Stamp End railway bridge
By Barry Barton

Stamp End bridge photographed in 1950

The dismantling of the main span of this historic bridge by Network Rail’s contractor (AMCO) was scheduled for the night of Saturday 5th / Sunday 6th August but did not finally take place until 8.40pm on the Monday evening, after frenzied activity by men with shovels and wheelbarrows removing, to reduce weight, the several tons of waterproof (i.e. very dense) bricks found to be lining the longitudinal U-section steel decking carrying the rails installed in 1968. This was followed by gas-axe cutting of the ends of the 1903 steel central strengthening girder to detach them from the huge granite blocks on the top of the piers.

John Fowler’s wrought iron box-girders of 1848 (see photographs) were successfully lifted out by a Gottwald AK680-3 (1,200 tonne maximum capacity) crane and placed on 1.5m high timber cradles in the working area on the north bank of the River Witham, from where they will be transported to Scotland for refurbishment by the Lanarkshire Welding Co Ltd, who have fabricated the steelwork for the new bridge, before being returned to Lincoln. They will then be incorporated into the main span of the new bridge as self-supporting but non load bearing edge beams.

Network Rail allowed Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology members access to the box girders and, although they were not allowed to climb on the timbers, it was possible to make some measurements and take photographs. As a condition of planning consent (the bridge is Grade II listed) AMCO will be re-installing the box girders with the cross-members in place, although in the new installation the existing cross-members will not be long enough. Extensions will therefore have to be attached to the cross-members.

Old Kent Road gasholder listed
By Robert Carr

Welcome news is the listing of gasholder number 13 at the former Old Kent Road Gasworks in south-east London. It was
listed grade II in June 2017. This holder was built in 1879-1881 to the design of the engineer George Livesey for the South Metropolitan Gas Company. It was the world’s largest gasholder when built with a capacity of 5.5 m cu ft and was a pioneering structure innovative in many ways, leading to the development of helical or geodesic structures elsewhere.

Gasholder number 13 photographed in February 2016

The guide frame was treated as a cylindrical lattice shell for the first time and the gasholder had to be built up tier by tier in order to preserve its structural integrity. In many ways it embodied cutting-edge technology, the wrought iron standards were unusually slender and the bell used mild steel for the first time. The tank was the deepest so far constructed and one of the deepest ever built.

Architecturally speaking this holder can be considered an early example of modernism, the guide frame makes no use of applied decoration simply relying on the purity of its structural form. This design served as the basis for a number of later holders and was an influential prototype widely copied elsewhere.

Currently there are three gasholders on the Old Kent Road site, number 10 and number 12 are listed locally and the group forms an excellent illustration of the development of gasholder design.

George Livesey (1834-1908) was a remarkable gas engineer who became chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company in 1885. He was innovative in management and had a wide influence in company management further afield. A leader of the London temperance movement he was a notable philanthropist and had advanced ideas as to how society should be organised. Knighted in 1902, he was elected a Member of Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1906.

Queensbury tunnel
By Graeme Bickerdike

A study undertaken by Sustrans has found that a disused railway tunnel under Queensbury in West Yorkshire (HEW #2788) would generate around £10 million in tourism income over 30 years if it was repaired to accommodate a cycle path. Overall, a local network of paths - with the tunnel as its centrepiece - would deliver £37.6 million in economic benefits across the district, with a high benefit-to-cost ratio of 3.2:1. Campaigners are hoping to save the 1.4-mile long tunnel from abandonment plans currently being progressed by Highways England’s Historical Railway Estate (HRE) which is custodian of the structure on behalf of the Department for Transport. Abandonment is likely to cost about £3 million, with funding coming from the taxpayer.

Last year, consultants acting for HRE suggested that more than £35 million of repairs would be needed to make the tunnel safe for public use, but an alternative scheme developed for the campaign group by a team of specialist engineers and contractors has put the cost at just £2.8 million.

Bradford Council intends to carry out a programme of intrusive investigations over the next few months to establish its own figure before deciding whether to take on ownership of the tunnel.

