

Friends of Raymond

Registered Charity no: 1059614



Patron: Tim Coghlan

Autumn 2015



The Raymond & Nutfield News

EDITORIAL

Autumn is here again and both our boats and crew are in fine form. We are proud to present in this edition some pictures of our first ever “Members Day” – which I’m pleased to say was a very successful occasion and enjoyed by all who participated. Added to this, you can also read about our very special “*children’s day*” when a class of children were taken on a boating trip through a tunnel – another successful story for all involved. We are also pleased to include Part 2 of Chris M Jones’ superbly researched article about canal traders and trading in the historic town of Braunston.

A forewarning – we are going to print the next newsletter ourselves so it is going to look very different! Printing costs have risen but home printing facilities have continued to improve so we will, in future, be taking full advantage of this. I am aware that some of our members save all their newsletters so I guess we can regard this as a historic page-turning moment!

Jenny Freeman

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PHOTO CREDITS

Front and back cover pictures courtesy of Chris M Jones :-
With Nick Scarcliffe steering NUTFIELD and Roger Golder steering RAYMOND, the boats descend Claydon Locks on the 3rd October heading towards Banbury. Many FOR volunteers turned out to help with the lockwheeling.

NEW HAND ON THE TILLER

I've handed over the job of membership secretary to Nick Lake. Nick will be re-combining the roles of Membership Secretary and Treasurer for the Friends of Raymond.

You don't need to change anything in your email addresses. The email address: membership@friendsofraymond.org.uk will now whizz over to Nick!

If you want to contact Nick by less electronic methods, Nick's address is:

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Thank you for all your support in the last few years and for making my job so easy. May I wish you all a good autumn and happy boating!

Barbara Evans Rees

CLASS OF 2015

The boats were moored as last year at North Kilworth to enable the Husbands Bosworth Primary School top class to visit the pair and have a short trip through the tunnel. Last year there were seven children, two teachers and three crew. This year we had thirteen children. Thanks to Rachel at North Kilworth Wharf we found sufficient life jackets for their needs!

The crew, as last year, consisted of Neil Hankin, Melvyn Forman & John Blay and we split to pupils into two sections so that Raymond's cabin could be properly explained. This year the children were a lot livelier with a lot of questions. In due course off we went & the 3 boats southbound in the tunnel must have wondered what the boats were carrying, with the singing and chatter that went on. A fourth boat entering the tunnel warned of a boat stemmed up at Honeypot Farm Bridge where we intended to offload the children. Instead we were able to give the boat a 'snatch', but this meant we couldn't use the bridge hole and so moved to the gabions further along. Unfortunately, there were two boats moored on them so we had no option but to go alongside to offload across the moored boats. The children thought it all very exciting and clearly had a very memorable morning. Orders for 10 jars of marmalade & jam were taken!

The crew continued to Foxton, wined the boats and tied off ready for the Foxton Festival.

Neil Hankin



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Grateful thanks to our Patron and Sponsors for their support

NUTFIELD AND RAYMOND ON TOUR

The first event in the year that *Nutfield* and *Raymond* attend is usually the BCBM Boat Share weekend. This was held a bit later this year on 25th-26th April. It was a very short distance to travel as it was held at our "home" ground Braunston Marina. All we had to do was move the boats from their mooring at one end of the marina to under the canopy at the other. Once again BCBM joined forces with 3 other boat share companies - Carefree Cruising, ABC Leisure and OwnAShare. Each of these had their own marquee and boats present.

The boats left Braunston Marina on Tuesday 12th May on their way to Rickmansworth. The crew on this journey were Alice Lapworth and her brother-in-law Tom Lapworth, who had requested that they be allowed to take our boats there this year. This had been agreed. Brother Tony was also on board for the ride. Cameraman Nick Lake was also present on board that day filming the activities.

As requested on their previous trip they asked for assistance with the locks on this journey. They were met at Braunston bottom lock by Peter Copeland and Jean & Neil Hankin, who were to assist them with lockwheeling up the Braunston locks and also down Buckby locks. With efficient lock-wheeling and little downhill traffic they cleared the top at 10.00ish. At Buckby top lock they were met by Nick Lake plus Jean & Neil and worked steadily down to Whilton, clearing the bottom lock at 12.15. Some uphill traffic and some interest was shown, including one lady who asked about joining. After drizzle to start the weather cleared before the tunnel and all went well.

