

Diary

Oct 9 - **Autumn Cruise** to Sharpness and return on Queen Boadicea II. 10.30am to 4.45pm, contact Mary Mills at the Museum.

Oct 19 - **Ramlin Rose** - "*My search for the boatwomen*"; a talk by author Shiela Stewart about the woman's side of life on the boats - based on interviews with several former boatwomen. In the Museum Schoolsroom, starting at 7.30pm.

Nov 4 - Friends visit to the **Ellesmere Port Boat Museum**, or to the nearby *Catalyst*. See page 5 for details.

Nov 13 - **The Watt Engine** from Smethwick (and later Ocker Hill) in steam at the Birmingham Science Museum. For details of coach trip to see engine & associated canal sites, see page 5 or, contact John Foley on 0989 750529 (evenings).

Nov 17 - **Sapperton Tunnel** - an illustrated talk by Bob Simpson, organised by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust in the Wheatstone Hall, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, starting at 7.30pm. (NB new time).

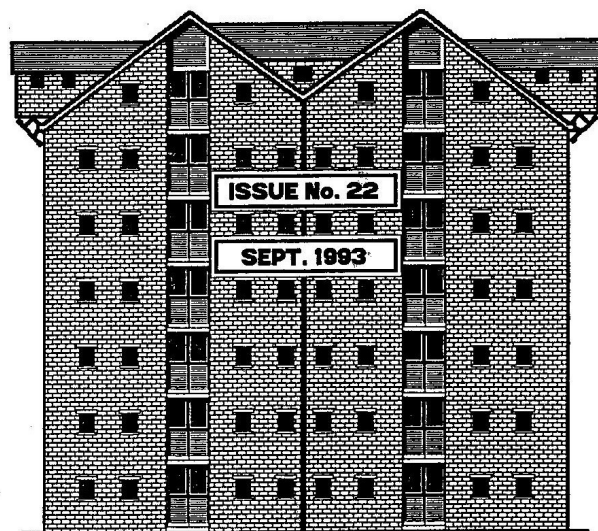
Dec 16 - **Canal Mania**. An illustrated talk by Anthony Burton, the author & broadcaster, in the Museum Schoolsroom, starting at 7.30pm.

Feb 22 - **The New Canal Age**. An illustrated talk by Roger Butler, the British Waterways Strategic Planning Manager, showing how old buildings and structures are being put to new uses. In the Museum Schoolsroom at 7.30pm.

Apr 26 - **Friends AGM**, followed by Richard Trelfa illustrating how Shopmobility's fleet of battery powered scooters and wheel chairs enables people with poor mobility to tour the City and the Docks. Have a go yourself afterwards! In the Museum Schoolsroom at 7.30pm, and afterwards, in the car park.

For evening meetings, car access to the Museum is from the Southgate Street entrance. Non-members are welcome.

Llanthony Log



Newsletter of the Friends of the
National Waterways Museum

The "Friends" is Registered Charity No. 800282

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EDITORIAL

With this September Issue of Llanthony Log, we find ourselves three-quarters of the way through another year, which has of course, amongst other things, seen the recognition of 200 years of the existence of inland waterways with the British Waterways "Canals 200" events countrywide. With particular reference to Gloucester Docks, the celebration proved to be very popular and successful.

In this Issue, you will find a contribution from the Friends' former (and first Chairman), now Secretary, Hugh Conway-Jones, describing the formation of the Friends organisation. I am sure that our members and not least those who have recently joined, will find this an interesting article. With regard to new members, I would mention that Friends sweat shirts and tee-shirts are available at a reasonable cost. The colour is Royal Blue and they display the Friends logo. These are available from me, Alan Garnett, (see Contacts page for details).

On behalf of the Friends, I wish to give our best wishes to two members of the 'Wednesday Gang' who work on the Dredger restoration and who have recently each required a spell in hospital. They are Ron Williams and Ken Dunn, and I am pleased to say that their operations were successful and that they have now been able to rejoin the 'Gang'.

A.L.G.

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DREDGER PROGRESS



Alan Garnett describes further slow but sure progress on the Dredger Restoration.

Attention has been given to the deck areas and superstructure over the summer months. Alan and Betty Conder, Doris Toller and Mildred Bramley have been busy chipping and repainting

fittings such as bollards and cabin skylights whilst John Millican has organised working parties under Des Fforde's supervision to continue with superstructure repainting. Ron Williams has been refurbishing the various porthole fittings both along the sides of the dredger and for the cabin skylights. The external appearance of the dredger therefore continues to improve.

