



Record-breaking festival

DERBYSHIRE's biggest annual heritage festival is Discovery Days – a nine-day celebration of the only World Heritage Site in the East Midlands.

The latest festival, last October, pulled in record crowds, with visitors from all corners of the country topping 20,000 for the first time in its 12-year history.

The Discovery Days Festival, delivered by scores of Derwent Valley Mills volunteers, saw 22,800 attendees at 170 activities, across a 15-mile stretch of the River Derwent between Matlock Bath and Derby.

Walks, talks and children's workshops were all well attended – and received great feedback from visitors.

Events in Belper included a Belper in Bloomers Exhibition at the Number 28 Community Centre, a talk on Belper's old pubs by historian Mary Smedley, and a number of tableaux recreating scenes in Belper during World War One, as part of a Belper in Wartime Walk.

In Cromford, the ever-popular *Birdswood* canal boat was pulled by horse, Leawood Pump was in steam and there was a concert, 'Wine, Women and Song,' from Derbyshire folk singers Keith Kendrick, Sylvia Needham and Pete Castle.

At Derby, the Mini Makers Faire® at Derby Silk Mill was a massive success, and Darley Abbey saw a number of walks and special events.

Chair of the World Heritage Site Steering Group is Councillor Ellie Wilcox. She said: "The festival is now in its 12th year, but the programme has been as fresh as ever, and volunteers as keen as always to come up with new activities.

"This time we also had dry weather, which made for a truly impressive turnout in a great week of events."

The Discovery Days Festival returns in October 2017, and is being extended to 16 days, running from October 14 to 29.



Bringing home the Joseph Wrights

WHEN the Duke of Devonshire contacts you and asks 'have you seen those two Wright paintings for sale in New York', the first thing you do is to look them up on the internet, writes Jonathan Wallis, Head of Museums at Derby.

When you realise they are two paintings of Cromford, one of Arkwright's Mills and the other of Cromford Bridge and Willersley Castle you start to wonder how you might be able to bring them home to Derbyshire.

Painted around 1795, they are considered to be two of Joseph Wright's last pictures and may have been those purchased by Daniel Parker Coke, MP for Nottingham, who lived in College Place, next to All Saint's Church (now Derby Cathedral).

The Christies' auction is in eight days, the estimate over \$200,000, you've never bought anything at auction for this value or, indeed, from an auction in the USA at all. How do you transport paintings like that across the Atlantic once you have bought them? The Derby Museum team rose to the challenge.

With the help of friends in both countries, including the Yale Centre for British Art, the

paintings were examined and a case put to funding bodies. A 'secret' agent was engaged to bid at the auction and the rest is history.

With help from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Art Fund and the Friends of Derby Museums, the bid was successful and the paintings are now in the Joseph Wright Gallery at Derby Museum and Art Gallery.

Above: A View of Cromford Bridge, Joseph Wright of Derby, Oil on Canvas, c1795-6 ©Derby Museums

Below: Arkwright's Mills, Joseph Wright of Derby, Oil on Canvas, c1795-6 ©Derby Museums



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Looking out
for the little
people at
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Gateway is up and running

THE NEW Visitor Gateway and Cromford Creative managed office space development at Cromford Mill was officially opened last March.

A major problem to overcome before work could commence on the building was the contamination left from the building's time as a colour works. It had to be completely sealed while decontamination and encapsulation work took place.

Much of the original fabric was saved, due to the cutting edge methodology adopted by the specialist contamination contractors. All this work resulted in the building being removed from Historic England's Heritage at Risk register.

The official opening welcomed over 100 invited guests who ranged from civic dignitaries and funders to the many contractors who helped bring the Gateway vision to fruition.

The Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire, Mr William Tucker, performed the official opening



ceremony and unveiled a special art work, by German artist Alke Schmidt, depicting Sir Richard Arkwright.

Following the official opening ceremony guests enjoyed a tour of the building, the first time many had seen inside since completion. They had the chance to chat with many of the contractors who helped create the Gateway, tenants from the Cromford Creative managed workspace and also Arkwright Society staff and volunteers.

If you haven't had a chance, then do visit the Gateway, especially the Arkwright Experience that brings the great man himself to life.

WELCOME: Sarah McLeod welcomes guests to the official opening of the Visitor Gateway and Cromford Creative.

Creative success story

When the **Cromford Creative** business centre opened a year ago, its stunning location and great offer promised to attract businesses of all types and sizes.

One year on, that promise has more than delivered for the Arkwright Society. Businesses based at **Cromford Creative** include project management, tourism, creative writing, IT, life coaching, financial advice, water monitoring, architecture, environmental consultancy and engineering. Such is the uptake of accommodation that there is a waiting list for offices.

Part of **Cromford Creative's** appeal is the variety of accommodation on offer. Whether hiring an entire floor, occupying single offices, or renting a desk, the flexible accommodation also comes with use of the Creative Lounge with complimentary refreshments and discounted use of meeting rooms.

Cromford Creative offers a perfect space for local start-ups and businesses and has filled a niche in the market. Simon Gill, General Manager, says: "We looked at business providers in Derby, Sheffield and the wider area but in

between the two cities there is very little that offers serviced offices.

Cromford Creative fills the gap and we are finding that tenants are moving from working at home to a business environment."

