

# FoR News April 2019

## Restoration and Maintenance Special Report

In the March issue of *FoR News* we caught up on The Friends of Raymond's general activities, but there is a great deal more to tell about what has been going on behind the scenes. Over the last two years, we have carried out an extensive and costly programme of restoration and maintenance on *Nutfield & Raymond*. Some news of this has been posted on the website, but a lot more has gone unreported. So, to complete the record and bring it up to date, we have produced this special issue of *FoR News* to report on all the work that has been done since January 2017.

### Spending

**£30,665**

The amount spent on restoration and maintenance from 1st January 2017 to 31st March 2019.

The total cost of the work described in the following pages was £30,665, which is the most FoR has needed to spend on the boats for well over a decade. We were able to cover a large proportion of the costs with reserves built up in previous years, together with grants and donations totalling over £10,000. But the rest was paid for out of funds raised from membership subscriptions, small donations and sales.

### Work on Raymond

#### January 2017



*Raymond* in Bulbourne dry dock, December 2016  
Picture: Jem Bates

During the summer of 2016 crew members sleeping on board reported that *Raymond's* cabin was leaking. However, the cause and the full extent of the problem were only revealed later that year.

In early December 2016, *Raymond* was taken to Bates Boatyard's dry dock at Bulbourne for boat builder Jem Bates to caulk the bottoms and investigate the state of the cabin. It turned out that the cabin panels were rotten to such an extent that the entire exterior of the cabin would have to be removed and rebuilt.



Rot in *Raymond's* cabin side, December 2016  
Picture: Jem Bates

The caulking was finished before Christmas. Then, immediately after New Year Jem Bates and his team set about the job of stripping back the cabin to the bare framework. And in doing so, they discovered that the root cause of the rot was water seeping between the top plank of the hull and the bottom of the cabin side, a problem that, we hope, Jem has solved by letting the new panels into a rebate cut into the top plank.



Jem Bates checks the work in progress, 11 Jan 2017



A week later and the cabin takes shape, 19 Jan 2017

The cabin rebuild was completed within four weeks and *Raymond* left the dry dock on 27 January.

### March 2017

The next stage was to have *Raymond's* new cabin painted. But, because of a long stoppage at Stoke Bruerne locks that year, *Nutfield & Raymond* had to stay at Bulbourne, and it was not until 15th March that we set out on the two-day journey to Blisworth and Jason Clarke's paint dock.

We ended the first day at The Globe Inn at Old Linslade where the couple on the boat in front helped us tie up, and in conversation, showed an unusual interest in how we had raised the money to pay for the work on *Raymond*. The reason for their interest became clear the following morning when they announced that they were trustees of a family charity and would like to give us £3,000. So for The Friends of Raymond, the Ides of March in 2017 proved to be an unusually auspicious day.

But once at Blisworth, *Raymond* spent the next two weeks in the paint dock where boat painter Jason Clarke and signwriter Alan Baillie, together with a little volunteer help, restored the dull grey cabin back to its former glory.



Top left: FoR's Caroline Brudenell undercoats the roof, 23 March 2017  
 Right: FoR's Peter Copeland scumbles the roof while Alan Baillie completes the lettering, 1 April 2017  
 Bottom left: the finished cabin, 1 April 2017

## April 2017



Chris M Jones, 15 April 2017

In mid-April, *Nutfield & Raymond* returned to Braunston where, on a sunny weekend with *Raymond* in the arm at the marina, Chris M Jones painted the cabin-side castles and Will Hewitt painted the name.

There is a great satisfaction in being able to do this kind of work “in house”, and FoR are fortunate to be able to call on the exceptional skills of some of our more talented members.



Will Hewitt and Chris M Jones, 15 April 2017

Chris, an artist, illustrator and canal historian (readers of *NarrowBoat* magazine may recognise his name) can produce castles in the style of the late Ron Hough, who painted the originals, with such faithful reproduction that it is hard to tell one from the other.

And Will is a boat painter and signwriter in his spare time, as well as being an experienced boatman and one of FoR’s leading skippers.

## September 2017

Although *Raymond’s* exterior was now immaculate, there was still work to be done inside the cabin before we could redecorate. In September, we invited Pete Boyce to advise on what needed to be done, and his report was worse than we feared. Much of the woodwork inside the cabin and the hatches was rotten beyond repair, meaning that the cabin would have to be stripped out, and all the defective timbers replaced.



