumper for this restoration work.

No untoward incidents have occurred during the reporting period that required notification to the Charity Commission, the Health & Safety Executive or any other competent body.

John Baylis, BEM Trustee, January 2017



STRATEGIC RESTORATION COMMITTEE UPDATE (& OTHER BITS 'N' PIECES)

by George Rogers

It feels like some time since I last wrote a report for *Portal*, but I made a commitment to myself to ensure that in Mike's last edition as editor I would endeavour to send him a report, before press date, without him having to chase me. With several hours still to go until press date, I'm thus sat down to draft a report on the events of the last few months with regards to Strategic Restoration.

Before I delve into matters though, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Mike for all his hard work editing *Portal* over the years. I know from maintaining the website in previous years how hard it actually is to get copy for publication without writing it yourself, and so how he has managed to produce such a fascinating variety of interesting material is beyond me. Thank you Mike - your efforts will be missed but I hope you and Val can have a (slightly) more peaceful time.

The Strategic Restoration Committee

The SRC was set up formally just over a year ago, as reported previously. We are tasked with looking at the 'Strategic' goals of restoring the canal - basically, the remit is to collate a coherent plan from all of the work and reports done previously, in a usable form for putting together funding bids and planning applications. The focus isn't so much on carrying out the restoration once we get to the stage where things can get going in earnest; that will be handed over to separate project teams (though there is nothing to say many of the personnel won't be the same!), but to get the projects ready to go.

Much of the first year has been spent dealing with the Economic Development Study, being carried out by Coles Baxter Associates. This has been previously reported on and is looking at the economic benefits (or otherwise) of restoring the canal east of Butterley Tunnel, including the Pinxton Arm. For various reasons, the final report has been delayed somewhat, but I hope to be in a position to report much more of the outcome of that in my next report.

Alongside the Economic Development Study, we have been looking at developing the first stage of works at Langley Mill. This is largely on land owned by the Canal & River Trust, who are generally very supportive, and the work party of the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association are very keen to get digging, so we are working to get this project underway as soon as possible. To that end, we recently had a very good meeting with representatives of CRT, who felt that we had all the right information but just needed to collate it all into a form that was easy to present to the personnel within CRT, the planning authority and the Environment Agency. As this is what we are working on, it wasn't that surprising and it is encouraging to hear their general support both for our overall plans and our current approach. This work is ongoing so hopefully we'll have positive news to announce soon!

Phase 1 of that work would extend the existing canal at Langley Mill, and phase 2 will seek to build the two locks required beyond this. More on the details of that in the next report. The SRC is indebted to the hard work of John Boucher in putting together the technical details of the scheme and to him and Chris Broome for their work in consulting with the Environment Agency. Unfortunately, gone are the days when you could just go



and dig a canal - there are a lot of hoops to jump through in the current age, and they are doing an admirable job.

Aside from Langley Mill, we've completed the administrative works in getting the SRC set up - formalising the Terms of Reference which dictate our roles and responsibilities with respect to the rest of the FCC, and appointing a chair (where I didn't step backwards fast enough!)

The Future

Alongside developing the Langley Mill scheme and finalising the outcome of the Economic Development Study, the next priority for the SRC is to review the work done to date and where the gaps are. The Inland Waterways Association and CRT have together produced a very useful guide to restoration that develops the Royal Institute of British Architects work stages plan. This sets out the suggested work that needs to be done at each stage of restoration against a number of headings. Looking through the suggested work it is clear the FCC has already progressed significantly so we are planning to review this carefully before trying to document a plan of action for the whole canal.

Other Bits 'n' pieces

Away from the SRC, I attended a workshop run by CRT in Lincoln. This was part 2 of a 3 part workshop looking at some of the issues for local societies. The first part (which I unfortunately could not attend, but which I have a copy of the notes) looked at setting a vision and project management, alongside how to work with volunteers - some of which has made fascinating reading. The session I attended was focussing on the development of projects (much as the SRC is currently doing) but with particular focus on the Construction Design Management regulations that define much of what happens in construction. Whilst this is a topic I know a lot about through my day job, it was very interesting to hear about it from a different perspective and to understand how it might be used effectively within canal restoration - and to share experiences with other societies.