Meanwhile, the campaign group has published a six-minute film to give the public a sense of what a bike ride through Queensbury Tunnel would feel like. It uses a computer model to show the tunnel’s key features and significant repairs, including two in-situ concrete arches where partial collapses have occurred. The video can be viewed on YouTube via https://youtu.be/u0WdcohuELc

Bennerley viaduct
By Peter Harris

The Friends of Bennerley Viaduct were recognised with Greenwood Community Awards on Monday 11th July at Swancar Farm in Trowell for their contribution to conserving this monument to Victorian railway engineering.

Greenwood Partnership Board Chair, Councillor John Knight presented the awards to community groups and individual volunteers, for outstanding contribution towards improving the environment. He praised volunteers in his welcome speech:

“We are pleased to be able to recognise volunteers who work year in, year out to make ours such a beautiful county.”

Nominations had been received from groups and organisations for environmental work carried out over the last year working towards the creation of Greenwood, Nottinghamshire’s Community Forest.

One Hundred and forty guests enjoyed a review of achievements by volunteers and organisations presented by
Friends of Gedling Country Park’s Rod Fillingham, Chair of the Friends of Greenwood Community Forum.

Fourteen awards were presented on the night to volunteers from all areas of Greenwood and included awards for individuals and teams of all ages and abilities who take part in conservation tasks or work behind the scenes.

Rod Fillingham congratulated the award winners and said: "Congratulations to every one of the award winners. Tonight has shown how diverse volunteers can be, with many vital assets including vision, determination, knowledge, skill, experience, but above all humour."

Friar Gate bridge
By Peter Harris

The Friends of Friar Gate Bridge have just been awarded a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Fund (HLF) for a scoping exercise to assess possible future uses for the restored bridge and to ensure the Friends are organised to handle the restoration programme, in conjunction with the owners, Derby City Council.

Llantysilillo chainbridge
By Stephen K Jones

Further to the article in the last issue on ‘The Oldest Chainbridge’ a commemorative plaque was unveiled at the Llantysilillo chainbridge. The chairman of ICE Wales Cymru, Stephen Lawrence, performed the ceremony to mark an historic link in the development of the suspension chainbridge on 7 July 2017. Permission to erect this inverted suspension bridge, in which the level deck was supported on iron catenary chains below the road deck, was granted in 1814 to span the Dee. It was noted that this bridge was in use in July 1817 enabling Pickering to deliver coal, lime and bar iron by wagon from his wharf on Telford’s Llangollen canal. In 1870 Pickering’s chainbridge, was refurbished as a footbridge, but still an inverted chainbridge. It was rebuilt as a conventional suspension footbridge in 1929 with the original chains (from 1817) retained and used as catenary chains.

After falling into disrepair and being closed for over thirty years, the Llangollen and Llantysilillo councils, working with Shemec Ltd with Heritage Lottery funding, have restored the bridge in 2015 with some two-thirds of the rebuilding making use of original materials including the chains - the oldest surviving eye-bar link chains in the world.

Wyre lighthouse
By Ian Weir

The Wyre Light was first recorded by Brian Crossley in October 1975 and further recorded by Paul Dunkerley in March 1982. HEW 0249 refers, to a collection of estuary navigation structures which includes a few land based lighthouses around Fleetwood. The precise HEW reference for Wrye Lighthouse is therefore HEW 0249/02.

Built between 1839 and 1840, operational on 6th June 1840, it is reputed to be the first lighthouse to come into service using Mitchell cast iron screw piles. As with many claims of being first, this is somewhat of a precise claim, as screw piles had been used a little time earlier in other parts of the country. A close geographical example of the use of similar screw piles is the North Pier at Blackpool, designed by Eugenius Birch and opened on 21st May 1853.

