

The Packet

The Derby Canal

*Issue 73
Summer, 2013.*



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DERBY AND SANDIACRE TRUST:

Please contact Chris Madge or Doug Flack at the above addresses.

Front Cover:

A reminder of the coldest Spring for 62 years.

Centre Spread:

Page 14 Breaston Winding Hole c1940.

Page 15 Breaston Winding Hole, Winter 1947.

EDITOR'S CORNER.

Please do remember to send all material for the next issue to Doug Flack no later than the middle of September, 2013.

Advertising.

If you wish to advertise or, most importantly, know anyone that does, contact the Editor. Don't forget, there are 3 issues per year.

We are indebted to Interhire Power Tool service Ltd, (0115 9306382) of Park Road, Ilkeston, Derbys. DE7 5DA for the free use of tools and plant on our Working Parties.

Acknowledgements.

Views expressed by individuals in The Packet are not necessarily those of the Society or Trust.

This edition was printed by Eight Days a Week Print Solutions.

Photographs.

As you can see from the centre spread, pictures still appear every so often.

If you have or know anyone who has a picture of the canal, please let me know so that we can scan them for our archives.

In the last issue I inadvertently missed out a painting of Spondon Winding hole so I have put it on page 3. It is provided with kind permission by the Spondon Historical Society.

Book – The Derby Canal by Mike Smith.

In 1978 Mike Smith wrote a book entitled "The Derby Canal" which detailed the history, decline and closure of our canal and which is an invaluable source of information. He gave us permission to re-issue the book and I have spent some time updating it and having it printed.

It is available from Paul Birtles at our meetings @ £7.00, or £7.50 including post & packaging from Paul's address.

They were produced with grants very kindly given to us by The Foyle Foundation and the Derbyshire Community Foundation.



Words from the Chair.

Welcome to the Summer, 2013 edition of the Packet. As you'll have noticed we have changed the form of the Packet to increase its information content, variety of content and we've introduced colour. We hope you like the new format and welcome your contributions, whether it is to tell us what you think of it or a written contribution featuring news, adverts, advice or articles on your experiences.

As always I am delighted to report that as we near 20 years since formation increasing numbers of people are contributing their time to making the restoration a reality. It's not only the committees of our Society and Trust, but others who are not recognised but continue to give their time and ideas. I continue to be humbled by two active supporters, who I know are also quietly fighting cancer. Thank you all.

As those of you who have supported the talks we give locally – we are happy to talk to anyone about the canal for a small fee – will know, we continue to focus on four sections with a spread of options for funding.

The development at Chellaston continues to be the most likely first win and confidential discussions continue strongly around private sector funding that will deliver a stretch of canal tied to commercial and housing developments. With the economy and house prices now rising we believe this process will accelerate. We have spoken to a possible funder for the Pride Park development and we continue to get strong support from the City Council. Again the economy will be the main driver here.

At Spondon we have received a strong intention of support from Celanese, who are happy in principle to provide us with water abstraction from the Derwent (subject to Environment Agency approval of course) now that they will not need existing rights themselves. We are working on the Winding Hole, but there have been no moves on the development front over the last twelve months.

The end stretch at Sandiacre continues to be planned and we have approached Heritage Lottery for a grant in support. They have advised a timetable that sees us apply in February next year to maximise chances of success and have encouraged our bid. Fingers crossed. In the meantime we are coordinating effort with Derbyshire CC to secure the land and claim back any land poached over the last decade or so.

Working Parties.

We have also made good progress on our working parties and since the last edition have completed work at Draycott for the season. To assist this we have bought a Sickle mowing machine (as used by many Councils at roadsides). This should make the job of maintenance easier in future. We are determined not to allow the wilderness to creep back once we have got it into good order.

We have made more progress at Spondon. We have taken out the final tree that caused some difficulty as it was overhanging the Moon's garage and generally tidied up the debris. Offcuts have been packed along the path borders and is already starting to rot to form good wildlife habitat. We now await the drying out of the hole so we can restore the walls and extract the tree roots and tidy the banks.