In April I will be attending the annual Waterways Restoration Conference. This was a very interesting event last year with lots of presentations and discussions with other societies. This year the theme is making your project 'fit for purpose' which should be very interesting given the recent changes in the FCC and the progress being made.

In January, I was invited by North Midland Construction to accompany them on a site visit to a pipe bridge at Lower Hartshay. Now, I accept that might not be very exciting, but the pipe bridge crosses the canal on the stretch that Geesons have recently cleared and enhanced the towpath. NMC are going to be replacing the pipe bridge and following the article in *Portal 58* regarding the work carried out so far, they thought we might like to report on the next work that happens there. They're also using some fancy scanning technologies to scan the area before and after (similar to the work done at Lock 4) and they have agreed to share the data with us when they have finished. I will be returning to the site when they start work to see how they are getting on and will report back - and I'll remember my camera this time!

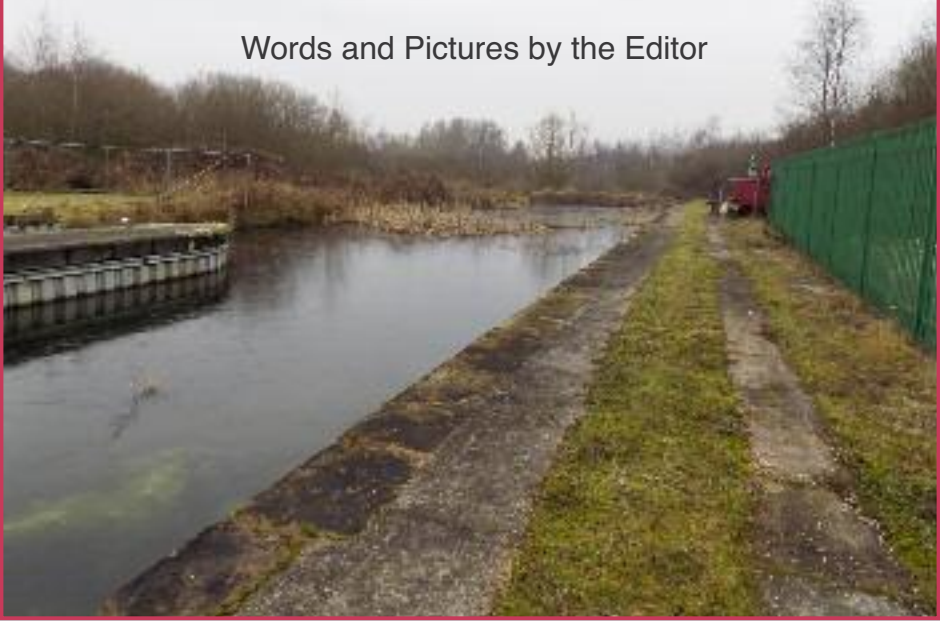
I'm also continuing to help with the work around the Stevenson's site with CRIB. Gill Hirst has just informed us that all the consultation responses have been collated and we are sitting down to review those next week, so I look forward to that and moving that project forward also.

All in all, I think 2017 promises to be a very exciting year for the Cromford Canal. I hope you will join in where you can and support us elsewhere. I'll be presenting a fuller update at the AGM, and I hope to see many of you there.



ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

Words and Pictures by the Editor





My first involvement with the Cromford Canal was in the early 1970s at the southern end at Langley Mill. Under the leadership of Michael Golds, I was one of the many volunteers of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association (ECPDA) who restored the first lock (Langley Bridge Lock No 14), the first short length of canal above and the adjoining Great Northern Basin on the Nottingham Canal. After that, several more short lengths of the Cromford have been restored by Langley Mill Boat Company, including building a drydock and extending the moorings in stages. This much will be well known to many readers.

After that, Michael was still very keen to see some more canal restored and over several years led a smaller gang of ECPDA stalwarts who carried out quite major works on the next section of canal north of the boatyard. This length has suffered quite severe deep mine subsidence and major piling and earthworks were required. The top picture opposite is looking north up this section from the boatyard, and the lower one is looking south from near the top end of this excavated section, showing how much work has been done.