Peter Copeland, Chris R Jones and Chris M Jones met them on Wednesday at Stoke Bruerne before they moved off to be their lockwheelers for the day. Steve Miles and Diana & Roger Golder met them at Leighton Buzzard on Thursday to assist them by doing the lockwheeling for the day. On Friday Steve Miles and Diana & Roger Golder met them again, this time at Cowroast.

Stoke Bruerne was reached on Tuesday, Leighton Buzzard on Wednesday and Cowroast on Thursday. They finally arrived at Rickmansworth late afternoon on Friday. Many other boats had already gathered there for the Rickmansworth Canal Festival that was taking place over the coming weekend. The boats were wound in the winding hole just before Tesco's then reversed to their mooring position alongside the towpath.

Members of the general public and visitors to the event itself formed the usual stream passing by our boats moored alongside the towpath.

Many ex-working boats were present most of whom are regular attendees at this event. There were lots of side stalls in several locations in the nearby Aquadrome and there was also a fun fair present. There was plenty to see and do together with all the boats attending the Festival.

Following on from this event the next move was to start the return journey from Rickmansworth and travel north heading for the Crick Boat Show. The crew on this journey were again Alice Lapworth and her brother-in-law Tom Lapworth.

The boats left Rickmansworth on Monday 18th May. Mike Bowley and Diana & Roger Golder joined Alice and Tom before they set sail to be their lockwheelers for the day. They finally reached Cowroast by the end of the day.

On Tuesday Roger & Diana Golder and Brian Seymour joined them at Cowroast to carry out lockwheeling duties for the day. Leighton Buzzard was reached by close of play that day.

The lockwheelers for the day on Wednesday were Chris R Jones and Chris M Jones who met Alice and Tom at Leighton Buzzard before they moved off. Stoke Bruerne was the overnight stop on Wednesday.

Peter Copeland and Martin Sachs met the boats on Thursday morning at Stoke Bruerne. I drove to Braunston Marina where I met Brian Seymour. Brian drove me to Buckby top lock where he dropped me off. I then walked down the Buckby lock flight to meet the boats when they arrived at the bottom lock. I assisted them up the lock flight by lockwheeling. Steve & Janette Tuckwell joined us on the Buckby flight and assisted us.

Neil Hankin and Nick Scrivens joined us at the bottom of Watford Locks to assist us up them. The final destination of Crick Marina was reached at the end of the day.

We spent the end of May Bank Holiday at the Crick Boat Show. Our boats were moored next to each other either side of the same pontoon that we had in 2013 and 2014. The sales stand was set up in the large Kingfisher boaters' marquee. There were many visitors to see inside the cabin of *Raymond* over all 3 days of this show.

Following on from this event the next move was to start a further journey but this time it was a very short trip indeed to just outside Crick Marina and to moor the boats up on the main line. This was in readiness for their next move to travel north heading for Foxton Locks. The crew on this journey were Peter Copeland, Chris R Jones and Robin Bishop. We then left the marina and went home separately.

Peter Copeland, Chris R Jones and Chris M Jones were going to move the boats on Saturday 6th June from outside Crick Marina further up the canal to Welford Junction. Neil Hankin was going to move the boats at some point up to Foxton Locks in readiness for the Foxton Locks Festival on 20th-21st June. He had also arranged a short boat trip one day for some schoolchildren from Husbands Bosworth. Neil has reported that the children were "blown away" with their trip on Nutfield.

We next attended the Foxton Locks Festival. After this festival the return to our base started. We travelled from Foxton Locks to Crick on Monday 22nd. The crew were Steve Miles, Peter Copeland and Robin Bishop. Next it was Crick to Braunston on Tuesday 23rd. Melvyn Forman joined us at the top of Watford Locks to assist us down them. Later in the day Brian Seymour joined us at Braunston top Lock to assist us down the flight.

