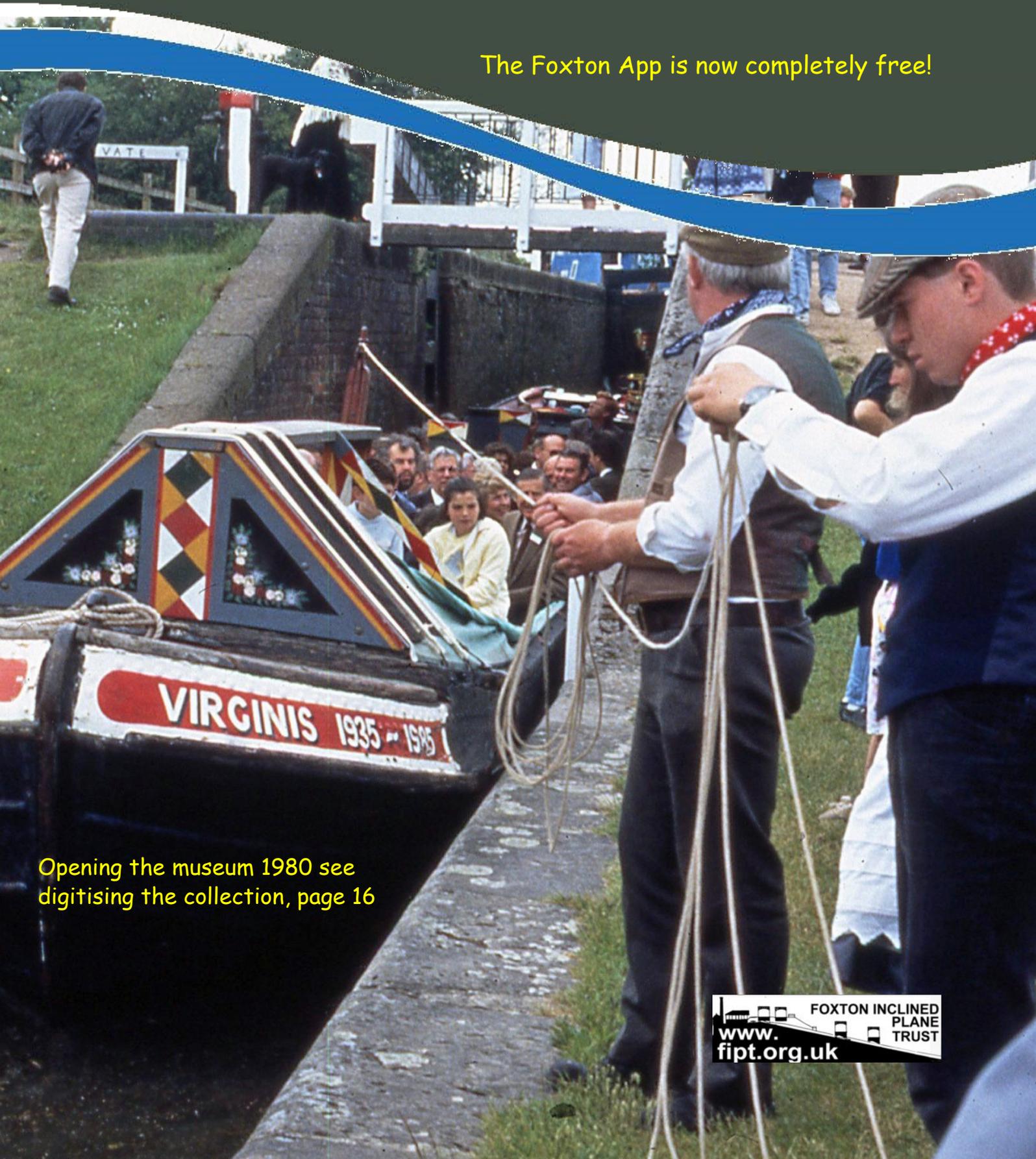


Spring 2016 No 136

Plane Informer

The Foxton App is now completely free!



Opening the museum 1980 see
digitising the collection, page 16

Mysterious Heaps

by Bob

We do enjoy our walks around the site.

We have noted over the years mysterious yellow heaps of pre-packed coal or other fuel suddenly appearing beside a moored narrow boat along the cut.

The heaps were not there when we set off on the walk but whilst our backs were turned the "mysterious heap man" has visited and there is the evidence in a neat stack of plastic sacks of fuel.

