

THE PORTAL

Issue 82 - Autumn 2022

Price £1.00 - Free to Members



Friends of the Cromford Canal

Registered Charity No. 1164608

FRIENDS OF THE CROMFORD CANAL

The Officers

Chairman - David Martin

1 Lawrence Park, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5QZ
Email: chair@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 813310

Vice Chairman - John Barker

106 Main Road, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5GN
Email: vicechair@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 760358

Executive Secretary - Richard Handley

12 Holymoore road, Holymoorside, Chesterfield S42 7DX
Email: secretary@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 07831 550731

Acting Treasurer - John Barker

106 Main Road, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5GN
Email: treasurer@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 760358

Membership Secretary - Yvonne Shattower

264 Bennett Street, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 4JA
Email: membership@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01159 464479

Archivist - Hugh Potter

Bankfield, Chase Road, Ambergate, Belper DE56 2HA
Email: archivist@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 852009

Editor - Hugh Potter (Layout & Design - Keith Bailey)

Bankfield, Chase Road, Ambergate, Belper DE56 2HA
Email: editor@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 852009

FCC Sales

Weighbridge Office, Gothic Warehouse, Mill Road, Cromford, Derbyshire DE4 3RQ
Email: sales@cromfordcanal.org.uk

Social Secretary - David Martin

1 Lawrence Park, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5QZ
Email: chair@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 813310

Local Authority Liaison Officer - Steve Parish

26 Leamington Close, Warrington WA5 3PY
Email: steve.parish@cromfordcanal.org | **Phone:** 07909 001399

Webmaster

Email: webmaster@cromfordcanal.org.uk

Work Party Organiser - John Barker

106 Main Road, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5GN
Email: work@cromfordcanal.org.uk | **Phone:** 01773 760358

CONTENTS

Contents	3
Editorial	4
Chairman's Notes	5
Membership Matters	8
A message from our President	9
John Baylis 1940-2022	10
Work Party Report	12
Summer Drought	16
On The Final Straight	18
FCC Trading Update	22
New Housing at Ironville?	23
Why I Volunteer	24
Another Leawood Mystery	26
Letters and Follow-ups	28
Welsh Connections?	29
The End of a Family Tree	30
Respect in Pinxton	30
Canal Inn, Bullbridge	31
Bullbridge Swing Bridge Move	32
Autumn Events	34

Front Cover

John Baylis proudly demonstrates one of the the 3:1 reduction ground paddles that he rebuilt and installed at Langley Bridge Lock 14 of the Cromford Canal.

Back Cover

Top: This atmospheric painting of the Cromford Canal south of Aqueduct Cottage is by Carol Hill, who has kindly given us permission to reproduce it. Carol says: "I have been painting the canal for years, as I live in Matlock and walk the canal during all seasons and different times of the day."

Bottom: Talking of different times of day, this is Steve Freeman's almost magical shot of sunrise lighting Gregory Tunnel in August.

The copy date for the next issue is 18th November 2022

President – Brian Blessed

Patron – Julian Richards

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

By Hugh Potter

We are privileged to have had the knowledge, help and leadership of one of the 'waterway greats' to unflinching help us through our first two decades. We benefited so much not only from John Baylis's intimate knowledge of procedures and processes, so necessary to a charity, but also from his practical expertise, whether it was cutting a hole in the top of the toilet holding tank and refitting it, putting in stop planks, placing rubber fendering for *Birdswood's* winding hole, measuring her hull thickness or supervising her craning out. From the back of his battered red VW Polo came the most remarkable array of equipment, and even more was carried in the trailer. He always had the right tool for the job.

Several articles in this issue allude to the value of our volunteers, which I wholly endorse, but what struck me most was the positive effect that volunteering has on the volunteers themselves (see page 24). How heartening that you can give enjoyment and pleasure to others whilst equally benefitting yourself. I suppose, in truth, that is why we all do it. But it is a definite 'win-win'. Perhaps you might consider joining one of our happy gangs?

Send us a photo . . .

In this issue, you will see several excellent photographs – and a painting – which have been sent in. The editor cannot be everywhere all the time so your photographs are important to create an overall impression of our wonderful canal to all our readers, and to keep them up to date on any changes. Many readers post on Facebook and if I see something that catches my eye, then I will get in touch and ask if we can use it. But if you think you have a shot of something dramatic,



The Editor at the tiller in the rain! Thanks to stalwart volunteer John Guyler for taking the photo in a break from his work party!

unusual or newsworthy then please do email it to me at editor@cromfordcanal.org.uk at the full original size. Any images used will be credited and the copyright remains with the photographer. So please keep your images coming in and share your pleasure in our canal with others.

DCC Work

We recently reported on Derbyshire County Council's purchase of a 'Truxor' amphibious weed-cutter in these pages, but its arrival has been inexplicably delayed. We are now told that all being well it should arrive this winter and that consent has been given from Natural England to cut the weed from Brown's Bridge to Leewood. And boy, do we need it! We will all breathe a sigh of relief once that length has been restored to its earlier clearer state before problems with Brown's Bridge and Covid.

DCC also plan to cut the weed around Whatstandwell and Crich Chase Bridge areas. Other planned works include replacing/repairing the paddle opposite Aqueduct Cottage, towpath repairs to the supporting wall at Whatstandwell Bridge and further reed pulling where needed along the canal. **T**

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

By David Martin

John Baylis

These last three months have been extremely busy ones for the FCC and we have had some highs and some lows. Regrettably we had the funeral for our remarkable former chairman, latterly our executive secretary, John Baylis BEM, who has played a major role in restoring canals all over the Midlands. He was also a major contributor to the work of the Inland Waterways Association for many years.

A keen boater himself, he and Christine have spent many good times on holiday aboard their boat cruising the canals around the country, and John always got stuck in to help wherever he could. His engineering skills were still highly valued by many who knew him. Only the other year during the pandemic he put his mind to work on how to resolve the technical issues we had with the complicated propulsion system problems we had with *Birdswood* and I'm glad to say he fixed them.

He was a truly robust and individual personality; he always knew what he wanted to achieve from any given set of circumstances, and he will truly be missed by all who knew him, we can only be thankful now for all that he gave to this charity as one of its first four founder members. ►



John Baylis celebrated his 80th Birthday on the dumper at Langley Mill, with fellow volunteers Malc Chisnell, John Barker, Norman Cornwell and David Martin.



John Baylis directs operations at the first work on the Smotherfly site, work that was subsequently made impossible through the demise of UK Coal and its promised finance.

Thanks to Volunteers

On Saturday 16th July we held a thanksgiving buffet event for some of our wonderful volunteers down at the hidden gem of the Boat Inn, which is situated alongside the Cromford Canal just along from Pinxton Wharf. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff who provided us with a superb meal and excellent service. If you have not been there, you really should check it out.

It was great to see around thirty of our volunteers enjoying themselves on what was a gorgeous sunny summer afternoon. We don't very often get a chance to take any time out to just get to know each other and find out what's going on in everyone's lives and after the last two years it was just the ticket!

Meetings

At our Ironville social event in June we had a talk given by David Amos 'Coal in the Blood, 36 Years on', which was obviously meant for release in 2020 but the pandemic set it back by two years. The hall was full, with many questions being asked by the audience. David is coming back on 19th September with 'Tracks, Tramways, & Towpaths associated with the Cromford Canal', so if you fancy hearing that then come along to Ironville Church Hall – you'll be made most welcome.