The Braunston FMC Boat Rally was the next event in the calendar. This was held on 27th-28th June at our "home" ground Braunston Marina. Our boats were moored on the main line outside the Marina. The Sales stand was up and located alongside the arm in its usual spot. Neil Hankin and Robin Bishop were the crew when the boats were moved from Braunston to Linslade on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th July to attend the canal Festival there on the Saturday. The boats headed back to Blisworth on Sunday where they arrived later on the same day and were moored up in position in readiness for the festival on 8th and 9th of August. The crew on this occasion were again Neil Hankin and Robin Bishop.

I returned to them on Friday 7th. to prepare them for being present at the Blisworth Canal Festival that weekend.

This event was well organised as usual and as on previous occasions on their own website it is well advertised in advance. The event is supported by various groups in the village and in different locations around the village there were many activities taking place. There was a good number of private boats moored all along the towpath together with trading boats as well. Boat trips ran from the same two points as previous years. The weather was better this year than last. Sales flourished and *Raymond* was open for

show-arounds. Our boats were then moved back “home” to Braunston Marina following on from this event on the Monday the crew being Neil Hankin, Robin Bishop and Mike Bowley on this trip.

There was an additional event that we attended this year and that was the Hillmorton 175th Anniversary of the Hillmorton Locks and this took place on Saturday 15th August. The crew who took the boats there was Ed Parrott, RobIn Bishop, Nick Scarcliffe, Caroline Brudenell and Chloe Brudenell.

The boats left Hillmorton on the Sunday to return to Braunston when the crew was Will Hewlitt, Claire Hewlitt, Phoebe Hewlitt, Robin Bishop, Nick Scarcliffe, Caroline Brudenell and Chloe Brudenell.

Before we moved off we were joined by Neil Hankin, John Blay, Phoebe Harrison, Amy Harrison and Michael Hobson, who all came along for a ride. Later in the day Phoebe and Amy Harrison both had a turn at steering Raymond ably watched over by Claire Hewlitt.

The Alvecote Historic Boat Gathering at Alvecote Marina on the Coventry Canal was the next event attended on 29th-31st August. Alice Lapworth and her brother-in-law Tom Lapworth had requested that they be allowed to take our boats there again this year. This was agreed so they were the crew this time. However, due to their age, they had requested assistance with the locks on the trip. They left Braunston marina on Thursday 27th and by the end of the day had made it as far as Sutton Stop. Neil Hankin, Steve Miles and Nick Scarcliffe helped them down the Hillmorton locks.

Steve Miles, Nick Lake and Diana & Roger Golder joined them at Atherstone top lock to assist them down the Atherstone flight of locks. They arrived at Alvecote later that afternoon and found their mooring location. There were again a large number of historic boats in attendance but there was a lack of members of the public attending. Over the weekend Steve Miles, Nick Scarcliffe and Chris R Jones attended this event to man our boats.

The boats were left at the marina for a couple of weeks with a plan in place to move them on up to attend the Black Country Boat Festival on 12th-13th September. However, due to the lack of available crew to take them there this plan was later abandoned.

The boats finally left Alvecote Marina on Friday 18th September. The crew on this journey were Steve Miles, Roger Golder and Diana Golder. They were moved on up to attend the Huddlesford Heritage Gathering on 19th- 20th September. Following this event the boats were returned to Alvecote marina on Monday 21st September.

On Saturday 26th September the journey started early in the morning to move our boats back “home” to Braunston Marina. On this journey Nick Scarcliffe and Robin Bishop were the crew. They were joined by Chris R Jones, Chris M Jones and Nick Lake to do lockwheeling duties up the Atherstone flight of locks. On Sunday 27th. Will Hewlitt joined them as crew before they moved off. Neil and Jean Hankin and Nick Lake met them at Hillmorton bottom lock to help them up the flight. The boats arrived back at Braunston later that day.

The final event of the year that we attended was one we went to for the first time last year and that was the Banbúry Canal Day on the Oxford Canal on Sunday 4th October. We departed from Braunston Marina on Friday 2nd October. On this trip the crew were Steve Miles, Robin Bishop, Nick Lake, Roger Golder and Diana Golder. We were joined by Mike Bowley and Alan Mills at Napton bottom lock to assist us up the Napton and Marston Doles locks.

