

2021 FoR Chair's Newsletters

Emails from Clare Hewitt

May 2021

We held a very successful AGM on 14th March via zoom, it was fantastic to see members appear on screen and contribute to the meeting, this may be something we will do again in the future as it easier for our members who live far away to attend.

During lockdown *Raymond* was sheeted up and left on her mooring but did acquire a new set of steps for accessing the hold, made with handrails which can be fitted on either side of the steps to suit which side the boat is moored. *Raymond's* 'elum' was also taken to Tradline in Braunston for new ropework to be made, whilst there it was repainted by Norman and Nick (Lake), the ropes have now been put on and the 'elum' is back in place looking very smart. The ropework was paid for by a generous donation from one of our Friends

Meanwhile *Nutfield* was once again used by NBT for their autumn coal run and ended up at Alvecote over the winter due to the lockdown situation, she has now returned back to Braunston. Both boats are now ready for a spring clean and some serious maintenance work, we are hoping to get a work party together on the 5th/6th June and would be very grateful if anyone would like to join in and help.

Over the Easter period Norman and his wife Kath organised a garage/garden sale and managed to raise £163.85 by running a tombola, selling planters and cakes plus our famous jam & marmalade. This donation was gratefully received as all shows and events were cancelled last year so fund raising has been non-existent !! If anyone else would like to raise money in this way that would be fantastic or has any other ideas to raise funds please let us know.

Chris R Jones and Nick Lake are delivering 'Raymond – the story of the last wooden working boat' talk to the London Canal Museum via zoom on Thursday 3rd June, if you are interested I can get more details as to cost and timings etc...

Looking ahead we are hoping to have *Nutfield & Raymond* open with a sales stand on the 26th/27th June in Braunston. Crick Boat Show is looking promising for the end of August, as is Welford in early September.

Many thanks to all members for renewing this year, I hope we will have more to report on as things open up and some normality returns.

July 2021

Norman arranged a work party weekend at the beginning of June to tackle the rather large task of sprucing up *Nutfield & Raymond*, ready for any events that may come our way this year. With the help of Brian, Nick, Diana, Roger, and John the following was achieved.

Raymond

Removed the top cloths, folded them up and stowed them away, the side cloths were rolled up and tied to the gunwales.

Cleaned out below the shuts and refitted them. Swept out and tidied up the hold.

Sanded down the stands and mast box above deck board level.

Cleaned inside the cabin, polished all the brass, eased sticking drawers and doors (sealed the bare wood).

Inserted a temporary prop between the side bed frame and the bed cupboard frame.,

Scraped and sanded the floor, sanded the ash wood foot boards around the hatches, repainted the floor with two coats of red oxide.

Removed the cabin slide, sanded it down and applied two coats of primer/undercoat to the green perimeter before refitting.

Nutfield

Replaced a broken shut.

All of this hard work was not in vain as over the weekend of 26th/27th June we held a "pop up" sales stand in Braunston Marina. The weather stayed dry but it was very windy and various items had to be rescued from the water!! Nevertheless the weekend went well and we hope to try and do something similar once a month in some format. It was lovely to see *Nutfield & Raymond* back on show and one of our members took *Nutfield* out for run to the Puddle Banks.

Our "pop up" weekend figures were:

Saturday – sales £220.00, donations £17.20

Sunday – sales £100.00, donations £18.50

We also received £295.00 from Norman and Kath in respect of their takings over the weekend, as well as some previous sales of planters in the shape of narrowboats which are handmade and painted by Norman.

Many thanks to Brian, Roger & Diana, Nick L. Norman & Kath, Chris R, Chris M, Mike & Michele l'Anson, Sarah Mallett, Ian Mulford & Becky, Mike Bowley, Clare and Will. A big "thank you" to one and all.

We are still waiting on news as to whether Crick Boat Show (August) and Welford (September) will go ahead so I will be in touch as soon as we hear to ask for crew and volunteers to help get the boats there and to man the sales stand.

August 2021

We decided last month to have another 'pop up stall' in the gardens of The Gongoozler Rest Cafe to try and raise some much needed funds. The forecast wasn't very good but miraculously it stayed dry for the whole weekend. Many thanks to Norman & Kath who ran a very successful tombola and sold Normans handmade narrowboat planters raising the grand sum of £149.00. Brian manned the FoR stall on the Saturday and was joined by Ian, Becky and Clare on the Sunday raising £79.50 plus £12.00 in donations, it was lovely to be supported by Braunston villagers and the customers of The Gongoozler's Rest (who very kindly sold our jam and marmalade).

There will be a slightly larger event in Braunston marina over the weekend 4th/5th September, when *Nutfield & Raymond* will be on display, along with *Nuneaton & Brighton*, and hopefully a number of other historic working boats. If you can either help on the day on the stalls or just come along and browse our lovely merchandise it would be great to see you.

At the time of writing, our attendance at Crick is uncertain.

Unfortunately we have become aware of some leakage in *Raymond*. To address this, *Raymond* will be going into the dry dock at Braunston on 23rd August for a week. Prior to this, we need to empty out *Raymond* and see if the source(s) of the leakage can be found. This will be done over the weekend 14th/15th August - volunteers are required to help. Some assistance may also be needed to move *Raymond* to and from the dock, and perhaps during the week of the docking, if you are available to help please let me know.

If anyone can help raise funds by having your own garage sale, car boot or table top sale in the area where you live it would be much appreciated.

September 2021

As you are aware we had some concerns regarding *Raymond* springing a leak, so she was put into dry dock on 23rd August and was assessed. There was a leaking seam above the bottom plank, this was raked out and re-caulked as were dubious places along the hull sides.

Two coats of blacking were then applied, the hold was cleaned out and any water removed, the shuts were treated with preservatives.

While *Raymond* was in the dock we took advantage to do some much needed maintenance, the sheering was repainted, gunwales scraped, rubbed down, treated, filled, and painted. The cabin top was rubbed down and varnished as were the cabin sides. The red cabin handrail was repainted, the slide was repaired and repainted, plus rotten wood in the stem post/top bend was removed, treated, filled, and undercoated.

This was a great effort by all involved, namely Rex, Paul, Norman, Nick S, Brian, Will, Nick L, and John. And many thanks to the management and staff at Braunston marina for their help and support.



September 4th/5th was a very special weekend as we were presented with a cheque for £1,000 from our FoR patron Tim Coghlan. I have attached a photo which also shows that the Narrowboat Trust and the Canal Society of Stoke Bruerne benefitted from this generous donation.



I have also attached a photo of Will and Ian sprucing up *Nutfield*, and Kath on one of our sales stalls. *Nutfield* also had to jump to the aid of NBT as they loaded *Nuneaton* with coal and discovered that they too had a small leak, quick action was taken and half the load was put onto *Nutfield* to relieve the situation.

Over this weekend we raised a grand total of £397.98 on sales plus the cheque for £1,000.

We also had a stall at the Braunston Scarecrow event this weekend, and even though footfall was quite slow we raised a grand total of £256.