narrows, with gardens on your left, and paddocks and outbuildings on the right between you and the river. Continue over a stile and straight on through a small housing estate. Turn left at the old railway embankment and follow the narrow path beside the old railway cottages until you reach Asfordby Road. Turn right and follow the road back into town or take outgoing top of the the the embankment, to cross the river and re-join along 1 next path to the right (13) walk at (6).

Follow the path to Riverside Lane opposite, with the Butts on your left and Riverside Farm on your right. Cross the lane and the stile to the path through the field passing Sysonby Knoll Hotel on your left. The path

brick to the bridge. Carry on up the lane across second gate into the churchyard. railway

# Sysonby Church

Follow the gravel path on the left of the church to the stile at the far end.

12. The Butts

If you would like to complete the circular walk, cross the wooden footbridge over the lock chamber and turn right, and then left up the lane past the sewage works on the left. 10. Sysonby Grange Lane Turn right into the lane a

## Sewage Works

At this point you can either retrace your steps, or continue past Sysonby Church, and cross the field back into town. Or you can cross the canal bridge and railway, through the grounds of Mill House, to join the footpath to Kirby Bellars at the A607.

This is the Eye Kettleby Lock island with the weir on one side, and the lock on the other. The lock chamber, filled in at the moment, is in good condition, and it is intended that it shall be restored. The present large weir was built to control the amount of water flowing down the river. If you walk on to the wooden footbridge at the other end of the island, you can see the Eye Kettleby canal bridge to your left.

8. Rhubarb Island
Cross the iron footbridge.

# Here are a few interesting facts:-

evidence about Melton's past also know a great deal about to very important for centuries. The parishes of Sysonby and Eye Kettleby are rich in archaeological evidence about Melton's past going right back to the Stone Age. We also know a great deal about the history of the area, which clearly was

- barges, and the across Burton barges, and the lock chambers are wider than usual. The Boat Inn, across Burton Street from the carpark, is a reminder that Burton End was the site of the old canal basin. Looking up Burton Street towards St. Mary's Church, the view has not changed very much from the days when boats carried coal, wool, wheat, oats, barley and manure from Leicester's stables. In 1808 there was a wharf at Priors Close west of the basin. It included a warehouse, a granary, malt offices, and a coal was built ior
- 4. Egerton Park formed part of the landscaping around the house designed by Wyatt in 1829. A cricket pitch was laid out by the owner of Egerton Lodge, Lord Wilton, and he entertained teams from the MCC when two-day matches were played. It was the only private ground visited by the MCC in Leicestershire. County first class matches were played here in the 1940s.

Lords of the Manor

Local Bus Services

as a medicine reherbalist. It was 8. Rhubarb Island was given its name because of the large plants with rhubarb-like leaves that grow all over it. This is Butter Bur, used as a medicine for the Plague according to Culpeper the 17th Century herbalist. It was also used to wrap butter pats to take them to market.

There are regular bus services from Leicester (St. Margaret's Bus Station), via Syston and the Wreake Valley villages of Ratcliffe, Thrussington, Hoby, Frisby and Kirby Bellars to Melton Mowbray (Windsor Street).

A regular bus service also runs from Leicester and Syston along the main road A607 to Kirby Bellars, and then to Melton Mowbray via Station Lane, Asfordby. All bus information can be obtained from:-

- west, avoiding the lands of the Lords Wilton and Palmerston, objected to the Works being built too close to their properties The Sewage Works were built in 1852 in Mr Whittle's field to the est, avoiding the lands of the Lords Wilton and Palmerston, who had
- II. Sysonby Church. Near to the church part of a Roman coffin was found by the Melton Fieldworkers and in 1859, pagan Saxon burials were discovered which suggests that the site had religious significance before the coming of Christianity. The church was built in the 13thC. by Roger de Mowbray, Lord of Melton.

was formed in 1997 to improve access to the corridor of the Rivers Eye and Wreake, and to work for the re-opening of the Melton Mowbray Navigation between

Melton & Oakham Waterways Society
(MOWS)

opening of the Melton Mowbray & the River Soan

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Waterways

Society

- 12. The Butts. The semi-circular area to the left of the footpath was set aside for the practice of archery. Able-bodied men were required to practise their skills every week. In 1613 Melton was fined 21 shillings for not having a pair of Butts, and the Sysonby Butts were thought to have been one of the pair they were forced to provide. 21 shillings would have been about £117 now.
- 13. Riverside Farm. The buildings on this site date from the 17thC and are listed. Beside the river is a moat fed by river water. This is recorded in the Sites and Monuments Records. It is probably a garden feature associated with the old Manor House, but it may be much older and been adapted from a moated farmhouse. The Yew trees on this site date from 1580.

