

# THE PORTAL



## THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

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**FRONT COVER:** Mud hoppers belonging to Land and Water Services being craned into the Cromford Canal at Whatstandwell in readiness for dredging operations. These will be filled with silt by a floating dredger, moved along the canal by a tug and emptied on to adjacent fields, where the silt will be ploughed in. This is incredible and extremely welcome news. It will mean the first commercial boat traffic on this stretch of canal for over 70 years. See also Rick Jillings' report on page 17.

Photo: Hugh Potter

**BACK COVER:** Work Party organiser Dave Tinkler, having uncovered the original Cromford 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and Langley 12 milestone whilst assisting the Derbyshire County Council Rangers to clear trees and undergrowth from the offside bank. This length of canal has been transformed. See pages 8-10 and 14.

Photo: Ron Amner

## 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.33

Val and I have been somewhat under pressure recently producing the new Walker's Guide, but this is now at the printers. We are also trying to get the boat ready for a fairly long trip and at the same time I have been preparing this issue of *The Portal*.

All of the FCC committee are as usual working away to further our cause. This applies especially to our chairman Pat Morriss who is now very involved in the political aspects of the campaign. As well as being vice chair of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Partnership, he is one of the main players in the new Cromford Canal Partnership. This is now starting to show considerable benefits. See Pat's report.

Having walked the length of the canal recently, I can say that things are also improving on the ground. Dave Tinkler's work parties have certainly made an impression both on the Codnor Park locks and at Sawmills. The greatest improvement, however is in the length above Ambergate. The number of trees which have been felled along the banks by Derbyshire County Council, assisted by the FCC, is really impressive, completely changing the views from the towpath, which is also being resurfaced. See page 14.

The most amazing news of all though, is that **the canal at Whatstandwell is about to be dredged**. This will involve a floating dredger and the silt being moved along the canal using a tug and hopper. Should be worth seeing. See front cover and page 17.

**Please note the press date for the Summer 2010 edition will be July 4th**

### A SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH ON THE CANAL

Following this winter's severe weather, a new idea to take some of the traffic from the busy A6 between Ambergate and Cromford has been proposed. A spokesman said that, although this plan had good potential, some minor local difficulties had been experienced with the initial trials. It is hoped these will be resolved by the first of April.





## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

by Patrick Morriss



It is mid march and it does not seem many weeks since I was writing the last lot of Chairman's notes. About this time of year, the FCC normally face an embargo on our working parties due to the effect these might have on nesting birds and other ecologically sensitive items that start to come back to life with the approach of Spring. Not wanting to sound like the letters page of The Times, but it is only today that I have seen a daffodil in flower in the wild as opposed to gardens etc. To me this means that Spring must be about four weeks later than what we now think of as normal. If it is that time of year, it must be time to consider the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Cromford Canal. This year it will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 19th April at Ironville Church Hall. Please do try and come along if possible. The AGM does not last that long and afterwards Hugh Potter will be showing highlights of the late Frank Nixon's collection of images of the canal, mostly in colour, taken before he published his book 'The Industrial Archaeology of Derbyshire' in the mid to late 1960s. This was just when the major damage to the canal at Ambergate due to the construction of the 'gas plant' by what was then East Midlands Gas Board and at Bullbridge due to the demolition of the Bullbridge aqueduct by Derbyshire County Council took place. How times change, the second meeting of the Cromford Canal Partnership is due to take place on 22nd March and by the time members read this, hopefully more progress will have been achieved.

Although not yet subject to a public fanfare, Derbyshire County Council have allocated £75,000 towards a full feasibility study for the whole of the Cromford Canal in their 2010-11 budget for the forthcoming financial year. The 'mechanism' for this has yet to be established, but the FCC will seek to use the study to answer as many questions as possible relating to the full restoration of the canal, seeking to reduce areas of uncertainty and attempt to quantify unknowns such as the Butterley Tunnel. If agreement can be reached over funding, the FCC intend to make a major financial contribution to this study as well. It would be wrong of us to appear with our 'wish list' and not expect to contribute towards the cost. As Chairman of the FCC, I can only hope that other stakeholders in this study will be equally obliging in backing their 'wish list' with hard cash. We will of course be making available all the studies undertaken to date which have been commissioned by the FCC on various aspects of the canal for verification and inclusion in this feasibility study to hopefully reduce the overall cost.

Given the current financial situation, the inclusion of such an amount in the next financial year's budget reflects admirably on those involved and the FCC look forward to playing an active part in the commissioning, preparation and dissemination of the feasibility study. Interesting times lie ahead.

It never ceases to amaze me where reference to the Cromford Canal appears. In the current Mid Derbyshire Badger Group Newsletter is an article that mentions a badger



sett that used to exist not far from where the A610 embankment now crosses the canal. In the days before this embankment and the A38 were built it was possible to use the over tunnel path and the towpath as a short cut on a bicycle to get from sailing lessons on Butterley Reservoir to home. During the spring and autumn when these journeys were undertaken in conditions of less than ideal visibility. The shock of meeting a grunting badger, head down trotting along the towpath was quite major. Then as now badgers did not 'give way'. They may come off worse when hit with a motorcar, but my money would have been on the boar badger if I had ever hit one on my bike, not that I ever did! The sight of them digging out wasps' nests on the towpath, oblivious to any stings, was a sight to remember. Fortunately the canal is in a cutting here, on other canals poor old Brock has been accused of causing bank collapses and canal breaches. I must remember not to use the expression 'to badger' when I am driving home points in some of the many meetings the FCC committee seem to have these days. All done as a charitable gesture of course, but none the less for that. If you will excuse the possible sexism which was politically correct at the time, one volunteer is worth ten pressed men!

In terms of other news, negotiations continue with UK Coal over the possible acquisition of the part of their Smotherly site required for a new Pinxton Canal. It puts things into perspective when you think that we have been negotiating with all concerned now for longer than it took for the canal to be built in the first place!

I would also like to thank the residents of Bullbridge and Sawmills who have been very active on 'their' stretch of canal both with and without FCC support. Currently all concerned are trying to persuade the landowner of the gas depot site at Ambergate to allow a rather more user friendly footpath to be created rather than the tortuous diversion around the site that is totally inaccessible to any user on wheels, especially so the disabled. So far to no avail, but watch this space as they say.

Time to stop typing now, looking up from the keyboard I see that France have beaten England at 'proper' football and won the grand slam. Now that has put a damper on the whole evening. See you all at the AGM!

## **KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN**

### **A Plea from the Committee**

Whilst you are out and about on the canal you can help the FCC campaign greatly by telling us of any relevant developments that you notice. Don't assume that we will already know about them! In theory FCC should be advised of any planning applications impinging on the route of the canal, but the system is not foolproof and some slip through.

So if you see one of those familiar planning application notices near the canal please advise us, quoting the reference number. You may also spot footpath diversion notices and the same applies.

Finally, if you notice problems on the public footpaths along our canal, such as fallen trees, these are swiftly and efficiently dealt with by Derbyshire County Council, provided that they are advised about them. You can contact them directly with location (preferably grid reference) and details of the problem on Call Derbyshire:

**08456 058058 or [contact.centre@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:contact.centre@derbyshire.gov.uk)**

or you can tell any committee member and we will pass the information on.