Since my last report in the March 1993 Issue of Llanthony Log, work on the main engine has continued and the problem of shimming the crosshead slipper restraints mentioned therein has been solved, and these are now in place. The replated valve rods have been reinstalled and connected to the Stephenson reversing mechanism links, the bearings of which have been hand scraped and shimmed to give a good fit. Following this, the 'Wednesday Gang' effort has been concentrated almost entirely on reinstalling the crankshaft and the two stub shaft extensions which carry the belt drive pulleys on the main engine. These three shafts had earlier been sent away to a specialist

firm for the bearing journals, - ie. those parts of the shafts which are supported by and rotate in, the white metal lined bearings - to be prepared, metal-sprayed and reground back to size. There is a total of five of these journals, three for the crankshaft and one at the outer end of each stub shaft. The three shafts were lowered separately in to the engine room and the crankshaft positioned above its bearings with the help of trolley jacks and wood blocks. The two stub shafts were then bolted back on to their drive couplings on the crankshaft.

With this completed, and consequent upon the journal regrinding, the aforementioned white metal bearings then required checking for correct fitting of the shaft journals in the bearings. This work is not yet finished as it is a lengthy and repetitive procedure, which entails dealing with each bearing in turn by thinly smearing 'engineers blue' which is an oily paste containing a blue dye, on the journal surface, lowering the shaft in to the bearing, rotating the shaft by hand, then jacking up the shaft and removing the bearing shell. Any high spots on the white metal surface are then shown up by the blue markings and are removed by careful use of a hand scraper. The shell is then put back in position, the shaft lowered and the procedure repeated until a satisfactory fit is achieved. This has now been completed for the lower halves of all five bearings and attention has now turned to the top half bearing shells. These require a similar procedure but without the need to lift the shaft. When the white metal surface for each top half bearing has been scraped to an acceptable condition, shims (ie.packers) of a total thickness to produce the required running clearance of nominally 0.004" are then made and fitted between the two halves of the bearing shells before bolting the caps in position. Up to the date of writing this report, the three crankshaft bearings have been completed, and one of the outer bearings is almost complete. After this work has been finished, attention can then be turned to refitting the belt drive pulleys on their shafts and reinstalling the connecting rods and valve gear operating rods and eccentrics.

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STAFF CHANGES AT THE MUSEUM by A.J.C.

With the end of the summer there will be new faces at the Museum. Julie Bunclark has left her job as Dave McDougall's Assistant to become Assistant Curator at Barton-on-Humber Museum. Julie took up her new post in July. In her place comes Anne Oliver from the Cider Museum at Hereford, who started with the Waterways Museum in September. Anne is already qualified with a Museums Diploma and has considerable experience of museum work.

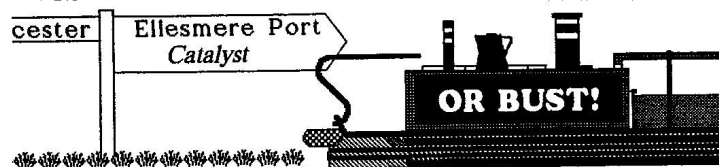
Clare Caldicott moved from Gloucester in early September, to join her husband in his new job with the Police in Nottinghamshire. Friends and colleagues joined in a farewell party at the Museum to say goodbye to Clare. Her service to the Museum has been chronicled in Llanthony Log and we wish her and her family well with their move north.

- 4 -

Mary Mills will move to a joint Marketing & Publicity role, Judy Wootton becomes Receptionist and Margaret Clark joins the staff to work with schools and in the Shop.

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VISIT TO ELLESMERE PORT or CATALYST



The provisional arrangements for the visit to the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port on Thursday 4 November given in the last Llanthony Log have been modified slightly. The coach will leave our Museum car park at 9am and we expect to return about 7pm, giving about four hours at the Boat Museum. Some of their Friends will be on hand to meet us. To provide an alternative option for those already familiar with the Boat Museum, the coach will also call at the nearby Catalyst exhibition of the chemical industry (Richard Treffa has details). The cost for either option (but not both) will be £5 per person, covering travel and admission. Refreshments can be purchased on site. Send cheques, payable to Friends of the National Waterways Museum, to Hugh Conway-Jones, 1 Grovelands, Gloucester, GL4 7JF. Places are limited, so apply early. Tickets will only be sent on receipt of payment. H. C-J.

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VISIT TO SMETHWICK AND BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE MUSEUM

Friends of the Museum and Staff are cordially invited to join a visit by coach, organised by John Foley, a member of the Friends and Secretary of the Barnwood Industrial Archaeology & Transport Society - a section of The Nuclear Electric (Barnwood) Sports & Social Club - on Saturday 13th. November 1993 to the Birmingham area. The visit is to the Galton Valley Canals and to include the excavated engine house of the World's oldest working steam engine, Boulton & Watt's Smethwick Engine of 1779. The engine is now restored and situated in The Birmingham Museum of Science & Industry. Dr. Jim Andrew - Keeper - Industry and Collections, is arranging for the engine to be in steam, so the Museum will be part of the outing.