The boats are nearly all locked up so it unlikely the boat owner has placed the heaps there. Speculation turned on a manifestation of the "tooth fairy" in a more adult form.

Our patience was rewarded last week when we spotted in the lower arm basin the culprit. NB Callisto delivering fuel in gaseous, solid and liquid forms.

Colour is much needed on the cut and this working boat is certainly colourful. Red gas bottles,

Yellow pre-pack coal, black cargo covers, green wheelbarrow for gangplank delivery. Blue paintwork with yellow lettering. Gaily decorated hatch pillars.

Then we recalled seeing the dog seen here sitting on the cabin top by his master whipping into and then out of Top Lock Coffee Stop whilst we were buying an ice cream.

The dog probably knows every boat and building on the canal which holds a customer. "Bunkering" in style.

Bob Hakewill Feb 2016



Chairman's Notes



It's been an interesting and exciting time at The BoilerHouse museum since it re-

opened last April after the major refurbishment.

The museum has had a lot of visitors and more school groups than previous years. Many people have said how much they enjoyed their visit and have particularly enjoyed the interactive 'Boiler Game'. 'Coals' are fed into a 'boiler' and when the correct pressure is reached a digital version of the Inclined Plane Boat Lift is shown on the screen actually working.

When The BoilerHouse re-opened an App was also introduced that people could download on their phones and tablet devices. The App gives information on visiting the site, the Foxton Quest and various other features. The App was chargeable initially but now downloads completely free of charge.

In the past year Mike Beech, the Museum Keeper, has taken semi retirement and Penny Arscott will be the BoilerHouse Manager from April this year. Penny has recently completed a mountain of paperwork to apply for the Museum's accreditation. This was a very time consuming job and I would like to congratulate Penny on completing it on time.

The BoilerHouse is on a good footing for the future. Lots of ideas are being considered to make it even better.

Canal and River Trust have been talking to all businesses on the Foxton site to establish a Destination Management Plan to look at future development of the whole site.

We were also pleased to hear that

the site, along with Bingley Five Rise Locks, and the National Waterways Museum have

all won a Sandford Award - an independently judged, quality assured assessment of education programmes at heritage sites, museums, archives and collections across the British Isles.

CRT entered three locations to give a sample of the types of places at which they deliver learning programmes. In the case of Foxton this is delivered in partnership with the BoilerHouse. The judges were all greatly impressed by the programmes on offer at each site and felt that they were worthy of commendation by the award scheme. A common thread throughout the judging reports is the fantastic work done by Canal and River Trust Explorer education volunteers

The awards will help us to encourage more schools to visit Foxton as along with the recent award of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, CRT are now able to demonstrate high quality learning and safety provisions, which are the essential elements of any school visit.

Congratulations to the CRT Explorer Team for Foxton. They have worked with us for several years and make a School Visit to Foxton a brilliant event.



Mikes mutterings

by Mike Beech

Well as no one has stepped in to take over as editor You are stuck with me for the moment, but the position remains available.

It seems quite odd to be 'Semi Retired' it has made a big difference over the winter. I no longer have to work 5 days a week and so far over the winter Penny and I have been working alternate weekends with a few days extra to do specific jobs. It is odd to know that there is work to be done but I do not need to do it. I have been tempted to come in and do things that need doing and have to remind myself that no I do have a life outside of Foxton. However I have been sitting at home scanning 35mm slides in to my computer and trying to separate personal pictures from Foxton and also group them into sensible collections.

It has been great to be free to go off at weekends to see shows etc. I got to see the last flight of the Vulcan and I visited the steam model fair at Leicester's Abby Pumping Station. It was overcrowded on a very wet day and I decided to stroll along the river. There is a pleasant circular walk from the museum but having got half way I found that the towpath on the other side was completely underwater.

In The BoilerHouse Penny has been very busy working on our Accreditation application with the Arts Council.

We are fortunate to have a few good museum volunteers at the moment, including Katie who is cheerful, can run the place on her own on a Saturday and

is good with the collections data base.

I have taken a back seat so that Penny can gain experience and confidence in running the BoilerHouse, I am sure that she can do it but I know that it can be a bit daunting. A great deal of the collection does need me to explain what it is, because in all of the years I have been working at the Museum I have never had enough time to complete the documentation, it always had to take second place to serving the customers, doing the maintenance and of course producing Informer. That is one part of my job that Penny doesn't seem to want!