Our other focus point has been at Borrowash where we are trying to recover the area where we were a few years ago after a WRG recovery party. Good progress has been made so far working in co-ordination with the locals who are recovering their side of the canal. We have also fenced around Borrowash Bottom Lock to manage our responsibility for safety of walkers along the path. If we can obtain permission/assistance from Network Rail we will also deal with overhanging trees at the Station Road end that will otherwise cause us trouble in the future.

Again I'm pleased to welcome new faces to a growing regular working party force. A good and fulfilling time is had by all and we welcome any new faces who want to help. No strength or skills requirements exist – there's always something that anyone can do wherever we are. I'd also like to thank:

- Our meetings organisers who have organised diverse entertainment that is attracting a steadily increasing number of you to the Wilmot Arms on 4th Tuesdays.
- Paul and family for managing our varied attendance at events (and the Langley Mill Boat rally).
- Chris Grimoldby for a tremendously successful day at Breaston in May where we cemented relationships with the University and the local public.

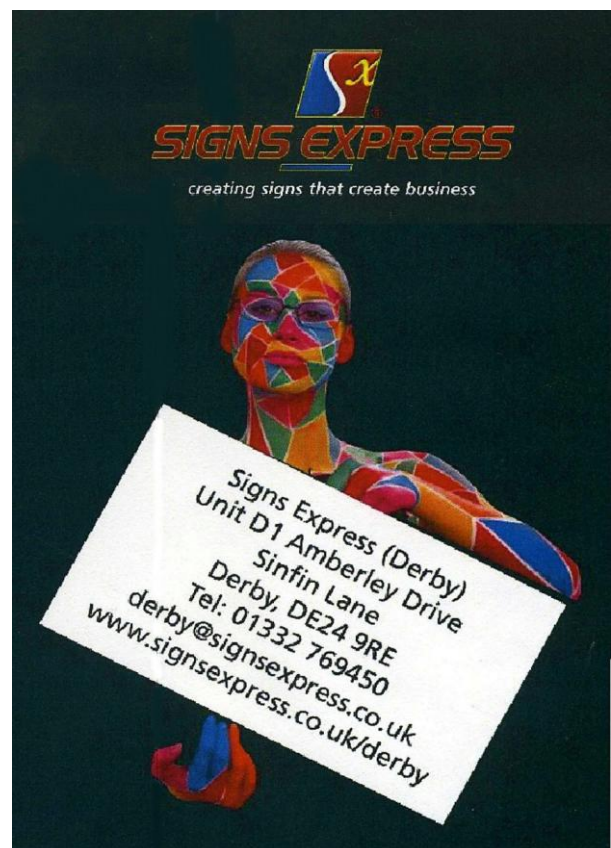
- Doug and Chris ReesFitzPatrick who have pushed through and taken on maintenance and development of the website.

As always if you can please tell others what we are doing and refer them to our website or bring them to a suitable meeting. The more supporters we have the happier we are.

We have an extensive list of events to attend during the spring and summer. As usual we will be talking to people and selling them merchandise. Help would be gratefully received or just come for a chat and catch up at:

.23 rd June	County Show, Elvaston.
25 th June	Canal Walk from the Moon to the city centre.
6 th July	Little Eaton Carnival.
6 th July	Spirit of Chellaston.
23 rd July	Demolition of Derby by Derek Palmer.
7 th Sept	Spondon Festival.
24 th Sept.	Erewsh Canal by Mick Golds.
26 th Oct.	AGM Wilmot Arms, Borrowash.
26 th Nov.	Problem Solving in Canal Building by Rod Pearson.

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A to Z of Vintage Marine Engines; Book TWO.

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Erewash Canal Preservation & Development Association

45th Anniversary Boat Rally (or Sunburn and Rust) by Jackie Birtles.

The Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society decided to take their display and stall to the E.C.P.& D.A. 45th Anniversary Boat Rally, held over the late May Bank Holiday at the Great Northern Basin, Langley Mill. At the words 'boat rally' my ears pricked up! Boat rally....surely that means we can take our boat, but how do we get the display and marquee there? In steps our chairman, Chris Madge, who offered to tow the trailer to Langley Mill on Friday evening. So, with great excitement we left Mercia Marina at Willington on Tuesday, naively thinking we would get there early to bag a good mooring spot. Oh how wrong can one be? We should have set off at least the week before. But we did have a good journey, meeting up with another boat at Shardlow lock, also going to the rally, so we travelled up together, sharing the joys and hardships of the locks (mainly hardships).

