



The Batchworth Telegraph

Newsletter of the Friends, Winter 2017

RWT Awarded!



INSIDE:

**Our
Chairman
Speaks...**



**New
Education
Centre**



**Batchworth
1961**



**Festival
2018**



**New
Trustee**



**Work on
Roger**



Call 01923 778382 for more details or visit www.rwt.org.uk



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Chairman's Chat...

Welcome to the second issue of the Batchworth Telegraph for 2017, the twice yearly magazine from Rickmansworth Waterways Trust. It has probably been the most eventful year for the Trust and all our volunteers since our formation over 25 years ago. Winning the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, which we celebrated in glorious weather at our presentation on August 17th, was certainly the highlight of my year volunteering for the Trust. However we have also gained our new building planning permission and made excellent progress with fundraising for our new Education Centre, and we hope to start building by the middle of next year. Much more later on in this issue on our award presentation and also on the progress with our building plans and fundraising.

When I wrote my introduction to Batchworth Telegraph at the end of last year we were still in the process of appointing Rob Moore as our new Education Programme Manager. As you know Rob joined the team early this year and with excellent support from Mark rapidly came up to speed in the role. Rob has made a great start and has some new ideas on how we can take our education work forward. We have hosted a successful visit from Mencap this autumn and also piloted visits from secondary school children. Rob has long term plans to expand what we offer to help meet new requirements that secondary schools now have in the national curriculum. Rob also has the knowledge and experience to take our education work forward and this is proving a great asset to the Trust.

However this is all in the future and our priority at the moment is to continue to secure, develop and

improve our flagship education programme, Learning at the Lock. Rob has developed new tools to track the metrics from Learning at the Lock so we can understand how we are doing and where we can improve. Ensuring we are at the front of schools' minds when they are looking for novel and innovative educational visits is a challenge. Rob and the Trustees know only too well the time and budget pressures schools are under and the number of other organisations offering visits. However we have something unique that many other organisations cannot compete against which is delivered with enthusiasm by an amazingly dedicated and knowledgeable team of volunteers. Our new education building will make so much more possible and hopefully at the end of next year we will have a new facility to kick start our next 25 years.

This year Mark has reduced his hours from full time to just three days per week. However it has not had any effect on the support provided for volunteers and the many other tasks that Mark oversees as our General Manager. This is totally down to Mark's dedication and commitment to all the Trust does and stands for. He has the trustees' sincere thanks for all his hard work during the transition.

I should also like to comment on way the trustees have worked together this year. Our new building project is the biggest commitment the Trust has made since the original restoration of the Roger and it has prompted challenges from several trustees on whether we are taking the right approach on several aspects of the project. The trustees are naturally nervous about making such a big financial commitment and are concerned that we make the right decisions to secure our future. During the year we have had many robust discussions both in our meetings and via email. We have had disagreements within the board which we have had to work through



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in terms of how we should progress the project. However the important thing is that this is exactly how a trustee board should work to provide good governance to a charity. We have a strong trustee board that asks questions, challenges each other and brings a variety of different skills to the table. This puts us in a strong position as we embark on a new project such as our Education Centre and it is great to work in such a team.

We are always looking for new talent to join the trustees and to this end we have co-opted Steven Mander to the trustee board. Steve will be put forward for formal election at our 2018 AGM. He brings a wealth of experience and has already worked for several years supporting me in running the Festival. Steve introduces himself later in this issue so please give Steve a warm welcome to the trustee board.

As well as all these additional challenges, we ran another very successful Festival; we ran more charters than in previous years; we sold more merchandise and ice cream through the Lock Centre; we have trained more skippers to crew our boats; we improved the way we communicate volunteering opportunities to all our volunteers

and we have welcomed new volunteers to the team. All these activities continue to grow due to the work of Mark and Rob and our dedicated team of volunteers.

So I hope you feel as I do that 2017, rounding off our 25th year in existence as a charity, has been a great year. My personal thanks to all of you who have helped the Trust in any way during the last year. Whether it is as a volunteer running our boats, working in the Lock Centre, helping run the Festival, supporting our work at Batchworth or helping with Learning at the Lock. Our real strength is in all our volunteers and without you none of this would be possible.

I hope you enjoy a wonderful Christmas and New Year with your family and friends and I look forward to having a new building at Batchworth by the end of 2018 – no pressure!

Best regards,

David



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- Fish in distress
- Illegal dumping of hazardous waste
- Flooding incidents

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Mark Reports

As the days draw in and Christmas lights appear, it's a great time to provide you with details of what's been happening in and around Batchworth during 2017.