Getting others to write for informer is a bit of a problem, but there must be members out there that are budding journalists with something to say. It could be the tale of your holidays and Chris has provided an interesting article for this edition. Or it could be a piece of research . These days you can research so much on the internet. Most of the articles in well known magazines are compiled entirely from information found on the net. Dave Goodwin's favourite at the moment is THE INDUSTRIAL RAILWAYS RECORD (BACK NUMBERS) since this includes many local and foreign IND. ARCH rail subjects or if you like canal related walking you could look up TODWICK RAMBLERS CLUB WALKS (in and around Derbyshire).

If you find interesting subjects you 5

could give me a call and discuss it. I may be able to suggest helpful places to look for more info, or I might be keen to go and look what you can find on the ground. You could get yourself in print and perhaps spark off a plethora of others interested in your subject. So you have a couple of months now before the next informer, see what you can come up with, any format will do. But if you don't I may well fill the pages with my exploits and opinions, let's have yours!

In the last issue I reported on the nasty accident that saw a lady fall in and get pulled into the lock through the paddle gear, it could have been a lot worse. CRT responded quickly and to my surprise came up with a fast solution that avoided fences everywhere. They put a steel cage round the entrance to the paddle gear. It was always a temporary fix and the pressure of water was by the end of the season destroying the cages, and they were made of thick wire. Now they have installed the permanent fix. Cages made of heavy gauge metal, with a galvanised finish.

They have a sloping front which if you were trapped against them would push you towards the surface. They have been designed in consultation with the wildlife experts so that fish and eels can go through, but trapped vegetation can be raked clear. They also look the part.

At the top of the locks on what we all ways refer to as the island, the project to restore some of the apple trees and make the space available to the public, whilst improving the wildlife habitat has progressed, the bramble which was choking everything has been cut back and we are waiting for the tree surgeon to come in and ensure that all of the trees are safe and healthy. CRT had to ask permission from Harborough Council to work on the bigger trees.

I have applied to become a volunteer lock keeper. This is to give me something to do that is still canal, but gets me out in the fresh air with some exercise, at the moment I am waiting to start the training, I will let you know how I get on.



Penny's Piece

News from the Museum Manager by Penny Arscott

I have had a very busy start to 2016. The store at Desborough has been emptied of the remainder of the collection with help from Richard, Gabe and Bob. Thank you gentlemen for your assistance. Don't worry I treated them to a coffee at Bridge 61 for their efforts!

I have also been completing the museum's accreditation form, which needed to be reapplied for. This has been a very interesting process and has helped me gain a better understanding of what is required to run our museum. I've been keeping the Trustees busy too with all the policies and plans, which needed reviewing and approval. Part of our Forward Plan is to get more key objects out on display. We are designing a discovery chest, which will sit under the section of the inclined plane rail and will house some of our puzzling objects. HoloVis will be assisting with the construction of the chest as well as helping us with other improvements around the museum. Mike and I have planned the year's events at the museum. The main one will be our summer exhibition called Waterway Wildlife. It will be looking at what the visitor can find living in and around the canals at Foxton. Penny Foster who is an ecologist for CRT came in and gave us useful information and ideas of what to include. We will run various activities for children including a nature trail and being a nature detective.

You can see what we have planned over 2016 on our events section in Informer.

With last year's refurbishment we have had to review the collection. We started by engaging help from Emma Chaplin who gives advice and support to museums up and down the country on reviewing and rationalising their collections. She devised a methodology, which Mike and I used on each object. The questions that were aimed to answer through this process were:

What is the significance of collection objects? Does it relate to the site or an important part of canal history?

How well can objects help the museum engage with visitors?

What potential is there to use the object in research or learning?

Is the object a duplicate of others in the collection?

This has been a fascinating exercise. Mike has an incredible knowledge of the collection and could tell you a story about every object in the collection! Through this I have obtained an in-depth understanding of our collection.

Easter Fundraising and Festival

by Ann Bushby

I've agreed to help organise the usual Easter event outside the BoilerHouse over the Easter Bank Holiday (25th to 28th March) with our fundraising stalls and craft stalls and trading boats. Penny is organising an Easter egg trail round the site and if she can get permission from CRT she is organising a Roll an Egg Down the Incline event!

We are once again holding our Foxton Locks Festival over the weekend of 18/19 June and that's been taking over my life since before Christmas.

We would love to see you, our members, down at the locks over Easter. It's always a busy weekend as everyone makes the most of the first Bank Holiday weekend. If you come along come and say 'Hi' to us on the fundraising stalls as we like to meet as many of our members as we can.