Raymond at Welford, 10 June 2017

## January to March 2018



Raymond at Tess Wharf, 8 March 2018

Before Christmas 2017, Pete Boyce moved *Raymond* up to his yard at Tess Wharf, opposite Braunston Turn. And, in early January, he began the job of removing the fitted furniture aft of the bed cupboard, stripping the sheering from the sides and taking out the rotten floorboards and the deck in the hatches, leaving the cabin an empty, and rather wet, void.



Raymond's cabin, 8 March 2018



Top right: Pete sets out the deck subframe  
17 February 2018  
Above: the new deck in place  
16 March 2018  
Right: the finished cabin  
Below: Pete brings *Raymond* back  
25 March 2018



In spite of the cold weather, over the three months from January to March, Pete repaired all the rot in the structural timbers, laid new floorboards, fitted new sheering and tongue and groove lining to the sides of the cabin, and constructed and installed a new deck in the hatches. The work was completed and the cabin furniture replaced by the end of March and *Raymond* was returned to the marina just in time to be docked.

## April 2018

In the first week of April, *Raymond* went into the Braunston Marina wet dock, where a team of FoR volunteers took the cloths off, cleared out the hold, dug out and filled the rot in the woodwork at the fore end and prepared it for painting in readiness for the dry-docking at the weekend.



*Raymond* in the wet dock, 31 March 2018



Legends in their own lunchtime: Roger Golder, Peter Copeland (and Archie) and Diana Golder, 4 April 2018



The fore end ready for painting, 5 April 2018

Between Friday 6th and Sunday 8th April, we lifted the shuts and treated them with wood preserver, retouched the paintwork on the cabin, painted the new woodwork in the hatches and all the top planks and beams, and caulked and blacked the hull. At the same time, Bates Boatyard staff fitted new, protective chine shoe plating to the bottom edge of the hull, and Will Hewitt painted and decorated the fore end.



Raymond in the dry dock, 7 April 2018. Picture: Diana Golder



Peter Copeland retouches a scratch  
7 April 2018. Picture: Diana Golder



Scott from Bates Boatyard fits the chine shoe plating  
7 April 2017. Picture: Diana Golder



Roger Golder treats the shuts  
7 April 2018. Picture: Diana Golder



Will Hewitt adds the final touch to a bunch of roses  
8 April 2018. Picture: Diana Golder



The fore end repainted, 9 April 2018



8am Monday, filling the dock, 9 April 2018

## May 2018



Peter applies black gloss to the scallops, 4 May 2018

With the boats back on the mooring, Peter Copeland and Chris M Jones took advantage of the warm spring weather to scumble the interior of *Raymond's* cabin and put some finishing touches to the exterior paintwork.

Peter added a pattern of black scallops to the cabin's forward bulkhead, which we had discovered from archive pictures was a feature of the original colour scheme.

Chris retouched Ron Hough's castles on the door panels and painted roses in some of the panels inside the cabin.



Chris restores one of Ron Hough's original castles (left) while his own version (right) makes a bold statement on the newly-scumbled cabin door into the hold, 4 May 2018.

As the final touch to complement the paintwork and decoration, *Raymond* was also given a new set of white, decorative ropework.

The various pieces had been made over the winter by Karen Flockhart at Tradline Rope and Fenders, and Pete Flockhart fitted them in time for the photoshoot on 13th May (as reported in the March 2018 issue of FoR News).

The set was designed to exactly match the style of the ropework on *Raymond* in the 1960s and the picture (right) shows just what an excellent job it was.



Picture: David Williams

## July 2018

The long, hot spell in mid-summer helped to completely dry out the moisture that usually lies in the bottom of the boat. And this revealed the unwelcome sight that *Raymond's* hull was now leaking. The obvious leak appeared to be between the first plank and the bottoms. And as water was still accumulating under the cabin floor even though the weather had been dry for weeks, it looked most likely that leaks were occurring in several places. It was clear that the only way to fix the problem was to put *Raymond* back into dry dock.



Evidence of the leak, 20 July 2018

## October 2018



Norman Townsend, Diana Golder and Mike l'Anson caulk the seam between the first and second planks, 3 October 2018

As it turned out, we did not have to wait too long. Thanks to Braunston Marina, who kindly agreed to extend the weekend docking for *Nutfield*, we were able to put *Raymond* into the dock for two days on 2nd October.