A Mitchell and Son of Belfast was the main contractor for the Light and Captain H.M. Denham designed the Light. It was commissioned by the Preston & Wyre Railway Fleetwood Dock Company for their new emerging port of Fleetwood, to aid navigation of the channels leading to the port through Morecambe Bay. The Wyre Light (originally called Port Fleetwood Lighthouse) was an off shore beacon, taken out of service in 1979 and replaced by a lighted buoy. It stands on a sand bank known as ‘North Wharf’, 1.75 miles offshore at a point where the River Wyre joins Morecambe Bay, the sand bank only being exposed at low tide. It carried its light 45 feet above half-tide level. Work on its substructure commenced with the deposition of a layer of earth and stones several feet thick before 7No piles 16 feet long and 3 feet in diameter of wrought iron with a cast iron screw shoe were installed at an inclination of 1 in 5 at the corners of and the centre of a hexagonal plan.

The piles / columns supported a hexagonal deck superstructure constructed on column baulks of Baltic timber 14 inches square connected to the piles. The central column was 57 feet long, rising above the deck level to support the lantern, with the six perimeter columns 48 feet long. In the feet of the baulks a hole 5 inches diameter and 7 feet long was bored to receive the tops of the piles, and iron hoops were driven on hot to strengthen the junctions. A small spiral flange was fitted to the foot of each baulk to help it into the sand. The substructure had 1.5 inch bracing diagonally between the upper parts of the piles and low water level.

The floor of the two storey superstructure was 45 feet above the sand bank, the rise of the equinoctial spring tide being some 32 feet. The 9 foot high lower storey had an external walkway 27
feet in diameter, the 9 foot 9 inch upper storey having a sloping roof and also an external walkway. The manned light also had a fog bell and an 8 mile horizon, but was visible from the deck of a coaster for 10 miles. It cost £3,350.00 of which nearly £1,000.00 was for dioptric apparatus. In 1845 it cost £335 per annum to run. In contrast to a lightship this cost £1,316 per annum to run. A fire later destroyed the superstructure.

Recent reports over the last month in the local press have highlighted what appears to be its final fate. The entire structure is now leaning at an alarming angle and complete collapse can only be a short time away. As is so too often the case deterioration of our less recognisable heritage assets only become of interest at the last moments and before viable solutions can be found. At least the ICE Proceedings contain a contemporary record, from which the text above has been abstracted and the PHEW Hew records identified its significance even if it was not able to assist those willing to explore its conservation. Perhaps renewed efforts should be channelled into ensuring the remaining shore based structures are retained and able to tell the story of the Wyre Light to future engineers.

Skew arch bridges - a reprise
By Mike Chrimes

In a previous issue of the Newsletter Peter Cross-Rudkin made an appeal for information on early skew bridges (Newsletter 137, March 2013 p. 4), with particular reference to any built in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It is a subject which recently aroused my own interest, as a result of research for the 2016 Smeaton Lecture on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. A notable feature of the line was the use of oblique or skew arches for 13 bridges.

This inevitably led me to wonder who had designed these bridges and how they had learned to set out the spiral courses. George Stephenson is named as engineer on the well-known turnpike road bridge at Rainhill, and the Scottish mason George Findlay was the supervisor of its erection. Stephenson had no previous experience of such bridges, and whilst Findlay might have done a much more likely figure is Jesse Hartley who the Railway are known to have employed on other bridges. Descriptions of design methods were provided by William Chapman in 1815 in Rees Cyclopedia, a well-known source in which he claims to have designed the first three such bridges with spiral courses in Ireland (1787-89) on the Kildare Canal. Telford provided more detail in an article on Inland Navigation in the Edinburgh Encyclopedia c. 1820, and Thomas Tredgold provided a less satisfactory article in the Encyclopaedia Britannica in 1824.

However the best known publication of the time was Peter Nicholson’s piece on stone cutting of 1828. All of these could have been available to the engineers of the Liverpool and Manchester as many of the bridges were not built until 1829-30.

Thanks to Peter Cross-Rudkin’s work, and information provided in published sources I have compiled a table of early skew bridges. I do not believe this can be complete and information on any others would be gratefully received by myself and Peter.