When this work beyond the boatyard was just getting going, a company called Shires Developments came up with a proposal. They announced their intention to extract coal by opencast working from the plot of land in Langley Mill between the River Erewash and the Cromford Canal. This sounded like a very interesting plan as it included developing the land after the coal had been extracted to provide housing, a hotel and, since part of their land adjoined the west side of the canal beyond the boatyard, also included building a marina. The result of this was that the ECPDA work on the 'Cromford Extension' as it had become known, was suspended pending the proposed exciting developments which would mean much of the work being done as part of the marina proposal. Consequently, the work remained in limbo for some years while Shires Developments had public meetings, did several lots of test hole boring, and were in negotiations with the local authority regarding planning permission. British Waterways, as it was then, were also involved as owners of some of the land, and the Environment Agency regarding alterations to the area of the flood plain. These talks and meetings went on for years.

Meanwhile the ECPDA work continued slowly for a while, anticipating the opencast scheme would go ahead, but not able to go much further until more definite news was forthcoming. Eventually the ECPDA was getting very disappointed and frustrated and the work had to be stopped. Then at last we had definite news - Shires Developments had pulled out. This came as rather a blow to all concerned, but now at least we know where we stand. The main regret is that restoration of the Cromford Canal northwards from Langley Mill had been put back by 20 years.

Whilst all this was going on, or rather not going on, the FCC had been formed and more interest was being shown in the prospects of restoration. From the start, it was recognised that any restoration of the Cromford Canal must include it being connected to the main waterways system via the Erewash Canal at Langley Mill.

So I am very pleased to say that we are now at the start of a new phase for both the FCC and the ECPDA. The idea is to hopefully join forces to work towards pushing the Cromford Canal onwards up the Erewash Valley towards Stoneyford and Ironville. Of course, this is easily said, but there is no doubt that the job is not without its snags!

This brings me to the main reason for writing this article now. As I have mentioned above, one big problem above Langley Mill is that the ground levels have changed considerably due to deep mine subsidence. Another is that all sign of the canal channel and the locks has disappeared after opencast coal workings up the valley. Yet another is the fact that the A610 Langley Mill Bypass has been built along the line of the former Great Northern Railway then diagonally across the line of the canal above the site



of Lock 13. So the purpose is to explain what will need to be done to overcome this situation. Basically, the job will involve building a new canal to continue above Langley Mill to the bottom of the locks at Ironville. But the first step is to cross the A610. This road is on an embankment which the canal needs to get through. However, we have a ready-made solution to this. The plan is to take the canal through an existing bridge. This needs a little more explanation, which will be assisted by referring to the section of a 1958 OS map of the Langley Mill area reproduced below.

This shows the start of the Cromford Canal at Langley Bridge Lock No14 with the canal still intact up through locks 13 and 12 and continuing north over the River Erewash aqueduct towards Stoneyard. The two main line railways shown are the Midland on the left, which is still in use today and the Great Northern on the right, still also in use then but which closed in the 1960s. Also shown is the mineral railway which originally connected to both of these and crossed the canal below lock 13, passed under the Great Northern Railway and carried on to the east to Moorgreen colliery and others.

Moving on now to 1983, the A610 Langley Mill bypass was built from a new traffic island on the A608 on the site of the old Eastwood and Langley Mill railway station, then along the line of the Great Northern Railway before swinging west above the site of lock 13. At this time, Moorgreen colliery was still operating and the mineral railway was still in use. This meant that when the bypass was built, a bridge had to be provided in the embankment





on the same site as the former railway bridge. Then in 1985, the colliery and the mineral line were closed and the track lifted. This meant that the bridge carrying the bypass over it was now redundant, meaning that the same bridge could be used as a route for the restored canal.

John Boucher, the FCC honorary civil engineer, is presently working on a scheme to determine how this can best be achieved. Because of the changes in ground level mentioned above, and also the fact that there is a main sewer on the east side of the bypass, it has been decided that the canal will need to be higher along this section than



Above: Looking back south across the swampy jungle which is the line of the canal towards the boatyard.