When the building first opened the initial challenge was to find the first tenant but within six months all the offices were accounted for. Simon says: "The facilities are so unique they sell themselves and feedback from tenants is that **Cromford Creative** works fantastically in the atmosphere we've created."

Those who only require a desk can become co-workers. This involves hiring a desk in one of two "hot desking" offices, which can be booked for single days or on a more regular basis. Simon is keen to increase the number of co-workers as well as the use of the meeting rooms for seminars and workshops.

Whilst the site is steeped in history, **Cromford Creative** offers an up to the minute contemporary workspace for the modern age. For more details, visit www.cromfordmills.org.uk or phone Simon Gill on 01629 343002.

Thomas Evans remembered

A BLUE plaque in commemoration of the Derbyshire banker and entrepreneur Thomas Evans was officially unveiled in January by Alan Grimadell (Chair of Derby Civic Society), Lisa Eldret (City Councillor for Darley Ward) and Andrew Rose (Founder of the West Mill Venue).

The plaque is located on the Long Mill in the Darley Abbey Mills complex, the Mill that he built in the 1780s. Following the unveiling there was a tour of the new wedding venue in West Mill.

Thomas Evans was born into a rich Bonsall family in 1723. He was an entrepreneur with various business interests in and around Derby and he became an

influential banker with a counting house in St Mary's Gate, now part of the NatWest Group. Thomas was responsible for the development of Darley Abbey Mills and for much of the associated mill-workers' housing and St Matthew's Church. He died in 1814.

Alan Grimadell said: "I'm delighted our 16th Blue Plaque is being launched to recognise the work of Thomas Evans. The working partnership between Derby City Council and the Civic Society in promoting the Blue Plaques throughout the City is something we are all very proud of."

This Blue Plaque scheme forms part of Derby City Council's and Derby Civic Society's partnership to celebrate eminent people with



strong links to the city.

THANK EVANS: Andrew Rose (Founder of the West Mill Venue), Cllr Lisa Eldret (Darley Ward) and Alan Grimadell (Chair of Derby

Civic Society) at the unveiling.

INSET: The new blue plaque for Thomas Evans.

Photographs: David Conway.



Thanks for volunteering



TO THANK all the World Heritage Site volunteers for their hard work in organising and delivering walks and events during the 2016 Discovery festivals a day trip was arranged to the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) in Manchester and New Mills Heritage Centre.

There were 48 volunteers, representing 12 of our partner organisations, taking a look at the contrasts between a large Manchester museum with paid staff and a volunteer-run heritage centre in the High Peak.

In Manchester the volunteers all had the chance to see the guided tour of the mills demonstration which showed how cotton was processed from its raw state to the finished product. At New Mills, they had a guided tour taking in the new millennium walkway and the Archimedes screw and fish pass.

Before the return journey the annual volunteer awards were handed out to some of the

volunteers who work tirelessly for the World Heritage Site. Awards this year went to Chas Arnold (Arkwright Society), Dorothy Griffin (Belper North Mill Trust), Phil Roberts (Discovery Days), Sarah Laman (Discovery Days) and Sheila Hartle (Darley Abbey Historical Group).

ALTOGETHER: The World Heritage Site volunteers gather at MOSI (above).

AWARDED: The recipients of the 2016 DVMWHS volunteer awards.



Researchers investigate to support work of museum

STRUTT'S North Mill at Belper has set up its own research team, to investigate more about the Strutt mills, their workers and the communities they created at Belper and Milford.

In its first year, the group's investigations included schools, the section of railway which passes through the Strutt community in Belper, and the individuals at the mills in 1896, whose names were recorded on the group photographs taken when the Strutts handed the mills over to the English Sewing Cotton Company.

An exhibition of the group's findings was displayed in the Upper Wheel Pit of the mill for much of 2016.



Anyone interested in joining the group should contact the museum at manager@belpernorthmill.org.uk.

INVESTIGATORS: Some of the researchers at the North Mill.

John Smedley loan to V&A

2016 has seen the first major loan from the John Smedley Archive Collection – to the Victoria and Albert Museum's blockbuster exhibition 'Undressed'.

A blue 'Edale' ski vest from the 1950's was on display all year and will tour in 2017, as the exhibition moves to new locations in the USA, Russia and Brazil. This represents an important step in the development of the garment archive as a major resource within the museum fraternity. There are over 8,000 pieces in the collection, making it one of the largest in the UK.

The collection is now held by an independent Charitable Trust, which had its inaugural meeting in November. The Trust will work to preserve and interpret the archive for public benefit. There will be an emphasis on research and education, in order to tell the story of knitted fashion and of the skilled crafts involved in making knitted garments.

As part of this undertaking, a second guide has been recruited to help service the increasing popularity of factory tours, thanks to the work of Senior Guide and retired Head Colourist, John Mumby. The new recruit (also a retired employee) is already proving to be a great success with Further Education groups and informal learners alike.

2016 saw the publication of a monograph on George Marsden-Smedley, who died in the Battle of the Somme together with further research into the Smedley Family Tree; early knitted underwear; 1930's fashion trends; the origins of the company in 18th century Wirksworth and the building of Christ Church, Holloway (JB Marsden-Smedley was closely involved in the project).

Eroica returns

Derbyshire welcomed the return of the Eroica vintage cycling festival again in June.

This family fun event ran for 3 days with a base at Bakewell showground where there was a variety of entertainment including a fairground, live music and entertainment, which created a party atmosphere.