First of all, I would like to sincerely give my thanks to everyone who has volunteered their time to the Trust over the last year. I know I say it again and again but you really are the most fantastic bunch of people that I have had the pleasure of working with and your Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is very well deserved.

Pride of Batchworth & The Roger

Those of you who regularly read the Batchworth Telegraph know of the ongoing maintenance that we have undertaken on both the 'Pride' & 'Roger'

Both boats are regularly maintained and this ensures that we can run our boating operations without hitches. Regular oil and filter changes, fan belt replacement, window maintenance etc are all essential in keeping our assets in operational order.

Even more new Skippers and crew have been trained during 2017 and this means our pool of volunteers able to undertake charters and ferry trips has increased. If anyone wants to undergo the training or get some experience steering and looking after 'Roger' please let me know as the

winter months are a good time to get this training done ready for what we hope will be an even busier 2018.

I normally have to report that one piece or another has dropped off the Pride and has needed to be repaired or replaced, but I am really happy to say that 2017 seems to have been a quiet year in mechanical failures. We may have even cured the cursed intermittent starting problem, but Skippers, please remember to give our engine a good load of pre-heat prior to starting and treat the boat with loving tenderness!

The Lock Centre & Batchworth Area

The Lock Centre has been staffed continuously throughout 2017 and my thanks once again go to the volunteers who open up and meet the public.

The figures for volunteer hours provided at the lock centre (to the 30th November) is 1,849 and the number of visitors (again to the 30th November) is 10,240. For a small charity this is absolutely fantastic.

So far this year the shop has only been closed on 2 days. What an achievement!

Our continued open presence at Batchworth is really appreciated not only by our customers but also the boaters who live and pass through the Batchworth area.

Our regular Friday maintenance event, volunteer and clear up days are well supported by both volunteers and by other companies who provide their time to help us keep Batchworth looking beautiful, and we have had excellent help from the Canal & River Trust in support of our activities.

We have hosted a number of events at Batchworth including a performance of the 'Idle Women of the Wartime Waterways' that was held in the lock centre garden. We have also provided our garden for a private party and all this activity increases our presence in and around the Canal.

Volunteers

We continue to get a regular stream of new active volunteers wanting to join the Trust. Volunteer support and development will again be one of my priorities in 2018.

Everyone who helps the Trust contributes to its success. From the whole of the Festival Team to those who undertake ground works and maintenance, from the litter pickers to the Trustees, from those of you who undertake charters and ferry trips, sometimes in extremely challenging weather, to those who sit by themselves on a cold November day in the lock centre, you should all be extremely proud of our charity which is recognised by others outside of the Trust as a well run, well organised and financially stable organisation.

This short report does not really do justice to all the hard work and commitment shown by all you all. It is really quite amazing how much we accomplish and all of you should feel extremely proud that you belong to such a vibrant, energetic, fun and expanding charity.

Happy Christmas and New Year to you all and I really look forward to seeing you all in 2018.

Mark

Rob Reports

The end of the summer was very hectic with bookings from schools filling the last weeks in June and the first weeks in July. Central Primary School in Watford was one of a number of new schools that booked at Learning at the Lock. Every school visit was filled with volunteers to carry out the full programme and we were generally lucky with the weather.

I was very pleased to start some new initiatives in my first year of being Education Programme Manager. St Martin's School in Northwood have raised a considerable amount of money as a contribution to the building fund. The Year 8 students were given a chance to test out a new programme for secondary school aged children. Our core schools will always be from the primary schools, but with a new classroom facility it might be possible to expand the range of

schools that come to Learning at the Lock.

Although the end of the summer was busy, it was a bit worrying that schools had not asked for bookings in the autumn. Many of the summer bookings were made at short notice, but when September came around only one school had booked. There is only so much emailing that I can do to persuade schools to come to use our fantastic learning opportunity and meet our wonderful volunteers.

There was one exciting development when Mencap booked a visit for their clients. The small group that came had a lesson in Room 1 with canal artefacts. Pam Paterson was able to show the clients around the 'Roger' and Fabian Hiscock did the lock talk. David Montague was skipper of the 'Pride' that day. Pat Hiscock and Nicole Chater came as representatives of Mencap.

Even though winter is upon us, work for next year is going ahead. I am pleased to see that bookings are starting to come in for the summer. I have been working with David Montague on ways to promote Learning at the Lock. I know that we

can offer a fantastic day out at a reasonable price, but best of all are the enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers.