Once again the Festival will be a family oriented affair and coincide with Father's Day on the Sunday. Attractions are being lined up as we speak but there will be arena entertainment all day both Days. Live music on two stages again all day and Saturday night till 11.45pm, the usual craft stalls, a large food village selling a variety of food for all tastes and not forgetting the real ale bar. Don't forget if you come along to the Festival with proof of your membership you can get in for free (normal charge £5 for adults). We even have camping



facilities for those of you who would like to imbibe in the alcohol or who perhaps live a distance away but want to come and enjoy the festivities.

As usual I'm going to ask if anyone would like to help at both or either of these events, they don't run themselves and the more people we have the more time we all have to enjoy the craft stalls at Easter and the Festival itself. If you'd like to volunteer then either email Cathy on cathy.fipt@gmail.com or ring me at the museum (0116 2792657) on a Tuesday or Sunday we can find jobs to suit all skills.

Thanks for reading this and I look forward to meeting you all if not at Easter then over Festival weekend.

German ships & Foxtan Scrap

Back in 1988

Dave Goodwin wrote a book based on letters from the canal engineer, Thomas William Millner. One chapter is dedicated to scrapping the Foxtan lift. Millner's brother in law, a Mr B F Pearson from Los Angeles, visited Britain in 1928 about the time that the lift was being scrapped. He went on to visit Scapa Flow in Scotland. So what Dave has that got to do with Foxtan?

According to the letters it fell to Millner to get prices for the scrap metal which constituted our lift, (every body boo.) One of the companies tendering were Cox and Danks Ltd. They were

represented by a Mr. P H Humphries.

The first letter exchanges date from 1924, they offered to meet Millner on site and 'Quote you our own very best price'. After the exchange of lots of letters it was nearly a year before anything happened. On the 15th of August Cox and Danks had won the contract to cut up the German fleet scuttled in Scapa Flow. Pearson who was staying at Millner's house in Blisworth, wanted to see the works for himself and asked permission through

Earnest Cox standing on the upturned hull of a German battle Ship with his railway crane in the background.



Mr Humphries who promised detailed instructions 'as to how to get to the spot.' Cox's had a base at Cradley Heath and were looking for boats to move the scrap metal from Foxton. They didn't succeed in their bid for the scrap but on the 18th they did instruct Pearson on how to get to Scapa flow. 'Take the Train to Thurso (far north of Scotland, I have relatives there Mike.) take the steamer to Stromness and then the daily launch to Lyness.'

Pearson worked for the Edison Electric co. They were involved in the

early electric tram car system. Ernest Frank Guelph Cox (1883-1959) was an electrical and mechanical engineer and marine salvage expert from Wolverhampton and he went into partnership with Danks, a silent partner providing finance. He gained the contract to salvage the German fleet.

52 ships of the surrendered German fleet were scuttled by their crews to stop them being taken by the allies. All but 7 have been raised for scrap. Danks used innovative ideas to raise the ships, including pumping



The capsized Moltke en route to Rosyth, surrounded by tugs. Through a misunderstanding two pilots were appointed to guide her to the dry dock. The temporary housing for men and machines while on the journey was built on the ship's bottom, which was now her top.

The pipe sticking up from the hull is an air lock, these pipes some up to 60 foot high were welded to the hull underwater, compressed air was pumped in an men could go down inside the hull to prepare it to refloat, all be it upside down.

compressed air into them.

One of the early ones was the Moltke she was raised and towed to Lyness pier. There the railway was extended on to the hull and a crane run out to lift the heavy materials. Cox's methods were efficient. Other companies had salvaged some ships but not many, once Cox got started he was lifting a couple of ships a year. He bought out his partner. Whilst he broke ships up on the Thames he had no experience of salvage works but as a brilliant engineer he found ways to do it and lifted 26 ships before attempting the Hindenburg. This was a slow job with interruptions such as a miners strike, which meant no coal for his

pumps. When the metals market collapsed in the 1930s he handed the operation over to Metal Industries Ltd who began work in 1934 and continued raising ships at a rate of one warship per year until 1939.

As the ships of the German Fleet were made in a pre-nuclear age, their metal was highly sought after for use in sensitive scientific equipment. Edinburgh company, Nuclear Enterprises Ltd, found use for 2000 tons of the salvaged metal in large medical systems and some of the Scapa Flow steel even found its way into the Voyager II spacecraft!