## FORTHCOMING MEMBERS' SOCIAL MEETINGS

The following are the members' meetings which have been arranged for 2010  
All held on the **Third Monday of the Month at Ironville Church Hall at 7.30pm**

- **April 19th - Annual General Meeting.** This is to remind you of the date of our AGM. Full details were in the last issue. After the formal business, Hugh Potter will be giving a presentation of colour slides of the Cromford Canal from the 1950s and 60s.

- **May 17th** - Brian Naylor. 'The Restoration of Heage Windmill'.

- **June 21st** - Liam D'Arcy Brown. 'Grand Canal of China.' Liam is a China-watcher and travel writer. In 2006 he became the first Westerner in over 200 years to travel the entire length of the Grand Canal of China, the world's longest and oldest man-made waterway. An illustrated talk on the fabric and history of the canal and the people who live and work upon it. The book of his journey to uncover this amazing feat of engineering— *The Emperor's River; Travels to the heart of a Resurgent China* will be available for anyone who wants to learn more about it.

- **Sept 20th** - Adrian Farmer. 'Belper Boating Association and River Gardens.' How the water management round the mills at Belper led to the creation of the unique gardens and boating association.

- **Oct 18th** - Our Vice Chairman Mike Kelley. 'The Hidden Events of 1066.' Taking the audience through events from Christmas day 1065 to Christmas day 1066.

- **Nov 15th** - Barry Joyce. 'Rock House.' Richard Arkwright's house.

All of the above meetings will also be attended by the FCC sales stall, which has an ever increasing variety of goods for sale. Do come along and enjoy the meetings, support the FCC stall and save on postage at the same time.

The sales team will also be attending a number of other events throughout the year. Details of those arranged so far are as follows:

- **April 24th** - Jacksdale Heritage Gathering at the Oakes Suite Jacksdale Welfare.

- **June 12th** - Pinxton Fun Day. The stall will be outside Pinxton Village Hall.

- **June 19th & 20th** - Cromford Celebration. This event will involve the whole village and the FCC stall will be at Cromford Wharf.

- **July 10th** - Ambergate Carnival. See [www.ambergatecarnival.org.uk](http://www.ambergatecarnival.org.uk)

- **July 17th & 18th** - Chesterfield Canal Festival. This is a large outdoor event at Worksop Rugby Club adjacent to part of the restored section of the Chesterfield Canal.

- **July 31st & August 1st** - Cromford Steam Rally. A popular annual event with many interesting stalls as well as all types of road vehicles at Brackenfield.

- **August 11th** - Ashover Show held at Rectory Fields, Ashover (to be confirmed).

- **August 28th-30th (Bank Holiday)** - One of the Leewood Pump Steaming Weekends. FCC stall at Cromford Wharf.

- **September 12th** - Brinsley Headstocks. An interesting outdoor event.

- **September 26th** - Smotherly Sunday. An FCC sponsored walk from Langley Mill to Pinxton. The stall will meet the walkers at the end of the walk outside the Boat Inn.

- **October 2nd & 3rd** - Another Leewood Pump Steaming Weekend, with the stall at Cromford Wharf.

- **October 30th & 31st** - World Heritage Weekend at Cromford Wharf. One of our most important events of the year. The stall will be in the Gothic Warehouse.



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

from Mike Kelley



• **Winter** - As you will see below, we are a very active society. Without exception your committee have all worked very hard toward our goal of restoring the Cromford Canal, but none more so than our Chairman, Pat Morriss. We owe him a debt of gratitude for the considerable amount of time he gives to the FCC.

As reported in the last edition, the 'Method Statement' required for operations on the Smotherfly site was completed by SLR Consulting. This looks at the protection of the Smotherfly and Pinxton Wharf site's ecology during its planned development. SLR have now also carried out the 'Management Plan' for the protection of site ecology during development, and the 'Landscaping Detail' of this site, which requires how each area of the development will be planted and what with.

All this has cost us several thousands of pounds, but this is all part of the requirements of the planning conditions. The good news is, all planning conditions are now being met.

We have also had several meetings with a UK-Coal intermediary to look at the possibility to lease, rent or buy the site. This is taking some time to resolve.

- **Monday 11th January** - Our regular monthly full committee meeting, held at the Poet and Castle, Codnor.
- **Monday 18th January** - Our monthly social evening at Ironville Church Hall had a wonderful talk by Andy Pollock, a ranger from Derbyshire County Council (DCC). This entertaining talk was called, 'The Cromford and High Peak Railway – The Railway that thought it was a Canal.'
- **Wednesday 20th January** - Pat Morriss attended Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Partnership meeting at the Silk Mill Derby. Then in the evening he delivered a talk to Swanwick WI. 40+ in attendance £25 raised for FCC funds.
- **Wednesday 27th January** - Pat Morriss had a meeting with DCC regarding the Cromford Canal feasibility study, then in the evening he attended a Cabinet Meeting at Ripley Town Hall regarding the demolition of Butterley Company.
- **Sunday 31st January** - Our sales team had a charity stand at Morrison's, Belper. Over £105 was raised.
- **Monday 1st February** - Pat Morriss attended a Planning Committee Meeting at Ripley Town Hall regarding the Golden Valley Project.
- **Wednesday 3rd February** - Pat Morriss gave a talk to Allestree Local Studies Group. 50+ in attendance with £30 raised for FCC.
- **Monday 8th February** - Our regular monthly full committee meeting, held at the Poet and Castle, Codnor.



• **Tuesday 9th February** - Pat Morriss had a meeting with ECS Engineering at Pinxton regarding corporate support for FCC/Smotherfly. Then in the evening he had a meeting to consider Derwent Valley 'Discovery Days' 2010.

• **Wednesday 10th February** - I gave a talk on the canal to the Littlelover Women's Institute Group. £20 was raised.

• **Thursday 11th February** - Pat Morriss had a meeting with an ex DCC Councillor regarding archive material for FCC.

• **Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th February** - Work party held at lock 6, Ironville. Our work party leader, David Tinkler said, 'A great deal of work was achieved.'

• **Monday 15th February** - Our monthly social evening at Ironville Church Hall. George Jones gave us an imaginative talk on the wonderful possibilities for the future of the Cromford Canal. Our sales team raised over £78 at this event.

• **Monday 22nd February** - Pat Morriss had a meeting with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust regarding Erewash Meadows and Ironville Lock Flight.

• **Saturday 27th February** - A site meeting with Steve Mulholland, a new volunteer regarding the Butterley Site & Butterley Tunnel. Interesting possibilities of boat trips through the tunnel with passengers returning by steam train were discussed. John Boucher, Hugh Potter, Pat Morriss, Mike Harrison and myself attended. *[This included Steve giving us a tour of the West Shed at the Midland Railway Centre - well worth seeing - Ed.]*

• **Wednesday 3rd March** - A meeting was held with an agent of UK-Coal concerning the Smotherfly site. Pat Morriss, Mike Kelley and John Boucher in attendance.