It was great to see some of you at the Cafe Nero coffee morning. There was a chance to have a chat, which is not always possible when we are busy on a Learning at the Lock programme. I was also pleased to welcome John Harris, who has been added to the list of potential skippers, as has Sadie Galindez. Sadie, Steve Mander and I all took our skipper's licences and passed! Which is a tribute to Mark Saxon's teaching.

I look forward to working with all the volunteers next summer.

Rob



Caption Competition!

Between issues of Batchworth Telegraph we always accumulate a few photos of our volunteers and others in action around and about Batchworth. Be aware that Mark is especially good at catching those odd moments we really would not like to have recorded for posterity.

The first is of one of our founding trustees, Tim Woodbridge, who was having some difficulty navigating his boat, Albert, up the very shallow water of the Chess arm. Mark, who took the photo, was not exactly sure what Tim was doing but he could be praying to the great god of silt for a bit of a break!



Many of you know Pat Hiscock who does a fantastic job keeping all the planting and displays of flowers replenished throughout the year in the Batchworth Lock area. I think what Pat is about to say to Mark is if you take a photo of me here I am going to find a new place to bury my trowel!





Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

On a glorious sunny afternoon on Thursday 17th August at Batchworth Lock, we hosted Robert Voss CBE, the Lord-Lieutenant for Hertfordshire, to present the Trust with our Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The weather the day before was very wet, so we borrowed a large number of small gazebos as insurance. As is usually the case with insurance, if you have it you only rarely need it, and the sun shone and the temperature was perfect for our garden party at Batchworth. Martin Mace and I met Robert Voss in the car park at Batchworth House and escorted him in his full ceremonial dress along the Chess arm towpath to Batchworth. We found out when he was working out how to fit his sword that this

was his first formal appointment as the new Lord-Lieutenant for Hertfordshire.

Having left the lock before everyone assembled in the garden, Martin and I were amazed by how many volunteers and supporters of the Trust had gathered to celebrate the occasion. As well as a tremendous number of current and past volunteers for the Trust we had many members of the Parish, District and County Councils who were delighted in our success. I have to give our thanks to Cllr Andrew Scarth, previous Chairman of Three Rivers District Council, for submitting our nomination, as without him having the initiative to put the Trust forward we would have not won the award. Also many thanks to Cas, my wife, for planning the catering and

baking dozens of scones during the morning and for all those who helped serve the fizz and afternoon tea. It certainly made for a fantastic afternoon and we can take away memories of a very special day resulting from 25 years of dedication from all our volunteers.

You would never have known it was Robert Voss's first such award ceremony and he delivered a perfect presentation speech then stayed to enjoy the occasion and meet as many people as possible. The photos of all our volunteers by the lock show what the award is all about, people giving their time and working for their



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups



Rickmansworth Festival 2018

Next year is going to be rather special. It is the 25th Festival since the Trust was formed to organise the first event back in May 1993. The team are working hard to get everything in place for next year and our booking process will go live on January 2nd and as usual we will probably be just about full of traders and boats by the end of February. All of our large site infrastructure has already been booked well in advance to avoid any possibility of suppliers being fully committed.

This year Janet Billing, who took over from Kay Fearn as administrator for the Trade bookings last year, will also take on managing the boat bookings. Janet is looking to streamline some of the processes we use to ensure we can respond and acknowledge all bookings in good time so everyone knows they have got their place at the event. We also have two new team members joining the Waterspace team. Phil Bassett, who you may know as a regular helper at the Festival, is stepping into the role of Deputy Waterspace Manager. After several years helping the Waterspace team Russell Blake is stepping up to the role of Harbour Master. We will also have new people involved in the Tug of War next year after Adrian and Chris decided to stand down after many years of loyal service.

One person who will complete 25 years of service to the Festival next year is our Waterspace Manager, John Brice. Incredibly John has been running the Waterspace at each Festival since the very first event. He plans to stand down as Waterspace Manager after the 25th event in 2018 and Phil Bassett will take up the role. We will not be losing John completely from the team and he will still be involved in the Festival, just not in such a stressful role! John, many thanks for your work on the event for all these years. You have helped establish Ricky as one of the boaters' favourite Festivals and your

legacy will live on for many more years.