By the time we reached Langley Mill, on Wednesday, and moored up together, Percy and Joan, on nb" lteshale", were our 'New Best Friends', and were even roped into helping on the stall! Thursday and Friday we spent sheltering from the hail, rain, and wind, feeling snug (and smug) inside our boat while we watched other boaters arriving, cold and wet through. We did feel sorry for them, but pleased with ourselves for having missed the awful weather. Tuesday and Wednesday might have been cold, but at least we kept dry. Friday tea time, during one of the rare but short dry spells, we met Chris with the trailer and display boards.

Due to problems with the wind (talking about the weather here, not Paul or Chris) the decision was made to put the marquee up on Saturday. If we'd put it up on Friday night, we might have had to go into Derby to collect it in the morning! The rest of Friday evening was spent at the 'Hog Roast', and sampling a fine selection of real ale. Yum.

SATURDAY:- during the night someone heard our prayers, and turned the weather to SUMMER. The day dawned...dry, clear blue sky, sun, hot and no wind! Unbelievable, and very enjoyable. Paul went up to the site and summoned the troops to help put up the marquee. A BIG THANK YOU to Peter, Brian and our new best friend Percy. Couldn't have done it without you lads.

We'd hardly finished setting up when the 'punters' arrived, including the Mayor of Amber Valley and her Consort. They must have been interested as Paul was talking to them for over 15mins.



Then two working boats, breasted up, entered the lock, with a brass band on board, for the Official Opening of the Rally. As the lock filled, the boats rose, with the bands playing and the crowds cheering....magical! And so the day became better and better.

Paul talked himself hoarse, Eileen, Percy and Joan were selling the produce, Brian and Val kept us supplied with cups of tea, and I 'Played My Cards Right' while being interviewed by Radio Derby! As the crowds dwindled we packed up the stall, secured the marquee and went off to spend the evening in the beer tent with real ale, friends and entertainment.

SUNDAY:- and it's still 'summer'. Chris Grimoldby came to help today. A bit quieter than Saturday but we still did quite well with the takings from the stall and 'Play Your Cards Right'. Evening, and it is 'Boaters D.I.Y' entertainment and an auction. Amongst the auction lots was an anchor, for which we made a successful bid of £20. Bargain!

Star of the evening was our very own Peter Brooks with a selection of poems written by his good self, in the style of various other famous poets.

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An excellent performance which we feel should be shared with all our members, so Peter has kindly agreed to 'ODE TO THE DERBY CANAL UPON ITS OPENING' in the style of William McGonagall, being included in this issue of the Packet.

MONDAY:- still summer, but cooler. It was the turn of Chris ReesFitz-Patrick to help today. (If your name is Chris, you must be on the committee) The public were thin on the ground and everything seemed very quiet, but the takings were surprisingly good. Chris and Ann Madge arrived after lunch, in time for the announcement of the real ale being reduced to £1 a pint. To say there was a stampede for the beer tent is an understatement. I was nearly killed in the rush, but when I got there, lo and behold...at the front of the queue were Chris and Ann, and hooray, they kindly bought Paul and I a pint. Thank you. Four o'clock came, end of rally. Packing up and dismantling of the marquee was done in record time and as we waved goodbye to everyone we felt rather 'flat'....it was the end of the rally and we had nothing to do now except to go home! But we couldn't have had a better weekend, especially with the sun shining...it was not to last!

We set off on our return journey with Percy and Joan, on Tuesday morning...in the torrential rain and return of winter. We arrived at Sandiacre Lock Cottage at 3:45pm, soaked through. (That's what you get for feeling smug when other boaters are cold, tired and wet.) We moored for the night, and as we live only a five minute walk away we all walked home, had showers, something to eat and then went to the Society Meeting where we

all thoroughly enjoyed the very amusing talk on Seaside, Skegness and Knitted Bathing Costumes.

Wednesday dawned cloudy and dry. At least it was dry until we'd gone through Trent Lock and out onto the river, then the heavens opened and once more we ended up very wet. I now have webbed feet and keep saying quack quack!