Cromford Wharf to Gregory Tunnel

As I reported in the last *Portal*, we needed to take some silt core samples from the section of the canal where *Birdswood* runs so that we could be more informed of the contents of that silt, and this has now been done. The engineers will now discuss with Derbyshire County Council and Severn Trent as to how and to where we could potentially move it. Then of course we will need the agreement from the Environment Agency to carry out the final plan.

Interestingly, also along the top section, DCC have done a ground penetrating radar survey to ascertain where all the leaks are. We currently await their response on how and when they will be fixing them. ►



John Baylis 'on the job'. He earned the nickname 'Bogs Baylis' at IWA Festivals, and true to his name he fixed the complicated pump-out arrangement on Birdswood.



A good spread was laid on for volunteers at The Boat Inn.



Volunteers enjoyed the sociable get together outside the Boat Inn, with the canal maintained by the work party in the background.

Our engineer Chris Broome and two of his associates have now taken all the datum levels again and these will now be analysed and compared to the previous historical data sets to ascertain if there have been any movements in the levels of the canal and its towpath. After this we will be planning with our geotechnical advisors on a scheme to secure the stability of the section from Aqueduct Cottage through to Leashaw Farm, because we already know that we need to enhance the stability of the canal along certain parts of this section.

Funding

It has now been 6 months since we entered into a contract with our fundraising consultants Marsha Miles Consultancy and we have had some small successes in receiving funding from four applications raising us an extra £13,250 which has already been earmarked for separate and pre-set projects. As we move into the next half of their first year with us we hope to be more successful in attracting more substantial core funding for the employment of a project manager for the Beggarlee Extension.



The pleasant canalside location of the Boat Inn attracts many customers, who also visit for the excellent food.

Beggarlee Extension

We are still waiting for responses from some of the statutory consultees to our current submissions to Amber Valley's planning department around our pre-commencement planning conditions. It's a long and hard road with some of them; you just have to keep banging the drum! As for the nitty gritty around actually starting the work down at Beggarlee, DCC have in principle agreed to our amended plans and drainage diversions around the flood mitigation zone and we now have to just go through the statutory council processes to get the licence we need to start those works.

Finally as ever we are always on the lookout for willing volunteers. Even if it's for only couple of hours a month you will always be made welcome and we have a wide and varied choice of roles. You can get in touch at: [volunteer@cromfordcanal.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@ cromfordcanal.org.uk) - we'd love you to get involved! **T**

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Yvonne Shattower

I do hope you have not all melted during the recent heat wave. The forecast today is for very welcome rain which will hopefully cool us all down.

We were all devastated to hear of the death of John Baylis recently. John was a founder member of the Friends of the Cromford Canal, and held the fort for us in most roles at one time or another. He will be very sadly missed not only by us, but throughout the whole waterway system. Canal restoration was one of his '*raisons d'être*' and it is no exaggeration to say that there are stretches of canals in England and Wales which are now in water thanks to his efforts. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife, Christine, and his wider family.

The change from Standing Order to Direct Debit is still continuing, and we hope to get more of you to change in the coming months. With the last edition of *Portal* we asked members who were still underpaying their subscription amount to update their payments; sadly several have not replied so will no longer be receiving the magazine, so if you want to keep up with all our activities and work on this lovely canal do make sure your standing order is for the correct amount: £12 for single and £20 for joint membership. I have tried to email several of the people concerned, but find that the address no longer exists, so please do keep me up to date with your contact details.

I understand that one or two members have been confused by the appearance of a payment of £12 or £20 from their account to a company called 'GoCardless' and have cancelled this payment; 'GoCardless' is the company that collects the Direct Debit for us,



and if you have any queries you can check on their web site and clicking on 'get in touch' where you can identify the payment.

The very hot weather in the last few weeks has brought problems to many of the canals, but we seem to be fortunate and although the level at Cromford is down, *Birdswood*

has still been able to continue cruising. The shop at Cromford is doing very well, with more stock arriving on a regular basis, and new items appearing. Keep a look out for our Christmas card sale. (Yes, I know it is only August, but Christmas is not far off!). See inside back cover for details.

It will be good to get back to seeing many of you at Ironville in September when we will have David Amos speaking to us again on Monday 19th. David gave us a very entertaining talk in June; this time he will be telling us about local 'Tracks, Tramways and Towpaths'. On 17th October we will have Maureen Taylor telling us about Codnor Castle and the de Grey family – a really local topic.

On 21st November we will have the great pleasure of welcoming back Mick Golds. Mick has spoken to us on several occasions and his talks are always very informative and entertaining. This time he will be showing us pictures of the restoration by the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association of a short stretch of the Cromford Canal at Langley Mill many years ago now. All talks start at 7.30pm at the Ironville Church Hall. There is a bar and raffle as well as items from the shop for sale and tea/coffee available in the interval. We look forward to seeing you there. **T**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

By Brian Blessed

Dear Friends of The Cromford Canal, forgive me for being out of touch! These have been tough times for us all. The pandemic has been a frightful experience for the entire nation. It must have badly affected your work on the canal which we would like to encourage people to support in whatever way they find possible in these times.

Friends, allow me to digress for a moment, and give you an insight into my family life. In 1975 during the filming of the series *The Boy Dominic* for Yorkshire Television, I met and fell in love with the renowned and beautiful actress Hildegard Neal. She was famous at the time for such parts as Cleopatra in *Anthony & Cleopatra*, the leading role of Kate in *England Made Me* and Roger Moore's wife in the film *The Man Who Haunted Himself*.

We were married in Woking, Surrey, and have lived in a quaint little abode in Bagshot. Both of us and our daughter Rosalind share a passionate love of animals. This "Noah's Ark" way of living has taken up every moment of our married life – we would be multi-millionaires by now if we had not devoted ourselves to these lovely furry creatures.

Hildegard's love of the great outdoors stems from the beaches and beauty spots of Cape Town, South Africa, where she was born. She adores the British countryside. Over the years we have explored the rivers Don and Trent, and past Normandy and New Holland to the far reaches of Grimsby, Hull and Spurn Head. Hildegard always swoons with delight when we visit picturesque Knaresborough. Our adventures have taken us along the river Nidd to enchanting Pateley, Loft House, Masham and Buckden Pike, finally resting with King Arthur, and



his knights, at historic Richmond. Oh, My friends we have delighted in the countryside of Penistone, Shipley, Bingley, Otley, and all those graceful, mystical abbeys. Every county, including beloved Derbyshire, of course, we have embraced with our hearts and souls.

Hildegard adores our canals. She has an unstinting passion for narrow boats. I must pause for a second and inform you that she has been dreadfully ill, but she is improving and gaining strength each day. Not Covid! No! Thank God, but cancer, which she developed about two years ago. Eventually she went into remission and is making a steady recovery. Unfortunately, after cancer she developed pneumonia; thankfully she made a total recovery and but now she is nursing a weakened heart from all the stress. With her delightful supervising nurse, she is making a fine recovery, and ultimately, she is hoping for a trip on a narrow boat. She is walking about half a mile a day. It won't be long before I take her up Everest!

We send our love and best wishes. You are achieving wonders! Many congratulations on your work! You are miraculous people!

You are *Nuli Secundi*: Second to None!

God's Speed

Brian Blessed

JOHN BAYLIS 1940–2022

The loss of John Baylis in July at the age of 82 leaves a huge void. A void not only for the Friends of the Cromford Canal but for the wider waterways world. A void that encompasses not only knowledge of waterway restoration, regulations, politics, procedures and finance but also contacts. John knew virtually everyone who has ever been connected to the East Midlands waterways over the last half century.