Below: Looking east from just below the original site of lock 13 towards the bypass bridge. A short length of the mineral railway track can be seen still in place here.





the original. The plan therefore is to build two new locks (or possibly a two step staircase) shortly beyond the restored length shown on page 22. These will replace the original locks 13 and 12. The canal will then turn sharply to the right to pass under the bypass bridge, needing an extra wide section of canal to enable boats to negotiate the 90 degree turn. This will therefore mean purchasing some extra land which presently belongs to the aforementioned Shires Developments. Immediately after the bridge will be a sharp left turn to continue up the east side of the bypass. This new, higher pound of the canal will then continue to a new aqueduct over the River Erewash and on to the three new locks at Stoneyford. Simple eh?!



The bridge carrying the bypass over the line of the former mineral railway is shown above. This is a substantial structure of adequate width for the new canal and towpath. There is also plenty of headroom, which will be needed because after rising up the two new locks, the water level will be several feet above the present ground level.

This ambitious but nevertheless perfectly feasible scheme has been going through our minds ever since the FCC was formed, but as I have said we have been through a long period of frustrating delays. But I am now feeling more optimistic that we are entering a time when meaningful progress seems possible. This has been encouraged by a number of factors. Probably the most pleasing is that the new chairman of the ECPDA, Norman Cornwell, has expressed his wish to see the canal restored through the A610 during his term of office. I feel sure that the FCC and the ECPDA can pull together towards this goal. Also, Dan Cauldwell, the new director of Langley Mill Boatyard, has brought some youthful enthusiasm to the idea of more canal at Langley Mill. This is a project which could motivate new volunteers and provide a very satisfying goal which will be a big step forward for the aims and objectives of the FCC and an entirely appropriate use of FCC funds.

Your help on this ground-breaking project will be much appreciated!



EX CHAIRMAN OF FCC TO RUN IN THE LONDON MARATHON

by Matthew Rogers

On 23rd April 2017 I will be running the London Marathon on behalf of The Inland Waterways Association, with all money raised going to their Waterway Recovery Group (WRG), who provide practical and technical support to waterways restoration projects across the country and run Canal Camp restoration working holidays, as well as providing skills training for volunteers. Over the past years the FCC has regularly been assisted by WRG with various restoration projects along the Cromford Canal at Ironville, Derwentside Weir and the Narrows at Sawmills as well as aspects of dredging - 100s of man hours! The photo below was taken in December 2016 when they were hard at work near High Peak Junction - I arrived to bring some cake!



As someone who grew up in south London and has sat and watched the marathon every year since its inauguration in 1981 it has been on my "bucket list" but after five unsuccessful entries a call from IWA offering me a charity place is like a dream come true. For the many of you that know me I live next to the Cromford Canal in Whatstandwell and I am a keen supporter of its restoration. This will not be my first marathon, I've



completed 6 now - 3 when I was a very young man and another 3 in my late 30s/early 40s (see example above!). After the last one I vowed never to run another (just ask George!) but my memory has forgotten the pain so at 51 we do it all over again!

So now the hard work begins - both in training and fundraising with a target of £2000 to raise over the next few months. Your support is vital to the success so please help! Through Virgin Money Giving, you can sponsor me and donations will be quickly processed and passed to charities. Virgin Money Giving is a not for profit organisation and will claim gift aid on a charity's behalf where the donor is eligible for this. I really appreciate all your support and thank you for any donations.

To sponsor Matthew on his marathon endeavour, please use the following link:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/wrglondonmarathon>

or send a cheque payable to **The Inland Waterways Association** to
Mr M Rogers, 2 Main Road, Whatstandwell, Matlock. DE4 5HE