The festival grows each year, over 4,600 cyclists, from 14 different countries, participated in 2016. There were around 40,000 visitors over the three days, many following the riders en route as they again came down the High Peak Trail from Middleton Top to High Peak Junction across the Cromford Canal to John Smedley.

Reimagining Derby's Silk Mill

Throughout 2015/16, Derby Museums have been in the Development Stage of a programme to redevelop the Silk Mill.

This £16m programme will see a full capital redevelopment of the site as the Derby Silk Mill Museum of Making, creating an outstanding visitor experience that will be ready to open in 2020. Throughout this stage the design team, including the project architects and exhibition designers, have been working with audiences and stakeholders to re-imagine the site, reflecting its position as the southern gateway of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

Using a co-design approach they have been exploring how the building will look and function, the exciting ways the museum collections (over 30,000 items) will be displayed and interpreted, as well as areas of the museum development where people will be able to actually 'make'.

In early 2016 the ground floor of the building was

reset as a 'Project Lab' in which to explore and test ideas through a public programme. Visitors have been able to get hands-on with all aspects of the emerging designs through weekly activities – taking part in projects from preparing the collections to be moved out of the building ahead of the capital programme, to international family events like Maker Faire® and the Figment Arts Festival. Over 45,000 people have engaged in these activities during this period, with participants regularly volunteering for all aspects of the co-design programme.

This programme will reach its next phase in May when stage two of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England funding applications will be submitted for approval in the autumn.

For opening times and details of programmes, check the website www.derbymuseums.org

HAVING FUN: Creating some colour at the 2016 Figment Festival. Image ©Derby Museums Trust.



Mark settles in

THERE'S a new manager at the Strutt's North Mill museum in Belper – Mark Higginson was appointed last year to succeed Nicky Crewe, who left in the January.

Mark originally hails from Birmingham but has lived in Derbyshire for most of his life and has a longstanding interest in its history. He has spent over three decades employed locally in the heritage sector, for most of that time as a museum professional.

Starting at Elvaston Castle, he then spent 26 years working for Derby Museums and Art Gallery, latterly as Keeper of Industrial and Transport History at The Silk Mill. More recently he was employed by the Picture the Past photographic project at Matlock, a scheme he had previously helped develop between 2001 and 2010.

Says Mark: "I am a great enthusiast for the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and all the opportunities it brings. The mills at Belper, historically the largest component of the Site, are of huge importance, which in turn makes Strutt's surviving North Mill a key element and one with a lot of potential.

"While there are undoubtedly challenges to face, where there is a will there is a way and the prospects for the future look very exciting!"



Japanese interest in DVMWHS

LONDON researcher Akiko Yanagisawa was in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site in November, commissioned by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs to conduct research into world and cultural heritage in Japan and abroad.

The Agency had asked Akiko to study how heritage assets are managed and promoted in England, and the Derwent

Inquiry success

The DVMWHS took part in a planning inquiry in June 2016, concerning two outline applications for up to 49 residential houses off North Avenue in Darley Abbey, an area within the Buffer Zone close to the A38 slip road.

The DVMWHS fully understands the need for appropriate development within the Site and Buffer Zone but if built this scheme would have impacted on the sensitive setting of the World Heritage Site.

The DVMWHS expressed its concerns on the proposal in the usual manner as a non-statutory consultee.

Expertise and advice were given by Derbyshire County Council's Conservation and Design Team. Historic England had also objected to the proposed scheme.

Derby City Council requested that the DVMWHS Partnership act as one of the heritage witnesses. Director Mark Suggitt gave evidence at the inquiry along with colleagues from the City Council and the Darley Abbey Society.

The Inspector decided in favour of Derby City Council.

The ruling is an important one for the DVMWHS and other UK World Heritage Sites as it sets a precedent for developers planning to build on sensitive sites within Buffer Zones.

Valley Mills were chosen as a prime model for a case study.

She was much impressed with a tour of the 15-mile site, and learnt how we manage and protect such a complex area.

IMPRESSED: Akiko Yanagisawa meets the new manager of the Strutt's North Mill museum, Mark Higginson.

DerwentWISE
Inspiring and enabling us all to care for the Lower Derwent Valley



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Keeping up the good work

It's been another busy year for DerwentWISE, now in the third year of a five year plan to inspire people about the landscape of the Lower Derwent Valley. There are various projects running in the area, to help understand, conserve or record heritage features that make the valley so special. Here the scheme office team take you through the highlights.

Weir Watchers

Working closely with the DVMWHS team, DerwentWISE commissioned Jeremy Benn Associates to carry out a 'health check' of two key weirs: the Rock Weir, Belper and the Foundry Weir, Milford to assess their condition. They also trained a team of 'Weir Watchers' in survey techniques to continue annual checks to ensure the condition of these heritage features are monitored. It is hoped these very enthusiastic volunteers will monitor all the DVMWHS weirs, ensuring these structures continue to survive, as they are central to the World Heritage Site status.



WATCHING: A volunteer studies Milford Foundry Weir.

Slinter Mill

At Cromford, The Environment Partnership (TEP) have been working on a historic report and management plan for the Slinter Mill site, with help from local historian Doreen Buxton and a team of enthusiastic volunteers who examined the condition of structures on site. The report investigates the complex series of weirs and ponds that are now mostly lost beneath tangled vegetation and decades of built-up silt and makes recommendations on how to carry out any restoration work.