- 5 -

The proposed arrangements are as follows:
 Depart - Nuclear Electric (Barnwood) Car Park
 Return - to Nuclear Electric
 Cost (approx) - Adults £7-00, Children £4-00.

09.00hrs.
 approx 21.00hrs.

Although refreshment stops will be made, packed lunch and tea should be brought with you if desired. The contacts for booking are John Foley, Tel.0989 750529 (evenings) or Alan Garnett Tel.(0452) 303489 (Answering machine service available).

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1994 BOAT JUMBLE

I have received the following note from Tony Conder regarding the proposed 1994 Boat Jumble:-

Following Stuart Darnley's decision to step down from the organisation of the Boat Jumble it has been determined that the Museum and Friends will take on the organisation for 1994. The Jumble is the single most important item in terms of fund raising which occurs in the year and has allowed this museum to continue a major restoration programme at a time when many museums have virtually had to cease theirs.

The more funds the Friends raise on the collections behalf the stronger the future of the Museum is. We have a restoration programme stretching far into the future with work on Northwich, two concrete vessels, cranes, railway trucks and a host of smaller items still to do. Besides that there will be a major capital programme of new stores, display replacement and new educational facilities for which appeals will be necessary in the future.

Organisation of the Jumble within the Museum will be undertaken by Tony Conder and Doreen Davies. Any Friends who would like to help with items on the following list should get in touch with them. All assistance will be most welcome. Les Dalton will be recruiting ticket sellers and helpers for the visitor side of the day.

We are working to two possible dates, they are April 10th. or 17th, but the most likely date is April 10th.

Remember it's not just help on the day, you could run a stall, recruit other stall holders or simply help with publicity in your area. Whatever your contribution and whatever the Jumble raises, the Museum can usually double the value with grants from elsewhere.

Stuart has given us a great start in the first three years, it's up to us to build on his lead.

Administration

Planning
 Sponsorship

Publicity

Organising and distributing posters
 Editorial in local papers.
 Interviews for TV & radio.
 Discounts for adverts.

- 6 -

Boat Jumble continued:-

Traders & Traffic

Helping marshal the site
 Parking and directions
 Liaison with traders

Site

Selling tickets
 Clearing up
 Moving cash
 Banking Admin.
 Recruit staff

The Show

Liaison with Boat Clubs
 Seeking out traders
 Running a stand
 Visiting car boot sales

Readers please take note and offer your services if you can. This is an event for which the assistance of Friends is most important.

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A.L.G.

DONATIONS

The Treasurer is pleased to acknowledge the following donations received between March 1993 and August 1993, (with apologies for any omissions).

Aldred R.H.& D.
 Bailey A.D.
 Baker K.
 Barton A.K.& D.E.
 B.C.N.Society.
 Bell M.& D.L.
 Beesley R.J.& R.D.
 Blakeby P.G.& E.
 Bramley M.M.
 Brewis S.& B.
 Butcher A.D.
 Churchill S.R.& J.V.
 Clements I.
 Collins P.H.
 Conder A.G.& E.M.
 Conway-Jones A.H.& J.R.
 Cresswell D.J.
 Danks S.G.
 Deighton F.
 Dellbridge D.K.
 Dowling A.R.& B.G.
 Dubber.E.H.S.

Dunn K.H.
 Garnett A.L.
 Gregory R.A.& S.G.
 Hatton I.
 Hammond J.E.
 Hopkins K.E.S.
 Jones K.& M.
 Jones C.R.& S.
 Leonard L.J.& K.M.
 Mack D.E.& S.R.
 Managh R.P.
 Martin J.& B.E.
 Masters S.R.& M.A.
 Mills R.W.& L.M.
 Neall D.B.
 Newman D.& L.R.
 Oram R.D.M.& E.A.
 Parsons I.M.
 Perkins C.C.
 Prentice M.M.
 Radford D.E.
 Rees F.G.

Riddick K.J.& G.L.
 Robson W.B.
 Rowles N.I.& M.E.
 Rowley W.E.& R.
 Selway P.
 Shooter R.A.& D.J.
 Simmons J.R.& S.
 Skinner J.H.A.& M.
 Smith L.J.
 Stone H.
 Stokes M.R.
 Thomas D.G.A.& M.E.
 Thompson P.G.
 Tomlinson K.M.
 Trelfa R.J.& A.C.
 Threlfall P.M.& H.J.
 Vale T.L.& A.
 Whitcombe R.& T.A.
 Wood P.D.
 Woolley S.E.C.

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- 7 -

MUSEUM IS NOW OFFICIALLY "NATIONAL"

The Museum has been celebrating formal registration as a National Museum. A massive nationwide process has been ongoing for the last few years to set a basic standard for museums.

A rigorous examination of the Museum's practice and philosophy has led to registration but with the added extra of being recognised as "National", which meant an even closer look by the Museums and Galleries Commission who are in charge of the scheme.