Recent new FoR members Graham Lane and Viv Carter had requested to come with us on the boats from Fenny Compton to Banbury. They were cordially invited to join us on Saturday 5th October before we moved off. Also joining us there were members Ian and Becky Mulford.

Chris M and Chris R Jones joined us at Claydon top lock to assist us down the Claydon flight of locks plus four other locks.

Once again, the same as last year, there was a constant stream of members of the public passing by our boats all day long at this event. With lots of things to see and do this was a very popular event and our takings were even better than last year. The crew on the return trip were Steve Miles, Robin Bishop, Nick Lake, Diana & Roger Golder, and Peter Copeland.

On Tuesday we were joined by Mike Cooper at the Marston Doles top lock to assist us down the locks. Mike also continued on to the Napton top lock to assist us down the lock flight.

The Sales Counter was set up at all these events and operated from inside *Raymond* with the exception of at Linslade, Crick and Braunston. Due to the height of the towpath at Linslade, in relation to our boats, the sales counter was on the towpath alongside the boats. At Crick the sales stand was placed in a marquee and at Braunston under a gazebo - both of these being away from the boats. At all of the events *Raymond's* back cabin was open for people to come on board to see inside her and see how the working families used to live.

Our takings at the events that we have attended this year have been up at some and down at others compared with our previous records. We have been very lucky with the weather at most of the shows this year.

Robin Bishop

FoR MEMBERS' DAY

Saturday August 22nd saw the Friends of Raymond run our first 'Member's Day'. Luck was on our side – in this damp summer we actually had a fine day for our outing, instigated and organised by 'the two Nicks'; Nick Lake, our new Treasurer, and Nick Scarcliffe, our Captain and Restoration Chief. This event had been planned at rather short notice, but even so a total of fifteen members and guests embarked after a quick introductory word from the chairman. An easy trip from Braunston to Hillmorton, on the outskirts of Rugby, allowed a number of our guests to try their hands at steering the motor or butty; an exercise in winding at Kilsby Wharf and reversing up to the pub showed off Nick S's talents, ably assisted by Trevor Maggs as supervisor and Ian Mulford and Tom Bonewell as bow-thrusters.

The Old Royal Oak at Hillmorton Wharf looked after us all superbly, providing a private room for our lunch; both the food and service were excellent, and we were all feeling somewhat replete as we set off for the return journey. Back at Braunston about 4.30pm, the sun still shining, and people seemed reluctant to depart, standing on the towpath by the Stop House chatting – but eventually our guests drifted away, and the boats were returned to their mooring. It proved to be a very enjoyable day for all involved, the crew as much as the visitors, and plans are already afoot for a second similar day next year, maybe in the spring. This time we will give everyone more warning, and we will hope to see even more of our less active members come to enjoy the boats that they support so loyally.

Steve Miles

Pictures of this event (all courtesy of Steve) can be seen on pages 8, 9 & 15



MEMBERS' DAY 2015





DESTINATION BRAUNSTON – PART TWO

In part one of this article published in the Spring 2015 Newsletter, I wrote about several of the traders and merchants who used canal transport to bring cargoes to Braunston, mainly in the days before the railway arrived there. Some of those traders also feature in this second part.