Heritage at Risk

A growing team of around fifty volunteers are working on the Heritage at Risk project, surveying heritage features in the valley listed on the county's Historic Environment Record (HER).

The reports are coming in steadily,

with 350 surveys out of a target of 1,000, recorded. Much of the data entered is from Belper, thanks to Brian Deer, local historian. Arc Heritage were commissioned to train the volunteers and more courses are scheduled for 2017, along with specialist sessions from Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service (DACES), on historic parks and quarry archaeology.

Field Barns

A small team of volunteers have surveyed historically important field barns in the Middleton area. The features are being lost from the landscape so a condition and location audit was essential for capturing their place in time. Headed by Derbyshire County Council, volunteers were trained in condition survey techniques and 61 barns were identified. These have been entered on the HER and hopefully consolidation of a couple of these barns will be possible over the next year.

Duffield Castle

At the Duffield Castle ruins site, *Arc Heritage* and *InHeritage* have been looking at options for conserving the tarmac capped ruined walls and interpreting the site. They have come up with a range of ideas to create a more satisfying experience for visitors.

The National Trust will be talking to local people to help them prioritise the stories of the place. The aim is to involve the community in any future direction and upkeep of this site, to enhance the visitor experience.

Landscape Conservation

The practical conservation team delivered amazing work in the Lower Derwent Valley in 2016. Every Wednesday and Friday the volunteers meet to improve Local Wildlife Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and important geological sites. This often involves back breaking work, but

certain tasks also require a highly technical element so a number of the group have completed qualifications in rope access and tree surgery. The National Stone Centre in Wirksworth has a number of quarries which show important geological features like ancient coral reefs. Over the summer, the skilled members abseiled down the quarry faces removing self-set trees and shrubs which were damaging the site. At Kennel Wood in Alderwasley, an acre of invasive cherry laurel has been removed, helping to restore ground flora and native shrubs.



RESTORED: View of Milford Weir from Makeney Road after tree work was carried out.

Iconic Views

More work has been carried out on the 'opening up iconic views' project. Many important historic views in the valley have been lost due to a lack of tree management. This project aims to restore some of these views by selecting and removing non-native and diseased trees where possible. The aim is to have minimal impact on wildlife whilst having maximum impact on cultural heritage. Some views have already been opened up, including one of Darley Abbey from Darley Park, Milford Weir from Makeney Road and Belper Mills from Calders Corner. Further work is planned for spring 2017.

Lea Wood

Work continues in Lea Wood to open up the understorey through removal of Rhododendron. Around two hectares have been cleared to date with a further two

awaiting extraction by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and their team of volunteers. In April/May 2017, DerwentWISE are working with the Dethick, Lea and Holloway Heritage Group to hopefully undertake an archaeological excavation in Lea Wood Knoll, and work with the group and the Woodland Trust to train people in ground survey techniques.

Community Arts

Local community groups *Umbrella* and *Common Threads* have begun making and creating on two arts projects with Fleet Arts. 'Anatomy of the Landscape' offers groups a one-day creative workshop to get out and explore the landscape with professional artists. Through the sessions iconic views will be captured through textiles, photography and painting. 'Sedimentation' follows on from Anatomy of the Landscape, introducing participants to the area's geological heritage and works with clay over a series of workshops to tell its story. Unglazed clays and hand-building techniques will be used to make ceramic objects inspired by the sedimentation and layering of rock that has shaped the landscape features, settlements and industrialisation of the valley – it all began with the rocks!

DerwentWISE is the Lower Derwent Valley Landscape Partnership, hosted by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and supported by Heritage Lottery Funds. If you would like to find out more about DerwentWISE projects, volunteering, training, or events then more information can be found on the www.derwentwise.com shared website with Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. For current news and updates follow us on twitter @derwentwise or see the facebook page [facebook.com/DerwentWISE](https://www.facebook.com/DerwentWISE). Alternatively, email the team at derwentwise@derbyshirewt.co.uk

Research framework launched

THE RESEARCH Framework for the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site was officially launched at the Arkwright Society Academic Conference at Cromford in October 2016.

Funded by Historic England with support from Derbyshire County Council, the Framework is the result of over two years work. It was developed by David Knight (Head of Research at Trent & Peak Archaeology, York Archaeological Trust) in close liaison with the Derwent Valley stakeholder community. It is modelled upon the Research Agenda and Strategy developed in consultation with the historic environment community of the East Midlands (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/Main>).

In common with that work, it comprises two key elements: a synthesis of current views on the priorities for research (the Agenda) and measures for advancing understanding of these (the Strategy).

It focuses upon research themes and topics identified by the Derwent Valley's stakeholder community and seeks to integrate the abundance of archaeological, built environment, historical, literary, artistic and other data that may be drawn upon for study of the cultural heritage of the Derwent Valley.

Discussions with stakeholders identified eleven key research themes, focused upon the impact of the Enlightenment; the growth of industry, trade and

settlement before the factory system; the development of factory-based industry and its subsequent metamorphosis; the factory owners, landed gentry and middle classes; the urban and rural labour forces; transport, power and public utilities; the built environment; landscape and environment; and the national and global impacts of developments in the Valley.

The development of a strategy, for advancing understanding of the themes and topics highlighted in the Agenda, came out of four stakeholder workshops. This permitted identification of a series of strategic objectives, which form the heart of the framework.