"National registration" is a reflection of the Museum's services, collection and our aspirations" said Curator Tony Conder. "It could not have been achieved without the hard work of the staff and Friends. It is up to all of us to maintain the standard and retain our status over the coming years".
A.J.Conder

(Editor's Note - I am sure that all the Friends will wish to congratulate the Museum on achieving this formal recognition of its work).

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HOW THE *Friends* BEGAN

Hugh Conway-Jones continues the story of events before the Museum opened

"Will you be having a Friends organisation?" I asked Tony Conder two or three months before the Museum was due to open for Easter 1988. I was on one of my occasional visits to the British Flag pub (now the Tall Ship), joining the staff for a chat and a bacon sandwich. I only asked the question because Janet Illingworth-Cooper had raised the issue with me - I had no real idea what a Friends organisation might do at that time but it sounded a good idea.

I had first got involved with the Tony and his staff some months earlier - mainly introducing local contacts and taking in old photographs for the Museum's collection. I had also spent several days describing and dating local photographs for David McDougall's index. Although I was only an infrequent visitor, I was very quickly made to feel one of the family, and I was sure I wanted to be a Friend when the organisation was set up.

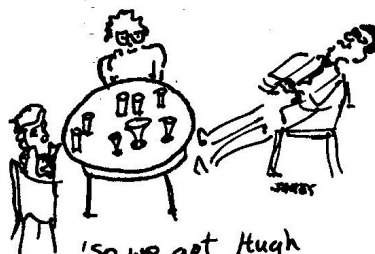
Not long after my lunchtime question, Tony wrote asking if I would consider taking on the role of Chairman! After discussing with Tony the kind of activities the Friends would be able to do, I agreed to start getting things moving and I enlisted Janet's help as the potential Secretary.

It so happened that Tony and BW architect Roger Beckett were due to talk about the work they had done to establish the Museum at a public meeting arranged by

- 8 -

Gloucester Civic Trust. At the end of the meeting, Janet and I gathered together about a dozen likely looking "volunteers" and we fixed the date for a meeting of what we called the Steering Group.

TONY'S VERSION



'so we got Hugh
into this hub and
when he came round
again he found he'd
volunteered!'

The Steering Group first met on 2 March 1988. Most of those present were already helping the Museum in some way and/or were interested parties through being Civic Trust docks guides or IWA members. Tony talked about what Friends could do to help the Museum, and I outlined the kind of organisation envisaged. We discussed how we could help over the opening weekend in a month's time and what was needed to achieve the formal launch of the Friends as soon after as possible.

At the meeting, Tony invited us to a preview of the Museum a week before the opening day. We duly turned

up to find we were in the middle of a building site! There was so much work still to be done that it did not seem possible that the place could be made respectable for the opening. It was incredible what was achieved in those last seven days, with several "Friends" in the thick of it, and it was a real joy to see everything finally ready for the public.

The doors opened at 10am on Good Friday 1 April 1988, and "Friends" were immediately in action, welcoming visitors, working the steam dredger, talking about exhibits, serving coffee to the staff and recruiting members. Some worked in shifts for a few hours - others were there the whole four days of the weekend.

With the excitement of the weekend behind us, it was then necessary to get down to finalising the formal launch of the Friends. A constitution was drawn up, and a suitable number of the Steering Group members agreed to stand for the committee. The launch meeting was held on 21 May and good publicity attracted a capacity crowd to the Schools Room. The meeting duly approved the constitution and elected the committee, and the Friends were formally in business.

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- 9 -

HORSES WEEKEND 1993

The cast:

by Pauline Hill

Saturday 22nd May 1993, Canal 200 and Horse Weekend, the start of a busy weekend. We arrived at 8.30pm to find Peter looking extremely clean and tidy having spent the night in the cart shed to keep him that way. The weather was dry and cloudy, which is ideal for horses, especially when they have to pull carts around for parades. The first horse to arrive was Samson, who pulls the Forest of Dean trap. Peter and Samson were tied up together whilst everyone else got organised. Peter's cart was polished up and barriers finished off round the car park.

Peter and Samson were getting to know each other again with a friendly grooming session, for a horse who spends the majority of his life on his own Peter is very sociable with other horses and thoroughly enjoys their company when he has visitors.

More horses arrived and haynets and water appeared round the yard. The horses whinnied to each other and produced the usual rose fertiliser, which was shovelled up before they trampled it into their hooves, not a pleasant job, hoof-picking that lot out!

I was summoned into the kitchen, Julie had been taken home ill and they were short staffed to prepare the buffet lunch. We set to mashing eggs and buttering bread. Soon there was a very appetising spread in the Rest Room. The tea pot was kept busy, and the visitors began to arrive.

Just before lunchtime, Fred Dibnah arrived with his steam engine, pulling a large low-loader with an enormous generator mounted on the back. He had a chat with one and another and stopped to have a bite to eat, a quick look round the Museum and away again, accompanied by a T.V. crew.