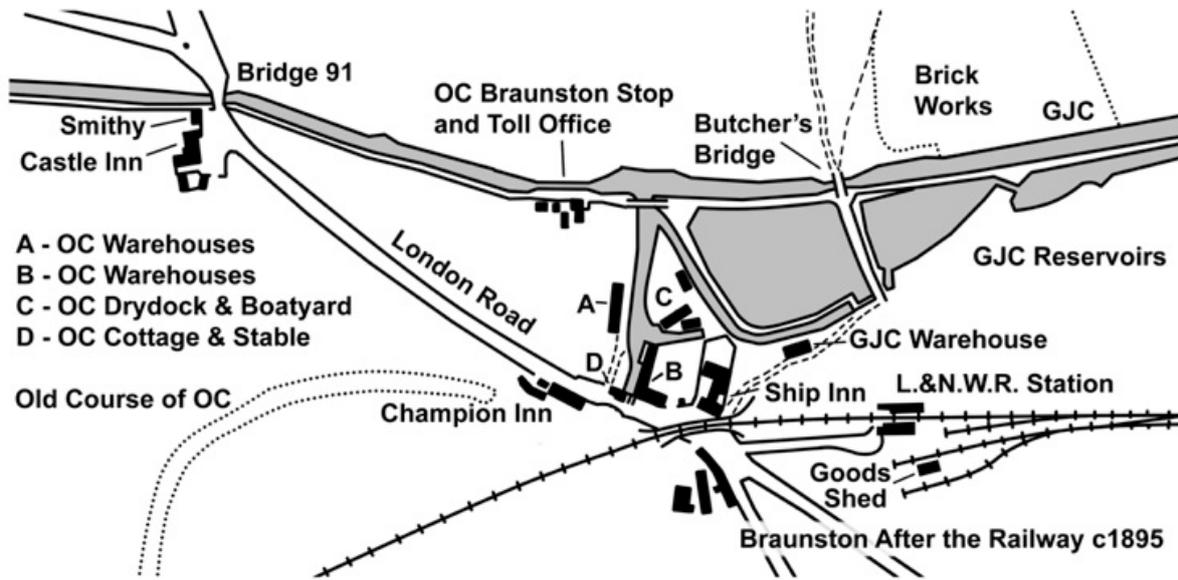
One important event to affect trade at Braunston was the building of the London and North Western Railway Weedon to Leamington line, the station at Braunston opening on 1st August 1895. The new line crossed London Road on an iron bridge with the track either side raised up on an embankment, including the station and goods yard. Building work near Braunston started in 1892, the contractors being Walter Scott and Company who applied for credit on the Oxford canal (OC) in anticipation of using the cut for the transport of materials.

One trader who benefitted was John Whittingham, superintendent of the OC at Hillmorton, who owned a sandpit there. He obtained a contract for supplying sand for the new railway at three boat loads per week by November 1892. His boat was named NANCY and he kept her until his retirement in 1896, when his son Christopher took over. After railway building had finished his boat was sold to owner boatman George Tooley who became famous as the proprietor of Banbury Dock during the 20th century.

Another trader was Thomas Lapworth who applied for a beneficial toll rate to carry drain pipes and bricks to Braunston and other places for the new railway. Even before the station was officially opened the railway carriage rate was having an effect on the canal trade. It was said in November 1894 that coal from Baddesley Colliery to Daventry Station was considerably cheaper than by water to Braunston Wharf. In July 1895, just before Braunston station was opened, Thomas Lapworth of Tusses Bridge was supplying coal to Braunston Wharf but the impact of the railway was already making itself apparent and despite a reduction in tolls, trade was still uneconomic. The problem was that the railway company had sent in their coal agents to offer traders low carriage rates to poach the traffic from the canal. Lapworth was carrying for at least two traders at Braunston, Alfred Knight and Philip Boswell, the former since 1890, but now they were threatening to take their business to the new railway as it was cheaper. It wasn't that Thomas Lapworth was too expensive either, as he was said to be working as cheap as he could manage.

Emanuel Smith jnr., found he couldn't make a living at it and gave up the local trade and moved to Brentford, about 1896 to set up what eventually became a substantial canal and river carrying business that lasted to 1930.

The L&N.W.R. wasn't the only railway being built at the time. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway was also organising construction nearby in October 1894 of their London Extension Contract No.4, but thankfully for the canal it headed south from Rugby and bypassed Braunston to the west, passing through the village of Willoughby, then Charwelton, then on to London. The railway was renamed the Great Central Railway in 1897. Sand for this railway construction was excavated at Hillmorton from pits leased by R. G. Stanley-Banks, who was the proprietor of a brick and tile works there. It was taken via Braunston to Willoughby Wharf, Flecknoe and on to Napton. Bricks were also taken by boat for the railway by merchants J. Fairbrother and Company of Rugby in the spring of 1895. They used coal merchant and contractor John Busby of Hillmorton Wharf to handle some of the boating. He owned the boat SARAH ANN, then later that year bought BLACK DIAMOND. He was given a toll credit account by the OC because of this work. Bricks were also supplied by Mason and Watson, the owners of Napton brickworks. Although the long-term prospects of canal trade looked bleak for Thomas Lapworth's Braunston traffic, in the short-term he was profiting from the railway construction.