We went all the way to Stenson Lock without incident, where we met a broken down boater.

Let me rephrase that. We met a boater whose narrowboat had broken down, and he was asking for a tow to Mercia Marina. Poor chap, he'd been there since 6 o'clock the previous evening! As Mercia was our destination we gave him a tow. We stopped just before going into the marina to bid farewell to Percy and Joan and wish them a safe journey back to Shropshire, then it was home for us too.

Paul and I thoroughly enjoyed the Rally...would we do it again?YES!!

Peter Brooks' Poem.

ODE TO THE DERBY CANAL UPON IT'S OPENING.

In The Style of William McGonagall.

Oh, wondrous canal that goes to Derby!
The men that built thee have not been tardy
But have laboured hard to achieve thy completion
In such a short time, to Little Eaton
As well as to Swarkestone and Sandiacre.
In just three years they have managed to make thee
With all thy locks, bridges, wharves and whatever
And have filled thee with water from the Derwent River.

And now thou art finished, in this year of grace
Seventeen Hundred and Ninety-six, to carry goods all over the place;
Especially coals, which come down the gang-way
To Little Eaton wharf, and also from the Erewash Valley, which is a long way
To fetch them by road; but on the canal a horse
Can pull forty tons with ease, as a matter of course.

The pleasant waters, so clear and bright
Bring people from miles away, to see the sights.
On market days a Packet Boat runs for the people of Swarkestone
To save them from carrying baskets, and having to walk on
The muddy highway; instead they can travel in style,
And now that they have the canal they use it all the while.

In Derby, many factories have been built upon the bank
Of the canal, the proprietors of which all the workers do thank
For the chance of honest toil, to improve their state
And relieve their poverty, which before was very great.
In the country, the farmers can have night-soil carried by boat
From the town, to manure their fields, instead of by road,
Which makes things better for them, especially in wet weather,
For they say that the canal is such a great convenience altogether.

Surely trade in the town and its surroundings will expand
Now that there is opened a canal so grand,
And the commerce it brings will prosper the county for ever
Because it no longer has to rely on the river
Which, whilst it was useful in its way was subject to droughts and floods
Which tended to cause delays to the carriage of goods;

For now the canal, being by it's nature free from such disadvantages
Has come, so that factories and other establishments
May have their supplies delivered straight to their frontages
And therefore are no longer dependant upon the vagaries of the elements,
But can rely on regular shipments from all over the country,
And, by way of London or Hull, even from the Continent.

And though the centuries may pass
In all that time no work of man shall surpass
Thy usefulness to all the folk of the town;
But will to all who come to be known,
So that in two hundred years all men shall tell
Of the day thou wast opened, O wondrous Derby Canal!

First published in "The Packet", Oct 1996 and "Canal Memories", 1996
copyright Peter Brooks 1997.





Langley Mill Boat Rally.





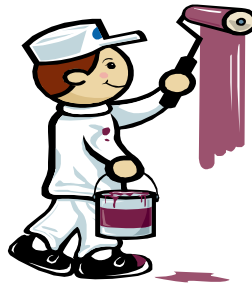
A reminder of what we have achieved. Wilmorton Culvert under construction.



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A Soar Head.

As you may remember after the unfortunate “romantic” honeymoon on a narrowboat 35 years ago, it was decided we wouldn’t buy our own boat. But time heals and, for the last two years we have hired a boat in March when it’s quiet and tried to cruise on the Soar/Trent. In 2011 our cruise from Braunston was halted at the Watford lock maintenance closure, but Milton Keynes wasn’t as bad as we thought. In 2012 we started at Market Harborough avoiding the top of the Leicester branch and possible drought only to be stopped at Kilby by another closure, so we turned through Foxton instead. After an eventful cruise we came back to Foxton on a sunny Sunday. The normal crowds had fewer boats to watch, so all the way down children were fighting to help, so I just relaxed into supervisor mode and co-ordinated the working party. Seeing those delighted faces is surely what restoration is all about.



A Reminder of the Coldest Spring for 62 Years.