Jane assembled the horses for the first parade of the day. There was Peter pulling the Museum cart, Samson pulling the Forest of Dean trap, Duke pulling a small farm cart, a Strawberry Roan pulling a hay cart, the Courage horses pulling the brewer's dray, Joey pulling a small farm cart and Dilly pulling a small farm cart.

Nobody had realised the problems involved in parading horses around fair grounds and crowded roads, this soon became evident. The first problem was getting crowds to move out of the way, despite the noise of heavy hooves on the concrete, people still stood in front of the procession. When they did move, mothers turned pushchairs under the horses' noses to show their children this unusual sight, not caring that the horses were on the move and not able to come to a sudden stop. Next, the fair ground. One ride being very noisy, the horses who were not used to this, shied and became difficult to handle. This obstacle passed, the bridge had to be traversed, fine when Joe Public moved, but again, they strolled along in front of the horses, or stood and stared in line with the edge of the carts. Disaster was averted and the procession proceeded into Commercial Road round to the Lock Bridge. The cars stopped with a very narrow space for the carts to get by. After much gesticulating, they moved over slightly and the procession proceeded. Into Llanthony Road, and further problems. Traffic lined up to cross the bridge was too far out into the road because of cars parked on double yellow lines causing problems.

Jane arrived back at the Museum quite tense, but relieved that no vehicle had been scratched or dented and no pedestrian unharmed. Dock Security were asked to provide a back-up for each parade. We had also received an irate phone call from someone complaining about certain leavings on the Swing Bridge, so the girls

Samson

Duke

James

Charles

Gem

Bonny

Sergeant

Captain

Duke,

Ben

Snell

Colonel

Barley

Danny

Major

Dillie

Joey

Peter

were sent out with shovel and bucket to clean up. This was only Saturday. What would Sunday be like with millions of people milling about. Jane had a cup of tea to steady her nerves, and we organised lunch.

The problems of an event like this are many and varied, and we were soon to discover, people and entrances being the biggest bugbear. The Way Out door became the biggest problem. People entered the shop, spotted the horses through the window, and decided to open the door or climb over the barrier. We had to post someone there who, as usual got abuse from people who, either wanted to get in free (it was only £2 that day anyway), or, having paid, did not see why they should have to walk back to the top of the car park to gain entrance. This is not a pleasant job, and, in the end, Tony decided to leave things as they were. If people got in free, what the heck, there were not enough people to cover all the entrances and exits.

Chris, and whoever else was on the gate, were taken some food. They had been on gate duty all day, and there appeared to be no relief for them. The Friends are sometimes long-suffering, and put up with a lot from the public, and lack of numbers. Jane thanks them from the bottom of her heart; without them the weekend would have been much harder to cope with. I did not have time to notice who actually helped on the day, but I do know that many Friends came and did their bit. It is very much appreciated, even if sometimes the time is not available to thank them properly.

The next parade was preceded by a phone call to Security, and Clare Caldicott and Her Husband volunteered to go ahead and clear the way. Clare went to the fair ground and asked for the noisiest ride to be turned off while the horses passed. The parade left the Museum car park with Clare and Her Husband shouting to people to clear the way. Next time some flags might be useful. This second parade was less traumatic than the first. The horses did not shy at the fairground, obviously having got used to it and the Dock Security men helped to clear the Lock Bridge and control traffic in Commercial Road. There was a lovely carnival atmosphere. The parade arrived back at the Museum with cameras clicking and videos pointing at the horses from all angles.

There was a further parade before the end of the day with Clare and me as the forward party to clear the way. There is real enlightenment in seeing the stupid ways in which people park their cars. Do all car drivers leave their brains behind when they get behind the wheel? There were certainly a few idiots about on this weekend. On the one parade, we arrived at the Swing Bridge (at entrance to the Victoria Dock) to find a man just preparing to open it, so this meant the horses having to wait by the noisy fair ground. Horses do not take kindly to having to stand still in these surroundings, but they behaved extremely well. The bridge swung closed, and we were away again.

We had to move an idiot who had double parked his Range Rover on the wrong side of the road. Then we found the Llanthony Bridge raised and there was another wait followed by the problem of clearing the bridge to allow the horses across. People do object to being held up. Goodness knows where they are going in such a hurry!

Back to the Museum to clean and tidy up the kitchen, ready for the next day. We tidied up behind the horses and settled Peter and his two friends, Samson and

Duke, who were staying the night with him. Jane went home to rest and we went to Huntley to walk the course for a cross country Helen was going to do the next afternoon. We hoped Jane would have enough helpers to fill in while we were away.