One thing we want to try and do is bring some aspects of the Festival a little more up to date. Hands up all those who know about QR codes. I was not very up to speed on them until Phil Bassett showed us how we could use them during the Festival. A QR code is essentially a 2 dimensional square bar code that you can read with a scanner app on your phone. The code can be used as a link to take you directly to a page on a website. You have probably seen them all over the place where you are encouraged to scan them to obtain further information relevant to where you are. We want to try and use them on some of the materials we display on the Festival site.

We can place a QR code on the poster showing the schedule of acts performing. On scanning it the user is then taken directly to the latest schedule on our website which gives them the most up to date listing and they can then have this with them as they travel around the site. We can place a QR code on the maps of the Festival so people can download a map on their phone to carry around with them. Even though we try and give a programme to everyone which has the map on the back cover we still have people who put it in the bottom of their bag and then ask for directions. Hopefully making the map more accessible will help people to navigate the Festival.

These are just a couple of applications we could use but as an example I have created one which will take you directly to last year's programme of entertainment so you can see how it

works! All you need is to download a QR scanner app for your phone – you probably already have one – and scan the code below.



As regards the event itself the changes we introduced this year to the main stage worked really well. The increased height of the marquee allowed us to have a much better lighting display and also a slightly higher stage. We also had a ramp to the back of the stage which enabled wheelchair access to the main stage, something we have not been able to achieve before. Both these improvements are planned again for this year. We are also working on other ideas to mark our 25th anniversary event, but if you have anything you think could work please get in touch!

Below is a photo taken by Steve Mander of the Ricky Jam at the end of Sunday last year to remind you how special Batchworth Lock is when it is full of people enjoying themselves at the Festival.



New Education Centre: Building

We have broken ground - JUST!

To paraphrase our "swan wrestler" Graham Cooper, you may not see a lot happening on top, but there is a lot going on underneath the surface!

Since the last Batchworth Telegraph a lot of work has been underway to ensure all is in place to start work on our new building. I report elsewhere on how the fundraising is progressing and although we are raising the funds before we actually start building there has been a lot going on in several areas to make sure we are all ready to go when the time comes.

Firstly we have been working with Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) on the land ownership and the lease for the land. As you know we had to resolve an issue with missing information at the Land Registry on the ownership of the plot currently occupied by the Little Union Canal. Although we have a document going back over 20 years showing TRDC leased us the land for restoration of the Roger, when we went to get the information for planning from the land registry we found only half the plot could be traced to TRDC's ownership. With help from Brian Ashby at TRDC we have now successfully registered the "unowned" half of the land in the Trust's name. We were the only ones who could do this as we have had continual use of the area for over 20 years. So we are now land owners, but only for a short while, as the trustees do not feel it is appropriate for our charity to own land long-term.

Now that the land ownership is resolved, we have discussed a new lease with TRDC which would include the right to erect a building on the site, something which our current lease specifically excludes. We are waiting for the initial draft heads of terms document, and when everything is agreed and in place we intend to sign over our part of the land to TRDC so the complete plot

can be held for the future as a community asset.

We have been working with the proposed building supplier Keops on the final details for the building and went up to meet with them again recently. Our architect has drawn up the technical plans showing all the construction details and services so Keops and other contractors can provide quotes for the work. I have put a display up in the Lock Centre of the detailed construction plans so please take a look next time you drop in.

We have completed the third party works application to the Canal & River Trust to make them aware of the project and allow them to advise us on carrying out building work near to the canal infrastructure. This is important as we have to ensure that everything we do does not put the very structure and heritage we work to conserve at Batchworth at risk. We will also be doing a similar process with the Environment Agency for the river Colne.

We have applied to UK Power Networks for a new connection to the electricity national grid. This can have a long lead time if they need to upgrade part of the network to provide the supply. Therefore we have been advised to get an application completed early and the survey for this should be completed before Christmas. We will also have to go through a similar process for water and sewage connections and eventually phone line and Broadband connection. We have even had to apply to TRDC to register for a new address as without having a postal address many other activities cannot be completed!

We have appointed a structural engineer who will do the foundation design. We have also had test bore holes completed and are awaiting the report on the results from the soil samples taken from underneath the Little Union Canal site. I was on

site when they did the work and the good news is the ground is very firm and consists of sand and gravel, which is what you would expect in Rickmansworth! On the second test bore the machine actually gave a "refusal" which means the ground was too hard to go any deeper. They had been attempting to get to between 10 and 15 metres down but only managed about 6 - 7m on the second hole! This is good news as it means we can probably get away with a simpler foundation system for the building but we will know when we get the report and the structural engineer has reviewed it.



