



A LOST CANAL – REDISCOVERED

Ken Howarth, Museum Assistant at Bury Museum, has provided details of a recent exploit beneath the streets of central Manchester, when he and a number of associates set out to explore the route of a canal tunnel, now unused but evidently still in good repair, which provided an important junction cut between the Rochdale Canal and the River Irwell. Ken also provided the photograph which accompanies his account of the expedition :-

"In April this year a team of people visited and recorded a 'lost' canal under Manchester. The party led by myself (Ken Howarth, Bury Museum), consisted of Richard Hills (Manchester Museum Science & Industry), Chris Makepeace (Greater Manchester Council), Dorothy Wildgoose

(Manchester Local History Library) and Roger Lorenz (Canal Historian). Our back-up team included Cliff Gardner, a colliery official trained in gas detection, and a group of brave lads in wet suits, led by John Barton, Youth and Community Relations Officer for Bury (South) who was responsible for the dinghies.

In 1839 the Manchester and Salford Junction Canal was opened to traffic and was doomed to failure. The MSJcC linked the Rochdale Canal to the River Irwell just five furlongs away. Across the Irwell was the entrance lock to the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal, who wanted a link with the Rochdale Canal which in turn was linked to the Ashton,