The M.S.&L.R. passed just a few yards from the northern Oxford canal at Barby, where Lapworth was contracted to carry coal, bricks and stone to be delivered between Bridge No.81 and No.82 Rowdyke Bridge, then carried over the towpath direct into railway wagons, as was Fairbrother's traffic also carried by Lapworth to Braunston. The railway contractor for this area was T. Oliver and Son who employed twenty men full time unloading at Barby using planks and barrows, which caused some complaint from passing boaters as they had to pass their towing lines over the moored boats and negotiate the unloading planks. The stone was from Mancetter quarries owned by William Henry Green, and was used for concrete making for railway bridge foundations. He was contracted for delivery to Rugby, Clifton, Hillmorton, Barby, Willoughby and Braunston. John Griffiths of Bedworth was another carrier subcontracted to take bricks for the new line by railway contractors Topham, Jones and Railton of London.

As it turned out Alfred Knight of kept most of his trade on the water, and he never had any coal via the Great Central Railway. But it did have an impact on the roadstone traffic to the wharf, most of it being delivered at Braunston Station. Grain traffic was also in decline. Westley, Brothers and Clark the Northampton millers who had warehouse space at Braunston, decided to give it up from February 1901.

Thomas Lapworth retired in the early 20th century and later died on the 23rd May 1906. His executors were his widow Elizabeth, his son David who was also a boatman, and a local farmer named Samuel Randle Topp. Lapworth's canal trade was subsequently taken over by John Frederick Cox of Longford. He was an energetic, ambitious but pugnacious coal, coke and metal merchant, who at the time started to expand his boating traffic along the northern Oxford canal.

The threat of railway competition was never far away and from time to time it was a struggle to keep the trade on the cut. During World War One coal deliveries were difficult to get, and by then Henry Collins Mason only sold a few boats loads per year and Alfred Knight one boat load per month, the rest of his stock coming by rail. In order to keep coal supplies up the Daventry Co-operative Industrial Society Limited brought in coal by road and then by boat to the wharf.

After the war things were apparently little better as the local trade was very small and the complaint was that the pubs and blacksmith profited from the canal traffic, but the OC gained hardly anything due to very little toll revenues and rents, yet without the canal these traders would be out of business. This criticism was mainly levelled at the landlord of the Castle Inn, Henry Stuchbury, and the smithy next door run by George White. The Castle Inn and smithy was on the southern towpath side of the cut against the London Road (A45) bridge, number 91.

One major event to occur at Braunston Wharf was the creation of a transshipment depot for carriers Fellows, Morton and Clayton Limited. Early in January 1901 the OC gave FMC permission to take over two warehouses and stables at the wharf. After plans were drawn up between FMC and the OC the canal company started work at Braunston towards the end of March 1901, and FMC officially started their transshipment business at Braunston Wharf on the 1st May 1901. Various cargoes were transported to Braunston to expedite their own traffic. Provender was sent from their Fazeley Street premises at Birmingham and other places for their own boat horses, and coke was brought from gas works at Leamington, Rugby and Northampton to fuel their steamers.

One unforeseen problem that came about there was an increasing housing shortage. Although we think of boaters living aboard their boats as a permanent home, in fact quite a number of them lived in houses, and with FMC now ensconced at the wharf more and more boaters started to take up residence in the village. As the available dwellings filled up with tenants, rents started to rise due to the limited housing stock. By November 1901 it was almost impossible to find a vacancy. The problem had no solution other than to build new houses but even thirteen years later the Braunston parishioners voted against building any new housing.