We have met with two contractors and also a project management company on site and all three of these companies are interested in quoting for the project, with Keops as the main subcontractor supplying the building. We will be requesting them to quote as soon as we have the results of a ground survey. We are also going ahead and getting quotes to get the relevant tree work done on the site this winter before the bird nesting season starts. The objective is to try and get this done by the end of March so if you want any logs let us know.

So, although it all seems quiet on the surface regarding the building project at the moment there is still a lot going on!

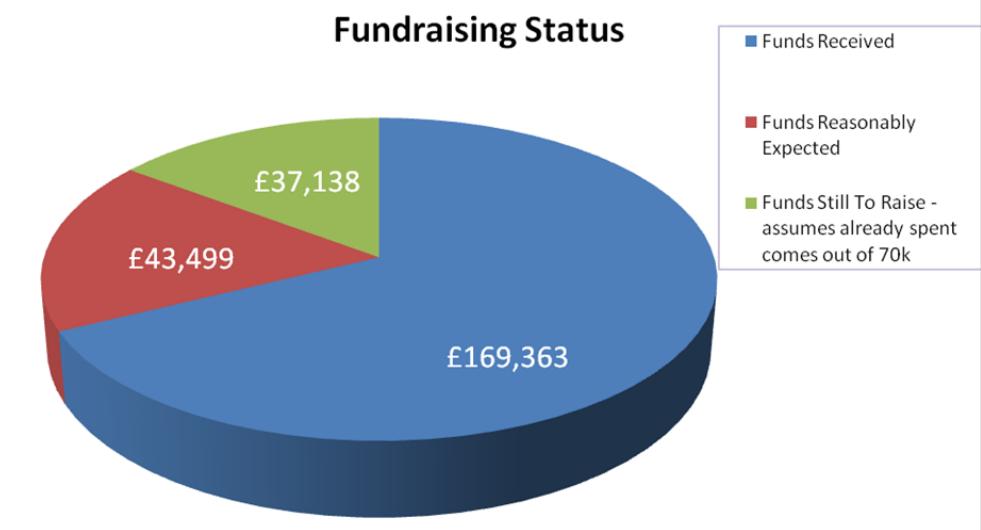
Plans and Fundraising Drive

When I last reported in Batchworth Telegraph in July this year we had raised just over £100,000 towards the new building against our target of £250,000. The Fundraising Team has been working very hard to close the gap to our target and we have made very significant progress.

Following the trustees' concerns our Treasurer, Kay Fearn, has set up a couple of other bank accounts so we can keep these funds separately tracked from our main account and also to ensure this large amount of money is protected under the financial services bank protection scheme. Kay has also been very thorough in keeping track of all the funds received and the diagram to the right shows where we are as of early November with our fundraising.

The area of the chart showing Funds Received is money we actually have in our accounts. The area showing Funds Reasonably Expected is money we still have to receive but is mostly grants that have been awarded but are only paid when we actually start the building work. Another large part of this money still to come is gift aid which we can claim on individual donations from UK tax payers and our claim on donations received so far will go in at the end of our accounting year.

Among the donations and grants that have helped bridge the gap is an incredible grant of £50,000 from the John Aphorp charity and the Garfield Weston Trust have pledged £20,000. Rob Moore's old school, St Martin's, raised an incredible £8,000 for the building with all their fundraising events with RWT as their charity of the year. Rob and I had the privilege to go along and thank all the boys for their hard work in person and the picture below was taken when the



cheque was presented. We have also had many other generous donations from individuals and other smaller charitable trusts and our "Share in a log scheme" has so far raised over £19,000 when the gift aid is added. This is an incredible response and we have been overwhelmed by the generosity of individuals and other organisations in their support for the Trust.

You can see that we still have a way to go before we reach our target. It is also important to note that our target is still an estimate based on the budget assessment prior to getting firm quotes from major contractors. We do have a firm quote for the wooden building structure but the quotes for other work such as the foundations and fit out of the building still need to be received. We also have the opportunity to put a second skin inside the building to improve the standard of insulation to meet full building regulations for year round usage. We have dispensation in our planning approval at the moment not to do this based on our profile of usage for our education work. However as well as a warmer building this second skin has the advantage of allowing all electrical services to be run in the insulated cavity between the inner and outer walls and it would make a big difference to the internal appearance. This would require raising another £25,000, in addition to our target and could be a very achievable objective.