Personally I believe that Chapman must have derived his method from a work on stone cutting which he was perhaps shown in Ireland, or else he was passed a drawing of a bridge by John Pinkerton of a canal bridge in England and used that. It would seem that the oldest extant stone skew bridge in England is March (Barn) on the Rochdale Canal (c.1802). Two engineers on that canal, William Crosley jnr, and David Henry provide a link with later skew bridges, while William Jessop, the Engineer in Chief, can safely be assumed to have been familiar with Chapman's work. Telford knew him well, was trained as a mason, and owned copies of all the relevant published texts.

Please contact me with any relevant thoughts, and preferably a photo of relevant bridges. m.chrimes@ntlworld.com

Table of early skew bridges (*known to have spiral courses)

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Bridges</th>
<th>Engineer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1785-9</td>
<td>Coventry Canal</td>
<td>Askew Bridge (66) Tamworth</td>
<td>Thomas Sheasby?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1787-8</td>
<td>Kildare Canal</td>
<td>Naas (Finlay)<em>; Osberstown</em>; Oldtown*</td>
<td>William Chapman</td>
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<td>179x</td>
<td>Grand Canal</td>
<td>Shee/Scow Allentown (Robertstown)</td>
<td>William Jessop</td>
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<td>-1797</td>
<td>Grantham Canal</td>
<td>Bridges 60; 62</td>
<td>William Jessop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1797</td>
<td>Grand Junction Canal</td>
<td>Bridges 31; 41</td>
<td>William Jessop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1797</td>
<td>Leics &amp; Northants Union</td>
<td>Bridge 77</td>
<td>William Jessop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Canal/Bridge Description</td>
<td>Author/Engineer</td>
<td>References</td>
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<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>Ashton Aqueduct*</td>
<td>Outram</td>
<td>1838, 1839</td>
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<td>1800-1002</td>
<td>Rochdale Canal*</td>
<td>William Jessop</td>
<td>1838, 1839-40</td>
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<td>1806-180x</td>
<td>Glasgow, Paisley &amp; Ardrossan Canal*</td>
<td>Thomas Telford</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1809</td>
<td>Lee Mill Bridge*</td>
<td>James Green</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1825</td>
<td>Stockton &amp; Darlington railway*</td>
<td>John Dixon</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1826-31</td>
<td>Macclesfield Canal*</td>
<td>William Crosley (2)</td>
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<td>1827-1836</td>
<td>Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal*(incl Middlewich Branch)</td>
<td>Thomas Telford</td>
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<td>1827-30</td>
<td>Liverpool and Manchester Railway*</td>
<td>??</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1827</td>
<td>Great North Road*</td>
<td>Henry Welch</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1829</td>
<td>High Peak Railway*</td>
<td>T J Woodhouse Jessop?</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1830</td>
<td>Over River Gaulees, Hagger Leases Branch*</td>
<td>John or Thomas Storey</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1834</td>
<td>Castle Eden*</td>
<td>Thomas Rhodes</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<tr>
<td>1834-37</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Robert Stephenson; G W Buck; C. Fox</td>
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<td>1833-3x</td>
<td>Yorkshire Drainage works*</td>
<td>Chapman</td>
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<td>1834</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>G R Stephenson (F. Swanwick)</td>
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<td>1838</td>
<td>Jolly Sailor*</td>
<td>Gibbs</td>
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**North Shields railway**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bridge/Description</th>
<th>Author/Engineer</th>
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<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Brandling Junction railway*</td>
<td>J &amp; B Green</td>
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<td>1839-40</td>
<td>Midland Counties Railway*</td>
<td>Thomas Woodhouse</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1838</td>
<td>London &amp; Greenwich Railway*</td>
<td>?Landmann</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1838-41</td>
<td>Great North of England*</td>
<td>Henry Welch for Thomas Storey</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1838-40</td>
<td>Eastern Counties Railway*</td>
<td>John Braithwaite</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<td>1838</td>
<td>Bolton &amp; Preston*</td>
<td>A J Adie</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Lancaster Canal*; Chorley Road*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1838-41</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Further reading**