He was born in Mansfield in 1940 and educated at Brunts Grammar School, then worked in various roles for Boots at Nottingham until early retirement in 1994.

With his wife Christine he joined the Inland Waterways Association in 1969 after a holiday on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. In 1969 he also joined the committee of its North Midlands Branch and was harbour master of the Sheffield Rally in 1970. In 1972 they launched their first boat, a 36 foot 'Springer' which he fitted out, and cruised much of the Midland Canals network. A second boat followed in 1976. Their last boat, *Thornbury*, a Les Allen 60ft 'trad' with a Lister HR2 engine, was bought in 1981. Since then they have cruised most of the inland waterway network, much of it many times.

In 1974 he formed an IWA and Retford & Worksop Boat Club initiative to restore Morse Lock on the Chesterfield Canal and to build a winding hole above Worksop; this led to the creation of the Chesterfield Canal Society in 1976. British Waterways were opposed to this restoration and built a large piled winding hole below Morse Lock instead. After many years the Chesterfield Canal Society acquired money, convinced BW and local authorities and by 2005 the whole of the connected part of the canal was restored to Norwood Tunnel.

John joined the committee of Waterway Recovery Group with Graham Palmer and became a director when it was first formed. He was WRG Vice Chairman for some years under Alan Jervis, leader of WRG East Midlands and attended most of the WRG Big Digs.



Around the time of the formation of FCC, British Waterways were invited to visit the canal and offer advice. At Cromford Wharf on 7th March 2002 are (l to r) Howard Smith, Stewart Simm (BW), John Baylis, Val & Mike Kelley.

In 1975–6 John worked on the Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association clean-up of Ironville Locks on the Cromford Canal, driving a lorry and a JCB excavator. In 1979, at Graham Palmer's request, he took over the restoration of Frankton Locks on the Montgomery Canal; in this he was assisted by ECPDA, Trent & Mersey Canal Society and several WRG groups and canal camps. After travelling for thousands of miles to work parties by car and by boat, his boat was the first down the locks in 1987. He then started the restoration work at Aston Locks, passing this on to Mike Palmer after the completion of Lock 2.

In 1980 he was elected as Chairman of IWA East Midlands Region and a council member. After several years on the Navigation, Technical & Amenity Committee he became Chairman in 1990, a post which he held until 2001. During this time he was the lead contact between IWA and BW, was involved in the early discussions on the Boat Safety Scheme, and was a member of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency Safety Steering Committee set up after the ►

Marchioness disaster on the River Thames.

In 1994 John was an IWA representative on the Groundwork Trust initiative which resulted in the Binnie & Partners engineering feasibility study for restoration of the Cromford Canal between Langley Mill and Ironville. He was later involved in Groundwork Trust attempts to find funding to restore the locks through Ironville and advised the Midland Railway Museum at Butterley on dredging the section of canal from the Newlands Inn to Butterley Tunnel.

For many years since 1974 he was involved with IWA National Rallies on the installation of water and toilet systems, gaining the nickname of 'Bogs Baylis'. This was a role in which he subsequently helped with *Birdswood's* complex toilet system.

John continued running WRG East Midlands from the ECPDA/WRG workshop at Langley Mill, mostly on steel work for waterway groups, IWA Festivals and others. WRG EM are currently the main supplier of grappling hooks to CRT and canal societies. In 2008–9 he designed the Erewash Canal paddle security locks for BW, and also rebuilt the 3:1 reduction ground paddles at Langley Bridge Lock (see front cover). At the same time, along with IWA Consultant Engineer Roy Sutton, he managed the restoration of Woolsthorpe Top Lock on the Grantham Canal.

He organised health & safety on the restoration work from the Great Northern Basin towards the A610 embankment. John



John in the doorway of the ECPDA cottage at Langley Mill, 'HQ' of WRG East Midlands and the ECPDA work party.

helped form the FCC in 2002 and was a founder trustee and executive secretary, becoming chairman from 2014 to 2019, and acted as treasurer for many years. The restoration of this section was delayed for several years waiting for an opencast coal extraction to take place but this has finally been cancelled and the Beggarlee Extension now has full planning permission with work due to start soon.

John was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the inland waterways, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Transport Trust and the IWA's most prestigious award the Cyril Styring Trophy.

At the well-attended funeral in Mansfield, his niece Louise read a poem that John had written, which showed a lesser-known side of his many talents. ▀

Dear Family and Friends by John Baylis

Dear family and friends I go, but do not weep
I've lived my life, so full and deep
Throughout my life, I gave my best
I earned my keep, I've earned my rest
I never tried to be great or grand
I tried to be a helping hand.
If I helped in a team, if I helped on my own
It was more than repaid by good family and friends I have known.
And if I went the extra mile, I did it with pleasure
It was all worthwhile.
If I brightened your path, then let it be
A small contribution from my loved ones and me,
Now sadly I leave you and travel alone
Through a mystic veil to the great Love known.
With such beautiful memories
That will forever be the way that I hope
You'll remember me.

WORK PARTY REPORT

By John Guyler

Ironville Towpath Improvements

A group of us were at Codnor Park Reservoir in early May, filling mud holes in the path at the far side of the reservoir. This entailed barrowing gravel from the car park along the reservoir, over the metal walkway and down along the path to our work place. Because of the distance we could only half-fill the barrows; the weight made our arms very sore. In all we moved two and a half tons of gravel and made the path much better. To add to the weight of the barrows, it bucketed down with rain the whole time we were there. One positive of the rain was that we could tell exactly where to tip the gravel on the path.



AECOM volunteers at Ironville.

The following week, we had 16 volunteers from AECOM of Chesterfield together with 8 FCC work party regulars, working on the towpath under and approaching King William Bridge (aka Jack Brown's). We always enjoy visits from companies because they ask lots of questions about the canal and the area around it and some of the questions are very deep and probing; they also get to achieve working in a different environment. Altogether, we laid another four tons of gravel and, with there being so many working, the job was finished early and saved the regular FCC work party another two weeks of work. The group then moved to Pinxton Wharf and litter-picked around the fishing area and down to the weir. ▶



Barrowing at Ironville Locks.

In the middle of May, the work party dug out and replaced the surface of the towpath under the bridge at Lock 3 at Ironville. Four tons of medium gravel, that had been delivered the day before, was used to make the slope beside the lock much easier to walk on.



Whacking the path at Ironville.

A fortnight later 4 tons of top dressing was delivered to Ironville and barrowed to the sections which had been worked previously. A whacker plate was used to consolidate the stone and the finished towpath now looks as if someone cares for it.

Fitting Rails

At the beginning of June, Malc Chisnall and Baz Basley went to Butterley Reservoir at the request of the Canal & River Trust to fit some rails to the steps down to the water.

The next week they went with John Britten to the Aqueduct Cottage to fit and weld a rail on the bridge across the Nightingale Arm, which together with the work other volunteers are doing, is very rapidly drawing to a conclusion, ready for the official opening day.



AECOM volunteers at Ironville.



New rails for steps for CRT at Butterley Reservoir.