Scrap men at work at Foxton

An Interview with

PERCY DURRAN first published in Union

This article was first published in the Old Union Canal Society magazine, Union when it was edited by Dave Goodwin. At the time of writing the people mentioned in the article were well known to OUCS members. We haven't changed it so when Dave starts off 'a couple of years ago' it should now perhaps be many years. I do not have a date of original publication.

Taped by Heather Marlow, transcribed by Dave Goodwin.

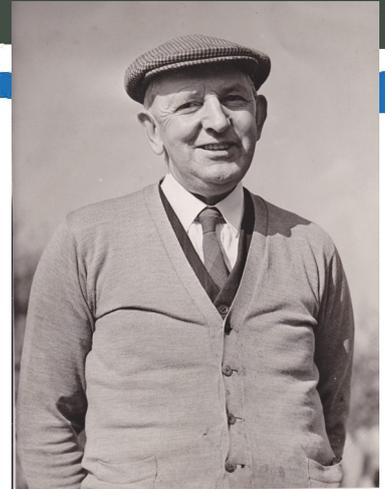
Readers will recall a couple of years ago a tape was made with Mrs. Dainty - sadly, hopes of completing a similar exercise with Percy Durran finally faded last year. By pure chance, I have just had a tape passed to me recorded 10 years ago for a college project. It consists of brief chats with local canal personalities. The interviewers - 'non-canal' people themselves, ask basic questions of the staff at Foxton about commercial carrying, and quiz passing pleasure boaters about holidays afloat. The major part of the tape however, is conducted by Heather herself, and devoted to Percy who recalls many aspects of his life on the section...

He started work for the Grand Union Canal Co. aged 17 as an apprentice carpenter, working with his father... 'Every Winter for six Winters I went up to Bulbourne which was the headquarters for making lockgates, to get an insight into the building. I used to go off in October and come back in March, then work on the district with my father. He lived at Northampton originally, and came to Foxton when the Lift was made'.

When he married, Percy lived in Foxton village for 4 years, when his father retired, he took over, eventually spending 25 years as district foreman with responsibility for the 'Union' waters... 'Head Offices used to be in Belgrave Gate in Leicester, I used to go each day to my office at Kilby Bridge. I had four different managers over me in the 50 years I was on the Canal. I used to set out work on the district - if there were complaints or inquiries, I used to visit the farmers and people along the canal. Cattle strayed through fences, water leaked through banks, when we got complaints I used to go and see these different jobs and then set the men on to do the work'.

Percy had begun this interview with a nervous laugh, but, put at his ease, his gentle deep voice was now describing the routine of the life he loved... About making clay into puddle, 'just like making clay for pottery', or commenting on the 'rats and moles' which used to work their way into the banks. 'In odd places near Kilby, some 6 - 8 miles from Leicester there was always cracks in the chalk. The short ponds meant you could go one day and find them empty. We had to put reinforced concrete all over the canal which did the job all right'.

Frustratingly, the tape has been re-used in places and so the interview is



incomplete... 'When we had stoppages for new lock gates we used to work from 4 in the morning, to 8 at night - a day and a half! Labourers wages at the time were 17 shillings (85p) per week, and the Tradesmen 30 shillings (£1.50), you had to be a good Tradesman to get thirty shillings in those days!' Tunnel repairs were carried out in Winter - 'They would work perhaps a month at a time, sleeping on the boats and only coming home at week-ends, we all had to do that when we started. When I first started there were 50 - 60 pairs of boats thro' Foxton a week, they worked right through to the end of the war then the trade went altogether from the canals - motor lorries took over. Cargoes were mostly coal at the end of the Second World War, but the first thirty years I worked, all the roadstone used to come from Mountsorrel and be dumped in different bridges every three miles apart close to the roads and then carted by road for the roller doing work on road repairing'.

'Timber came from abroad to Tilbury, London Docks, we should have perhaps 15 - 20 pairs of boats when one ship was in, one following the other from London to Market Harborough (Trenery's). In the early days every boat was horsedrawn, then there were three Steamers from London to Leicester

taking 72 hours. These boats were kept for particular cargoes. A fly boat worked from London to Birmingham with four men on board going day and night'. (Mrs. Dainty also commented on the Steamers.)

Percy referred to his retirement in terms which sum up the philosophy of a dedicated canalman - an attitude which is sadly lacking to-day - 'I got to retiring age which was 65, I had done 48 years, they let me carry on for two years to make 50 years service, for which I was very pleased'.

Mike Buswell has arranged to re-record the tape and it will be deposited in Society archives along with the previous Mrs. Dainty exhibit. Our thanks must go to Heather Marlow for kindly offering this rare item.