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Chairman’s Column
by Gordon Masterton

This quarter has been a refreshing mix of the past, the present and the future. The Scottish PHEW summer weekend took me back, not just to the past, but to my past. The village of Charlestown in Fife was one of the earliest industrial complexes in the mid-18th century. A planned village, built by the Earl of Elgin, to house his workers in his estates and his industries - quarries for limestone, wagon ways to transport the stone to multiple lime kilns in an array adjacent to the harbour, from where the lime was exported, mainly to other parts of Scotland for agriculture but also for building lime, and some was exported to the Low Countries, the ships returning with ballast and red pan tiles. The railway arrived in the 19th century and an outer harbour extension built for larger vessels and ultimately a post-war ship breaking business. Only the fabric remains, and the area is now an attractive coastal setting for high value housing. But the story hasn’t died, and many records remain, either in national collections or the present Earl’s archives, or in local folklore or memories. The mix of survivable remains, and a decent quality of archived data, curated or not, is how most of our past achievements still tell their story. The past and the present sit alongside one another with little to say to each other, until the past is nudged awake by research and interpretation. From that point on, the past and the present can engage in a dialogue on more equal terms.

We saw this at Charlestown, when Roz Artis, director of the Scottish Lime Centre, having taken us on a tour of the old works, explained the work done in the Charlestown Workshops to provide training in heritage crafts, and specialist fieldwork and advice on use of lime mortar and lime wash. Lime, once the main source of employment for the village, is once again providing employment on a smaller scale, but of a higher order of skill to help bring new life to heritage buildings, and give them a new voice. It was delightful to see the Centre thriving.

Some weeks later, I was back in Fife, to walk across the Queensferry Crossing after Lynda and I had been successful in the ballot for places on the open day. We were in the second bus to arrive, and would have been among the first walkers across the bridge, had it not been for a request for an interview on Radio Scotland and the Sunday Post - a true career highlight (the Sunday Post that is). We were under beautiful skies and bright sunshine, far more fun than the official opening two days later - it rained.

But there again, the past talks to the present. The Queensferry Crossing is not alone, it’s a welcome newcomer to what is now a tri-pontium of magnificent bridges from the last six centuries. The new bridge is a youngster, sitting at the feet of its venerable ancestors. There simply has to be a visitor centre to celebrate this glorious location - not just for bridge geeks like me but for everyone. The site has got far more to offer than, say, the Golden Gate visitor centre in San Francisco. The Golden Gate bridge is a monologue. The Forth Bridges are a conversation between giants. Let’s not drop that ball, Scottish Government.

And last week, PHEW held its AGM in Stratford upon Avon, at which Canal and River Trust and Warwickshire Council engineers were most helpful in guiding us around the town and surrounding area. The council has a scheduled ancient monument, Clopton Bridge, to maintain, and it’s a travesty that it must bid for Lottery money to properly care for the bridge. Engineering HEWs that attain the distinction of being Scheduled deserve to be National Treasures. They are engineering’s equivalent of the National Galleries. If there was a risk that one of our privately-owned Turners or Titians or Constables might be lost to the nation, there would be a national outcry, many millions would be found, and the art treasure installed in the gallery with fanfares. Clopton Bridge should not have to compete for lottery money. It’s undignified.

Which reminds me, I was pleased to see that the councillor who objected to Scottish Borders Council raising its contribution to restore the Union Chain Bridge by £450k because ‘we have many roads that need their potholes filled’, has failed in his efforts to overturn the decision. We will always have roads with potholes. If we allow an ancient monument or a unique piece of engineering heritage to collapse for the want of £450k, we probably lose it for ever.
HEWs in the News
by Brian George

The Daily Telegraph Business 16 April records that the Brent Delta platform shut in December 2011, followed by the Alpha and Bravo in November 2014. Although the Charlie rig continues to produce oil, it too will cease production within the next few years. The Delta platform weighs almost 24,000 tons, reaching nearly 1000 feet high below the surface of the North Sea and it will be the first to be dismantled within the next few weeks. To date the few oil rigs which were taken apart were stripped and taken to dry land to be scrapped, a process fraught with risk and high cost.