De-weeding

We had several work parties at High Peak Junction, at the request of the *Birdswood* team, to clear debris and weeds from the canal, between Brown's Bridge and Leawood Pump. There were quite a lot of branches in the water and several work boat loads of weed had to be lifted. I understand as I write, that we will be required to go back to the section up to the winding hole and do it all over again. Stella, the stegosaurus, had a trim around her with the strimmer on one day, when John Barker and several others made their way across by boat and set to, clearing the vegetation. She had been disappearing into the undergrowth but can now be clearly seen by passengers on *Birdswood* as well those walking the towpath.▶



Another boat full of happy customers who probably do not all realise how much work has to be done to keep the trips running.

In the first week of June we had a work party at Lower Hartshay pulling Himalayan Balsam and watering the new hedge. The following week was the first of four weeks pulling Himalayan Balsam at Beggarlee in the flood plain. By the end of week four we had pulled several tons of Balsam but when we surveyed the area there was a tremendous amount left in areas which were difficult to reach. Next year there will have to be a different plan of action, if we are to get the Balsam under control.

Attention then moved for the next four weeks to Ironville, around Locks 3 and 2 and all the way up to the spillway at Codnor Park Reservoir, pulling the Himalayan Balsam. It hadn't been targeted for three years in this area and the size of the stalks and the height was unbelievable; some of the plants must have been 9ft tall. The only redeeming feature apart from the pink flowers, is the ease the Balsam plants can be pulled out. The vegetation was so dense and tall that Adrian Booth had to act as a spotter from the towpath to direct us to any groups that needed pulling!

Also, at the request of Derbyshire County Council Countryside management, a group of FCC volunteers filled fifty sand bags with clay, which were then transported by DCC to Whatstandwell. Together with a load of gravel already on site, the bags were used to fill dog-out holes in the bank of the towpath; we spent two work parties doing this job. ►



John Dyson demonstrates how tall the Balsam grows!



Fishing for weed at High Peak Junction.

standards) volunteers to work various pieces of machinery. The machinery will include dumpers, diggers (large and small), vibrating rollers, tea urns etc. We are looking at funding the instruction courses to operate the machinery and the volunteers will then be certificated to work on projects. If enough volunteers are trained then the FCC will be able to work in areas not

Training and Volunteers

With the building of the Beggarlee Extension getting closer, the FCC will require suitably certificated (to Waterway Recovery Group

under the control of a contractor. This is a good chance train up on what could be a useful skill.

If you would like to get certification on any of machines as above, please let myself (john_guyler@yahoo.co.uk) or John Barker (work@cromfordcanal.org.uk) know.

And it is the same contacts if you would just like to participate in the work parties; the volunteers are a very sociable bunch, they look out for each other and are great to work with. Hope you will join us. ▀



Filling clay bags for DCC at High Peak Junction.



Fishing for more weed at High Peak Junction.

SUMMER DROUGHT

By Mike Kelley



Because Birdswood could not reach the winding hole, she returned from High Peak Junction in reverse. Fortunately, having the prop mounted in the back of the rudder makes this easier than on a conventional narrowboat.

Photo: Chris Gent



Passengers reboarding at High Peak Junction.

Well, it's been quite a summer. Many canals had to be closed due to lack of rain and low water levels, but thankfully our trip boat *Birdswood*, operating on the Cromford Canal, managed (just) to keep going. Compounding the problem of low water was the enormous amount of a 'spaghetti' type weed that we had to contend with on a section of the canal, which constantly wrapped around the propeller. On top of this, any failure to keep to the very narrow channel would result in the boat riding on, or sticking in, the mud.

These spindly weeds had built up due to us being unable to operate Brown's (swing) Bridge, and the Covid lock down, over the previous two years. However, last winter Brown's Bridge was rebuilt and we traversed the route without issue, until the water level dropped dramatically in August.

Trips that should have taken two hours in total were taking much longer, thereby giving the crew little or no break. So, for most of the month of August, we had to shorten the length of our regular trip boat cruise terminating at the historic High Peak Junction instead of the winding hole at the steam pump. ►



The interior of the oldest railway workshops in the world.



Coming in to moor at a sunny High Peak Junction.

public vehicles, and so is hidden away from all but those who know. This museum/workshop is as though the men who worked there have just left it for a short while and will be returning at any minute. It is almost a time-warp. The track in there is the oldest in-situ railway track in the world, and the building is the oldest, still standing railway workshop in the

Passengers were allowed to disembark at the HPJ and were given a guided tour around this historic workshop. This workshop is now a museum, which has no access for

world, built around 1830.

In order to do all this passenger numbers were reduced to help us deal with this *force majeure*, but hey! Then the rains came. ■

ON THE FINAL STRAIGHT

By Volunteer Project Manager Ron Common

It's been a productive few months at Aqueduct Cottage restoration as our volunteer team push to get the restoration completed.

In May, we were able to start the painting of the activity room walls thanks to a generous donation from Earthborn Paints Ltd. Their water-based, eco-friendly clay paint is highly breathable which makes it suitable for the lime-pointed stone walls of the cottage. The 'clay white' colour has brightened the room considerably.

On the ground floor, the second coat of plaster was applied to the walls which provides an idea of how the walls will look once the plastering is finished. We especially like the arches in the parlour and how the exposed reclaimed oak beams are highlighted. The labour on this task is being kindly provided by local plasterer, Jonathan Burton, as a donation to the project.

May also saw the beginning of another important job - the laying of the activity room floor. It was decided to fit new pine floor boards and treat them with Fiddes wood oil with antique stain. The flooring was donated to the project and, over a few days, our volunteers skilfully trimmed each board to achieve a close fit with the irregular stone walls.

We had a surprise at the end of May when Friends of AC members, Carol & Geoff Bunting, presented us with an amazing bird box which is a replica of the cottage. During the Covid lock down, Geoff made several bird boxes based on the homes of friends and family and they were such a great hit he decided to create one for the cottage. In due course, the birdhouse will be mounted on a wooden pole and located in the cottage garden. ►



The 'clay white' paint has brightened up the interior.



Elegant arches on either side of the parlour fireplace after their second coat of plaster.



Plastering the interior.



The activity room with access from the new staircase.

At the beginning of June, local business Lubrizol Ltd sent an enthusiastic team of volunteers to help us out for a day. They were assigned the task of clearing the vegetation along the entrance of the Leawood arm. They worked extremely hard and by the end of the day had made great progress. The next step is to remove four dead trees growing through the canal walls and re-set the coping stones.



The enthusiastic volunteers from Lubrizol.

In due course, we hope to install a lock gate with interpretation explaining the story of the 'Nightingale Cut' and Aqueduct Cottage.

By the middle of June, we had finalised the design for the south garden and the hard landscaping began. Stone steps were constructed to provide access to the garden which will comprise a flower border, a raised flower bed and a grassed seating area. It's a lovely view from the elevated garden across the Derwent Aqueduct towards the Leawood Pump House.



Geoff Bunting (right) presents his specially made bird box to Ron Common.



New steps up to the south garden.

By the end of the month, the laying of the new floor boards in the activity room floor was completed and the long-awaited pointing of the external walls had begun. Thanks to training by Andrew Churchman Ltd, our volunteers were able to complete the north gable end themselves. They then completed the south gable end before assisting Andrew with the front wall. The pointing transformed the appearance of the cottage, which looks absolutely stunning. ►



Exterior pointing has transformed the cottage's appearance.



Outbuilding door courtesy of Ian Hooker.



Handrails installed by FCC work party.



The different stonework at the rear of the cottage.

Around the same time and thanks to FCC volunteers, a pair of new handrails was installed on the footbridge. It's been decades since the footbridge had handrails so it is great to see this feature restored. We are very grateful to the FCC volunteers for their generous help.