We were aiming to do no more than caulk the two lowest seams, but as soon the boat was clear of the water, we could see that the old chine shoe plating, that had been left on when the new plating was fitted in April, was partially covering the bottom seam and would

have to come off. Unfortunately, that would need more than two days, so all we could do was caulk the seam between the first and second planks which, though a job well done, did not solve the problem.

## 2019 latest

We have booked a block of six days in the dry dock in early July to give us time to get the job done, and have asked wooden boat expert Adrian Polglase to oversee the work to ensure it is done correctly.

## Work on Nutfield

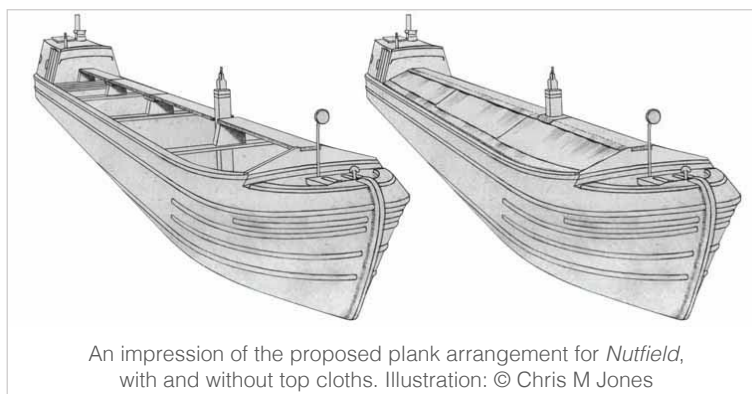
New cabin side panels had been fitted to *Nutfield* in early 2016, followed by a complete repaint of the cabin and engine room exterior. And further painting that autumn, ensured that *Nutfield* began the 2017 season in good shape, except for the fact that the hull survey carried out at the October docking had identified the need for some re-plating.

### May to July 2017

We asked Steve Priest at Brinklow Boat Services to come and check *Nutfield* and advise on repairs. His inspection revealed a number of areas where the steel was corroding or wearing thin, which would need to be cut out and replaced with new steel plate. And we agreed that the job should include grit-blasting the inside of the hold and spraying with two-pack epoxy paint as protection against further deterioration.

The trustees also decided that, although *Nutfield* did not currently have side cloths, in keeping with how she was fitted out in Blue Line days, the priority now was to preserve the boat itself rather more than her historical integrity, and that the hold should be covered, at least during the winter. A secondary benefit in being able to cover the hold was that it would offer additional crew accommodation on longer journeys.

So it was agreed with Rex Wain at Brinklow Boat Services that he would fit new gunwales and side cloths when the work on the hold had been completed. He would also make new, low-level stands and deck board and a new set of top planks, so that when they were in position and covered by top cloths, the planks would be at half the normal height, which would create an easier and safer walkway for crew moving from one end of the boat to the other.



The total cost of the work by Brinklow Boat Services was estimated at about £10,000 and we received a grant of £5,000 from Northampton IWA towards it.

### August 2017

*Nutfield* was delivered to Brinklow Boats Services at Stretton Wharf in mid-August and Steve Priest started on the plating straight away.

Then, with a bit of volunteer labour to help remove the shuts and the ballast barrels, the hold was grit-blasted and the sides sprayed with two-pack. And with some further volunteer help to shovel out the grit and clean up the hold so the bottom could also be painted, the job was finished by the end of the month.



FoR's Robin Bishop and Peter Copeland shovel up the last of the grit, 24 August 2017.



The job finished, 24 August 2017. Note the kink in the left-hand gunwale (see below)

*Nutfield* was now ready for the woodwork to begin. This phase of the work was to be divided into two stages to ease our cash flow. The first stage would take us as far as having the side cloths fitted, and the second stage would be the new stands, deck board, top planks and top cloths.

## September to November 2017

In early September, *Nutfield* was moved into the dry dock at Stretton for the work to begin. But with the old gunwales removed, it was found that the hull and the “gunwale angles”, the steel flanges to which the wooden gunwales are attached, had become too distorted for the new woodwork to be fitted properly so the steelwork would have to be straightened out first.



*Nutfield* in the dry dock at Stretton Wharf, 27 September 2017

By means of a combination of jacks to push the sides of the boat outwards, and clamps and the bracing chains to pull the sides inwards, *Nutfield* was eventually brought back into an acceptable shape.

The picture on the left was taken soon after the work of fitting the gunwales had begun. In the foreground, the first length of timber has been bolted to the gunwale angle and one of the jacks is still in place applying pressure to the gunwale angle on the other side.