• **Thursday 4th March** - Follow on meeting with ECS Engineering Pinxton regarding corporate support for FCC/Smotherfly. John Boucher and Pat Morriss in attendance.

• **Friday 5th March** - I gave a talk on the canal to the Stroke Victims Group of Ripley

• **Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th March** - A work party on the canal, this time with some of the DCC wardens at Whatstandwell.

• **Sunday 7th March** - Pat Morriss attended a meeting of Northern Canals Association at Foxton.

• **Monday 8th March** - Our regular monthly full committee meeting, held at the Poet and Castle, Codnor.

• **Monday 8th March** - Pat Morriss gave an evening talk to the North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society at Chesterfield. £30 was raised for FCC funds.

• **Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th March** - Our sales group held a charity stand at Morrison's in Eastwood. Over £268 was raised.

• **Wednesday 10th March** - Pat Morriss attended a meeting of the Derwent Valley Mills Partnership Technical Panel at Matlock, then in the evening delivered a talk to the Ashbourne Section of the Royal Observer Corps Association. This will be followed by a visit to the canal on 12th May.

• **Friday 12th March** - John Boucher and myself attended the offices of our ecologists in Nottingham to discuss the landscaping of Smotherfly.

• **Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th March** - A work party on the canal, on the Ironville locks. The volunteers were cutting down and burning trees and bushes that are badly damaging the canal banks.

• **Monday 15th March** - Our monthly social evening at Ironville Church Hall. This time we had a very informative talk by Tony Brookes on the Midget Submarine Attack on the Tirpitz.

• **Thursday 18th March** - A second meeting was held with an agent of UK-Coal concerning the Smotherfly site. Pat Morriss, John Boucher and myself in attendance.





## WORK PARTY REPORT

from Dave Tinkler



Well that's another winter season of work parties completed. I would like to thank all of you who volunteered, even when it was cold, and joined us in our endeavour to re-open the Cromford Canal. We have now stopped felling trees and clearing brush so as to let Mother Nature have her fling. Perhaps now is a good time to look back on what we might call the last work party season.

We have made several visits to the flight of locks at Ironville. Our work is restricted to the Derbyshire Wild Life Trust section, ie. the lower part of the flight below the main line railway bridge. Some pictures from our last visit there are shown below. So why don't you, over the summer, have a walk along that stretch and see what we have achieved.



Plenty of scope for the pyromaniacs amongst you.  
Photos: Jan Colombo





A big thanks to Derbyshire County Council Rangers for letting us assist them with work parties on the stretch of canal between Cromford and Ambergate. Our last visit to this very attractive section was at Robin Hood and, thanks to the kind hospitality of David Spray, we were able to enjoy our lunch break on the terrace of his attractive house, formerly a sawmill and now offering bed and breakfast, overlooking the canal. See below.



Above: Tea on the terrace.  
Below: Contemplating  
branching out into the  
timber business.  
Photos: Ron Amner





Above: Dave is addressing the inspection party.  
Below: Another Dave is getting on with the serious jungle bashing.  
Photos: Ron Amner



Another thing which made this work party more interesting was the discovery of one of the original canal milestones which had been lost in the undergrowth for many years. This indicates 2½ miles from Cromford and 12 miles from Langley. See back cover.

With over 800 members I would have liked to see more of you at the work parties. In the near future we will need to rebuild the locks and other infrastructure. This will need someone who has the knowhow and skills to achieve these tasks. I do not have these skills so I would willingly step down so someone can step in and we can move forward.

If you are that person then come forward and let's get the Cromford Canal reopened. I look forward to the day when boats can once again sail all the way to Cromford Wharf as I'm sure do all of you. So let's make an effort and if you are capable and local to attend the work parties then come and join us. We need **your** help.



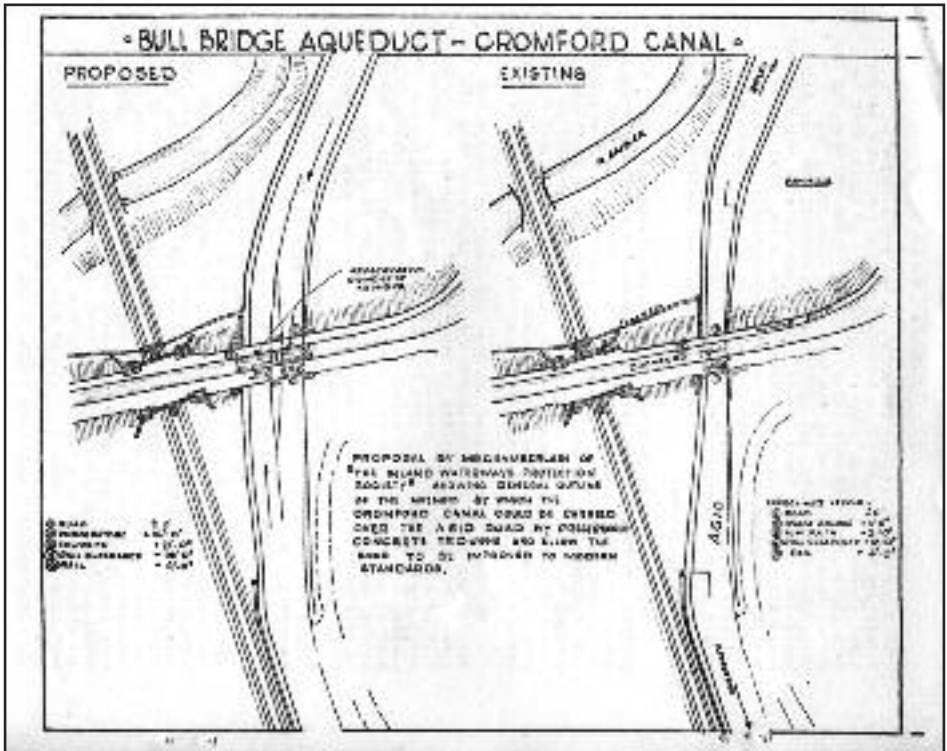
# THE DEMISE OF BULLBRIDGE AQUEDUCT

A friend of mine has recently been looking through some copies of *Navigation*, which was the magazine of the Inland Waterways Association Midlands Branch, dating from the 1960s. There are two articles by the late Royston V F Torrington who was an IWA stalwart for many years and, among many other things, a big supporter of the Cromford Canal. These relate to the efforts to save Bullbridge Aqueduct and are reproduced below:

## *Navigation* July 1965

Yet another sacrifice to the ubiquitous motor car – It is learned that proposals are well under way by the Derbyshire County Council to demolish the remarkably fine canal aqueduct which carried the Cromford Canal over the Ambergate – Ripley road. The reason? At present road vehicles have to wait a minute or so at traffic lights, so, despite the tremendous amenity potential of this lovely canal, the Philistines at Matlock say knock it down – “nothing must interfere with the precious motor vehicle.”