By the end of July, the activity room was almost complete, with the walls painted and the floors and staircase handrails stained and oiled. The final task is to plaster and paint the central wall.

During August, three important new tasks began. The first was to install the wash house outbuilding door and roof. We are extremely grateful to Ian Hooker who kindly made and installed the beautiful door and side panels and secured the roof panels.

The second was to begin the external pointing of the back wall of

the cottage. The stonework is very different to the front. It has an irregular pattern which requires more lime mortar. Using the experience gained on the other walls, our volunteers will be working on this task over the coming weeks and completion is expected by the beginning of autumn.

The third task underway is the reconstruction of the lean-to pantry. This job is more complicated than the wash house since it incorporates a window and slate-tiled roof. However, it will be useful experience before we take on the larger reconstruction of the privy.

At the time of writing, the kitchen floor is being excavated ready for us to lay a limecrete slab base. Once set, the floor will be tiled with red and black quarry tiles to match the original floor (uncovered in October 2019).

In the weeks ahead, we will be replacing the missing stone flags in the parlour and getting the final coat of plaster done. Once the plaster has dried (around 4 weeks), the walls will be painted and the interpretation panels mounted.

During this period, we will also be cleaning up the fireplaces and laying a stone path from the front door to the footbridge.

There's lots still to do but once we get the internal floors and path built, hopefully by the end of autumn, we will finally be able to open the door of the cottage to visitors.

That will be a special day indeed! **T**.



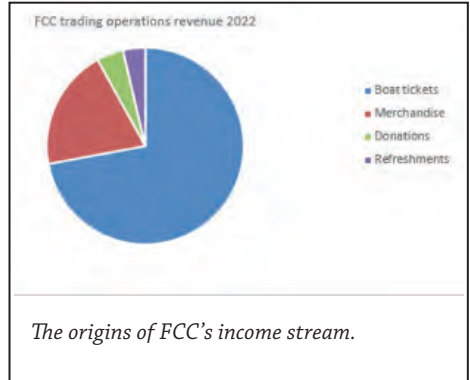
The activity room with floor laid.

FCC TRADING UPDATE

Richard Handley on raising funds from FCC's trip boat and shop



Welcome to the Weighbridge Shop!



challenges: elsewhere in this edition of *Portal*, *Birdswood* lead master Mike Kelley gives a briefing on the effects of low water levels and high weed problems with respect to boat operations, but despite such challenges we've managed to keep going – where some other canals haven't.

In *Portal* 80 I gave a pre-season view of our plans for the shop and *Birdswood*, where we had lots of pre-booked charters for the boat and had recently opened our on-line booking slots ready for starting public cruising on 2nd April.

We're now well over halfway through our season – although the online version of our shop is open for business 24/7/365! By the time you read this, to the end of August we'll have generated over £40,000 in revenue from all sources, so we expect to make a healthy surplus for the charity's cash reserves by the end of the year – and we will have given more than 4,500 passengers a fantastic experience that they will not forget! The pie chart gives an idea of where our revenues come from.

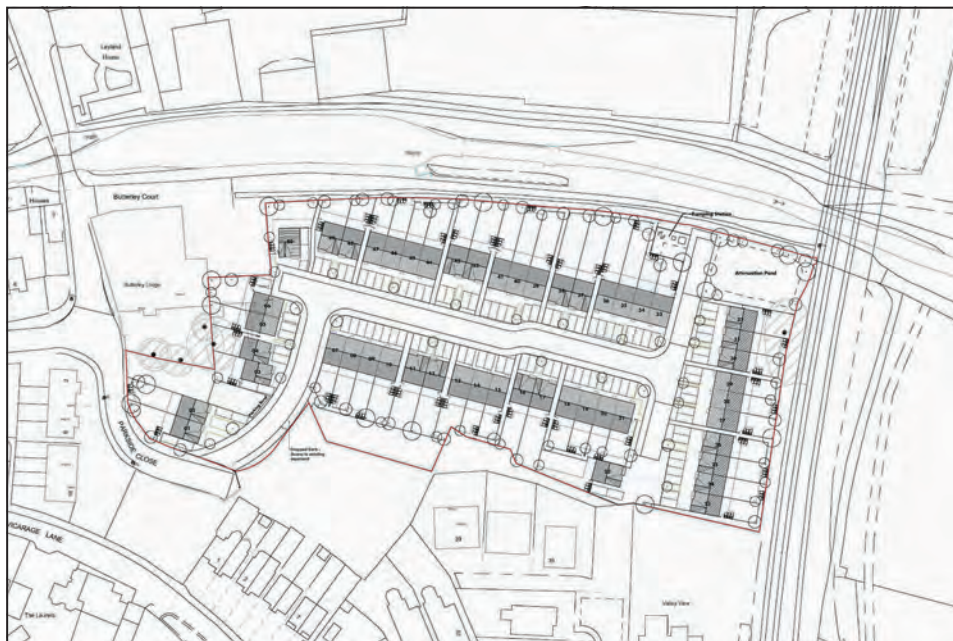
We are maintaining some of our Covid mitigation controls on the boat and in the shop, and we are currently facing other

None of this would have been possible without the fantastic support of our people: we have over 40 of them and the key is getting them to all 'play in position' – whether it be in allocating crew shifts, working in the wharf-side shop, operating *Birdswood* or maintaining the boat, we have fantastic people: so the charity and its members owe a sincere debt of gratitude to all its volunteers. And we must not forget the contribution that John Barker's work parties make to our operations, doing things like weed removal and boat cleaning as well as their many other tasks up and down the canal.

Our plan is to operate until the end of October, and then we face another challenge: this time an in-water inspection of the boat by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, probably in November. So when you next hear from me it'll no doubt be about the results of that inspection . . . see you then. ■

NEW HOUSING AT IRONVILLE?

By Hugh Potter



The site of the new housing is bounded by the canal to the north and the railway to the east.

Planning application has been made to erect 50 houses on the offside of the canal from Butterley Court (the former Mechanics Institute), alongside Lock 4 to the Midland Main Line railway bridge, on what is currently open ground.

According to Housing Strategy Officer Jeremy Dickinson, the proposed development will deliver a mix of 2- and 3-bedroom houses that will all be for affordable rent and that the properties will be owned and managed by the Guinness Partnership who have had a presence in Amber Valley for many years.

Canal & River Trust, which owns this length of canal, expressed concern about:

- potential damage to the canal through construction work;
 - potential for damage to the Grade 2 listed King William Bridge which has a 3-ton weight limit;
 - the removal of trees close to the canal to be replaced by close-boarded fencing;
 - the way in which the development turns its back to the canal rather than taking advantage of the views towards the canal.
- FCC has endorsed the views expressed by CRT. Full details including comments are available on the Amber Valley planning website, reference AVA/2022/0383. A decision was expected by 31st August. ■

WHY I VOLUNTEER

As part of our fund-raising campaign currently underway with Marsha Miles Consultancy, we were asked to produce testimonials from our many volunteers as to just why they did what they did, and how they felt they benefited from it. Below are just some of the inspiring replies that came from those who volunteer on the boat and in the shop at Cromford Wharf.

As a volunteer on *Birdswood* I get great satisfaction, not only from working with a good crew, but also by contributing to a worthy cause. Volunteering opens up an opportunity to meet and chat to people from different places and backgrounds. Our efforts are rewarded by hearing of their enjoyment in taking a mini cruise on our boat.