At the moment we have quite a few grant applications in progress and also in preparation and hopefully some of these will result in further contributions towards the building. The trustee board has agreed that although the preparation work on the site will continue, we will not start actual construction until we have the funding in place to fully complete the building. This is to ensure we do not run out of funds and end up with an unfinished structure that we cannot use. However based on progress to date we are very hopeful to start building sometime in the summer 2018.

If you have any other ideas of how we can raise funds or potential sources of grants to reach our target please pass them on. All ideas can make a significant contribution. For example Pam and Douglas Paterson's fundraising event at Batchworth Lock in September raised over £1,000 for the project. We also have a Ceilidh booked for 10th Feb 2018 to help with fundraising so hopefully you will be able to support this and come along and enjoy yourselves!

So in summary we are doing very well in reaching our goal. We still have a way to go but with all your help I am confident we will reach our target very shortly. Very many thanks for all your continuing support for securing the future and allowing further development of our education work.



Who Remembers Batchworth in 1961?

A couple of weeks ago I was introduced to Ivan Cane, the chairman of the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust by John Brice, our Waterways Manager for the Festival. As chairman of a similar small charity he had come to visit us at Batchworth Lock to see how their charity could learn from the challenges we had (and continue to have!) during our 25 years to date as a Trust. One of their challenges is that they do not have a single focal point for their activities, like we do at Batchworth, as their aim is the restoration of a 9 mile stretch of canal in northern Norfolk.

Ivan knew the Batchworth area well and mentioned that he had taken a couple of photos on his Brownie 127 camera when he was a child in 1961 of Batchworth Lock and also the lift bridge on the Chess arm. These are shown below.



The first shows Batchworth Lock with the Lock Keepers cottage beside the canal. Notice the steps are perfect as the tree by the lock, which has caused all the subsidence problems recently and was removed, has not yet self seeded! Also the towpath looks in a much worse state of repair with grass growing along much of the length we now look after.

The second picture shows a very different view of the lift bridge with the long removed Rickmansworth gas works in the background, no residential moorings and a near complete lack of trees. In fact both the photos show how few trees there were around the area just a few years ago. Makes you think that people then must have been much more proactive in removing them before they got too big compared to today where we tend to leave them to grow for the natural habitat and screening they provide.





Another photo he took of our local area is of the bridge over the entrance to the Troy cut with working boats very much in evidence and the canal side modern office and residential developments still to be built. Fisheries cottages can just be seen in the background on the towpath side of the canal.

If you have any old photos you would like to share please pass them along as it helps build up our information on the history of Batchworth and the canals.

Local History Lectures

As you may know Fabian Hiscock and Mark Saxon go out and about to do presentations on canal related subjects to many local organisations during the course of a year. At a trustee meeting earlier this year we realised that although many people outside our organisation get the benefit of these talks we have never presented them locally to our volunteers and supporters. After a little discussion we agreed to rectify this and so Les Mead managed to negotiate free use of the old council chamber in Basing House as a venue and Fabian very kindly agreed to present a programme of his talks related to the canals in Hertfordshire.

Fabian has presented the first two in a series of four talks which covered "The Heritage of the Waterways" and "The effect of the Grand Junction's early years on West Hertfordshire". The first talk was very well attended but the second one we had so many people we ran out of chairs! The next two in the series are below:

Monday 15th January - "Trade on the Grand Junction in our area"

Monday 19th February - "Conserving wooden canal boats (using Roger as an example)"

I will send out reminders via a web newsletter in advance as usual but please do let me know if you are planning to attend so we can ensure we find enough chairs! We will be able to host talks such as these in our new building so we will have more space and hopefully sufficient seats!

Introducing new trustee: Steve Mander

I am a retired Squadron Leader living with my wife in Rickmansworth. My Service career with the Royal Air Force started in 1970 when I was commissioned at Henlow. I joined my first Vulcan squadron in Cyprus in 1973 as a navigator. After the Cyprus coup the Squadrons were withdrawn and I served initially at RAF Waddington and then RAF Scampton on IX, 617 and 35 Sqns in Lincolnshire. Just prior to the Falklands War I transferred to the Buccaneer at RAF Honiton before joining 12 Sqn at RAF Lossiemouth. I finished my flying career on the Buccaneer 237 Operational Conversion Unit as the Senior Navigator Instructor. The next 15 years were spent as a staff officer

doing penance for the 16 years of enjoyable flying, firstly at HQ STC at Naphill and then in the Ministry of Defence. Here I looked at the future needs operational requirements for large aircraft and helicopters. I retired from the RAF in 2001.

