

A View from the Bridge

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge
July 2018

....a View from the Tower



Enjoying a grandstand view from the Scottish tower, surveyors carrying out a roped inspection in May take a break to watch a participant in the Austin Healey Club's *Air an Rathad* ("On the Road") rally en route to Loch Fyne. The Bridge closure order was suspended for five minutes to allow the 23 cars to cross. And although the Scottish Tower survey work was itself suspended because of the presence of nesting birds, it will be resumed later in the summer. The three-week Principal Inspection revealed no areas of major concern. During the closure period, Northumberland County Council (NCC) carried out temporary repairs to the rash of scars on the platform surface, which are expected to last until the platform is itself replaced during the restoration works.

Radar scan survey

The three-week closure also allowed an opportunity for our Patron Prof Roland Paxton of Heriot Watt University, with the ready agreement of NCC, to arrange for Dr Colin Stove and his colleagues from Adrok, an Edinburgh-based geophysical services company, to investigate – *pro bono* - the location and state of the Scottish-side anchors, for which no reliable data exists. The state-of-the-art atomic dielectric resonance process allowed the team to scan the ground to a depth of 12m, to locate the anchors and chains. Prof Paxton has worked with Dr Stove for many years and the team was responsible for the discovery, in 2001, of an entombed horse and cart which had fallen deep into the core of the central pylon during the construction of the Loch-nan-Uamh viaduct on the West Highland line in 1897.

The result of the Bridge investigation is awaited. Prof Paxton said: "Our anchorage investigation venture has the potential to inform decision-making on the Bridge's refurbishment and conservation, and to provide educational and promotional opportunities for a better understanding of the role of this historic international landmark in suspension bridge development"



Michael Robinson and Dr Colin Stove of Adrok investigate the Scottish anchors with Friends' patron, Professor Roland Paxton

The Restoration Project

Following the success of the first-round **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid**, with the award of a £360,000 development grant, the principal partners in the restoration project have now embarked on a one-year development phase to take the scheme further, through a raft of cultural, heritage, educational and community benefits. The project aims to provide learning opportunities for young people and to develop educational resources for the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) throughout the educational systems of both nations, in the hope that a new generation of students will be encouraged to follow careers in science, technology and engineering.

Friends' AGM – October 11th

Stephen K Jones to be guest speaker



The fifth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge will be held in the Horncliffe Memorial Hall on **Thursday October 11th 2018 at 7pm**. We are delighted that Stephen K Jones, left, who contributed a

fascinating chapter on the Brown Lenox chainworks to *Samuel Brown and Union Chain Bridge* (see more below) will speak about Brown's association with the company and its role in the supply of ironwork for the construction of the Bridge.

Samuel Brown and Union Chain Bridge Sold out – now re-printed and available again!

The first print of the widely-acclaimed definitive work on the Union Chain Bridge, by the late Gordon Miller and Stephen K Jones, sold out earlier this summer but has been reprinted. Each book will now come with an attractive souvenir bookmark kindly donated by the Hutton and Paxton Community Council. Copies of the book (softback; 300pp 138 illustrations inc 3 full colour plates) are available from Chain Bridge Honey Farm or Grieve's of Church Street, Berwick-upon-Tweed at £17.50 or direct from the Friends (+ £3.50p+p)

The Two Nations Run

at Paxton House – July 22nd



Following the successful Two Nations and Paxton grounds family fun runs in 2016 and 2017, the Friends are organising similar runs on **Sunday morning, 22nd 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 11am, 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. Advance **entry forms** are available from unionbridgefriends@gmail.com; or for download from our website; registration on the day is from 10am. The entry fee is £5 for adults and £3 for U-16s for either run, with free Friends' membership to December 2019.

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

Nasmyth Greetings Card



A high quality greetings card of Alexander Nasmyth's painting of the Bridge has been produced by the Friends. 21cmx15cm and with no message, it is cellophane-wrapped. and is available from the Chain Bridge Honey Farm or direct from the Friends at £1.50 or 5 for £6.50 inc postage. A5 cards of the same view are also available by post at £5 for 10, inc postage.

The Friends of the Union Chain Bridge

Registered as a Charity in England and Wales (No 1162687) and Scotland (No SCO46208) and a Charitable Incorporated Organisation constituted under the Charities Act 2011. Our **Trustees** are Robert Hunter (Chairman) Martha Andrews Robert Bulling (Hon Treasurer) Edward Cawthorn (Hon Secretary) Tommy Cockburn Georgina Home Robertson John Home Robertson Alex McGregor, David Osman and David Walker. (appointed by Horncliffe PC June 2018);

Membership Sec: Helen Newlands. Our **Patrons** are Prof Roland Paxton and Brian Whittle. Our **corporate sponsors** are Chain Bridge Honey Farm - Cheviot Trees - J G Greenwood & Co - Hutton Stone and Simpsons Malt

We are mutually affiliated with [sustrans](#)

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