

## Rennie to the fore at PHEW Summer Visit

by Roland Paxton



ICE Scotland's PHEW Summer visit with Sandra Purves and myself acting as guides, and up to fifty attendees, took place from 3-5th July. The event got off to a good start with a walking tour in and around central Edinburgh including, the Regent Arch (Stevenson, 1819), Waverley Bridge and Station, the Melville Column (Stevenson), Scotland Street Tunnel and, via the Water of Leith, to Dean Bridge. This was followed by a boat trip on the Union Canal (1822) out to Slateford Aqueduct.

Crawley Cistern



On 4th July we inspected the top of the North Queensferry cantilever and ongoing maintenance work on the Forth Bridge under the expert guidance of Network Rail Engineer

Ian Heigh. This was followed by four boat trips from North Queensferry pier to see the bridge from the firth, particularly its piers and skew-backs.



Knowes Mill

Scottish work of the eminent engineer John Rennie (1761-1821) featured prominently in this year's programme as it was less than a year to the 250th anniversary of his birth. Rennie improved the Queensferry crossing from 1808-17 and the party took the opportunity of examining his recently restored pier at North Queensferry and its Stevenson pier light. In the afternoon the party inspected the Bridge of Earn (Rennie 1819, widened F.A. Macdonald 1935) and Smeaton's impressive Perth Bridge (1766-71, cast iron cantilevered additions 1869).

The final day began as the guests of Scottish Water with excellent talks at Fairmilehead offices followed by visits to Crawley Cistern and Glencorse dam and reservoir (Jardine, 1825 and later) on which both Telford and Rennie had advised. In the afternoon the party visited the Rennie memorial (with Waterloo Bridge baluster) at East Linton, East Lothian and his



Leith Docks

birth place adjoining at Phantassie House, East Linton, where Patricia Stephen (the present owner) acted as our guide and generously regaled us with afternoon tea. Our 2010 event concluded, after brief stops at Rennie's first mill (Knowes) and (his celebrated master) Andrew Meikle's grave at East Linton Church, with informative visits to Musselburgh Bridge and Leith Docks.

**Roland Paxton**

Chairman, PHEW Scotland

## PHEW Summer Visit 2011 Glasgow

Next Summer's visit will be to Glasgow and surrounding area, provisionally on the weekend 1/2/3rd July. It is planned to include bridges over the Clyde from Erskine to Dalmarnock, water supply systems, the Forth & Clyde Canal, significant railway structures such as Ballochmyle and Lugar viaducts & Central station roof, and work associated with the Clyde River Navigation Trust.

For further details and booking forms please contact Sandra Purves, 4 Scotland Street Edinburgh or email [spurves004@btinternet.com](mailto:spurves004@btinternet.com)