The framework is a living document to be updated regularly as priorities change and as further investigations shed light upon topics identified for study. It is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather a tool to facilitate research on topics judged by the stakeholder community to be of particular interest.

The Framework can be found on www.derwentvalleymills.org.



Award-winning projects at Belper Mill

Strutt's North Mill in Belper had a busy 2016 with a number of exciting and award winning projects and events.

In partnership with local arts provider, Fleet Arts, the museum hosted a massive arts installation 'Part of the Fabric', by Tan Draig OBE. Threads were woven around the North Mill's supporting structure and hidden within the web were 500 miniscule model 'workers' for visitors to find. The installation, and its accompanying workshops, was subsequently 'highly commended' as an 'Inspirational Project' at the Derbyshire Heritage Awards.

The North Mill Museum also went one better at the awards ceremony, winning the 'Reaching New Audiences' award for its Community Craft Project. Through community craft activities and a competition involving redundant wooden bobbins, local residents, community groups and schools were engaged in the heritage of the North Mill, culminating in a craft exhibition showcasing their work.

As part of Belper's Discovery Day on Sunday 23 October, over one thousand visitors dropped down to see 57 local creatives display their wares at the Belper Mill Artists and Makers Fair. In conjunction with this the Museum opened its doors for free entry with visitors benefiting from costumed guided tours, as well as local heritage walks. Indeed, 2016 saw an extended programme of heritage walks, including over 50 guided walks around Belper.

2017 promises to be an even more exciting year with the re-launch of the museum's education offer, a revamped temporary exhibition space, an expanded Community Craft Project, and further improvements to the Museum's visitor offer.

PART OF THE FABRIC: The basement installation (top) with one of the tiny workers (inset).

MAKERS FAIR: One of the stalls on October 23 (below).



Clusters project moves forward

THE BELPER Clusters Heritage Group, in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund, is working towards restoring and protecting the roads of the neighbourhood the Strutts built for mill workers at Belper in the early 1800s.

Known as the Clusters, it comprises William, George and Joseph Streets and Cluster Road.

The group realised that a project of this nature would require substantial funding so in early 2016 applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a start-up grant to help get the project off the ground.

The application was successful and in March the group were awarded £9,600. The award of the grant meant they

could now move the project forward on a formal basis, and they obtained charitable status last August, a requirement of working with the HLF. They were also able to seek professional advice on areas of the project that needed to be addressed.

From the outset it has always been the group's objective to ensure the residents, from whom they have had excellent support, are fully involved and kept informed of the project's progress. To date there have been three residents' meetings.

2016 proved to be a challenging but also successful year for the group. They are now looking forward to the demands of 2017 and taking the project forward.

Solving flooding issue for canal

THE MAIN water supply for the Cromford Canal is from Bonsall Brook, flowing over a weir in Cromford Mill yard. For some time the canal between Cromford and Whatstandwell has been subject to flood water over-topping the banks in periods of heavy rain; this required additional out-of-hours work by Derbyshire County Council staff to control water levels.

One of the Trustees of the Friends of the Cromford Canal (FCC) noticed that there were vertical grooves in the stone walls of the culvert from the weir to the canal which he deduced were part of a water control system. FCC engineers designed a control system using these grooves to stabilise the new structure and have obtained planning approval for its



installation. Subsequently, archive evidence of the original structure has been found which is similar to the new design. The new control system should be installed soon.

NO MORE FLOODING: The control weir in Cromford Mill yard showing the grooves in the stonework where a new control system is to be installed.



Cruising along

IN 2016 the Friends of the Cromford Canal's popular passenger boat *Birdswood* carried over 7,500 passengers. As well as many local people, visitors came from all over the country – indeed from all over the world – to experience the canal and its wildlife 'close-up and personal'.

The special weekends when the boat is pulled by *Arraslea Shires'* horse Chelsea were particularly popular, as were the Santa Cruises which operated in December.

A full programme is planned for this year, with the first horse-drawn trips at Easter. Charter trips are also available. Details at www.birdswood.org or call 07552 055455.

ON THE WATER: *Birdwood* and young canoeists happily share the Cromford Canal.

No ill effects on canal wildlife

THE FRIENDS of the Cromford Canal are delighted that their trip boat *Birdswood* has been proved to have had no effect on birdlife on the canal.

A Breeding Birds Survey was undertaken from 2013 to 2015, ie before and after operation of the boat, to evaluate whether there was a difference in:

- The overall abundance of birds present in the canal corridor between Cromford Wharf and Derwent Aqueduct;
- The diversity of species present;
- The diversity and abundance of birds using the canal channel or margins for breeding.

Over the three years, the numbers in all categories remained steady, indicating no impact on birds by the operation of *Birdwood*.



Indeed, one of the most popular features of a trip on *Birdwood* is the close-up view of the wildlife that passengers get, with guaranteed sightings of the distinctive Dabchick (or Little Grebe) which makes its home on the canal.

UNEFFECTED: The delightful Dabchicks always prove a hit with passengers on *Birdwood*.

Georgian ball

Cromford Mills stepped back in time to host an evening of Georgian grandeur with its first Ball in September 2016. It was the first of what is to become an annual event in the Cromford Mills' calendar.

The fundraising evening celebrated the opening of the Gateway and Cromford Creative earlier in the year whilst raising over £2,500 for the charity on the evening alone.