Usually after each steamer arrived at the wharf from the GJC they unloaded, reloaded and picked up a different loaded butty for their return trip to Brentford. The steamer's cargo was reloaded into a single horse boat to complete its journey to Birmingham via the narrow locked Warwick and Napton, and Warwick and Birmingham canals. FMC had four of these craft working a shuttle service and were referred to as "Braunston Feeders". Steamers on this Brentford to Braunston trip ran both paired with a butty or as single boats averaging three round trips a fortnight. At other times steamers just dropped off their butties at Braunston and continued on to Birmingham alone, with the butty continuing on behind towed by a horse.

It seems FMC was sending the occasional wide boat to the wharf for transshipment too, but by late 1910 they started sending them quite regularly. These were hired as FMC only had one of their own at that time, newly built and appropriately named BRAUNSTON. Two more were added in 1911 and two more in 1912. In October 1911 they had three wide boats running from the Thames to the wharf which included their steam powered SWAN, fuelled by waste oil, and steered by Charles Newton. Although the GJC was built as a broad canal there were problems with these craft as other boats had difficulty passing them and they could only negotiate Blisworth and Braunston tunnels at certain times. FMC complained that a wide boat and a narrow boat could not get in their transshipment shed together which caused difficulties in bad weather, especially with cargoes easily damaged by damp. In World War One all FMC's wide boats were commandeered by the Government in 1915, and sent to serve their country on the French canals instead.

Most of the transshipment work at Braunston was for the London to Birmingham trade, then about 1908 FMC tried to revive their London to Coventry trade with steamers and butties. A year later it was proposed that a new shed should be erected at Braunston to facilitate this for the steamers to tranship their cargoes in the same way as in the Birmingham trade. The response by the Coventry traders was considered lukewarm but FMC persevered with it and

hoped it would increase. The main up traffic from Coventry to London was iron castings and down traffic was sugar and glucose.

The management of the transshipment depot was under the control of FMC's agent and foreman, Alfred Ironmonger of Moseley, Birmingham, who came over to Braunston three times a week to handle matters and keep everything working. He was credited as having the tact and experience to deal with a number of difficulties with the boatmen, despite one of his superiors at Fazeley Street in Birmingham being not very favourable to the whole thing. But in January 1913 he became seriously ill which led to his death on 3rd February. Without his regular presence at the wharf FMC quickly stopped operations there even before his death. By the last week of January FMC ordered that no more transshipment from steamers was to take place and two of the wharf men were put under notice, and the clerk was to be transferred to their Birmingham office.

Alfred Ironmonger was replaced with a new manager who also visited the wharf three days per week to oversee things just like his predecessor. A certain amount of transshipment still took place for various reasons. For example, later in 1913 owner boatman John Shed, who was regularly subcontracted by FMC, brought a cargo from London to Northampton, possibly grain. Then after unloading he took aboard 1 ton 15 cwts of iron at Northampton and delivered it at Braunston, before heading off back to the Warwickshire colliery district for another load of coal. FMC then took the iron aboard another boat for delivery at Birmingham. Transshipment did take place during the Great War and after, which mainly ended in January 1924 when FMC tied up some of their steamers at the wharf. Three of the four men employed at the wharf were under notice of dismissal. A little more transshipping took place such as one occasion when goods destined for Coventry brought in steamer VICTORY was sent by road in one of FMC's own lorries, then finally in June 1924 the unloading machinery was dismantled.

With both rail and road transport affecting FMC's traffics they had to resort to coal carrying to keep their boats employed. FMC's boats were built as fly boats and for swift general cargo carrying, but now they were being relegated to carrying the same cargo that only their most worn out craft had carried before the First World War. By 1925 S. E. Barlow was subcontracting some of his coal carrying work to FMC and boats that had once been steamers and even their more newly built craft were hauling coal to Dickinson's mills in Hertfordshire and other destinations on the lower GJC just to keep them in work. FMC still kept the buildings at Braunston for a time but were little used.