I have much enjoyed my first 2 months volunteering on the *Birdswood*. Meeting fellow volunteers and our customers/clients when on board has been a great pleasure. As a resident of Cromford, the walk along the towpath was familiar to me and has always been a delight. But I'm glad now to do it to some purpose other than personal fitness.

But what pleases me most is the satisfaction of our passengers. Almost without exception they say how much they enjoyed the little cruise, seeing the abundance of wildlife, and learning about the history of the canal. They always seem to disembark cheerful and relaxed. Wonderful!

Volunteering with *Birdswood* adds purpose, social and educational elements to my time now that I am retired from full time employment.

I volunteer to contribute something back to my local area, the industrial heritage and architecture are (to me) a big draw for this part of Derbyshire after moving from Sussex. I find that spending 2 days a month walking the towpath and crewing on *Birdswood* help clear my mind from a busy rest of the week. Both the exercise and company of other volunteers is most enjoyable, and to learn more of the local heritage and traditions is priceless.

As a retired person, volunteering on *Birdswood* gives me a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging to a group of like-minded people and a reason to get up in the morning. All this whilst enjoying entertaining/informing the public in an ideal environment and ending my day with a sense of fulfilment.

My husband and I enjoy opening the wharf-side shop & giving information/details re the *Birdswood* trips etc. As we have a cottage in Cromford it offers us an opportunity to give something useful to the village and area's tourism, and helps us feel part of the area. Crewing on *Birdswood* gives me peaceful moments in an area of natural beauty.

Janet and I volunteered to help get the FCC Canal Shop up and running again after its 18-month lockdown-induced shutdown. We have both greatly enjoyed the challenge of fundraising via merchandise. We had both retired from our full-time employment in the NHS and Social Care and our volunteer role brings the following benefits:➤

- 1 Structure in the week; we have a regular day to be there – Wednesday. Though we do on occasion do other times as the need arises;
- 2 Social Interaction with the public, boat crew and other FCC members. All human life passes you by if you wait long enough;
- 3 Knowing that our efforts are helping toward furthering the aims of the society;
- 4 Answering questions about the area of Derbyshire I have lived in all my life (I learned to sail on the Butterley Reservoir and can say, honestly, I have been walking the canal towpath for nearly 60 years);
- 5 Getting out in the fresh air in a role we can both do and enjoy.

In my days as a Senior Mental Health Clinician in the NHS I would advocate such meaningful activity to my patients and their carers. Now I feel the benefits myself.

I gain great satisfaction in crewing the narrow boat for the benefit of all. I like to ensure that the visitors are being given a good service and have value for money. I enjoy working as part of a team again. It gives a sense of satisfaction and of being valued. At the end of the day, a job well done. To see people disembark and say thank you very much, and meaning it, is lovely. It's enjoyable to meet lots of new people.

I have been a Scandinavian visitor to Derbyshire for many years as my wife was born and brought up in this area. I had travelled as a passenger on the canal boat a few times and when we moved to Derbyshire I was pleased to be accepted as a volunteer on *Birdswood*. Not having attended school or worked in the area I did not have a network of friends or acquaintances. Crewing on *Birdswood* made me feel more connected to the area. It meant immediately being welcomed into a pleasant, friendly group of likeminded people. People who care about the environment, local history

and who are willing to cooperate on a variety of meaningful tasks. Working together to protect the local wildlife, the canal itself and help spread the word about the importance of this world heritage area. I enjoy talking to the passengers and finding out why they chose to take a trip on *Birdswood*. I enjoy the social aspect of the boat trips and the social side of the volunteer group, including participating in the FCC group. It is not all crewing as I also volunteer for the work parties clearing reeds and maintaining the boat. This gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction and I like the idea of helping preserve such a unique aspect of national history.

When I retired, I decided I needed to do something completely different with none of the stress I had experienced at work. I wanted something that would get me out in the fresh air, contribute to the local community and environment, and give me the opportunity to meet a range of different people. I joined several volunteer organisations but working with the FCC has been the most fulfilling. The volunteers are friendly and helpful, and I meet people from all walks of life when crewing on the boat. I have learned a lot about the local history of the region, and the development of canals. It is also gratifying to think that I am contributing in a small way to maintaining the canal in a navigable state and hence preserving it as an asset for future generations to enjoy. **T**

Why Not Join Us?

We always have vacancies for more volunteers – in the shop, on the boat, in the work party, or doing some of the many other tasks that are necessary to keep the FCC going. Not only does your volunteering benefit FCC but, as you have read above, it will benefit you too! Contact volunteer@cromfordcanal.org.uk now!

ANOTHER LEAWOOD MYSTERY

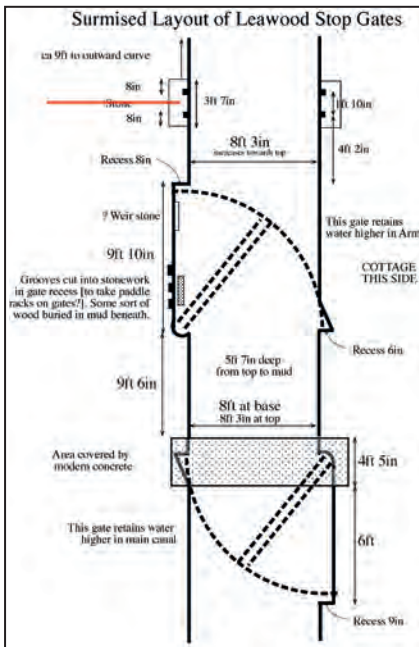
By Hugh Potter

The Leawood Arm adjacent to Aqueduct Cottage has thrown up yet another mystery – and one that was not known about when I wrote the Leawood Arm booklet. If you have been following the plot so far, there has been much debate about how exactly the stop 'lock' alongside Aqueduct Cottage was constructed and operated. And if you've not been following it, can I recommend the booklet available from our website? – it's an enthralling mystery!

From the current remains, we know that there were two sets of stop plank grooves on the Leawood Arm side of the two known gate recesses. We had puzzled over why there were two sets; after all only one set was needed to close off the canal.



Looking across the canal to the stop plank grooves and the excavated bar.



The location of the bar is shown in red on the diagram.

Further excavations by the enterprising and enquiring team of volunteers at Aqueduct Cottage revealed an unusual – I would say unique – feature in the stone work between the two sets of grooves on the side away from the cottage. Whilst removing surface soil and weeds, they found an iron fixing into the top of the stone into which the grooves are cut. Following the bar by digging out the soil revealed that the iron bar is a surprising 9ft long, with a screw thread and large washer and nut on the end.

I have been around many waterways in my lifetime and done much research but I have never seen anything quite like this. A closer examination around where it meets the stone shows that it might have been joined to a vertical rod by a pivot, which suggests that it might have been some kind of lever for operating a sluice beneath the stone. If it was, it seems a very ►



The large nut and washer at the end of the bar.



The point where the bar joins the stone – is it attached to a second vertical bar?

slender bar to take the strain, and there is no indication of a pivot point on the bar.

But that idea does conform with one of the original requirements for the construction of the arm, which was that the lock be 'drained' on Sundays. Could this mechanism have been the way to comply with this? By putting in both sets of stop planks and lifting a sluice, the two lengths of water would be isolated – which was what was required.