BIRDSWOOD MOTOR REPAIRS

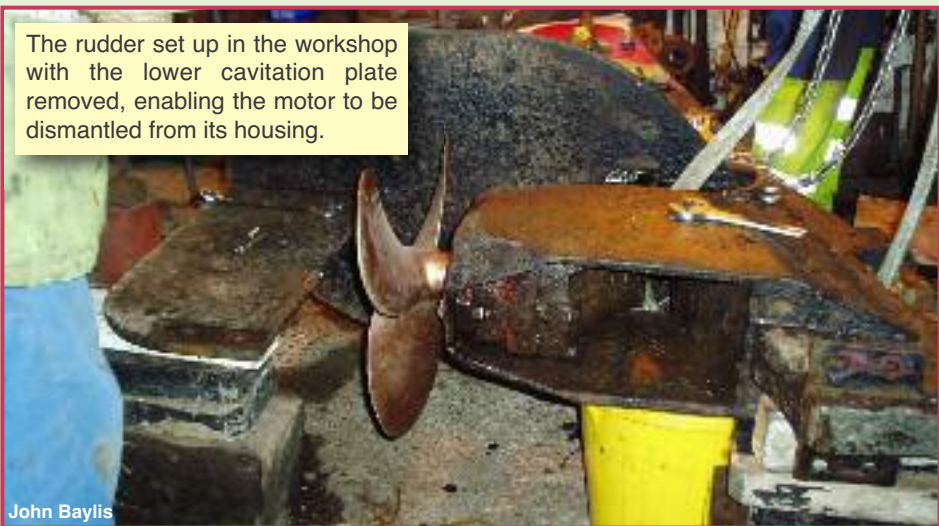
by John Baylis

Birdswood was built as a horsedrawn boat at Northwich in Cheshire in 1938 by W. J. Yarwood and Sons and had the traditional wooden rudder. It was later towed by a motor boat and continued working until 1974 when it was purchased by Bill and Jackie Young and fitted out as a horse drawn passenger boat operating on the Caldon Canal in Staffordshire. Following the death of the horse, the boat was motorised by fitting a small diesel engine to hydraulically drive a propeller fitted in the rudder. To do this Roger Fuller at Stone built a steel rudder fitted with a small motor and propeller. This means that the propeller direction moves with the rudder and reversing of the boat is easier than with a conventional propeller and rudder.

When the Friends of the Cromford Canal purchased *Birdswood* in 2013 Derbyshire County Council and Natural England would not allow a diesel engine to operate on a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Consequently the diesel engine was replaced by large batteries and an electric motor driving the hydraulic pump. When *Birdswood* was lifted out of the water in late 2015 the old hydraulic pipes were renewed and the old hydraulic oil replaced by biologically friendly hydraulic fluid. The pump and propeller motor seemed to be satisfactory but in November 2016 a clicking noise started coming from the rudder area. It was decided to monitor the problem during the running of the Santa Specials and if necessary do any repairs in the New Year.

An inspection of the installation after Christmas by our engineers showed that the clicking was coming from the motor built into the rudder and tests on the return flow of hydraulic fluid as recommended by hydraulic specialists showed problems with the motor. As *Birdswood* is not used during the first months of the year it was decided to investigate further rather than risking breakdown during the busy cruising season. In order to access the propeller motor, the rudder had to be lifted out and this was carried out by Peter Newman, formerly of Langley Mill Boatyard. This was done on January 3rd. and the rudder taken to Langley Mill where the work could be carried out in the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association workshop at Langley Mill. This has lifting gear and

The rudder set up in the workshop with the lower cavitation plate removed, enabling the motor to be dismantled from its housing.

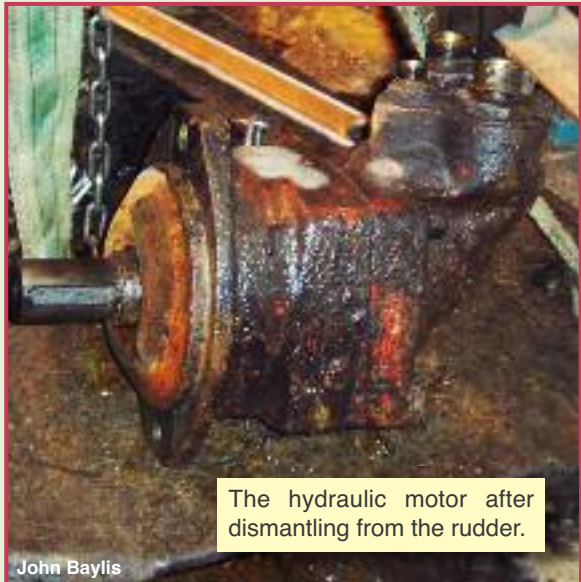


John Baylis



suitable tools for doing the work in the warm and dry. Before dismantling, the opportunity was also taken to weigh the rudder and motor assembly (see back cover). This was a little less than expected at 500lbs, as shown on the weighing instrument supplied by our engineer John Boucher.