So this year in March we hired from Sawley – as close as we could and Waterscape said no closures. The previous two years had been glorious weather, but you'll remember this year was the coldest spring for 62 years and I think we picked the coldest of the weeks available. This year there was an amber flood warning on the Trent and even my prestigious position in the DSCT wouldn't persuade them we could head Soarwards. So we travelled along the T & M and celebrated Mother's Day with our son and his wife in the Bull at Fradley Junction.

Fortunately no-one remembered my unintentional reverse pike dive from the back of a boat ten years prior. We loved coming back through the sheet ice in beautifully clear mornings – although Anne did point out that it was the first holiday ever when she'd worn all the clothes she'd packed all at the same time –she could hardly get through the door.



But I've learned my lesson – next year we'll walk along the Soar.

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New Fundraising Initiatives.

We now have a number of new fund raising initiatives that are available to raise further funds to help drive forward our ambition of restoring the Derby and Sandiacre Canal.



Through Recycle 4 Charity we are able to recycle inkjet cartridges, mobile phones and laser or toner cartridges, and a payment will be made to the Trust. Any of these can be brought along to a Society meeting and handed to a Committee member. Alternatively inkjet cartridges and old mobile phones can be sent for recycling in the envelope that is enclosed with this addition of The Packet. Before sending off the envelope; please add your name and address on the back so that Recycle 4 Charity can send more envelopes direct to you for future use. If you don't have anything to recycle please pass on the envelope to a friend or relative that does.

If you have laser or toner cartridges and can't bring them to a society meeting or you would like a collection box for a larger quantity of cartridges or for a business please contact our treasurer Chris ReesFitzPatrick.



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<http://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/derbysandiacrecanal> or follow the link from www.derbycanal.org.uk. It takes just a few seconds to sign up and install Give as you Live.

Derby Canal Company Dapol 00 Gauge Private Owner Wagon.

Having seen reviews of Dapol private owner wagons, in the Railway Modeller magazine, that are sold to raise funds for various charities a decision has been taken to commission a limited edition of approximately 100 wagons. The wagon will have a green background with "Derby Canal Company Established 1796" emblazoned in white text.

The wagon is relatively expensive to commission and this means that it will have a sale price of £12; which is in line with those advertised in the Railway Modeller magazine. If you wish to order one (or more) please contact Chris ReesFitzPatrick. Postage and packing costs will be determined once the stock is received and measured and weighed; for those of you that are local to the canal's route delivery can be arranged.

We hope to have stock on sale at the County Show 23rd June and future Society meeting. We will also try to get the model reviewed and featured in the Railway Modeller.

Rockery Stone and Slate Chippings.