For the moment the trench revealing the rod has been backfilled and the next approach must be to try to drain the canal at this point and dig down to see what evidence can be found below the water line. Meanwhile, if anyone has any ideas what this could be, please get in touch. ▮

More on the Leawood 'Lock' Mystery

Ian Hooker, Birdwood master and one of the regular volunteers at Aqueduct Cottage, adds some revelations regarding the mystery of the 'lock' by the cottage:

“The recent clearance of stonework beyond the gate area has added a bit more information. The early map of 1811 showing what appeared to be a full-length lock now looks to be even more unlikely. There is no sign of stonework 70ft away and the walls are flared outwards within about 30ft of the lock gate. Even if the lock ceased to be used after 1819 when the Strutt action led to the shortening of the canal it seems hardly likely that if there had been a full-length lock they would go to the trouble of dismantling it and build the flared approach instead. Surely they would just leave the walls in situ and leave the gate open. “After they were forced to stop using the Lea Brook to water the canal there was no other source of water so they must have just abandoned use of the lock gate and levelled off with the Cromford Canal.



LETTERS AND FOLLOW-UPS

The Hydraulic Ram Pump

Following the publication of the article about the ram pump in the last Portal, a copy of the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway's magazine containing the following article by the late Malcom Lake was handed to the Editor:

If you walk along the Cromford Canal opposite the Leawood pump you may have seen amongst the brambles two substantial brick enclosures. One by the riverside houses a substantial iron domed casting and then, not many metres away, is a second water storage tank.

These are the key components for a ram pump, widely used in rural localities to pump water from a stream to a distant farm which was often located at a much higher level and even over a mile distant.

The inventor of this device was Pierre Montgolfier in 1798, known primarily for his hot air balloons.

Ram pumps are ingenious and operate for extended periods without electrical power, simply by using the brisk flow of water from a header tank. The flow initially spills to a stream and then, as the velocity increases, the flow lifts the pulse valve (a rubber seated check valve) on the unit discharge. This causes a characteristic 'thwump' and the line hammer caused by checking the flow of the moving feed charges the cast iron air vessel and a flow to the high level storage tank commences. The rhythmic hammering at approximately 8 beats a minute is the tell-tale sound of a ram pump in the neighbourhood.

The nearest example, but no longer working, is on the Cromford & High Peak Railway near the junction with the Cromford Canal and a hundred yards further than the High Peak workshop.

A precarious footpath alongside the

swirling river leads to the first brick set pump house and the reservoir is a few metres away. The corrugated iron roof has collapsed around the pump body and whilst its removal and restoration would be possible, the real question is "where did the water go?"

Possibly it fed the existing trackside water tank by the High Peak Junction workshop which was a key source of water for the moorland farms, carried in converted tenders up the inclines.

Green & Carter at Ashbrittle near Wellington, Somerset, are one of the present manufacturers of the Vulcan range of ram pumps and were successors to James Easton. Green & Carter carry all the installation records from the early 1800s of the Vulcan pumps. If the Cromford pump has a serial number it is lost amongst the debris of the collapsed building.

Thanks from Age Concern

The following letter was sent to John Guylar to thank the FCC work party for their donation of the produce from the lock-keeper's garden at Lock 4:

I write on behalf of the trustees and our members to thank you for the contributions of the wonderful home grown produce that you and the committee you serve on have donated. A second bag arrived today so I apologise for my delay in sending this thank you. Nevertheless, it is heartfelt and much appreciated and I've been assured by our cook that the new potatoes were divine!

Wishing you and the committee well and thank you for considering us.

Hope to see you again soon.

**Josie Marsters,
Charity Trustee, Age Concern
Eastwood**

Thanks from WI

This letter was sent from Bardon Mill Women's Institute following their trip on Birdswood in July:

Dear Crew of the wonderful Birdswood,

Bardon Mill WI ladies have asked me to write and thank you very much for the amazing cruise along the canal on Saturday 9th July. We could not have had better weather, but the trip itself was fantastic.

We all felt relaxed and chilled – the experience is very therapeutic, and everyone agreed that it was better than any expensive massage!!

Thank you for your time and efforts in the upkeep of such a treasure – and of the care and maintenance of the canal itself – keep that brush very handy! We wish you well for the future and hope to return.

Again, sincere thanks,

Moira Bengtson
Secretary, Bardon Mill WI

More on Chains and Culverts

In the summer edition of *Portal*, the article on weirs, paddles and draw sluices reminded me of what we found a few years ago.

We were reed pulling in the section from Whatstandwell car park towards Sims Bridge, about 150m from the road bridge, if you look down to the railway, there is a large brick culvert under the railway.

John Dyson and myself were discussing the size of the brickwork and came to the conclusion it was for taking a very large amount of water from the canal.

A short time later, John called me over and he lifted the keb he was using and in the rake amongst the reeds was a chain, which would only lift a short distance then went taugt.

We presume that we had found the draw sluice at that point in the canal. It was carefully returned to the water and we moved to another area.

John Guyler

Good job you didn't pull to hard! – Ed. T

WELSH CONNECTIONS?

A report in the South Wales Daily News of 18th August 1890

Sir James Allport, writing from Derby, says that the first excursion train was run under his arrangement from Birmingham to Ambergate for Matlock in 1842. At that time there was no railway from Ambergate to Matlock, but as the Cromford Canal passes very near the Ambergate station, Sir James arranged with a canal carrying firm for a supply of some of their best goods boats, suitably fitted with seats etc for the occasion, to take on the passengers to Cromford, the terminus of the canal, but only a short walk from Matlock.

"It is true," adds Sir James, "this occurred before the amalgamation in 1844 of the three railways, viz, the North Midland, the

Midland Counties, and the Midland & Derby – each then terminating at Derby in the existing station. I was then the manager of the last-named railway, and arranged with the North Midland Company for the train to run through from Birmingham to Ambergate. The excursion was a grand success, but, our boat accommodation being limited, I well remember that many gentlemen, myself amongst them, had to walk along the towing path both to and from Cromford."

In the railway world Allport is recognised as the pioneer of cheap and comfortable railway travelling, but why this excursion should be reported in a South Wales paper 50 years after the event, is a mystery. T

THE END OF A FAMILY TREE



Betty Kenny's Tree survived for many more years until largely destroyed by fire. Today its rather pitiful stump can be found on a way-marked path in Shining Cliff Woods at Ambergate.

Many thanks to Peter Patilla for flagging this story from the *Derbyshire Courier* of 9th April 1921:

By the death of John Kenyon, of Chadwick Nick, near Crich, which was briefly announced in last week's *Derbyshire Courier*, the last of an interesting family has been removed. John

Kenyon was born on a coal boat at the canal lock at Stoneyford, 74 years ago. Naturally the towing path attracted him on his having to earn his livelihood and for many years he was a boatman. Oftentimes he has passed on the Cromford Canal both with coal and limestone, the latter being conveyed from railway end to the Butterley Co's kilns at Bull Bridge.

His abnormal strength was a valuable asset to him in this occupation, and John is credited with performing the stupendous feat of what is known as 'legging' a boat himself through Butterley Tunnel. This tunnel, one mile and three quarters long, has no towing path, and boats passing through had to be propelled by two men lying on their backs and pushing against the tunnel sides with their feet. John, on one occasion, himself legged through a boat containing 25 tons of coal. Latterly he worked for the Clay Cross Co at their lime works.