I then joined the defence industry. During this time I worked as a Capability/Project Manager covering both the internal customer role for future products as well as external programmes. These included: large and small unmanned air vehicles, intelligence capture and data extraction techniques, virtual reality training programmes, and a research programme looking at ways of seamlessly providing current

information to all elements of a force in real time.

I have now retired and have tried to involve myself in local life. I play and umpire hockey and I am secretary of Rickmansworth Hockey Club, I play golf on Chorleywood Common and am a team leader and sailor with the Chess Valley Special Sailors for the disabled. I also help organise and run the Rickmansworth Winter Fair on the High Street in November. As part of the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust I have been involved over the past few years as Sponsorship Manager and assistant dogsbody to the Chairman for the Festival and have recently become a qualified skipper of the Pride. I look forward to helping the Trust move forward as a trustee over the next few years.



Personal information held by RWT

Rickmansworth Waterways Trust (RWT) holds a small amount of personal data (name, address, telephone number and email address) about volunteers and other supporters. This is to ensure that we can quickly and easily contact people to keep them informed about our activities.

You are probably aware of a new regulation, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that comes into force on 25th May 2018, radically changing the way organisations have to look after their personal data. The UK's decision to leave the EU has no effect on this. The idea behind this regulation is to enact a single data protection law across Europe, to give enhanced rights for individuals, greater and more prescriptive obligations on those that process personal data and serious consequences for non-compliance. Many of the stipulations are already covered by the UK's Data Protection

Act; but simply put, all organisations need:

- to keep records of all personal data
- to be able to prove that consent was given
- to show where the data's going, what it's being used for, and how it's being protected.

Accountability is the new watchword.

If personal data gets stolen after a cyber-attack, companies have to report the breach within 72 hours of realising it.

In addition the definition of personal data has been extended so that it includes anything that could be used to identify an individual.

From our point of view just about all of this is already in place. Indeed, all volunteers who have been with the trust for more than a year were contacted last May to confirm that

they are still prepared to volunteer, and to check that their details were correct. One thing that we're currently lacking is a formal policy on handling personal information, and this is currently being worked on by myself, to include the requirements under GDPR. I plan to have this completed and ratified by the trustees in the New Year.

People are beginning to realise the commercial value of information held about individuals. For example, just think how useful the information from their Clubcard is to Tesco. From our point of view all personal information is held solely for the efficient running of RWT and will not be divulged to any third party except for statutory reasons, for example if we have to give information as a result of a court order.

If you have any questions about this then I can be contacted at stephen@rwt.org.uk.

Stephen Vincent

Volunteers' November Coffee Morning at Café Nero



Once again last month we had a very pleasant coffee morning for volunteers at Café Nero in Rickmansworth. It gives a chance for all volunteers who work in different areas to meet up and chat, and both Learning at the Lock and the Canal Centre volunteers were well represented. Steve Mander, our latest recruit to the trustees, also managed to come along to meet

people. We do take over the back half of the café so other customers must wonder what is going on!

Mark gave a round-up of volunteer statistics for the year and thanked everyone for their continued support while trustee Les Mead captured the atmosphere with photos!



Les Mead and John Hawkins



Steve Vincent and Chris Flaherty



Roger Ayers and Cas Montague

Prosecco and Canapés

Fifty friends came to the Canal Centre garden in September for a party to help with the Education Facility fundraising effort. Four groups of twelve enjoyed a trip on the Pride of Batchworth, while others ate canapes and drank prosecco. They were also treated to a 'tour' of the Roger and chat about RWT in general.

Everyone agreed that they had never been on an afternoon that was so different, informative, exciting and fun. Most of the guests live locally and had no idea that we exist! They know now!

We raised a four figure sum as people generously bought logs and raffle tickets.



A similar event is planned for the summer. Let me know if you are interested in inviting friends.

Pam Paterson (Trustee)

Anyone for a bit of light exercise?

You may remember that Roger was dry docked this year up at Tring for various work. One of the joys of having a wooden boat is that if you are going to put it into dock everything needs to come out of the boat. In Roger's case this means many tons of steel ballast in the form of old broken up bits of railway track as well as the masts, shuts and all other timber.



This means unloading all the steel piece by piece using scaffolding planks, wheelbarrows and sheer hard work and believe me those small pieces weigh a lot!

The picture on the right shows the boat completely clear of steel, the holding baskets and the shuts. Just the top planks, cratch and mast to go!