Delta would be different. Shell plans to pioneer an unprecedented feat of engineering. A specially built vessel is due to sail from Rotterdam to the site where it will use steel beams and powerful hydraulics to lift the Delta rig off the platform legs in a single gigantic piece. The vessel, Pioneering Spirit, is 382 metres long and 125 metres wide, and last year was tested by lifting the smaller, but far less stable Yme platform weighing 13,000 tons, from the Norwegian North Sea.

Under the heading ‘Wide Load’ the Daily Telegraph Business section 3 May showed a photograph of the 24,000 ton Brent Delta oil rig entering the mouth of the river Tees on 2 May after being unloaded from the Pioneering Spirit, which transported it to Hartlepool from the North Sea oilfield to be decommissioned.

The Inland Waterways Association Bulletin 14 March tells us that the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is set to host a major new waterway event this year with the East London Waterways Festival due to take place on Monday 28 August. The event is being held to mark the restoration of Carpenter’s Road Lock, closed in the 1960’s, a £1.8 million project in the heart of the park, which is one of the final pieces of a te

The Bulletin of 28 March notes that Kexby Old Bridge (HEW 0678) carrying the A 1079 road over the river Derwent 5 miles east of York is a three span masonry arch bridge which will be undergoing major structural work for the majority of 2017. The section of the river near the bridge will be closed to boats between Evington/Sutton lock and Stamford Bridge.

Cumbria’s forgotten Lancaster Canal is to be rediscovered with the construction of a £184,000 towpath trail from Kendal to Natland. The canal, which is due to celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2019 is currently un-navigable past Tewitfield due to the M6 and other road crossings. Much of the canal north of Stainton is not in water but is clearly identifiable, so the new trail will add further weight to a long term aspiration to restore the canal as far as Kendal by promoting the waterway route as a visitor destination.

Waterways 256 (Summer) tells us that last summer the Association invited projects across the network to bid for all, or part of, the £200,000 bequest left by former IWA consultant and trustee, Tony Harrison. Tony, who was an expert in hydraulics and hydrology in his professional life, served on IWA’s Restoration Committee for 20 years and chaired it for five years. After a lengthy judging process the money split is between four separate projects.

The first is matched funding for new lock gates at Stratford St Mary lock for the River Stour Trust in the sum of £8600. The second is a grant of £15,000 to the Friends of the Cromford Canal for the installation of a water gate for water supply to the canal. The third is £70,000 towards the £200,000 needed by the Montgomery Canal Partnership. School House bridge on the 2-mile section between Pant and Crickheath was demolished in the 1950s and replaced by a causeway, so a new structure is needed. The fourth beneficiary is the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society in West Yorkshire, where a grant of £106,400 will go towards the money needed to restore two locks and carry out dredging to extend the navigable canal by 2 miles by 2018.

The IWA Bulletin 10 May notes that 11 years ago the Environmental Agency piled across sufficient of the entrance to Welches Dam Lock between Chatteris and Manea in Cambridgeshire to prevent access through the lock by boats. This was because the top gates were leaking, but the situation remains and IWA Peterborough is complaining that this is a useful route that the EA should restore or allow volunteers so to do.

The Bulletin 24 May describes how one of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal’s heritage mileposts has been rescued from a railway memorabilia auction and restored to its rightful place on the towpath in East Lancashire thanks to the alert chairman of CRTs North West Partnership. Bob Pointing was checking the auction of railway antiques and negotiated the return of the milepost to its rightful owner. This particular milepost is significant because it marks the halfway point of the trans-Pennine canal.