On the face of it, perhaps you agree with the decision to sacrifice yet another canal if it holds up traffic. But wait – in this case there is an alternative. A scheme was, we believe, put before the County Council by the Inland Waterways Protection Society which was a practical engineering solution. [See plan below - Ed.] This preserved the canal whilst eliminating the bottleneck caused by the restricted dimensions of the arch. Had this practical scheme been considered by the pundits at Matlock, then the water supply to the canal from the Butterley Reservoir would have been assured, and one of the loveliest stretches of canal in the country could have been developed for amenity. The





length from Bullbridge to Cromford, now largely dewatered, should be preserved if only for its potential as a scenic attraction in the midst of the ever increasing concrete and tarmac rash creeping over the fair County of Derbyshire. It is not too late. We have had the compliment paid to us before that we are a pressure group. Perhaps this is now the time for some pressure to be applied to the powers that be, in order to make them think again and, why not a Restoration Scheme to provide an oasis, a haven of quiet away from the milling traffic of the A6?

It is up to you. If you live in Derbyshire, let your local councillor know. If you live elsewhere, a letter to the County Council will only take a few minutes. If we can do this we may yet be able to avert yet another unnecessary sacrifice in the name of so-called "progress".

Note: Visitors to Derbyshire should not miss the finest walk in the county. From Whatstandwell, leaving the A6 alongside the bridge and turning off the Holloway road on to the towpath at the canal bridge, the walk of about 4 miles includes a short tunnel, with towpath, and the wonderful single arch Derwent Aqueduct, followed by the engine house, still containing its fine beam engine, which pumped water from the river into the canal. Opposite are the wharves at the foot of Sheep Pasture Incline of the Cromford and High Peak Railway, which once linked the Cromford and Peak Forest Canals. The walk terminates at the Cromford Wharf, where transport can be obtained back to Whatstandwell. This walk will convince anyone of the value of this canal as a scenic attraction. Why not try it?

### **Navigation September 1965**

In the last issue of *Navigation*, a report was published of the proposal by Derbyshire County Council to demolish the aqueduct over the Ambergate to Ripley road at Bullbridge. Since this article appeared, a busy correspondence has been carried on in the local press by this Association, and also by Mrs B. Bunker of the Inland Waterways Protection Society, whose admirable scheme for the retention of the aqueduct was illustrated in our last issue.

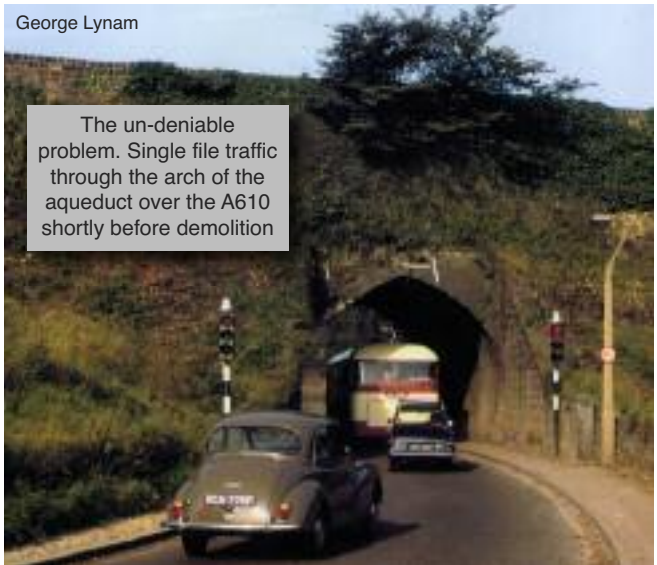
We have now heard that the Highways Committee of the Derbyshire County Council have refused to reconsider their original scheme to demolish the aqueduct, and that they propose to blow it up during the winter.

The branch committee feel that the possibility of forming a restoration committee should be explored, so that the length of canal from Cromford to Ambergate and Bullbridge could be reinstated in co-operation with British Waterways to provide an area for boating, fishing, rambling

etc. If the County Council are really interested in preserving the countryside for which they are responsible, then possibly they may be persuaded to follow the example of other councils whose outlook is apparently much more enlightened, and to lend practical help in this project. We understand that several Parish Councils in the area would welcome the restoration of this lovely

George Lynam

The un-deniable problem. Single file traffic through the arch of the aqueduct over the A610 shortly before demolition





canal, and that there is sympathy in the Urban District Council for the area. We now need IWA members to back up the committee in forming a nucleus of enthusiasts who will prepare the way for a scheme of restoration. If you are seriously interested in this project, and would like to know more of our plans, will you take the trouble to let the general secretary, Mrs Statham have your name and address.

The canal was "Closed to Navigation", not abandoned, by the 1944 Act, and there is nothing seriously wrong with the canal. After all it was built by Jessop, and contains some magnificent examples of his work. For instance, the massive single arch aqueduct spanning the Derwent, near Lea, and the equally beautifully proportioned engine house nearby, with its great beam engine. Is all this to be destroyed in the so called name of progress? Nearby is the well known Tramway Museum, where volunteers are doing great work; are we, whose interest lies in waterways, less able to tackle formidable jobs? I think not. Thousands of visitors come to the museum from all over the country each year. Why not make it possible for them to combine their visit with one to the restored and lovely Cromford Canal, winding through scenery more lovely than can be found anywhere else on the canal system, and I make that last statement having travelled over most canal routes, both open and closed!

The rest of this story, as they say, is history. Although there was a stay of execution until 1968, the part of the Bullbridge Aqueduct over the A610 and the adjoining main line railway was in fact demolished. The picture on the right shows its final moments.



However, we must of course look forward rather than try to live in the past. A new aqueduct will be built at Bullbridge. This will probably be a steel trough along the lines of the picture below which has been produced by our own (Visionary) Val Roberts. Ideally, this could have been a very appropriate project for the Butterley Company.....

Editor





# NEWS FROM THE NORTH

## Cromford Canal - Cromford to Ambergate

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

Derbyshire County Council countryside staff have been working with FCC volunteers to remove many overhanging trees from the canal between Leashaw and Robin Hood near Whatstandwell.

Thanks to this work, the canal walls and wharves have once again been revealed and the extra light will benefit the woodland flowers. If you look across the canal you can now see a number of black and white cast iron boundary markers revealed on the far bank.

At Whatstandwell, FCC volunteers have helped to cut and clear tree growth. Trees cause damage to the retaining walls, they also shade the canal and their leaves choke the canal and reduce water quality. Further tree clearance has continued to the south of Whatstandwell this winter and trees have been felled from the footings of the Derwent aqueduct near High Peak Junction.



The tree clearance has opened up the view from the towpath across the railway, road and river.

Hugh Potter



Some of the last tree felling before the bird nesting season

Hugh Potter



Several stretches of collapsing retaining wall and boundary wall, as shown on the right, have also been rebuilt around Ambergate by Allroads, the County Highways team.

The canal towpath is being resurfaced by Allroads and the towpath will be closed between Ambergate and Crich Chase until late March. This is for public safety while dumpers, diggers and a paving machine are operating on the towpath.



To enable the machinery to get along the towpath, scaffold platforms have been built under Poyser's bridge and Gratton's bridge.



The first part of the new towpath surfacing to be completed, looking south from Poyser's Bridge. This will provide an improved surface for walkers, especially those with pushchairs or wheelchairs.



