

A View from the Bridge

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge July 2017

Supported by over 600 individuals and Cheviot Trees Hutton Stone J H Greenwood R C Reed and Simpsons Malt

Affiliated to Sustrans: Registered as a Charity in England (No 1162687) and Scotland (No SC046208)

The Friends of the Union Chain Bridge is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation constituted under the Charities Act 2011

www.unionbridgefriends.com

At last! Is there light at the end of theBridge?

After many months of frustrating delays in reaching the first hurdle towards Heritage Lottery Fund grant assistance, it now appears that we are on track towards a stage 1 application by the end of August. Detailed investigation work is under way ahead of the restoration. Northumberland County Council (NCC) and Scottish Borders Council (SBC), with their consultants, are finalising a funding bid with a maximum of £5million available towards the bulk of the work. In July NCC's cabinet will consider recommendations to contribute funding towards the scheme over three years; SBC and other stakeholders are also expected to make significant contributions. **Friends' Chairman, Robert Hunter**, has welcomed the restatement of the Councils' commitment. He said "The Friends are delighted to hear of the continued significant financial support from both NCC and SBC towards the restoration of the bridge, which is a unique part of the UK's engineering history. But the success of the project relies on receiving HLF funding and the Friends with their large community support on both sides of the Border and internationally, will continue to lobby hard to ensure the success of the project, with the aim of restoration underway in time for its Bicentenary in 2020. It would be an unforgivable tragedy if we failed to save this engineering icon."

Bridge Closures in July



Ahead of the restoration works, site investigation work will take place on and around the Bridge from 26th June for about 4 weeks, during which period **the Bridge will be closed to vehicles for two weeks from July 3rd, on weekdays.** It will remain open to pedestrians and cyclists throughout this period.

Photo: Drilling rig above English tower; June 28th 2017

Helicopter Day a great success

150 passengers enjoyed spectacular views of the Bridge, the Rivers Tweed and Whiteadder, Berwick,



Norham and the surrounding area in a day of helicopter flights organised by Trustee, Tommy Cockburn, on May 28th. Two helicopters worked throughout the day, shuttling from the Chain Bridge Honey

Farm, and approximately £1500 was raised for Friends' funds.

Photo: Jim Gibson; with thanks Chain Bridge Honey Farm, its vintage vehicle collection, newly-established bee garden and classic bus café are open daily, except Mondays, throughout the summer.
www.chainbridgehoney.com

Summer river trips

Paxton House's river boat trips, which pass under the Bridge and head upriver to St Thomas's Island at Horncliffe, will continue throughout the summer. At £8 for adults and £5 for children, trips start at the landing ramp at Paxton House and take about an hour.. Check the Paxton House website for times; and also for details of the Paxton **salmon netting**, to learn about the heritage and traditions of Tweed netting and modern conservation methods. *Paxton House, Grounds and Tea Room are open daily 10am to 5pm (Grounds until sunset).*
www.paxtonhouse.co.uk



Second TWO NATIONS INTERNATIONAL 7k RUN! (and a 1.8k too!)

Wednesday 26th July at Paxton House

Following the successful Two Nations and Paxton grounds family fun runs last year, the **Friends** are organising similar runs on Wednesday evening, 26th July.

The main run, open to runners aged 15 and above, is over a challenging **7k** (approx.) course, which crosses the Union Bridge twice and thereby qualifies as an "international"! Starting at Paxton House at 7.30pm, it heads along the riverside to the Bridge and then over farmland and country lanes in England before returning by the Bridge to Paxton.

The more leisurely **1.8k** (approx.) run starts at Paxton House a few minutes later and follows a delightful route along Paxton estate glades and the riverside; ideal for those who enjoy the *Berwick Curfew Run* and for younger runners, perhaps with parents – those under eight must be accompanied by an adult. Refreshments will be available.

Registration forms are available in advance from unionbridgefriends@gmail.com; registration on the evening from 6pm. The entry fee is £5 for adults and £3 for U-16s for either run, with free Friends' membership to December 2018.

Route marshals are required for various points along the courses – if you could help, please ring 01289 382541 or e-mail unionbridgefriends@gmail.com

Sir Samuel Brown and the Union Chain Bridge

The comprehensive and lavishly illustrated history of the Bridge by Gordon Miller - covering the career of Capt Brown, the need for the Bridge, its design, construction and opening ceremony, subsequent repairs, improvements and management up to the 1970s, the toll house and tolls; Brown's other bridges and several other topics; and concluding with a chapter by Stephen K Jones on Brown Lenox, Brown's iron works at Pontypridd, which supplied the iron for the Bridge - is one step nearer publication, being typeset as this newsletter is issued.

Welcome to a new corporate sponsor

We welcome to our group of local corporate sponsors **R C Reed & Co** of Norham East Mains, whose generous support for the project is greatly appreciated.