We all had a good work out and Roger was left ready to make its trip up to Jem Bates Dry Dock in Tring, even though without the ballast the prop is half out of the water! Below you can see the full team having finished the job and they are all still smiling!



More Work on Roger!

Roger has had a leak – no, not at the bottom where the canal might come in, but in the cabin roof, where the rain comes in.

We first identified it a couple of years ago, when we suddenly realised there were a number of soft points in the planking of the cabin 'ceiling' in the bread cupboard. Further investigation showed that the planking there (remember this is under the canvas roof cover) was almost completely rotten – wet through, as had clearly been developing for years. We'd felt for a while that it was a bit damp in the cupboard, but it was only when the water actually came through the planks that we could see what was going on and found a hairline split in the canvas above... Jem Bates had advised us to 'bung it up' with expanding foam to stop more coming in and wait until we could be on his dock in the summer (we usually go up in autumn winter), which meant waiting until July 2017, after Learning at the Lock had finished for the summer.

And so we went up to Bulbourne, via a stop-over at an open day for the Wendover Arm Trust at Tringford about half a mile from where Roger was built in 1936, and docked for three weeks, to include the usual dock work (re-caulking, blacking and the usual minor repairs, and for the first time since 2011 a hull survey – more of that later. As always, the first thing was for Jem to investigate properly what had to be done. That didn't take too long once he and his team had ripped off the outer skin of the cabin sides (the painted bits) and the whole of the cabin roof. That confirmed that there was extensive damage, but that it was less extensive than we feared. The first picture shows what it looked like after that! You can see that the main cabin framing and structure remained intact.



And so restorative work began. The handrails were taken away and refurbished – good news. The rotten timber (which had been a white wood, a sort of pine) was replaced with red wood (still a soft-ish wood, but more durable), and the roof was recovered with canvas. But the clever bit was, and will remain, the covering of the whole cabin structure with a proprietary roofing 'membrane', which should last for years: the canvas roof remains, but is largely cosmetic – the weather proofing is the membrane.

I don't want to give the impression that this was all easy. It wasn't – there was still great deal of skilled work to do, as well as the docking work and the usual items like cleaning out the bottoms and applying several gallons of preservative. Here's what it looked like once the new side panels had been fitted after the roof had been installed and treated – with big Al hard at work (he also completely remade the cabin slide, long overdue).



You can see that the panel has been marked out for painting, done as part of the job and which I wasn't expecting. But of course we really needed to get it all sign written again, and that was done by Alan Baillie, who does a great deal of work with Jem – you can see the result on the boat! We still have a little touching up, coach lining etc to be done, probably now in the spring, but the main job has been done, and done well, and it should result in a cabin which will outlast most of us!

Jem also fixed the problem of leakage through the cooling water overboard discharge, which needed him to make up a specially long bronze fitting to go through the hull as a 'skin fitting'. But that, too, has been effective, and will last for a considerable time.

Bear in mind that in the middle of all this Jem and Lisa were married! Very good news, and they had the warm wishes and congratulations of the Trust as they went off.

But what of the survey, I hear you ask, which was asked for about a year early as a consequence of changing our insurer? Any hull survey of an old wooden boat is going to throw up all manner of issues (it's what it's for, after all), and Trevor Whitling is a hard examiner – which is why we ask him to do it. But on this occasion nothing of any significance was found at all – Trevor's view is that the boat was well rebuilt, has been well cared for, and is now in good condition. Which is a great relief to the trustees - we don't need extra things to be spending money on at the moment. No doubt in due time that will change – it's inevitable – but for the next 6 years we have confidence that as a consequence Roger will remain our principle 'heritage asset', ready to do whatever's required.

Roger will dock again in about 15 months time, having (we hope) had a full repaint. But more of that in due course!



Upcoming Events

Monday 15th January 2018 – Lecture by Fabian Hiscock: "Trade on the Grand Junction in our area" at 7.30pm Basing House

Saturday 10th February 2018 – Ceilidh and Supper at Mill End Sports and Social Club, Penn Road

Monday 17th February 2018 – Lecture by Fabian Hiscock: "conserving wooden canal boats using Roger as an example" at 7.30pm Basing House

Bank Holiday weekend 5th, 6th and 7th May 2018 – Canalway Cavalcade at Little Venice. Roger will be attending.

Saturday and Sunday 19th and 20th May 2018 – The 25th Rickmansworth Festival

December 2018 (exact date TBC) – Canal side Carols at Batchworth

Please look out for other events at Batchworth Lock throughout the year and refer to rwt.org.uk for further information on these and other events.

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