Scaffold platform to allow machines to pass under Gratton's Bridge





A graded ramp has been constructed off Chase Road at Ambergate, The picture on the right shows this under construction and the completed job is shown below. This replaces steps and will make access easier for all. This section of towpath has been designed to be suitable for pushchair and wheelchair users and will have passing places at regular intervals.



Hugh Potter



Rick Jillings



Scheduled monument consent has been sought from English Heritage to replace rotten timberwork on the High Peak Junction swing bridge. Scheduled monument and planning consents are also being sought for a scheme to provide better access by constructing a ramp to Leawood Pump, near High Peak Junction.

A video is being made to tell the story of Leawood Pump and this will hopefully be on show at High Peak Junction Visitor Centre in the summer.

Anyone who has walked between Whatstandwell and Crich Chase will have noticed that over the years the canal has become choked with silt and leaf litter.

Water depth is down to a few centimetres for much of this stretch and channel dredging is urgently needed to remove silt. This will benefit the ecology of the canal and also allow water to better flow through the canal. Land and Water, a company specialising in waterway management, will be dredging this section of canal (approximately 1.2km), from March 23rd through to mid April.

The canal is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Local Nature Reserve and is also a very important habitat for water voles. The method of work was drawn up following ecological advice and has been approved by Natural England.

The dredging work will take place in the central channel to leave an undisturbed area on each bank (approximately 2m wide). This will ensure that water vole burrows are not disturbed and that a reed fringe remains to provide both food and shelter.

The canal will not be drained, but an excavator will work in the middle of the canal and will load a small barge that will then be taken to an off loading point by a tug. The silt that is removed will be ploughed into fields next to the canal to create wild flower meadows.

The programme of tree management along with the silt removal will provide an improved wildlife habitat benefiting water voles, water fowl, bank side and aquatic plants and hopefully visitors' enjoyment of the canal.

The cast iron aqueduct carrying the canal over the railway is still drained of water pending repairs. Meanwhile the scaffolding footbridge carrying the towpath will remain in place. A design has been proposed to provide additional support for the trough and the towpath. The repair work will be co-ordinated through English Heritage and Network Rail, but the timescale for repair is still not known.

**For further information contact Middleton Top Visitor Centre on 01629 823204**



Spreading the first layer of stone on the towpath near Hays Wharf

Rick Jillings



## CODNOR PARK RAILWAY ACCIDENT

The photo reproduced below is one of two which were donated to the FCC at our sales stall at the National Waterways Festival at Red Hill in August. It shows a railway accident at Ironville and has proved of interest to railway folk as well!



The scene is the railway bridge carrying the Midland Railway over the Cromford Canal above Lock 5. The canal is perhaps a bit incidental but you can see one of the top gates and paddle gear of Lock 5 on the extreme left of the picture. Our Archivist Hugh Potter has done some research and obtained the following details kindly supplied by Peter Witts of Cheltenham via Glynn Waite:

*This accident occurred to the 1.00am Carlisle to St.Pancras train that was running through the trailing points at about 40-50 mph at Codnor Park Junction on 4th July 1877. The last two vehicles, a 1st class carriage and a brake van, derailed and became detached from the train. They ran along the ballast for about 140yds and then went down the embankment and turned over. The carriage next to them ran with one pair of wheels off the rails for 800 yds but righted itself at a crossing at Codnor Park station. The last passenger in the destroyed carriage had got out at Sheffield. One complained of injury in the next carriage and the guard, who had a very lucky escape, though injured, recovered. The train consisted of (behind loco) a brake van, Pullman sleeping car, three carriages and another van. There was no continuous brake. The Westinghouse brake was fitted to the engine tender and the two vans. Col. Hutchinson thought that the derailment was caused by a permanent way defect. The train had been ordered to be fitted with the Westinghouse continuous brake but was not ready in time. He thought that if fitted it would have mitigated the effect after the vehicles became derailed. In the foreground is the brake van that would appear to be the same as that shown in Midland Railway Carriages 2/365 that has the characteristic roof lights. As the destroyed carriage is stated to be first class this would appear to be a converted four wheel carriage (MRC 1/50).*

The picture opposite above shows the scene of the rail crash today, with the surroundings rather more overgrown but both pictures show the east side of the original stone railway bridge, albeit with a higher brick-built parapet in this modern view. When this



line was upgraded to four tracks in c.1900, the bridge was widened on the west side. The picture below shows this newer side, which was built of blue engineering bricks. This leads me to the answer to a curiosity which the observant towpath walker may notice on this side of the bridge. The corner of the bridge abutment carries an angle iron guard to protect it from the chafing of the horse boat tow lines. However, as can be seen below, in this case the familiar grooves cut in the guard by regular use are much too near the ground and on the wrong face of the angle! It is therefore obvious, Watson, that this angle was removed from the original abutment when the bridge was being widened and then refitted on the new one, but was fitted upside down! This was probably done deliberately to bring the unworn part of the angle into use. It is also proof of the considerable amount of boat traffic in the

sixty year period from the railway bridge being built to the line being widened. It also indicates that, judging by the small amount of wear on the top part of the guard, that boat traffic was much less after 1900, which of course was also the year that Butterley Tunnel was closed and the only boats past here would be those going up the Pinxton Branch.

Editor





## Reg Schofield 1929–2010

Professor Reg Schofield, author of *Benjamin Outram* (Merton Priory Press, 2000) and long-time enthusiast for the Cromford Canal, died in January. Born into a mining family, he won a place at Cambridge University to study engineering. He was involved with the planning of Corby New Town and later the M1, on which it is a family joke that he claimed responsibility for Watford Gap services!



He began a new career as a lecturer, first at Salford and then Ulster University, where he became Professor of Civil Engineering and President of the Northern Ireland Institute of Civil Engineers.

The Friends of the Cromford Canal are privileged that, as an amateur historian of engineering, he studied Benjamin Outram, which of course brought him into contact with our canal. He studied its early construction years in detail and was unfailingly generous in sharing his research and knowledge with me, as a novice archivist for the Friends.

He single-handedly transcribed the second volume of the hand-written Minutes of the Cromford Canal Company for us, and wrote a brief introduction. Having studied the first volume for his earlier research, he was keen to find out “what happened next” and we benefited greatly from his knowledge.

He was also generous in donating his copies of records from the House of Lords archives that he made during his research, relating to the passage of the Cromford Canal Bill through Parliament and the various objections to it.

He maintained his interest in the canal to the end, and we offer our sincere condolences to his family.

Hugh Potter

## CANAL FEATURE RECEIVES ATTENTION

Many of you will be familiar with the rather ugly water pipe which crosses the canal close to the swingbridge at High Peak Junction. The concrete posts and rusty metal brackets certainly detract from the general scene in what is after all a World Heritage Site. In recent weeks, the pipe had started leaking steadily into the canal, probably having been weakened by corrosion and burst by frost in the severe weather because the lagging has been falling off for some time. Severn Trent Water have sent a team to repair the pipe as shown in the picture. Derbyshire County Council are trying to persuade them that the time has come to divert the pipe under the canal and so protect it from further damage. From the FCC point of view, this would have the added benefit of removing a hazard to navigation for the horsedrawn boat. I suspect, however, that we shouldn't hold our breath. Another interesting point is, since the pipe provides navigable headroom, was it fitted when the canal was still in use? Advice please, Hugh.