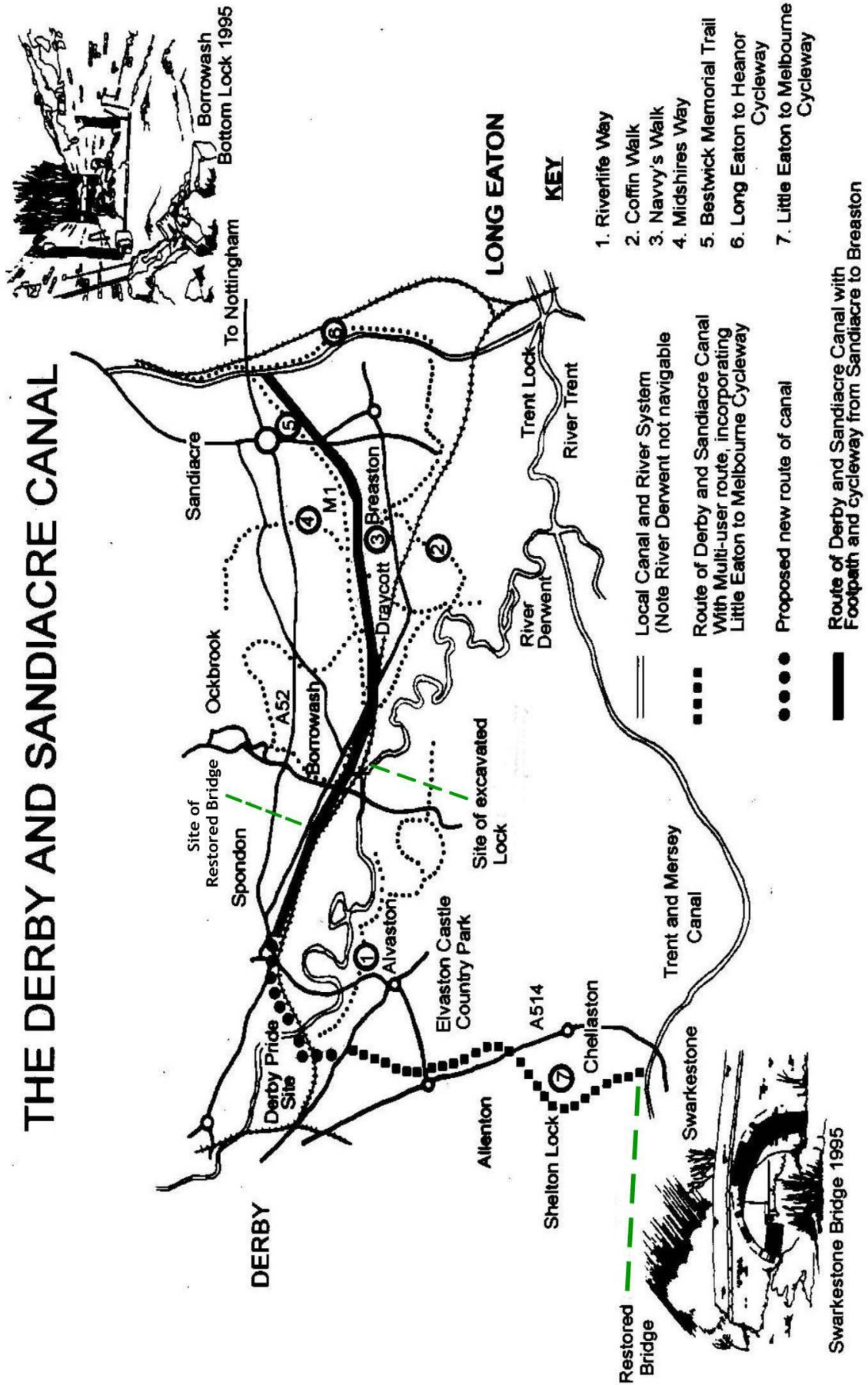
Approximately 70 good size rockery stones and half a cubic metre of Lake District slate chippings are available for a reasonable donation to the Trust. Buyer to collect from Melbourne, Derbyshire.

Please contact Chris ReesFitzPatrick.

There are plenty of other items for sale such as Polo Shirts, Sweat Shirts, calendars, books etc. available from

Paul Birtles, 54, Springfield Avenue, Sandiacre, Derbyshire NG10 5LZ.
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THE DERBY AND SANDIACRE CANAL



The Canal & River Trust.

It was as long ago as the mid 1950s that IWA co-founder Robert Aickman argued that the inland waterways should be managed as a conservancy outside of direct government control. This was a time of great decline and waterway closures as the freight role of most waterways disappeared. However Aickman was a visionary and he recognised the leisure potential of the green corridors running across the country. Largely due to IWA campaigns the closure programme was halted by the end of the 1960s and growth in leisure use resulted in a renaissance of our waterways. However most waterways remained under government control and funding was always a hand to mouth affair, for example in the early 1980s Blisworth tunnel had to be closed for over four years as there was not enough money to repair it.

More recently breaches on the Brecon & Abergavenny Canal resulted in British Waterways (BW) leaving the Cotswold Canals restoration project. Even before the recent financial crises there was a steady drop in government funding of waterways, but the recent austerity era has not just introduced cuts but has led government to question how much the taxpayer should subsidise leisure pursuits. IWA will continue to argue that government funding is necessary given the wider benefits waterways bring to communities but the Association realised that a new model was necessary.

IWA strongly supported the formation of Canal & River Trust (CRT) a year ago. Handing over the former BW waterways to a specially created charity is a first step towards realising the Aickman vision. The lucrative investment property portfolio has been locked into the charity and the 15-year financial settlement with government is generous compared with what has happened elsewhere in the public sector. More importantly it provides a known and secure income from government whilst CRT looks to develop new sources of income. Had BW still been in existence the latest austerity round would have certainly led to more cuts.