Sunday dawned, we arrived at 9 o'clock to find Peter and Duke enjoying a haynet together and Samson being got ready for the day's rides. More horses arrived, I will list those present at the end of the write-up, I need to consult my daughter to know who was who. We prepared the lunch and covered it ready for later. We all had long chats with friends and horses from the previous year and prepared for the first parade.

Sunday was a busier day, with public milling round from very early on, by early afternoon the docks were a sea of people, Helen and I headed off for her cross country leaving Trevor to fill in with help whenever needed. The parades we re-timed to accommodate the T.V. people who wanted to do a live broadcast.

Sunday was not without its problems but everybody enjoyed themselves and the horse owners went away with a horse brass and the comment, why don't you do this more often Jane? Poor Jane at this point was fit to drop and not sure that once a year was wise, let alone more often. We took Peter back to the field where we left him enjoying the grass with hundreds of sheep for company. We went back to the Museum to do final tidying and made some sandwiches and had a cup of tea before heading home well satisfied with the week-end.

I know perhaps some of my ramblings may make it sound traumatic, it was at times, but everyone had a wonderful time and we are all willing to muck in again, any time, in any capacity.

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THE FIELDING OIL ENGINE

*by Pauline Hill, Secretary, Mid-Gloucestershire Engine Preservation Society.
Originally written for the first edition of Llanthony Log June 1988*

The story of the Fielding Engine now at the National Waterways Museum began when about 5 years ago one of our club members was told that there was a large engine rusting away at Quenington. On inspection, this was discovered to be a Fielding & Platt 80 HP engine manufactured in Gloucester in 1928. It had been installed at Godwin's pumps at Quenington in 1928 and had run the line shafting in the factory. The engine house had some years previously burnt down around the engine and one or two spare pieces had gone missing. However, as our hobby is preserving old engines, we could not sleep easy in our beds if this fine example was to be scrapped. The present owners of Godwin Pumps were more than willing to donate the engine to any museum able to take it.

The plan for the redevelopment of Gloucester Docks had just got on to the drawing board and we had heard a rumour that there would be a museum there.

Eventually the Fielding was provisionally accepted by Tony Conder for the National Waterways Museum, provided we could transport it to the docks to be stored in what had been Romans' timber premises. Ray Swan and Trevor Hill then proceeded to make enquiries about Fieldings and discovered a gentleman who had been an apprentice there about the time the engine was manufactured. He had worked for Fielding & Platt all his working life and was now retired. Mr. Jack Hobbs then joined our club and gave us invaluable advice and mechanical help with the engine.

The next problem was transport. This was solved by the kind offer of transport and manpower by both A. T. Poeton and Ermin Plant Hire. Godwin's kindly organised crane. Ray made a framework for the flywheel and this was jacked up and lifted on to the low loader. On its journey home to Gloucester, Mr. Hobbs followed closely behind to ensure there were no problems. The engine pit had to be pumped out because with no roof over its head, the engine had collected a good deal of water. The base was broken up and the engine delivered to the Docks. There she sat waiting for her new home. All sorts of red tape had to be gone through before Tony had the money to go ahead with the grand plan. Meanwhile, Trevor and Ray, helped by Jack Hobbs, Charlie Mayo and Fred Howells (all members of our club) began the long process of getting the engine back to working order. Some bits had to be remade and some had to be cleaned off, filled up with filler, where the years had taken their toll, and then primed.

Mr. Hobbs was beginning to get impatient to see this engine run and at last we had the news that it was all systems go with the Museum. Building began and Mr. Hobbs provided the plans for the engine base. The workmen proceeded to make this using 36 cubic metres of concrete. There was a slight problem with the base, but Trevor and Ray soon rectified that.

At last the day came to lift the body of the engine into place and long hours were spent getting her level before the flywheel could be hoisted into place. The engine house was beginning to go up around the engine and a roof was floated down river from Diglis Basin, Worcester, to keep the Fielding dry. The engine began to take shape but there were many hours of work to go. Mr. Hobbs, bless him, died just three weeks short of the engine's first running. This has left rather a sad feeling to our engine but it also made us even more determined to see her run.

Mr. Silvey and Mr. Gabb, elderly engine gentlemen, took over from Mr. Hobbs with technical help. Mr. David Foster our head painter began to put the undercoat on the engine and we set a date for her first running. On Sunday February 28, the engine was going to run, so Trevor, Ray and Mr. Silvey, helped by Mr. Gabb, Charlie Mayo and Fred Howells began the initial stages towards getting her started. This involved getting the compressor up to 200 lbs pressure using the Ruston Hornsby engine that had come from the Grand Union Canal. Running was set for three o'clock. Quite a crowd had assembled, but like all well-laid plans it did not work out. After several attempts, each preceeded with the hard work of barring the engine over into the right firing position, she still would not fire. Mr. Silvey thought that it was because of a failure with the compressor, so we enlisted the help of a modern compressor but still she would not start. We all had a cup of tea and decided to warm up the hot bulb on the engine (although the

engine is in fact designed for a cold start). With the help of a blowlamp, and Mr. Silvey operating the fuel injection, finally with a small explosion she fired into life at 5.10 pm. The explosion had been caused by a build up of fuel which had been ignited by the blowlamp.