Editor

Hugh Potter



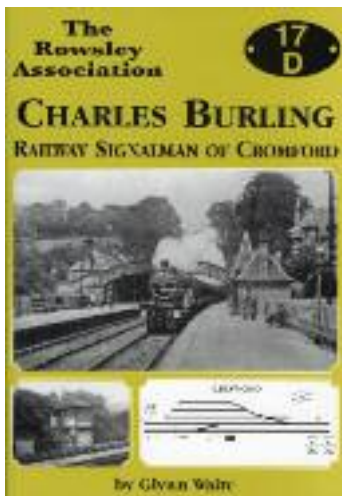
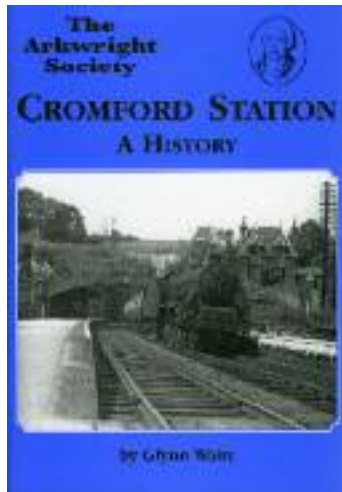


## BOOK REVIEWS

### Cromford Station, Arkwright and the Canal

The iconic terminus of the Cromford Canal could have been very different. At one time when the canal was being built, Richard Arkwright was campaigning for it to cross the meadows and follow the river to terminate near Cromford Bridge. Then, when the cumbersomely titled Manchester, Buxton, Matlock & Midland Junction Railway proposed its route from Stockport through Cromford to Ambergate in 1846, it planned that its Cromford station should be close to the canal, where the two run close together today. It agreed with Arkwright (a descendant of Sir Richard) that were it to purchase the canal (which it did not at the time, but was later to do in 1852) it would construct a new canal terminus near to the station within 6 months of the railway's opening. All the land lying between the new and old canal termini would then pass back to Arkwright, in exchange for some other land that the railway needed.

However, as was often the case in dealings with the Arkwrights, things did not turn out as expected, and we have the situation today with the original canal terminus and a station well away from the canal. There was also an agreement with Arkwright that a branch railway should be built between the station and the canal wharf. Of course this was never done, but the ever-astute Arkwright did get £1,000 compensation! All this and much more is told in the latest book by Glynn Waite entitled ***Cromford Station: A History*** (£11.99), published in commemoration of the recent restoration of the Station by the Arkwright Society.



The initial construction of the railway through the narrow gap between canal and river near Cromford caused the demolition of the temporary pump which supplied the canal with water from the Derwent. This had been installed after the failure of Cromford Sough owing to the construction of the lower Meerbrook Sough. It was replaced by the present Leawood Pump in 1849.

Further disruption to the canal took place later when the railway, which by then owned the canal, built Cromford Sidings in that narrow strip of land between river and canal. This is why, today, there is a lengthy, narrow, but neatly stone-lined, section when you walk between Cromford and Leawood. The railway 'moved' the river and pushed the canal into the hillside to squeeze in its sidings.

The full story of these is told in Glynn's other recent book ***Charles Burling, Railway Signaller of Cromford*** (£9.99).

Both books are available directly from Glynn Waite at 113 Green Oak Road, Totley, Sheffield S17 4FS (0114 236 4728) post free.

Hugh Potter



## ALISON UTTLEY AND THE CROMFORD CANAL

Among a box of secondhand books recently donated to the FCC Sales Department were several by Alison Uttley. I must admit that the name meant nothing to me, but they were immediately recognised by our archivist Hugh Potter as being of interest and potentially valuable. It seems that Alison Uttley, who lived in Cromford as a child, was a very popular author. The stories of her childhood memories, including various references to the canal, make delightful reading. Hugh has sent in the following details:

Alison Uttley (1884–1976) was born Alison Taylor at Castle Top Farm, which looks down onto the Derwent Valley and the Cromford Canal from the hills to the east. She was educated at the local school in Holloway and then at Lady Manners School in Bakewell, where she developed a love for science which culminated in a scholarship to Manchester University to read physics.

Later, having to support herself after her husband's early death, she began writing, and eventually wrote over a hundred books. The best known are her children's books such as *Little Grey Rabbit* and *Sam Pig*. She also wrote a series of country books, many of the stories in which were based on her childhood memories of the Cromford area. It is these that are of particular interest to the FCC.

The books contain many very nice illustrations by Charles F. Tunnicliffe. An example of these is included opposite, showing Leawood (or Aqueduct) Cottage. This appears in *Ambush Of Young Days*, an extract from which, describing the scene, is reproduced here:

*We returned home by the side of the lovely canal and river, where kingfishers flashed, and where we picked daffodils in the early spring. There, too, was a cottage which seemed enchanted to me, for it was built in the wood which dipped down to the water's edge, and the reflection of its ivy-covered walls lay in that tranquil stretch of green water, separated from us by a little swing bridge. Never had I seen a house so close to water, and associated it with a fairy tale.*

In 1984, Scarthin Books of Cromford [*that local bibliophile's paradise which is definitely not to be missed - Ed.*] republished the local stories in a new volume entitled:

### ***Our Village: Alison Uttley's Cromford***

and this is still available price £5.95. The book describes the village, its shops, barber, smithy, transport routes, and festivities, illustrated by some of the delightful drawings of Charles F. Tunnicliffe.

The Cromford Canal has its own chapter (republished from *Cuckoo in June*) in which Alison vividly recalls visits with her father to Cromford Wharf and the gaily painted boats (this would be before Butterley Tunnel finally closed in 1900 so there would still have been long-distance family boats arriving from the main canal system). She also recalls lead being loaded at the wharf at the end of the Lea (or Nightingale) Arm, and the way the horse was unhitched to pass through Gregory Tunnel (despite there being a towpath).

FCC has been donated five, mostly first edition, copies of Alison's books: *Cuckoo in June*, *Ambush of Young Days*, *Plowmen's Clocks*, *Wild Honey* and *Something for Nothing*. These are now highly collectable and FCC would like to raise as much money as possible by selling them. I knew they were valuable, but I must admit I was surprised to find an ex-library copy of *Cuckoo in June* for sale on AbeBooks for over £200! Any offers from any Friends for our almost pristine, non-library copies?







# THE BOWES REPORT

## Committee of Inquiry into Inland Waterways. Record of visits made by Mr. H. Leslie Bowes to the various canals

Archivist Hugh Potter has extracted part of the entry for **Sunday August 12th 1956** from the above, which is pertinent to our canal as follows:

...Thence to Trent Lock and entrance to the Erewash Canal. At Trent Lock there is a workshop where lock gates are made for the whole of the Southern section; I saw one which was practically completed - a very fine job in oak. There were some interesting machines, and one mortising machine was made to function for my benefit. This place has a small drydock, uncovered, which contained one craft about to be broken up. The Fisherman's Rest Inn is at this point, and on the opposite side of the river, a little lower down, is the entrance to the River Soar.