Master of Ceremonies was BBC Radio Derby's Andy Potter who compered the evening. Lots for the charity auction included a chauffeured luxury car for the day, a spectator's box and hospitality at Derby County Football Club, a steamship cruise, a steam train journey with dinner, an original painting and more – all kindly donated.

Guests enjoyed a drinks reception followed by a four-course dinner served by Arkwright's Café. Then it was time for dancing with the Playford Dancers dressed in their Georgian finery.

Catherine Roth, Events and Membership Manager, said: "We would like to thank everyone who attended for their support, as well as donors and sponsors."

The ball was considered such a success that not only is it set to become an annual event, it will also form part of Cromford Mills' brand new three-day Georgian Festival event from Friday 1 to Sunday 3 September. Further details are available in the Events Guide or by calling 01629 823256.

New toilets

The Arkwright Society has been granted planning permission and listed building consent to reconfigure the toilet block with new showers and unisex baby change and disabled facilities. Work has already commenced.

It was always planned to roll out the £50m regeneration programme at Cromford Mills in four phases. The first stage – the World Heritage Site Visitor Gateway and Cromford Creative – opened last March and work on developing planning and funding proposals for the second phase is already underway.

Sarah McLeod, CEO, said: "We hope to have contractors on site towards the end of 2018 but simply cannot wait that long for the new WCs block. Our existing facilities are antiquated and, worse still, you can only access the disabled facilities via the gents. Likewise, you can only use the baby changing facilities in the women's WCs.

"Apparently the late Dowager Duchess of Devonshire once said that having clean and warm toilets is the key to a successful visitor attraction. I suspect it is true."

The new toilets will open before Easter.

Cycleway proposals are moving forward

Progress on getting the Derwent Valley Cycleway in place continues, albeit at a slower pace than most supporters would wish.

The Derwent Valley Trust previously led the successful campaign for the Heritage Way walking route and has now turned its attention and support towards the cycleway recognition and funding applications.

Members of the working party have continued to publicise the wide public support for the route with various parties including local councils, the Department for Transport and key members of Parliament including the Cycling Minister.

Currently the focus is on inviting transport consultancies to express their interest in the production of a study evaluating the possible route, considering issues and alternative routes and producing a detailed costing. It is hoped that this study could be complete by the middle of 2017 (subject to funding becoming available).

More information is available at derwentvalleycycleway.org.uk/ where readers can sign up for free updates.



Walks for 90th

Two heritage walks looking at Belper's royal links, supported by an exhibition, were amongst the activities organised in the town to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. Mayor of the town Gary Spendlove is joined at the exhibition in the No.28 Community Centre by Mary Smedley from Belper Historical Society, walk leader Adrian Farmer and some of the walkers.

Volunteers awarded for outstanding work

Two Arkwright Society volunteers have been formally recognised for their work within the organisation.

The Special Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Arkwright Society was presented to Rosemary Annable and John Rivers at the Society's AGM by David Williams, Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Sarah McLeod, CEO.

Rosemary's award was in recognition of the huge amount of work she has put into cataloguing the Arkwright Society's Archives, and John's for his unfaltering support to the Arkwright Society during his time as Chair.

Duke visits Gateway

THE DUKE of Gloucester made a visit to Cromford Mills to view the new Gateway and Cromford Creative managed office space at the end of June.

The weather was kind on the day of the visit and on arrival the Duke was introduced by the Lord-Lieutenant, William Tucker, to David Williams (Chairman of the Arkwright Society), Sarah McLeod (Chief Executive), David Trevis-Smith (Project Leader) and John Rivers CBE, DL who recently retired as Chairman of the Arkwright Society.

Also in attendance was the High Sheriff of Derbyshire, Mrs Elizabeth Fothergill, CBE, DL and Mr Richard Fothergill, Chair of Derbyshire County Council Councillor Steve Freeborn, and Chairman of the District of Derbyshire Dales Councillor Tom Donnelly and Mrs Denyse Donnelly.

Local school children in period costume greeted the Duke who was then shown

a short presentation on the restoration of the building by Chief Executive Sarah McLeod.

He then had the chance to meet and talk with the contractors who carried out the renovation works, including the decontamination experts Bonsors, engineers Eastwood and Partners, and the architects Purcell. He also met with representatives from the main funder groups for the project.

After viewing Cromford Creative the Duke moved to the Gateway and saw the model of the Derwent Valley and information displays, as well as the Arkwright CGI presentation.

The Duke unveiled a plaque to mark his visit and was impressed with both Cromford Creative and the Gateway, and the positive contribution that the Gateway will make to the whole of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

Award in first year for group



ACCESSIBLE Belper has won an award 'Most Accessible Town of the Year', given by the charity Accessible Derbyshire, in recognition of their work in raising awareness of all accessibility needs in the town.

The inaugural awards were held at Chatsworth House and attended by the group's chair, Siobhan Fennell.

The group is raising awareness of accessibility needs of all kinds, not just physical, so includes understanding people with dementia, autism and other hidden disabilities so that Belper is an 'Understanding Town' and a good experience for all.

Over the last year Accessible Belper has created a new website (www.accessiblebelper.org) which has information about how to travel into and

around the town using public transport, car parking, the key attractions, and details of accessible businesses to help residents and visitors plan their visit. The latest training sessions and events are shown on the home page.

