

News Update March 2023

A busy month

On 2nd March, Nick Scarccliffe discovered that there was a short window during which National Historic Ships UK had funds available to offer grants for the restoration and preservation of registered historic vessels. The bad news, however, was that the application deadline was Tuesday 14th March.

With less than two weeks left in which to submit an application, there was no time to lose. The maximum grant for any one vessel was £1,000, and NHS-UK confirmed that we could make two applications for that amount for the work planned on both *Nutfield* and *Raymond*, but warned that they expected to be oversubscribed so, even if our applications were successful, we might not receive the full amount.

The next 10 days were occupied with writing what we hoped would be compelling reasons for NHS-UK to grant us some money, and preparing estimates and photographs to support our applications. With a sigh of relief and fingers firmly crossed, we finally pressed “Submit” on both online application forms on the evening of Monday 13th March.

In spite of our efforts, we had no great expectations that we would be successful, and it came as something of a surprise when we received an email only a week later, to say that we had been awarded no less than £1,500 to be spent on *Nutfield* and *Raymond* as we saw fit.

The grant will only be paid to us on submission of a claim form supported by invoices and receipts after the work is completed, but it does at least guarantee that we will have the money to carry out the work we have planned on both boats in the first half of this year, without needing to resort to temporary loans.

So it was with great relief that we, which is to day, Norman Townsend, John Onions, and Nick Lake delivered *Nutfield* to Brinklow Boat Services on the Stretton Arm on Sunday 19th March.

Work on Nutfield

The original reason for *Nutfield* going to Brinklow was because of the engine problem that we reported in the February issue of *FoR News*, but we had also seen the opportunity to carry out other urgent work while *Nutfield* was there, like repainting the cabin and engine room sides, and having the badly rusted back cabin doors replaced. So we had booked Brinklow’s dry dock for two weeks.

Nutfield went into the dock on Monday 20th March and work began the following day.

Tuesday 21st March

Rubbing down the paintwork, and new cabin doors made and fitted by Dave Ross.



Wednesday 22nd March

New doors fitted, undercoating in progress.



Friday 24th March

With two undercoats completed, Norman and Nick (behind the camera) set out the coachlines.



Sunday 26th March

First coat of gloss, and first coat of cream undercoat for the graining.



Thursday 30th March

The gloss painting was finished on Monday 27th. Chris M Jones gained the sides on Wednesday 29th, and on the Thursday, Will Hewitt started the signwriting.



Saturday 1st April

Will completed the signwriting and decoration.



Other jobs completed by Saturday 1st April include repairing and priming the cabin gunwales, painting the engine room bulkhead, undercoating the cabin doors and bulkhead, painting the stern cants, and touching up the tunnel bands.

We hope to have the graining varnished, the coachlines painted, the handrails, cabin gunwales, and counter deck painted, and all other small jobs completed by the end of Tuesday 4th April. Revarnishing the cabin top, and anything else outstanding, will be done when *Nutfield* is back at Braunston. However, as the work on the engine is not due to start until this week (Monday 3rd April) *Nutfield* will not be returning to Braunston until after Easter.

Easter weekend

Talking of Easter, *Raymond* will be in the dry dock over the weekend, and we will also have our sales stalls set up alongside the arm. So, this is a reminder that if anyone is able to help in any way, and at any time, with either of these activities, they will be very welcome.

The main issue of *FoR News*

Because the events during March interrupted the publication of the promised issue, this will now come out after Easter, and will also include a report of our activities over the Easter weekend.

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