The Erewash Canal has a good flow of water and the Stanton Ironworks take considerable quantities of water from the Erewash Canal. We drove through the Stanton Ironworks and saw their slag works; in these works they use the slag resulting from their smelting operations for making pipes. Some of the slag has been used for filling in their own Canal branch [*the lower part of the Nutbrook Canal - Ed*] which we saw partly filled in and piped to carry water. Thence to Barker's Lock, Ilkeston. This is a lovely lock, like a swimming pool. We also saw another lock (Stenson's) in which the lockkeeper's cottage is much lower than the lock itself, although the reverse used to be the case. Mining subsidence is the answer, it having been necessary to raise the level of the lock as the subsidence took place.

Langley Mill. This is the top end of the Erewash Canal, which receives its water from the River Erewash by a feeder which passes under the road. It has recently been made to follow a modified course in consequence of some development scheme of the local Water Board, which cut across the former supply line. We saw the pipes corresponding to this development scheme.

Beggarlee Wharf, Cromford Canal. This is the extent of navigation of the Cromford Canal. We saw some derelict coal loading gear. The rest of the Canal is legally abandoned for navigation, but British Waterways have the obligation to keep it open for water supply to Butterley.

We saw the mouth of Butterley Tunnel, the tunnel itself having collapsed some time ago. The Canal is almost dry, and this is clearly a case of letting Nature take its course, or of filling it in to help Nature. It is suggested that Butterley Reservoir is no longer necessary to supply water to Butterley, and that Codnor Park suffices. What is the position about fishing rights?

A beautiful aqueduct [Old Bridge Aqueduct] crosses road, rail and river. We approached it through some rather lovely cottages and saw a derelict boat in the water. We also walked across the aqueduct, which is fully watered in this part, and the surrounding country is truly lovely.

Whatstandwell. Walked along reaches of the Cromford, the Derwent River flowing rapidly down below. We saw the consequences of a "blow-out" in the Robin Hood section, near a house which is stated to have a certain reputation [*! - Ed*]. This particular section of the Canal is without water.

Next to Lea Wood aqueduct, which is also very lovely, and the Nightingale Arm, or Lea Wood Arm. Visited the pumping station there, where a beam engine still works.

The Pinxton Arm (Pye Bridge), no longer navigable.

Moorgreen Reservoir. This is a very lovely Reservoir, with large numbers of coots. It supplies water for the Nottingham Canal - or rather, British Waterways have the right to impound water on this privately owned property. Then proceeded to Leicester, where spent the night at the Grand Hotel.



## WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP - 40 YEARS ON

As many of you will know, on several occasions since the FCC was formed we have benefitted from visits of the volunteers of the Waterway Recovery Group - WRG - always pronounced werg) to assist on various work parties. The recent press release from the Inland Waterways Association may be of interest and help to explain what it's all about.

### CANAL RESURGENCE: THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION'S WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

2010 is a special year for the Inland Waterways Association's Waterway Recovery Group (WRG). Established in 1970, it is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Canals have been brought back to life ever since the middle of the 20th century by local canal societies and trusts. But WRG brought something new to supplement these local initiatives. It acts as a co-ordinating force, providing equipment, expertise, publicity and labour to help local restoration schemes. Since it does not focus on individual projects, it can move around the country, giving a concerted push to restoration schemes that need it, providing skills and resources that would not otherwise be available.

Mike Palmer, the WRG chairman, said:

"I am proud to be associated with the WRG, and it has been a privilege to be its chairman for nearly 14 years. I cannot speak too highly of the volunteers who make it work. WRG has assisted so many schemes over the past 40 years that it is hard to pick out key achievements. They are all important as far I'm concerned. But examples that stick in my mind are the saving of the Peak Forest and Ashton canals from closure and successful restoration of the Kennet & Avon Canal. More recently WRG helped to restore the Barge Lock on the Droitwich Canals and the flight of Aston Locks on the Montgomery Canal.

Every year WRG runs over 20 week-long working holidays called 'Canal Camps' with the aim of restoring the derelict waterways of England and Wales. WRG is already planning its summer programme. It is celebrating its 40th anniversary with an exciting schedule of working holidays planned across the country from Newport, Wales to Chelmsford, Essex, to the Chesterfield, Derbyshire and all the way down to the Grand Western Canal in Devon and Somerset.

There are 23 Canal Camps running this year with volunteers undertaking projects such as the restoration of 'Steppingstone's Bridge' near Swindon on the Wilts & Berks Canal; the continuing excavation, restoration and rebuilding of Gough's Orchard Lock on the Cotswold Canals; the restoration of a leaky culvert on the Grantham Canal; as well as working alongside Essex Waterways team to maintain the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, by assisting with bank protection, painting, towpath clearance and repairs.

Volunteering with WRG is a unique opportunity. Participants can learn new skills to improve and widen their future employment opportunities, such as bricklaying, the use of lime mortar and using specialist excavation and construction machinery, as well as taking the chance to be part of the team that really make a huge difference to the waterways.

In these hard economic times volunteering is as important as ever to waterway restoration projects across the country. We need lots of volunteers in 2010 to ensure we get more waterways restored than would otherwise happen. WRG Canal Camps are a great experience for anyone who loves being in the outdoors and is interested in having fun whilst meeting people from all different backgrounds and countries. To ensure WRG carries on successfully for the next 40 years we need new volunteers now. It's easy. Go to our website to find out more ([www.wrg.org.uk](http://www.wrg.org.uk)) and sign up to be a 21st century canal navyy."



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

from Yvonne Shattower



Welcome again to all our Members. At long last the snow and cold winter weather seem to be on the wane, and the first signs of buds are appearing on the trees.

Thanks to the advertising efforts of John Barker, our Publicity Officer, we are seeing increased attendances at our Members meetings at Ironville, and this is most welcome. Not only do we get a chance to keep more of you up to date with our news, it is good to be able to put faces to some of the names I have on the Membership list. You will find a list of forthcoming talks elsewhere in this magazine, but the next one, on Monday 19 April, is one of the most important meetings of the year – our AGM, when you can come and hear about our successes in the past year and our hopes and plans for the future.

Can I ask members to return the yellow renewal form they are sent when they send a cheque or standing order form for their membership, or at least put an address or membership number on the back of a cheque. I have had one or two instances where I have had to use a bit of ingenuity to work out which cheque goes with who, and the yellow form does help me to keep track of it all. Thank you!

Amongst our boating members, our Sales Officer and Editor are planning to go boating this summer, and I am sure that we wish them a very successful cruise after all their frustrated preparations in earlier years. Have a great time, Mike and Val, and come back with lots of articles for future *Portals*.

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

Mr D C Tummon, Sheffield  
Mr & Mrs Walker, Nottingham  
Mr J Schwanzenbach, Lichfield  
Mr & Mrs Vane, Belper  
Mr & Mrs Roughton, Alfreton  
Mr R A Dring, Nottingham  
Mr J Shanley, Ilkeston

Mr P J Hurt, Belper  
Mr F Bark, Matlock  
Mr I Castledine, Ripley  
Miss J M Storer, Derby  
Mr W Granger, Nottingham  
Mr Wylie, Nottingham  
Mr P M Hussey, Alfreton

Also, Mr S Crapper, of ECS Engineering, Pinxton, who has joined as a Corporate Member.