To help get the message out to a wider audience the group has also set up a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/AccessibleBelper) which is updated regularly.

The group is open to everyone and people are encouraged to get in touch with ideas or offers of help. Details of meetings and events are publicised around the town, on their website and Facebook page.

SUCCESS: Members of the group raising awareness at October's Discovery Days Festival.



Digitising the Derwent

THIRD year students on the University of Derby's Computer Games Modelling and Animation course have been using locations around the Derwent Valley to inspire them.

They have used them to develop realistic virtual environments that can be toured and digital characters that would have been found on site in the past.

Using digital cameras to capture buildings, costumed volunteers on sites and a technique called photogrammetry the students created 3-dimensional environments and characters.

Back at the computer lab they used a range of specialist software to enhance their photogrammetry to virtually recreate buildings, re-build lost features



and create moving characters as part of their final year module.

They visited High Peak Junction, Leawood Pump, Cromford Mills, Cromford Canal and the Birdswood Trip Boat to capture information.

The students showcased their work in December 2016. A wide range of inspirations and approaches were used including turning Richard Arkwright from a 2D painting to 3D character, a presentation of the Gothic Warehouse at Cromford past and present, the workshops at High Peak Junction and exploring the Bear Pit in Cromford from the viewpoint of a fly!

To find out more on the project contact georgina.greaves@derbyshire.gov.uk. To find out more about the University of Derby Computer Games and Modelling Course contact Robert Berry, Programme Leader, at r.berry1@derby.ac.uk.

INTO THE SUNSET: A Derwent Canal screenshot by James McCarthy (above).

HOW IT WAS: High Peak Junction Warehouse by Dale Ward (left).

IN USE: The Gothic Warehouse digitised by Bradley Horne and Matthew Hall (below).



Teachers go on a tour of discovery

In June 2016 a group of Primary School teaching staff and trainee teachers went on a tour of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

This day long tour showcased the learning opportunities available across the site for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils visiting a range of sites and having a go at lots of fun activities.

Learning about why this area is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, finding out about its Outstanding Universal Value and how this can be shared with children, the group visited Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Whistlestop Centre, Cromford Mills, had a ride on the **Birdswood** Trip Boat on Cromford Canal, went to one of the world's oldest railway workshops at High Peak Junction, stopped off at Crich Tramway Village and finished at Strutt's North Mill in Belper.

The visit, co-ordinated by Derbyshire County Council's Environmental Studies Service and supported by Adrian Farmer from the DVMWHS team, was very positively received.

If you'd like to find out more about learning opportunities in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site visit www.derwentvalleymills.org/learn. If you'd like to take part in a future learning tour training day contact Georgina Greaves at georgina.greaves@derbyshire.gov.uk or ring 01629 533439.

WHISTLESTOP VISIT: Teachers find out more from the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust at Matlock Bath.



More walks than ever for 2017

Although the World Heritage Site Discovery Walks Festival won't be taking place in May/June this year, there'll be more guided walks than ever for people to enjoy in 2017.

Instead of over 40 walks, competing with each other across 16 days, the Belper North Mill Trust, the Arkwright Society and other organisations within the valley will be providing even more walks, spread out across the year.

"People have struggled to get to all the walks they wanted to try in previous Discovery Walks Festivals," said Adrian Farmer from the DVMWHS team, who is helping to co-ordinate the walks.

"This way, people have an opportunity to pace themselves across the whole year - they don't have to miss anything!"

For the first time, Strutt's North Mill at Belper is planning a walk for every Sunday from May to August, as part of its March to October programme. New walks include a look at the village of Holbrook and its industries, a tour of the ancient Duffield Frith southern boundary and the first ever public viewing of the remains of the old Strutt Observatory on Bridge Hill, Belper.

For more information on all of the walks planned for 2017 in the World Heritage Site locality, visit the www.derwentvalleymills.org website or contact Gwen Wilson on 01 629 536831 or at gwen.wilson@derbyshire.gov.uk and ask to be put on the distribution list for walks information.



Learning about WWI

THANKS to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, a new book about life in Belper during the First World War has been produced for the town's primary schools.

The book, titled 'Belper in Wartime: Outbreak of the Great War', was written by Adrian Farmer, the Heritage Coordinator for the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, and published by Belper Arts Festival, which secured the funding.

Adrian has been visiting Belper and Milford's six primary schools to hand over 40 books to each. At some schools he talked to children about life in Belper a century ago.

He said: "Children have been very enthusiastic and eager to learn about Belper during wartime. I've been impressed at how quickly they recognise the town from photographs taken a century ago.

"A big thank you to George Gunby from the Belper Arts Festival for finding the funding needed to make the book a reality."

On some visits Adrian has been accompanied by Gwen Wilson, also from the World Heritage Site Team, dressed as a Red Cross nurse, who talked about the wartime hospital for injured soldiers in Green Hall on King Street.

The two-year lottery-funded project ends in March, and included a DVD based on the book, and dramatic presentations in December 2015 and for the centenary of the Battle of the Somme in July 2016. It was put together by the Belper Arts Festival with support from the Belper in Wartime Commemorations Working Group.

Project organiser George Gunby said: "We knew a lot about what went on at the various war fronts but information on life at home was scarce. Thanks to an enthusiastic group of volunteers, including the one hundred or so who supported the presentations, we have now a comprehensive picture of what life was like in Belper during the first two years. Plans are in hand to cover the final two years. Thanks to everybody who participated."