He was the grandson of the late Betty Kenny whose name figures in local history as having reared a family under a large oak tree in Alderwasley Park. This tree is always known as Betty Kenny's Tree, and is a source of attraction to many visitors. John worked up to within a fortnight of his death, and although well over the allotted span of life, was able to hold his own in physical labour. ■

RESPECT IN PINXTON

Hugh Potter finds that times have changed

In his diary entry for 5th November 1805, George Mushet, Deputy Manager of Riddings Ironworks, wrote: "I was walking along the banks of the Pinxton Canal, which is about 100 yards from the works, and runs over an immense stretch of country and communicates with several sea port towns in the east and west coasts of England. A number of school boys & girls perhaps to the number

of 6. I overtook them in the course of my walk. As I passed the girls kneeled and the boys with hand in hand bowed respectfully. This is a custom common with the youngsters in our neighbourhood, and I suppose is general in many Counties in England."

With the exception of Royalty, I'm not sure that kind of respect is paid to anyone anywhere today! ■

CANAL INN, BULLBRIDGE

By Hugh Potter

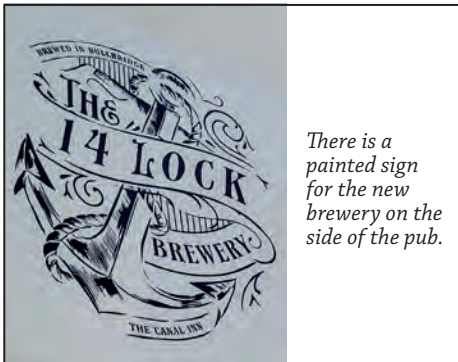


A drone's eye view of the Canal Inn under restoration and the new houses being built behind it.

When it was first announced that the Grade 2 listed Canal Inn at Bullbridge was to be restored and opened to provide extra accommodation for the nearby Hurt Arms' wedding events, it was feared that locals would not be welcomed to pop in for a pint. However, far from being exclusive, it is great news that it is styling itself as 'Your New Local' with pies and pints on offer (other food and drinks will also be available!).

Indeed it is strongly retaining its links to the canal with a new brewery opening called 14 Locks Brewery "after the 14 locks on the canal".

I look forward to trying it out when it opens – scheduled for September.



There is a painted sign for the new brewery on the side of the pub.



A dramatic shot of the restored façade of the historic Canal Inn.

BULLBRIDGE SWING BRIDGE MOVE

Hugh Potter looks at Susan North's photographs

In *Portal 74*, Simon Stoker wrote about the removal to Cromford in 1988 of the swing bridge that spanned the canal on Bullbridge Aqueduct. Also taking photographs on that day was Susan North.

Susan recalled: "My grandparents' cottages were below the canal [on what is now Drovers Way]. When we were children we played on the swing bridge and the big kids used to get the blocks out and swing it across. My grandad had a wood business and used to put new blocks of wood back in."

Susan called in at High Peak Junction and kindly dropped the prints off for the FCC Archives, for which we are very grateful. If any other readers have photographs of the canal from the 1980s or earlier, we would be delighted to see them; you can contact me at the address on p2. ►



The bridge awaiting lifting, with the ridges in the cast iron decking visible.



Having been craned from their original location on top of the aqueduct, the bridge and pivot stone were placed alongside Drovers Way to be craned onto the low loader.



The heavy pivot stone awaiting craning onto the low loader.



The pivot stone being guided onto the low loader.



Final adjustments.



Swinging the swing bridge onto the low loader.



Final preparations for departure to Cromford.



Positioning the swing bridge onto the low loader.



The convoy departs – but whose was the white 'Roller'?

AUTUMN EVENTS

FCC Monthly Meetings



Illustrated speaker meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at 7.30pm in Ironville Church Hall, Casson Street, Ironville NG16 5NN. Admission is £2.50. There is parking at the rear. A bar, tea/coffee, raffle and sales table for FCC products and other related items are available

Monday 19th September

Tracks Tramways & Towpaths, by David Amos

Monday 17th October

Codnor Castle & The de Grays, by Maureen Taylor

Monday 21st November

The Cromford Canal & the other Earlier Restoration Projects, by Mick Golds.

Birdswood Cruises

FCC's historic electrically powered passenger narrow boat *Birdswood* offers 2-hour cruises departing from Cromford Wharf at 11am and 2pm on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. A new extended and fully guided 'Premium Trip' is now offered on certain days when Leewood is in steam – the last two of this year will be 18th September and 9th October. For full details and to book seats on any trip, or to enquire about charters, visit www.birdswood.org.

Leewood Steaming Dates

Below we list the days on which Leewood Pump will be in steam in the next few months. On dates labelled 'static' the pumphouse will be open but not actually pumping.

On static dates the pump house will be open 11am to 4pm. On operational dates it will be open 12 noon to 4.30pm.

September

Saturday 17th *Static*

Sunday 18th

October

Saturday 8th

Sunday 9th

Thursday 27th *Static*

Cards for Christmas



Boat Horse



Cromford Wharf



Kingfisher



Sandiacre Lock



Bullbridge Aqueduct

Five designs, cards measure 6"x4"
Mixed pack of five
£2.00 Collected from
Cromford Wharf shop,
Birdswood or Ironville meetings.



Cromford
Lock 14



Great Northern
Basin



Trip boat
Birdswood



Greeting inside this
row & below



This row and one above 8"x6"
Mixed pack of five designs £3.50
In the shop single design also available
plus gift tags

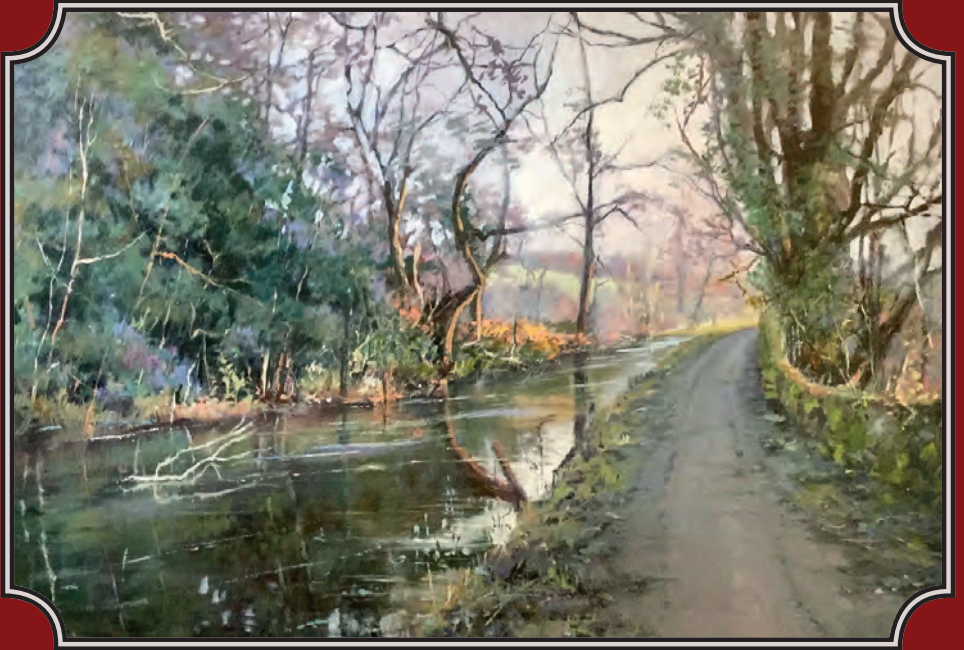


Open greetings card
blank inside



£1.50 each
from the shop or
4 ₤ £6.00 online

See website for postal orders and other ideas for Christmas gifts
<https://www.cromfordcanal.org/publications/>



www.cromfordcanal.org