London Road underwent major reconstruction during 1926, and the contract for section one from Braunston to Daventry went to public works contractors C. H. Linton. They required large quantities of gravel for concreting work exceeding an estimated 6,000 tons initially. This figure would make well over 200 boat loads and the carrier contracted to do the work was L. B. Faulkner of Linslade, who specialised in supplying road construction and repair materials. Work started in August with the first run delivered to Braunston Wharf on the 5th, carrying a sample load for the contractors to test the quality. Gravel came from Iver at the junction of the Slough Arm on the southern GJC, and the initial tonnage estimate was soon increased to 8,000 tons making over 142 pairs, and was probably much more. All this was welcome news to Faulkner as trade was being affected by the coal strike from 1st March to 30th November 1926. Another source of gravel was recommended by the GJC from Charles Reginald Whiting of Cosgrove Lodge. He was a farmer with large gravel deposits on his property which he transported to his loading wharf above Cosgrove Lock by a specially constructed tramway built in 1926. Sand was recommended from John G. Cowell of Dodford Farm, Weedon who worked a sand pit on his land from September 1925. His wharf was near Old Street Road Bridge, Weedon. All this traffic came in regular deliveries over the following year with it winding down in September 1927.

With FMC now departed, the wharf became predominantly a boat building centre with Nurser Brothers, and their successors the Samuel Barlow Coal Company Limited dominating life there. There was still the occasional delivery such as hay for a local farmer, but little coal traffic. The OC warehouse still had tenants such as farmer, grazier and landowner, Edwin Ellard. In the late 1920's the warehouse was still being let and used. T. H. Cope, had a motor repair garage supplying tyres, fuel and running a taxi hire business on the wharf. He started renting the whole of the OC warehouse and sub-letting a portion to a George Davies of Braunston.

Like so many other rural canal wharves Braunston had its share of canal trade to merchants and dealers working in the village and local area over several generations. Unlike many other country wharves now lying unused or having a new lease of life in the modern leisure industry, enough information survives about Braunston to get some idea of the canal based commerce that once made it a destination in itself.

Acknowledgement must go to Canal Boat Families Historian, Lorna York, for assistance with some of the genealogical information.

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At this year's Braunston Historic Boat Gathering, Raymond was re-united with wooden motor boat Roger and the pair paraded together. This is likely the first time the boats have travelled together since their restoration.

Marty Seymour



Roger is now owned and operated by the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust www.rwt.org.uk and based at Batchworth Lock.

Photo courtesy of Marty Seymour

JAM 'OLE GOES TO KINGSHOTT

At the end of May Roger and I were having lunch with Alison, one of our musician friends, when she happened to say that she and a mutual friend had been at the Crick Boat Show, had found Nutfield and Raymond but were disappointed not to see us there. We assume that was when we were queueing for lunch! I jokingly started my 'chat line' about the boats, the Jam 'ole run and the history of our apple and plum recipe dating back to the First World War, whereupon she started singing the chorus of "O What a Lovely War", part of which goes:-

Oh! Oh! Oh! It's a lovely war,
What do want with eggs and ham
When we've got plum & apple jam?

Alison is director of music at Kingshott School in Hitchin and was organising a choir day which included a medley of First World War songs. As she likes to give the children a treat connected to what they are singing about she thought it would be a good idea if they could try the Jam 'Ole Jam.

After arranging with Brian for her to collect some jars of jam we went to the school for the afternoon. Roger and I liberally jammed in excess of 120 pieces of bread!! After the rehearsal we talked to the children about the boats and what life was like for the working boat people and then they were able to have a taste of the jam. Quite a few asked for a second piece! We stayed for the concert in the evening and then parents were able to buy the remaining 13 jars of jam – we could have sold a lot more!

Roger and Diana Golder

THANKS!

I would like to give a very big "Thank You" to Umar, the manager of 'Snappy Snaps' in Aylesbury, who has, again, this year given me a discount on the printing costs for the photo cards. Also to other members of his staff who have done the printing and helped me with the machines when I have got into difficulties, at least one each visit!

Diana Golder

And here's Raymond's back cabin, redecorated by Alice Lapworth. Jam sandwich anyone?



Steerer's eye view from the footboard of NUTFIELD on the Coventry Canal south of Atherstone en-route to Sutton Stop. It was taken on 26th September during the return trip from Alvecote Rally.



On the return trip from Alvecote, Nick Scarcliffe takes the turn at Sutton Stop in the evening sunlight so they can be tied-up outside the Greyhound pub.