SCHOOL NURSE: Gwen Wilson with Alyssa Caddick and Freya Brown of Year Six in Belper's St Elizabeth's School.

Partner in European Geo-hazard research

FOLLOWING the completion of research on climate change in 2015 the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) was invited to become a demonstration site within the PROTHEGO (Protection of European Cultural Heritage from Geo-hazards) Project.

This is a European Union funded project with partners across the EU. The lead organisations within the UK are the British

Geological Survey and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

The project aims to develop a methodology for analysing the potential geological threats to European World Heritage Sites by applying space technology based on radar interferometry (inSAR) to retrieve information on ground motion and map geo-hazards in the 400+ UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Europe. The pilot demonstration sites are Rome (Italy), The Alhambra (Spain), Choirokoita (Cyprus) and the DVMWHS.

Changes at the DVMWHS

DERBYSHIRE County Council is the main funder of the DVMWHS team and is having to make cuts in every area of its operation. As a result, their contribution to the World Heritage Site will reduce by £60,000 in 2017/18.

The cut was made following extensive consultation with stakeholders which concluded early last year. The council still values the Site and remains the largest funder, demonstrating its ongoing commitment.

Mark Suggitt, the Director, will retire in March. His post will not be replaced and the team will join the county's new Conservation, Heritage and Design Service, headed by Adam Lathbury.

Adam was previously Conservation and Design Manager at Derbyshire County and has a long involvement with the World Heritage Site. His team provides planning advice to the Partnership and he chairs the Conservation and Planning Panel.

Mark said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed working for the DVMWHS over the past six years. Managing the relationships within a diverse partnership is always a

challenge but never dull!

"Collectively much has been achieved during this time. This is due to the ambition of the partners and the support that the partnership can offer them.

"The Arkwright Society has completed the first phase of its ambitious master plan with the opening of Cromford Creative and the Gateway visitor centre.

"Derby Museums are now well into the £16 million re-visioning of the Silk Mill and Belper North Mill Trust has been successful in attracting funding to broaden audiences and shape its future.

"Masson Mills and Darley Abbey remain thriving commercial centres and the latter has done remarkable work in attracting tenants and developing its wedding suite.

"John Smedley continues to produce the world's best knitwear and has been constantly supportive of our work.

"The greatest strength of the Derwent Valley has always been the people who work to bring its rich inheritance to life. I would like to thank all of them, especially the volunteers at the attractions and those who support our Discovery Days festival."



Belper's Fourteen are remembered

Belper remembered the 14 men from the town who died on the first day of the Battle of the Somme with centenary commemorations at the beginning of July 2016.

A performance called 'The Fourteen', in St Peter's Church, was well supported, with attendees including family members of some of the men who died. The temporary memorial of 1919 was recreated again in the Market Place, and an open air service held (above).

In 2017, the town's World War One Commemorations Group has received funding through the **Hidden Histories** Project, for a year-long activity researching what happened to the men who survived the war, and the impact of life in the trenches on their home lives that followed.

It includes finding out what family stories there are in Belper about that time, and capturing them through recorded interviews.

If you think you can help, contact the group via the www.belperinwartime.org website.

Water theme

Belper has made it to the finals of the Britain in Bloom Competition in 2017, and is looking to its heritage for inspiration to impress the judges.

This year, more groups and individuals than ever are working with Belper Town Council, to a theme of 'water' – the resource that transformed the town thanks to Jedediah Strutt and his water-powered cotton mills, built from 1776.

Floral displays in the town will include a three-dimensional waterwheel, and schools in the town are being offered lessons on how water has influenced Belper and the history of its parks and gardens.

Anyone wanting to help with the preparations for the entry should contact Liz Page, town clerk, on 01773 822116.



LEAVING: Director Mark Suggitt.



NEW HEAD: Adam Lathbury



Sleepers and hard work transform station approach

EXCEPTIONAL teamwork at Ambergate Station has transformed an overgrown bank on the station approach road into an impressive terraced sleeper planting bed.

The new bed comprises 60 donated railway sleepers which have made a triple level terrace, colourfully planted with over 500 shrubs. This has been a joint project for East Midlands Trains, Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership, Network Rail and station adopters.

Great teamwork by dedicated staff and volunteers enabled numerous difficulties to be successfully overcome, achieving a fantastic

transformation of the station approach. These landscaping improvements follow on from significant access improvements, with new steps and the adjacent footway and access road both being resurfaced.

The improvements were awarded a Runner Up prize in the Outstanding Teamwork Award at the Community Rail Awards 2016. This national recognition followed on from Ambergate winning the *Most Improved Station Award 2015* at the East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards for the access improvements and work of the station adopters.

WELL DONE: The finished terraces at Ambergate.

Looking better at Matlock Bath

STATION adopters from Matlock Bath Parish Council have taken over an area of land within the Derbyshire Dales District Council Car Park adjacent to the station entrance.

This area was overgrown with trees and large shrubs impacting on the station entrance area. They have cleared the area and replanted it with a variety of smaller attractive shrubs.

The old sign board hidden behind this area has been rebuilt and artwork produced by local schoolchildren reprinted and displayed on the boarding. A series of wildlife art images have been installed along the platform.

GOOD WORK: Adopters and their replanting.