It was both a marvellous and a sad moment, because after all those years of lying idle, the engine lived again, whilst the one man who helped to make it possible had died too soon. It was a lovely feeling of achievement even though I personally had done very little toward this. Since its first running, the maintenance crew have had to re-site the exhaust because of oil smuts which messed up someone's coat. Mr. Silvey has had to service the spray boxes (where the fuel is injected), the timing has had to be rectified and the compressor has had to be overhauled. But the engine ran for Press Day and the opening of the Museum. It is Tony's intention to run a line shaft from the engine into the Blacksmith's shop, which will in effect put the engine back as it was in 1928.

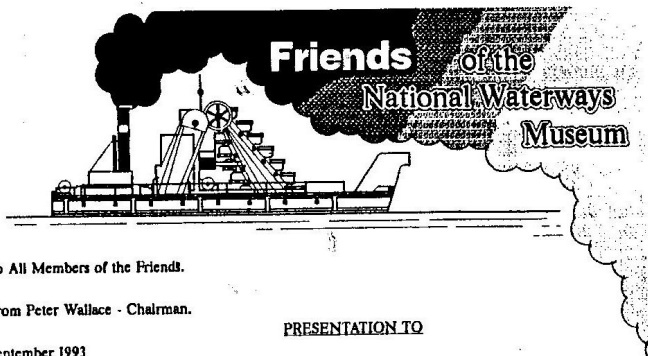
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THE MALTA CONVOYS A MEDAL FOR LES!

Les Rea, one of Queen Boadicea II's Skippers, served on the convoys which kept Malta alive during the Axis onslaught. He has just received a letter from the Office of the Prime Minister of Malta telling him that the Island's President has been pleased to approve their Prime Minister's recommendation that "The Malta George Cross Fiftieth Anniversary Medal" should be awarded to him. His name will appear in the List of Awards to be published in the Malta Government Gazette.

The award ceremony will be held in London, by Malta's High Commissioner.

I am sure that all members of The Friends will wish to offer their sincere congratulations to Les on this prestigious award and to wish him well for the future.



To All Members of the Friends.
 From Peter Wallace - Chairman.
 September 1993

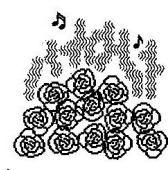
PRESENTATION TO
Hugh Conway-Jones

Hugh has recently retired as Chairman and it seems a suitable time to mark his 'one-off' achievement in setting up the Friends organisation and establishing it as a vital factor in supporting the Museum's activities. The work he has done over the last six years, especially during the year before the Friends came into existence, has been immense and in recognition, the Committee have commissioned an oil painting of Gloucester Docks to present to Hugh at the Christmas meeting on December 16th, 1993. The artist is Brian Collings who excels in river and canal scenes.

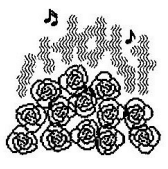
If you would like to contribute to this gift, would you kindly send your donation with the slip at the foot of this sheet. The names of contributors will be written on a card to be presented with the painting.

Peter Wallace.

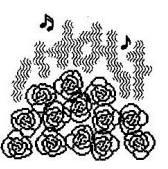
PETER'S DAY OUT
 A Contribution from Pauline Hill.



On Saturday 4th, September Helen Hill and Jane Savery gave Peter a shampoo and set in preparation for a very important day on Sunday the 5th. Peter had been entered in his first "in hand" show at Moreton-in-Marsh, so had to look his best. His feathers were washed, dried and combed and his mane and tail shampooed and untangled. The farrier had given him a new set of shoes a few days previously so apart from loading him on Sunday, he was ready. Jane tucked him up in the cart shed so that he would not get himself dirty rolling in his field.



At 6.30am on Sunday, Jane prepared to load Peter and his tack, only a head collar, grooming kit and hay net being required this time as the cart was not being used. When Helen and I arrived at Moreton-in-Marsh, Jane and Gary were busy plaiting Peter to be ready for the 9 o'clock showing. Gary's horse Gem was in the class after Peter so she was second to be done. It takes quite a long time to plait the mane and tail and polish the hooves but soon, after a final brush down with a body brush, Peter and Gem were ready to make their way to the show ring. There were horses of all shapes and sizes, Shires, Shetlands, elegant Hunters and Pony Club show jumpers plus a section given over entirely to cows and sheep, these being as well groomed as the horses.