The Canal Society OUCS has deposited it's archive with FIPT. The society are still active and hold regular walks and talks for details please call Mary Matts who is on the FIPT committee in addition to serving as an OUCS committee member in charge of talks.

marymattsfoxton@btinternet.com



Left:-

Percy with Jack Cryer talk to one of the bosses? on the inspection launch Kingfisher. Percy has the pipe.

Events 2016

BOILERHOUSE AT FOXTON LOCKS

25 th - 28 th March	Easter Fun at Foxton Stalls, egg hunt and roll an egg down the Inclined Plane
30 th - April 2 nd May	Family Spring Fun
28 th - May 5 th June	Nature Detectives Can you spot the clues on our nature trail?
18 th - 19 th June	Foxton Locks Festival The big event of the year, with a little extra around the BoilerHouse
July - September	Waterway Wildlife, our temporary summer exhibition in the BoilerHouse
30 th July - 1 st August	Nature Detectives
27 th -29 th August	Teddy Bear's Picnic
15 th - 30 th October	Spooky Foxton
29 th October	Ghost Walk

On The Telly

By Mike Beech

There have been a few programmes on TV lately with some connection to Canals, some good others not so good.

Canals: the making of a nation was very good and very informative. If this were a competition I might give it 10. Follow this link to see an interactive film based on part of the series. <http://bbc-vip.touchcast.com/embed/19946>.

Very popular is *Great Canal Journeys*, I have watched every episode at least twice and it is still entertaining. I am sure the editor has included as many mistakes in operating the boat as they can, it makes it more entertaining for those less fanatical about our waterways, but do they really make that many mistakes compared to anyone else? The start sequence contains a shot of Timothy West trying to drive out of a lock when still tied to the bank, Prunella Scales apologises, but when I was boating I always thought that it was my job when at the tiller to make sure I was not trying to tow the scenery with

me. Besides my crew never apologised, if it went wrong it must be the captain's fault! I believe a new series is being filmed.

I enjoyed *Jericho*, not a canal program, they are supposedly building a railway viaduct. The stories are quite good, but, I don't believe that the streets of a navy town were ever that clean, the people ever that clean and the language never that clean. Where are the Irish? I am sure that by the time we were building viaducts a good number of the navvies would have been Irish. The costume annoyed me as well, nearly every man was wearing a shirt collar. As far as I know they would have had detachable collars at that time and would not have bothered with a collar. And why is the weather always so good? Other historical programs made recently also have that problem, whilst I believe lives were not as bleak as some



By the 1960s I believe that most of the boats would have been painted in the BWB colour scheme of Blue and Yellow, otherwise *Call the Midwife* was a good representation of canal life.

people paint them, it was usually much dirtier than the programmes suggest.

One programme I do enjoy is *Call the Midwife*. I started watching it with Mum, and particularly enjoyed try to spot where it was filmed, mostly around Chatham Dockyard, one of my favourite places to visit. This week though they were visiting the canal in the 1960s. I think it was done rather well. It was filmed at Bulbourne Yard. It seems that this great set of canal workshops, where for many years most of the lock gates were made, is in line for redevelopment. Follow the link to find out more. <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/2676.pdf>. Another aspect of the program I enjoy is how they film it. Whilst I am never likely to want to film a birth for one of my amateur films the 'cheats' always intrigue me. Apparently most of the babies are real, but they do

have state-of-the-art prosthetic babies which cost £5,000 each. Mum wants to know why there is so much screaming, she says it never happened in her day.

No wonder making TV programmes is so expensive. In the fictional *Jericho* the viaduct is mostly done on the computer and smaller 'real' sets mixed in all clever stuff. , making *Great canal Journeys* is all real but there must be a cost to the bumps and scrapes on the boats.



It seems like a long time ago when we had our day of snow, the closest this year to a real winter, but the sun came out bringing visitors with it. Volunteer lock keepers can be seen here clearing snow and gritting paths to make it safe. We have some good volunteers working for CRT and the canals.