The rudder was partly dismantled by Waterway Recovery Group East Midlands, the propeller and motor removed, and the motor sent to Hydraulic Pumps UK in Rotherham for further investigation. Pressure and running tests showed problems in the motor and it needed stripping down. Further investigation of the motor recommended fitting new seals, thrust bearings and piston rings and some machining. As the motor is now obsolete and a new motor would require modifications to the rudder, in order not to lose too much time it was agreed to rebuild the old motor.



The hydraulic motor after dismantling from the rudder.

John Baylis

The motor was rebuilt and returned to Langley Mill where it was refitted to the rudder, which was then returned to Cromford and lifted back into place on the boat by Slinters with a telehoist. The hydraulic pipes were then reassembled and the system refilled.



The rudder complete with rebuilt motor being lowered back into position on the boat.

Hugh Potter



BIRDSWOOD

CANAL BOAT TRIPS



2017 SEASON BEGINS

18TH MARCH

www.Birdswood.org
sales@birdswood.org
07552 055 455



This boat 21000000 is owned and operated by
The Friends of the Cromford Canal
 Registered Charity 114438
www.friendsofcanals.org.uk Visit us on Facebook at Birdswood



High
 Department
 for Transport and
 Road Safety



Foundation
 Derbyshire





LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mike

In response to the letter from David Bartrop published in your Autumn addition I would like to make the following points.

Cromford Mills is currently undergoing a £50 million regeneration programme as detailed in the Cromford Mills masterplan published in 2010. The first £7 million phase was the World Heritage Site Gateway and Cromford Creative, opened last year with additional development being brought forward at Wheatcroft's Wharf to open up the upper floor. Contractors will be starting further work on site next week. In the main yard area, the existing WC block will go (temporary portaloos will be on site) and the block is being completely gutted and redone with new disabled WCs, baby change area and showers. The existing shop is being fitted out with new fittings. A new exhibition will be put into the Gateway this spring (where the Gateway Shop currently is located) and the existing slave wall in the Gateway is to be extended with further exhibits concerned with the global cotton market and the role of slaves in its production. New lighting schemes are also being introduced. As a Grade I Listed site, any such planning issues require extensive consultation, consideration and time. Funding bids for the next £6 million phase are currently being prepared. We, like the Friends of the Cromford Canal, are a charity and our resources are extremely limited but huge progress has been made recently.

With regards to power generation, we are keen to explore ways of generating our own electricity using the water source and have already consulted Historic England on this matter. The initial views of HE were that a replica wheel would NOT be appropriate but a modern turbine could be considered and could form part of an educational resource examining the development of water power from the 1770's to the modern day. This is very much something we are keen to pursue and will be allocating resources to it as soon as we are able to.

Sarah McLeod

Chief Executive, The Arkwright Society, Sir Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mills
Mill Lane, Cromford, Derbyshire, DE4 3RQ

Tel: 01629 823256 Mob: 07811 184809 Email: smcleod@arkwrightsociety.org.uk

Web: www.cromfordmills.org.uk Facebook: Cromford Mills Twitter: @CromfordMills

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 for the first part of 2017

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

- **February 20th** - BULLBRIDGE TALK - Geoff Simms
- **March 20th** - STANTON AT WAR - Stephen Flinders
- **April 24th - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**
including an engineering update by George Rogers (free admission)
- **May 15th** - THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL AND *DAWN ROSE* - John Lower
- **June 19th** - MR BRUNTON'S ENGINE AND THE FRITCHLEY TRAM ROAD
- Dieter Hopkin
- **September 18th** - MINING IN THE ASHFIELD AND EREWASH AREA
- David Amos



LETTER

Hello Friends

Do you or anyone else close to you like to shop on-line? Whether it's for the big weekly grocery shop or like me just for those occasional purchases when it's easier to order items on-line rather than having to go in search of them. If you never use the internet for buying goods then I invite you to turn the page as this article may not interest you, but if you do ever buy goods or services on-line then please read on.