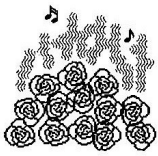


Gary had offered to take Peter into the ring for showing as Jane had never done "in hand" before and was not sure of the ropes. Peter walked very nicely for Gary and stood still whilst the lady Judge looked him over and checked his bone structure etc. Then Gary had to walk him up and down in front of the Judge so that she could see what a good mover he was. This he did well but when asked to trot, was not quite so willing. However after a little persuasion from Gary he did manage to trot away from the Judge and then back towards her. After all the horses had been judged, the rosettes were handed out and Peter came 2nd, receiving a blue rosette, a certificate, a brass and prize money.



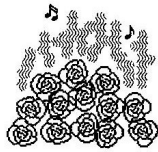
There had been a problem in the ring when the Hunters were exercised around the Shires but when the Steward finally realised that this perhaps was not such a good idea they were asked to go elsewhere. After Peter's class, Gary took Gem into her class. She was also very good apart from a little high spirits when she was asked to trot. Gem

received a 3rd. which was a yellow rosette and a money prize. The horses were then tied up to the lorry and given a well-earned haynet whilst we waited for the final parade in the main ring. We took the opportunity to go and find a meal and a glass of cider.



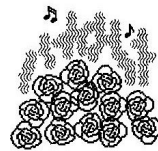
Next the carts were prepared for the parade, but unfortunately there were only two on this occasion, one being Eric Such's, a very showy set-up with lots of brasses and tassels, and the other was Graham Miles with his horse Duke and his farm cart. Duke was not nearly as decked-out as Eric's horse as he was in working attire and as the class was for turnout, Eric won. This quite often happens in showing classes, because, at the

end of the day, it is down to the personal preference of the Judge, and after all, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Had there been more carts, perhaps they could have had a class for show horses and one for working horses.



The carts and Shires which had won 1st. 2nd. and 3rd. were then paraded in the main ring. Gem and Peter took part in this and despite the presence of some very smart mares, Peter behaved very well. There was a Championship award for the best mare and then the horses were again paraded around the ring before returning to their boxes for another munch on their haynets. The next thing in the main ring was the show jumping, which Helen enjoyed, and won by

Nick Skelton. Helen's day was made when she managed to obtain Nick's autograph.



After a short walk round to look at the numerous stalls and side shows, Jane and Gary loaded the horses and headed for home. Helen and I went back to have a lingering look at the stalls and purchase a few bargains. We also inspected the livestock and watch with amusement the attempts of one gentleman to load a none too obliging large pig. When we left, the poor man was still struggling despite the advice of many onlookers and the assistance of two large

gentlemen with pieces of board. Luckily Peter is very good at loading and unloading, which, if he were not, could prove very difficult.



A lot of work is involved for Jane with these days out with Peter, but I am sure she feels that it is worthwhile when he manages to win a rosette. People seem to recognise him however far from home he is. One little lad had brought his Grampy and Granny because he had had a ride in the cart during a visit to the Museum and had enthused about him ever since.

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Ellesmere's AMBASSADORS

During the CANALS 200 celebrations two visitors to our Docks were RADIANT & REGULUS. They were the first pair of a group of narrowboats constructed of steel with V-shaped bottoms, built at W.J. Yarwoods & Sons yard at Northwich, Cheshire, in 1935 and 1936. Eight pairs were built altogether and they became known as the "Middle Northwich" class. They were built for the Grand Union canal Carrying Co. and were part of that company's enormous expansion during the 1930s.

RADIANT has spent almost all its life in work, only coming out of service as a maintenance boat with British Waterways, on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, in September 1992. It still has the original cabin, with modifications, and the engine room has been lengthened. A new Lister HR3M engine was fitted in 1971. It is now privately owned and will be preserved in its British Waterways colours.

The butty REGULUS is being restored to the condition and colour scheme it had when it was launched on the same day as RADIANT; November 14th 1935. It has had a varied life, at different times being a pumping boat, a mud hopper on the Warwickshire Avon, where it remained derelict for a number of years. After rescue, it became a coal carrier. It has changed hands twice since then, but its home is now at the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. It is privately owned. Last September, towed by Ellesmere's SHAD, it carried a cargo of coal to the Black Country Museum at Dudley.

RADIANT & REGULUS had probably been apart since the late 1930s. Only four of the eight original motor boats have retained their full length and only seven of the butties are still in existence.

If anyone has any information about the history, or photographs of RADIANT & REGULUS, or any of the other Middle Northwich boats, particularly when they were working, Mike and Cath Turpin would be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact them, either via the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum or, at their home, 1, Market Street, HOYLAK, Wirral. Tel: 05 16 32 54 46

THE MIDDLE NORTHWICH BOATS

Motor Boats	Butty Boats
RADIANT	REGULUS
SEXTANS	SCALES
TAYGETA	SARPEDON
THEOPHILUS	THEA
TUCANA	TAURUS
TYCHO	THOTH
ZODIAC	LEONIDS

(borrowed from the Owner's dockside notes by 'Mud')

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