On 13 June 1842, Queen Victoria became the first British monarch to travel by rail, proclaiming the journey “delightful and so quick” records the Daily Telegraph 14 June. Yesterday, 175 years on, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh recreated the journey from Slough to Paddington for a new generation. They travelled in a prototype intercity hybrid train accompanied by descendants of Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Sir Daniel Gooch, who drove the original train.

They were the first members of our Royal family to travel on a brand new bimodal train. Isambard Thomas, 53, the great-great-great-grandson of Brunel, who sat next to Queen Elizabeth en-route to London, said “It was fascinating how much interest she has in trains and in train journeys”. The article was accompanied by a photograph of the named train Queen Elizabeth II at the driver’s end.
Rail 828 showed a photograph of the original Birmingham Curzon Street station (HEW 420), noting that a planning application has been submitted by HS2 Ltd for it to become a visitor centre when it is incorporated in the new HS2 station.

As ever, I am indebted to Lucy MacLennan for two items from the north of Scotland. The first comes from Energy North, issue 55, and relates to the successful progress of SSE’s project Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm Ltd where they have seen the first and last pour of concrete at Blackhillock substation (OS. NJ 434 484), 2km south of Keith, a town on the Aberdeen to Inverness railway route. From the electricity grid substation a 20km underground cable will carry the power generated offshore from a landfall point to the west of Portgordon served by 80 turbines.

Likewise the company’s work has also got underway at Wick harbour to convert the historic Thomas Telford buildings into the operational base for the project. These had fallen into a state of disrepair and its a real bonus that the project can restore some of Scotland’s heritage as well as providing renewable energy. (I notice that sufficient offshore energy was provided at Christmas for four days for all of Scotland’s requirements).

Cromarty harbour (HEW 2547), described as the heart of the Black Isle town of Cromarty, and which dates back to 1784, has deteriorated in recent years and the Trust that runs it wants to spend more than £130,000 in a much needed facelift. The Ross-shire Journal 21 April notes that the Harbour Trust is seeking listed building consent to replace the old harbour sheds, corroded railings and the overhead lighting with underground and flood lighting, as well as installing a power supply, seating, information panels and ladders. Repairs are also required to the Smeatonian stonework and funding is required from Historic Scotland.

The preserved Swanage Railway ran its first passenger service connecting to the main line network at Wareham on the 13 June, notes the July Modern Railways. The service marks the achievement of a long-held aim to restore passenger services from Swanage and Corfe Castle to Wareham, which were withdrawn when the line closed in 1972. The preserved railway, which was completely rebuilt by volunteers from Swanage to the Furzebrook oil and gas terminal of the Wytch Farm oil field, currently runs to Norden, just north of Corfe.

A two-year trial service will operate with four services a day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays this summer until September, with the service returning next year. The railway has worked with Network Rail and South West Trains to introduce the service. A £3.2 million investment has come from local authorities, enabling NR to upgrade the track at Worgret Junction, where the Swanage branch joins the main line and install new signalling equipment between the junction and Wareham and also on the branch line to Corfe.

The sound made by 100 tons of steel rotating 400ft overhead is surprisingly understated notes the Daily Telegraph Business 22 May. There are 32 of these 8MW turbines in the second phase of Doug Energy’s Burbo Bank wind farm spinning off the Merseyside coast. They are the most powerful ever, and demonstrate the advance since 1981 when a 15m diameter turbine developed 55KW. The civil engineering content of these fields is a major part of the scheme and provides the power of an earlier Magnox nuclear power station.

Readers of this newsletter are asked, whenever they read of something which they think might deserve mention here, to send it, or a copy, no later than about a week before the deadline to:

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Editor’s Note
By Dermot O’Dwyer

May I repeat the regular appeal for Newsletter contributions which may include diagrams, photographs and / or illustrations. Those which are both informative and appeal for further information, or publicise forthcoming conferences or the availability of recent books, etc., are particularly welcome.

Contributions should be sent to the ICE as soon as possible after receipt of this newsletter by post to:

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