Digitising the Collection, Slides

By Mike Beech

We have in the collection a large amount of 35mm slides. For a long time I was taking slides myself as this was the cheapest and best way to produce colour pictures, and you could have some fun showing the family as a group. Digital photography was ok when it came along but the quality was not good. We had no way to project the images so, for talks at least, I carried on with slides for a few years after I owned my first digital camera. This was not much better than the camera in a cheap mobile phone. So there are a lot of pictures taken by me. These are not too bad to deal with, I usually know what they are of and why I took the picture. Some of my personal holiday snaps are mixed in to finish off the film. We also have several collections of slides inherited from others. These are much harder to sort, especially when the Box says BCN and it is full of Shropshire Union. What to keep and what not to keep. Very few people are good at getting rid of the rubbish pictures, one stretch of water with grass banks and trees is much like another. So I had to set some rules. We can't keep everything and what we keep must make sense to others, especially if they don't have someone like me or Mary Matts to tell them what they are looking at. So is it a canal? Do we know where? Do we know who? Is it interesting? Is the quality good enough or is the damage too bad to make it worthwhile (unless it is the only picture of that subject when a poor quality shot is better than nothing. Slides suffer from poor

storage, they do collect static electricity which attracts dust and very thin hairs. If the original wasn't of good quality there is little you can do, sometimes they were not processed properly and have purple spots, some have faded badly. Thousands of slides later and the batch I have at home is down to a couple of boxes of half frame pictures where to get more off one reel the picture is only half the size. There are also the Kodak Instamatics to look forward to. The slides are being scanned in to the computer, cleaned up where we can and the originals will be stored in a sealed box.

I have included some of the old pictures in this issue so that you can see what we have. Front Cover, the picture on the front cover was taken during the first opening party for the Museum. Foxtan Boat Services provided the boat and pulled her down the locks with their horse. A very young looking Sam Matts is on the right and his Dad Tony is next to him pulling the towline under the bridge. The Boat is laden with VIPs. Near the middle lock we had Harborough band playing, The VIPs thought it was a recording until they emerged from the lock to see the band.



Where would Foxton and the rest of the canal system be without WRG, this gang were at Foxton in the 1980s. I think they were from BITM (bit in the Middle not covered by other WRG groups, membership from anywhere). The Dog was the chairman, if I have the correct group. They helped clear the Incline and the top arm for the first time, WRG Essex took over later.



More stars, this time from a local scout group cutting trees on the top half of the incline.



Investigating the lift foundations. Top - Dave with high quality equipment moves the soil. Right -the tunnel entrance and end of steel conduit which crosses the site.

Bottom - showing the contraction of the supporting soil. We had a Leicester university engineer supporting the works.





Back wall of the BoilerHouse, removing the Ivy, that is me up the ladder and Dave Goodwin on the top of the wall. That bit of the wall is now in the office with the stairs coming down near where the ladder is. I didn't know just how good ivy was at sticking to a wall before then.



Putting the roof on the BoilerHouse. A very momentous time for FIPT. The crane was borrowed from Foxton Boat services and is now in Cumbria at the excavator trust. The tractor belonged to Trevor Towers. Dave Goodwin the red coat is at one end of the roof beam and I am at the other. I think Brian Oakley has his back to the camera, Trevor will be driving the crane and Peter Mayes stands clear.



Restoring the side ponds, 1989. the side pond walls were supported with huge steel piling which was higher than the museum, they piled along the front of the museum with these which I think was rather over the top!



Thurmaston gravel run, boats took gravel from the extraction site down river to the processing plant.



One of the first canal slide pictures I ever took was at the Old Union Canal society Welford Rally of 1970 just 1 year after the reopening of the Welford Arm. The boat, Friendship is famous as the last horse drawn long distance boat, Rose Skinner at the tiller. The boat is now on display at Ellesmere Port in the Waterway Museum.



Left, our stand at a national rally, not sure which one. Standing next to me are Mr and Mrs Tomlin-Barfoot. Steve Barfoot was once chairman and treasurer of FIPT. He is now involved with the Foxton Locks Festival.



Another of the slides, this is the restoration of the side ponds. The digger is there to drive the big steel piles, the square at the bottom of the picture was the well for the chimney lightning rod. You can see the strip of copper draped over the edge. The well would have held, large slabs of metal often copper. The metal would have gone for scrap a long time ago.

Fresh Clean Water

by Bob

As many of the readers may be aware I am somewhat interested in the history of Market Harborough. In the 1880s a water pipeline was run from a wellhead at Husbands Bosworth to the reservoir at the top of Burnmill Road. From this reservoir the town was supplied with drinking water.

The canal had been extended in 1814 from Foxton to Bosworth via Welford.

The water pipe fed the water by gravity along the line roughly of the road. It then climbs at Lubenham toward the ridge on which the reservoir sits.