There is a useful site out there, in the great expanse of the internet, that automatically sends a donation to your chosen charity (hopefully this will be FCC) every time you make a purchase with any of the major retailers that feature in their scheme. These include big names such as Amazon, eBay, M&S, Argos, Sainsbury's, B&Q and many, many more.

According to the information on my sites 'home page' there are presently only 11 people registered as supporters of FCC using this potentially lucrative source of income. I strongly feel and hope that if more Friends used this facility then between us we could generate extra income for our cause.

To use this website simply go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk and create an account with your details and choose 'Friends of Cromford Canal' as your chosen charity. There are no sign-up fees and no annual subscriptions to be made, making this a completely win/win situation.

To earn donations for FCC it's imperative to access your chosen retailer through the link within your own account page, you then make your purchases in the normal way and the donation amount will automatically be credited to FCC, usually within a few days.

The typical donation amount will be around 1% to 2% of the order value, but sometimes will not include the proportion that is VAT. Although this percentage is small, if more people within FCC took part in this scheme then the amount that we could raise would, I'm sure, be substantial. Don't forget that you could also invite all your friends, colleagues and family to sign up on our behalf.

Happy shopping!

Bob Brown, FCC member

LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING DATES - SPRING 2017

The engine will be in motion from noon to 5.00pm on the following dates, which are the same as the horse days on *Birdswood*. Why not combine the two!?

Sunday April 16th and Monday April 17th (Easter)

Sunday April 30th and Monday May 1st (Bank Holiday)

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*

Mrs L Coleman, ALFRETON

Miss S Drea NOTTINGHAM

Mrs P Bishop, MATLOCK

Mr A Johnston, MATLOCK (Life Member)

Mr & Mrs Reeve, NOTTINGHAM

Mr N Mothershaw, BELPER

Mrs F E Simpson, DARTFORD (Life Member)

Mr & Mrs Marsh, MATLOCK

Mr J C Dodwell, LONDON

Rev'd C & Mrs Woadden (Life Members)

Mr N G Smith, DERBY

Mr J Small, CHESTERFIELD

Dr N Hunt, ALFRETON



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: £9.00 Life: £125.00
Couples: £14.00 Life: £180.00
Corporate Business: £35.00
Corporate Charity: £17.00



from
Yvonne Shattower

I hope I am not too late to wish a very Happy New Year to all our Members. I wonder what 2017 will bring for the FCC. More trips for *Birdswood* perhaps or a start on work on the Langley Mill end of the Canal?

After the panic of getting out the last edition of *Portal* before Christmas, I am hoping that this one will be a little easier. I would like to apologise to those of you who were confused by the absence of the new Standing Order form, however, we now have this available, and if my records show that you pay by this method, a form should be enclosed with this magazine. Please complete the shaded areas of the form, and return it to me, as indicated, so that I can update my records and set up the Standing Order. As I said last time, we will be closing the HSBC account by the end of 2017, so it is important that you complete a new mandate for the CAF Bank. Do not forget to cancel the instruction to your own bank to pay the original order once you have sent the new form back to me; this instruction has to come from you, not FCC.

This edition of the *Portal* is one for celebrating quite a few milestones, and we have one for Membership, as I recently welcomed member number 1700 – yes one thousand and seven hundred! It would be wonderful if they were still all with us, but of course, many have fallen by the wayside for one reason or another. We now have our updated Membership leaflet available, why not use the one enclosed with this magazine to enrol another new member?

We have been very disappointed with the attendance at our last few talks at Ironville and we are hoping that numbers will improve in the coming months. Our next talk, on 20 February, will be Geoff Sims talking about Bullbridge, which promises to be a very entertaining and informative evening, and on 20 March we will have Stephen Flinders telling us about Stanton at War - again a very fascinating and informative talk. 24 April is the date for our AGM, and here I would like to remind you that this meeting is one week later than the usual meeting, as this coincides with Easter. This is an important meeting where you can learn about the Friends activities of the last year and plans for the future. Please do come along and support us, we try to give an update on the latest FCC activities at the monthly meeting, and there are always some of the Committee present who will be pleased to talk to you if you have any queries, although they may not be able to give you an answer there and then. Where else can you get an evening out for £2.00?

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