Top: Detail of new gunwales and deck beam, 27 Sep 2017  
Bottom: Ready for side cloths, 23 Nov 2017



Chris M Jones treats the gunwales with wood preservative, 7 Oct 2017. Picture: Chris R Jones

To save costs, more volunteer effort was called upon for the menial tasks such as sweeping up the sawdust and wood shavings in the hold, treating and painting the new gunwales and painting the beams and top planks. By mid-November *Nutfield* was ready to have the side cloths fitted, and everyone agreed that the result was a beautiful job.

There was one snag, however. Because of the additional work involved in straightening the steelwork, the bill for the first part of Stage 1 came to more than twice the original estimate, leaving us short of both cash and any idea as to how we could now afford to complete even the first stage. We had no alternative but to call a halt for the time being, and *Nutfield* remained at Stretton over Christmas, while we waited to see what turned up.

## January to April 2018

By a stroke of good fortune, something did turn up in January, in the form of a Gift Aid refund from HMRC which was just enough to cover the cost. So we gave the go-ahead for the side cloths to be ordered, and meanwhile *Nutfield* remained at Stretton. But as the cloths hadn't arrived by late April, we brought *Nutfield* back to Braunston to begin the summer season, on the understanding that as soon as they were delivered from the makers, we would return the boat to Stretton at the first available opportunity to have them fitted.



## September 2018

2018 was *Nutfield's* year for the annual autumn dry docking, but because we had been given a block of six continuous days to allow us to dock *Raymond* as well, we were able to steal an extra day for *Nutfield*, as we had more jobs than usual to cram into the time available.



Team work: blacking *Nutfield*, 30 Sep 2018.  
Picture: Diana Golder

Between the morning of Friday 28th September and the evening of Monday 1st October, we rubbed down, undercoated and scumbled the roof of the cabin and engine room, lifted the shuts, replaced sections that were rotten and treated them all with wood preserver, cleaned out the engine bilge and tidied the engine room, touched up the top planks, beams, mast box and gunwales, and blacked the hull.



Top: Chris M Jones scumbles the roof, 29 Sep 2018.  
Bottom: Roger Golder paints the gunwales, 30 Sep 2018

Meanwhile, Will Hewitt painted the back and fore ends of *Nutfield*, including the addition of bunches of roses on the top bends so that, once again, we have a pair with matching fore ends in the traditional Barlow's/Blue Line style.



Top left and right: Will Hewitt at work on *Nutfield*, 30 September 2018  
Bottom left and right: The finished result. 2 October 2018

As well as acknowledging the painting skills of Chris and Will, special thanks are due to Norman Townsend, a new member and volunteer who repaired the shuts and cleaned out the engine bilge, and to Mike I'Anson who not only made his regular trek from North Yorkshire to be an invaluable member of the docking team, but also cleaned up and fitted new shafts to several boat hooks and a new handle to our old sledge hammer.



*Nutfield & Raymond* tied at Butcher's Bridge, Braunston after the docking, 4 October 2018  
Note the matching fore ends.

## January to March 2019

The side cloths were finally delivered in January, so we returned *Nutfield* to Stretton on Saturday 9th February for Rex Wain to fit them.

And knowing that *Nutfield* would be at Stretton for a few weeks, we also took advantage of Brinklow Boat Services' engine-maintenance expertise by having their engineer, Dave Ross, carry out some important repairs to the gearbox at the same time.



Rex Wain fitting the side cloth, 19 February 2019



*Nutfield* at Stretton before returning to Braunston, 30 Mar 2019

So, Phase 1 of the work is finally complete, and *Nutfield* is back alongside *Raymond* on the mooring at the marina. But Phase 2 must unfortunately remain on hold until more funds are available.

Meanwhile, the next session of work on *Nutfield* is the Easter weekend working party as announced in the March issue of *FoR News*. To make the boat ready for the summer season, essential tasks include, cleaning and tidying the cabin, pressure-washing the engine room and varnishing the roof

## Looking ahead

Now that we are at last up to date on restoration and maintenance we will continue to provide news about work on the boats in the general issues of *FoR News*. The next one will be out in June when, among other things, we will report on the Easter working weekend, the Welford 50th Anniversary celebration and the Crick Boat Show.

If you have any questions or comments on this newsletter or on anything to do with The Friends of Raymond in general, please contact the editor.

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