Lubenham is at a low point in the pipe and the water flows there because of the siphon effect. Still visible in the ditch along the road is the cast metal sign showing the initials MHGLBWW. The sign is an AV sign signifying an A valve is located 9 foot away from the post



Membership July 2015

by Val



Hello members

Firstly let me wish you all belated but heartfelt good wishes for 2016.

As you all probably now know we have installed a new automated system to accommodate our membership database and this had a field day in sending out messages of nonpayment when most of you had paid. This was due to the fact that renewal dates are set to 31st December with payments not being received until very early January. Normally I would be in the office updating these files but was unable to do so before reminder letters went out. I will try to do better next year but do not take it personally if the odd overdue letter is received - just bear with me or give me a call if you are troubled about anything (I work only on a Tuesday) Tele no 0116 279 2657.

This new system should make things easier for me with regard to follow up procedures and hopefully within the next few months I should

know what I am doing!

If you have not already supplied an email address could you please do so now as this is the medium by which we can send;

- a) reminders
- b) b) send your informer electronically (if so desired).

We welcome the following members that have re-joined the trust :

Ann Hoxley

Michael Brash

Well that's all for now

Val Britcher

The Foxton Inclined Plane Trust

Chairman

Chairman and Volunteer Coordinator
Cathy Fleming cathy.fipt@gmail.com

Treasurer Lawrence Harrison
Treasurer@fipt.org.uk

Deputy Treasurer Chris Graves

Fund Raising and Events

Ann Bushby
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Heritage and Site

Mary Matts
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Publicity

Derek Harris

Membership Secretary

Val Britcher - contact as BoilerHouse

Museum Keeper & Editor of the Plane Informer

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Museum Manager

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Membership is open to all who have sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Trust upon payment of the appropriate subscription:

£9 Single- renewable Jan 1st

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£150 Individual Life

The BoilerHouse is run by the Trust and its volunteers. It holds extensive collections of artefacts, models, archives, and photographs of the Lift site and associated waterways. The Museum has won numerous awards and contains something for everyone and every age, including touch screen interactive displays, a play boat and working models, the boiler game and large screen projections. Refurbished in 2015.

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A Trip on the River Douro, Portugal

By Chris Graves

My name is Chris Graves, I have recently taken on the responsibility of treasurer of FIPT. My wife and I moved to this area in 2003 after living for many years near Worthing. Although we have never had a canal holiday, we love visiting the locks, especially with the grandchildren. We have been helping with the Festival for several years, and I offered my help when I heard that Lawrence Harrison wished to retire from the role of treasurer. Our main holiday last year was a trip down the Douro. Mike asked if I would write it up for Informer.

The River Douro is one of the major rivers of the Iberian Peninsula, flowing from its source in Soria Province, across northern-central Spain, then Portugal, to its outlet at Porto on the Atlantic Ocean (see map). Its total length is 897 kilometres (557 miles). For 112 kilometres (70 miles) the river forms the natural border between Spain and Portugal, in a region of narrow canyons.

We began our trip at Porto, Portugal's second city, where its historic centre has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, because of its significant architecture and history. The birthplace of Port wine, Porto is a long-running mecca for wine aficionados, where riverside wine cellars jockey for attention with scores of cellars open for tastings. Much of the Portuguese part of the Douro is navigable by light river craft with a maximum length of 83 metres (272 feet) and width of 11.4 metres (37 feet), so that they are able to pass through the five locks.

The locks are part of a total of 15 dams which have been built on the Douro to regulate water flow, generate hydroelectric power and allow navigation.

The highest lock at Carrapatelo Dam, has a maximum lift of 35 metres (114 feet), and is the deepest lock in Europe. The various dams effectively create a series of long thin lakes along the Douro.

Travelling upstream, the scenery quickly changes from lush covered hillsides, to an intricate patterned landscape of steeply terraced vine covered slopes, as we enter Port wine territory.

The climate changes too, leaving the Atlantic behind, it is noticeably warmer and drier. These reaches of the Douro have a microclimate allowing for the cultivation of olives, almonds and especially grapes. The region around Pinhao is considered to be the centre of Port wine, with its estates extending along the almost vertical slopes of the steep river valleys. In the 21st century



many of these estates are owned by multinational companies. Traditionally, the wine was taken down river in flat bottom boats (rabelos), to be stored in barrels in cellars in Porto. The building of the dams in the 1950's and 1960's ended this river traffic; now Port wine is transported in tanker

trucks.

For those of you interested in rivers, canals and locks, the River Douro is well worth a visit.





Carrapatelo Lock
The deepest lock
in Europe.

