

You take the high road, and I'll take

THE SLOW ROAD

Join Mike Ogden for a cruise by narrowboat through the English waterways. Travel up the tidal Trent to Nottingham, and explore the Midlands and the Fens by canal and river. Cruise the Thames tideway through the centre of London, and follow the river all the way to Oxford. Take the lovely Oxford Canal north, pass through the heart of the canal system in Birmingham, and end your journey on the biggest Meccano set in England!



In the space of two generations, starting about 1760, the English inland waterways grew from a few unconnected navigable rivers to a network of several thousand miles of river and canal. This explosion of ambition and enterprise provided the freight transport system needed to sustain the Industrial Revolution that was taking place at the same time.

Industry needed coal to heat its boilers and turn its wheels; it needed raw materials to feed its engines; it needed transport to ports and markets for its finished goods. In an age when there were no railways, and horses struggled to pull carts along rutted roads, canals were the answer.



This entertaining talk, richly illustrated with modern and archive pictures brings the waterways vividly to life.

The rapid growth of the canal system, which made the Industrial Revolution possible, is explored.

And through it all shines the sheer pleasure of travelling, at a comfortable walking pace, in your own home through your own country.

The talk is available for a fee in North Nottinghamshire, North Derbyshire and South Yorkshire. Venues further afield may be possible. Fee and travel cost details are given on the website:

www.mikeogden.moonfruit.com



It was a hectic time, reaching such a pitch of enthusiasm for canal building that the 1790s were described as a period of "canal mania". And it was a brief time, too. Even before the last canals were opened the new railways were starting to make inroads into freight transport. That process would continue for the rest of the 19th century, and in the 20th century road transport took much of what was left. By the 1960s, just 200 years after the canal age began, it ended.

But not quite. With ambition and enterprise that matched the canal builders', enthusiasts around the country were determined that the rotting, near-derelict canals and once-navigable rivers should live again. They overcame political indifference, bureaucratic hostility and huge financial obstacles to restore hundreds of miles of waterway. The second canal age was born.



To ask about a venue and date, please call Mike Ogden on 07741 777768, or email ogewriter.mike@gmail.com



So let's enjoy it!