# LEAWOOD PUMP OUTLET

by Ian Yates



At last the sun is shining and Easter approaches quickly, rather too quickly for comfort!

Work is progressing on the new pump sealing blocks. These have been made and fitted and now only need a final trim and shape and hopefully the pump can be reassembled. Once this has been completed, the lid can be put back on and the floor replaced. This work was delayed badly by the weather meaning the steaming season will start very quickly after putting the pump back together

The boilers have been checked and refilled with water and the boiler house tidied up.

A new flue door has been made by one of the volunteers and hopefully this will be fitted before the steaming. If not, the hole can be covered with some spare bricks until after Easter. With the delay, the proposed video of the pump in operation which I mentioned in the last issue will not now be possible before Easter so the repaired pump will be tested on the actual steaming, not before as hoped.

The County have removed the oak tree at the side of the entrance steps. This tree had unfortunately died and there was a concern for bits dropping off as it decayed. It has now been taken down and the resulting pile of wood is being removed to other areas of the site. It seemed a shame to remove it and there is rather a gap left but it was as good as dead so is safer out of the way.

The next notes will report on the pump and if our efforts have been successful and also if the interpretation video has actually been made.

## LEAWOOD PUMP STEAMING WEEKENDS 2010

The engine will be in motion from noon to 5.00pm on each of the following days.

MONTH	SAT	SUN	MON	PERIOD
APRIL		4th	5th	Easter
MAY		2nd	3rd	Bank Holiday
JUNE	5th	6th		First Weekend
JULY	3rd	4th		First Weekend
AUGUST	7th	8th		First Weekend
		29th	30th	Bank Holiday
OCTOBER	2nd	3rd		First Weekend
	30th	31st		Discovery Weekend

*[Remember that this impressive machine, capable of pumping over 40,000 tons of water per 24 hours into the canal, is maintained and operated entirely by volunteers. Ian and his colleagues would welcome your support. Ed.]*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

### Convenient (In)sanitary Arrangements

Dave Ratner's fascinating interpretation in the last issue of the photograph of men working in the canal by the Codnor Park Pottery mentioned "an overflow grid below lock 5" in a letter of June 20th 1907. What Dave does not mention is the purpose of the overflow grid, which the letter goes on to describe, and which I found gruesomely fascinating.

The overflow led to a culvert which ran "under the wash houses etc. of the row of cottages, subsequently coming into the Canal at the Tail Race of Lock 6". These would be the houses known as Limekiln Row. The letter then goes on to explain:

"It seems about 30 years ago the closets of these houses communicated directly with this culvert, and this pipe is said to have been put in for the purposes of flushing the night-soil out of the culvert into the Canal below, but some years ago a complaint was made to the Butterley Company, and earth closets were provided, the culvert now being used for drainage and slops from the back yards only." So now you know!

If you would like to be the first to 'unearth' such gems as these, I still have a large number of copy letters from the early years of the 20th century, digitally photographed, which are awaiting transcription. I have a loyal team beavering away at this, Dave being one of the star players, but there are plenty more to transcribe. If any other Friends fancy having a go at this, then please drop me an email.

Hugh Potter, Archivist, Friends of the Cromford Canal

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*I was once talking about lavatorial matters to the late Ike Argent, the well known former working boatman and a mine of local waterway knowledge. He said that the lock cottages on the Erewash Canal also had their closets discharging directly into the lock bywash culverts. I don't know if this was in fact the case, but it is certainly true that the bywash at Sandiacre Lock passes directly under the sole surviving lock cottage... Ed.*

Dear Sir

### Canal Milestones and Mileposts

I am writing on behalf of the Milestone Society, a small but vigorous organisation working hard to publicise, promote and raise public awareness of milestones and other way markers. We have so far concentrated on roadside stones, where we now have a very comprehensive database covering most of the country. The Society also works to represent the historical significance of milestones and posts. In addition, it can provide information about issues relating to protection, preservation and restoration of these historic artefacts

A number of our members are also canal enthusiasts and we are aware that there are many mile markers on several of our canals – often produced by the same companies that made the roadside posts. But there is relatively little information held by the Society about them and we would like to remedy this. So, I am inviting canal societies in particular, but individuals too, to let me know whether they hold a record of canal side milestones and posts, and - as I know is the case on the Chesterfield, Montgomery and Caldon Canals, for example - details of any projects they have undertaken or are planning to restore and replace mile markers along the length of their canals. A photo showing the type of mile marker would also be most welcome. Anyone wanting to send information can do so on:

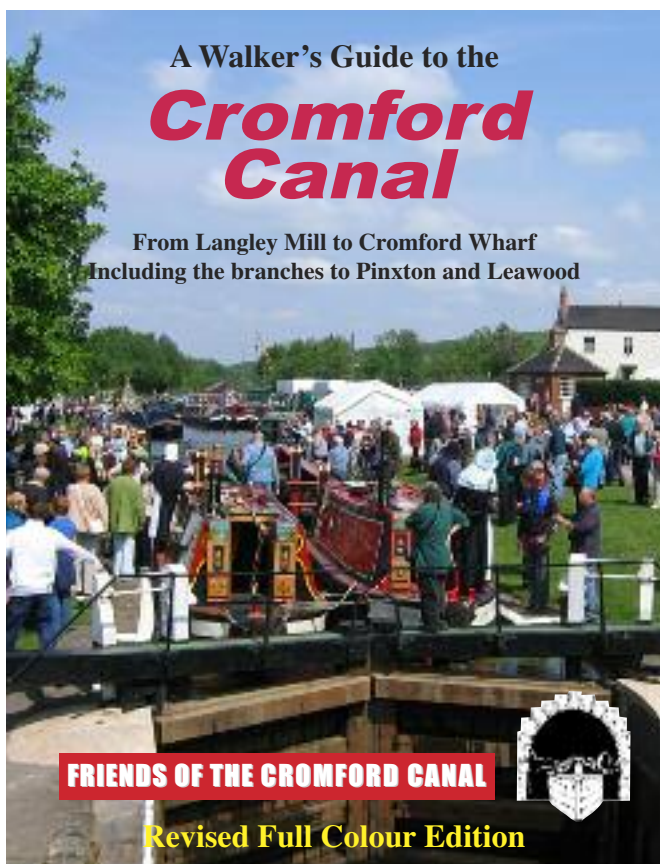
**canalmilestones@hotmail.com**

The same address can be used for enquires either about the work of the Milestone Society or issues relating to restoration, conservation and the like.

David Blackburn

# HOT FROM THE PRESS

A New Edition of our Popular Walking Guide to the Canal



Following the success of our first towpath guide  
which was published in the early days of

## **The Friends of the Cromford Canal**

we are pleased to announce that the new full colour revised version  
is now being printed  
priced at £4.50

Available from the sales stand at the Ironville meetings and other events  
or by post from the Sales Address. Add £1.00 p&p