6. The Old Northern Railways Line Bridge
Follow the path under the bridge. It can be very muddy, so care is needed. The river now swings gently to the left. There are two wooden stiles and two narrow metal gates to pass through, and a footbridge across a small stream. 5. The Junction of the Canal and the River Eye Carry on into the next field. Cross the stile a few yards from Until quite recently this bridge was a brick built canal bridge on the canal tow path. Longfield High School is to the left Asfordby Rd. of the path.

Oakham

looking down. It is the old canal basin pub. The Oz Canal joined the Melton Mowbray Navigation at Burton End. In 1877 the Canal Company was wound up. The canal basin and the bed of this part of the canal were filled in. The double row of chestnut trees was planted to show the line of the canal. There is a model lock gate with a descriptive map at the end of the avenue.

Burton

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left hand side

the

on

Boat Inn is cing down. It is

# The route you will be following is the old tow path of the Melton Mowbray Navigation as far as Rhubarb Island, and back home across the fields. It is roughly two miles, and takes about an hour at a gentle pace.

Cross Burton Street from the Boat Inn, and follow the service road into the Play Close. Near this new road ran the canal tow path beside part of the wall of the New Wharf. This was taken down when the new Council Office was

The Boat Inn

## THE WREAKE VALLEY WAY

Next to the river on a small area of gravel deposits was the old village of Sysonby or Sixtenby in the Domesday Book. Here archaeological excavations by the Melton Field Workers found evidence of human habitation in a three metre deep section starting with artefacts from the Stone Age and Bronze Age (c. 2500 BC) in waterlogged silt at the base, then Iron Age and Roman artefacts, and finally at the top, the last artefacts date to the

Following as far as possible, the route of the Melton Mowbray Navigation from Melton Mowbray to the River Soar

There is no evidence of mediaeval habitation on this site, which must have been abandoned around the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. The village moved on to the land which is now the Town Estate Golf Course which evidence shows was occupied from around 1100. It

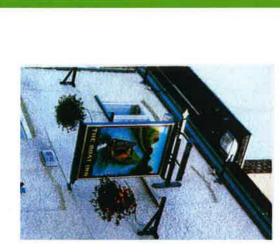
Saxon/Norman period (900/1050AD)

evidence shows was occupied from around 1100. It appears to have been deserted in the 16thC. The villagers may have been forced out by the Digby family who were

## Leaflet One

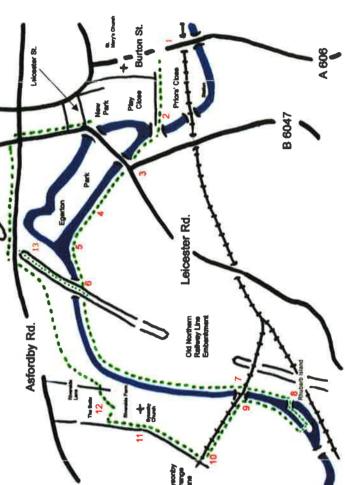
### **MELTON MOWBRAY** THE BOAT INN ТО НОВУ

Eye Kettleby Lock to Kirby Bellars Kirby Bellars to Frisby on the Wreake Frisby on the Wreake to Hoby Boat Inn to Eye Kettleby Lock



This railway line is now used as a test track.

7. The Old Nottingham Railway Line
Follow the footpath under the bridge.
As you go under this bridge you will see that the tow path of the old canal is still under the arch next to the river.



This part of the waterway is the first length of the original canal-cut left in water. Barges would have left Melton Mowbray along here on their way to the Junction and the Grand Union.

Carry on past the Leisure Pools with the canal on your right to Leicester Road.

First Canal Bridge

Follow the canal until you reach the junction with the River Eye. Because the owners of Egerton Lodge did not want barges with their rough crews passing their formal gardens, the canal was diverted. It now follows a separate course

the canal was div until the junction.

This bridge was made of cast iron by Cooke and Sons of Melton Mowbray in 1884. It replaced the arched brick canal bridge when the road was widened. At the same time, the tow path was

removed from underneath it.

**Egerton Park** 

Cross the Leicester Rd and follow the footpath sign through the kissing gate on to the tow path on the left of the canal.

Leicester Road Bridge

April 2011

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