Where does this leave the Environment Agency's (EA) navigations? Although they remained outside the formation of CRT the government has made it clear that it wishes them to be transferred in 2015, subject to affordability and the agreement of CRT trustees. IWA strongly supports such a transfer. EA navigations are in a generally good condition resulting from investment over many years; this is particularly true of the Thames but less so in East Anglia. However, the long term sustainability is precarious as they are even more dependent upon government grants than BW was. 65% comes from the taxpayer and only 35% from boaters, even worse

there are currently no other sources of significant income. If nothing changes then the inevitable fall off in government grant will have to be met by further cuts in running costs (and hence service standards) together with higher than inflation licence/registration charges. The EA knows that it has to find new sources of income but there are limits of what a government body can achieve. By joining the CRT, EA navigations will benefit from economy of scale with a large marketing organisation geared towards raising money including that from the charitable sector. The Thames in particular is a very lucrative waterway corridor where the potential for charitable fundraising is huge. Inclusion of EA navigations in CRT will move much closer to full realisation of the Aickman vision.

The government review of whether to push for a transfer of EA navigations is about to get underway. Money is very tight to enable a dowry that will satisfy the CRT trustees and there may have to be consideration of innovative financial solutions. IWA will give every support and encouragement to government and CRT and it will be a major campaigning activity.

Defra also asked the Environment Agency to look at alternative arrangements for its three ports (Rye Harbour, Dee Conservancy and Lydney Harbour), which would not be transferred to Canal & River Trust, over a year ago. The first two are understood to be commercially viable and may be sold off, but Lydney Harbour may be transferred to a not-for-profit body for £1 along with a dowry. Proposals are with the Agency's board for consideration, and are likely to become public knowledge shortly now that the future of the Agency is more settled. The Agency is still awaiting the outcome of a Harbour Revision Order for the Dee, to modernise its powers, which has been under consideration by Government since 2005.

Improvements to Caldon Canal Towpath at Cheddleton.

Works to make a popular stretch of Caldon Canal towpath more accessible and user-friendly for the local community are complete and were officially opened by Charlotte Atkins, chairman of the Canal & River Trust's Central Shires waterway partnership, on 27th June.

The Caldon Canal towpath through Cheddleton has been rebuilt to give walkers, cyclists and disabled visitors a clean, green traffic-free route, between two of the area's most important and popular historic attractions.

The 'Connecting the Heritage' project has seen the Canal & River Trust improve 1.2km of towpath linking the Churnet Valley Railway Station and Cheddleton Flint Mill making it easier for people to visit both.

The project has also included the creation of a wheelchair-friendly boat access point at the Flint Mill, specially designed in conjunction with The Beatrice Charity which provides boat trips for those with a need to get afloat, along with the installation of new visitor moorings near to the steam railway station to enable boaters to stop and use the shops, pubs and other facilities, providing a welcome boost to the local economy.

The improvements are the first big community-inspired project to be delivered as part of the Churnet Valley Living Landscape Partnership (CVLLP) which is aimed at protecting, enhancing and celebrating the special landscapes of the Churnet Valley.

The £200,000 project has been part funded by CVLLP with additional funding being provided by Communities Mean Business, the Canal & River Trust and the Garfield Weston Foundation.

The project has also benefitted from significant involvement of volunteers from the Caldon & Uttoxeter Canals Trust and IWA North Staffordshire & South Cheshire Branch (formerly known as IWA Stoke-on-Trent branch).

The volunteers campaign got underway on 4th March 2007, when a Cheddleton Waterway Community Day was held and the village was invited to come down to the canal for a walk, to enjoy a fun Sunday afternoon out and to say how valuable the canal is to your community.

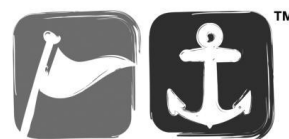
The event was organised by IWA North Staffordshire & South Cheshire Branch in partnership with the Caldon & Uttoxeter Canals Trust, Stoke-on-Trent Boat Club, the Beatrice Charity and Cheddleton Flint Mill Industrial Heritage Trust.

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