

I have often heard that the invention that changed so many things was the wheel. It can be traced back to the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in Lower Mesopotamia (present day Iraq). Originally it was in the form of a potter's wheel. 300 years later it was getting to be used for transport.

This looking back comes from spending time watching canal boats navigate locks at Fradley Junction. How old are canals? They also can be traced back to Mesopotamia to 4000BC. Canals as we know them in Britain only go back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however. England was in fact the first country to have a national network, about 4,000 miles which played a vital role in the Industrial Revolution.

Take a look at the lock an amazing piece of engineering, think of the construction all by manual labour. It is really amazing to see the boats move along through the locks sometimes a number close to one another. Today of course the canals are mainly used for pleasure, but still in need physical involvement to operate each lock.

You often watch two ladies go on ahead with handles to operate the needed turning at the gates. Dad is 'comfortable' staying on board to navigate ---- no comment!

Why think about this? We forget the clever ingenuity and skills of the past. Those who designed such navigation. Think ... while you are driving the car have you ever thought about the time before wheels were invented?

Have you ever thought we still have inventive minds and use them to help each other? 'I should leave that until Dad comes home, he will think of a way to fix it' or 'I must phone Grandma – she always has her own way of finishing off the top of the cake!'.  
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We have been given inventive minds to deal with every moment of life. Many the time too when we can only solve our own problems with help from another puzzling things out with us!

Something different to think about this week but still about being thankful to be there for each other. Think ... the amazing ability to design the canal system ... something to be shared for the benefit of all ... and changing in usage from industrial to pleasure!