



# News

## Newsletter for May 2025

Dear Friends

Here is another update on what we've been doing since the last one, and a reminder of what's coming up.

### Last month

Over the Easter weekend and the following week, *Raymond* was in the dry dock at the marina where a good show of volunteers enabled us to carry out repair work to the cabin sides and fore-end top bends– far more there than we'd anticipated, of course – as well as blacking, cleaning, and general painting.

Because of the extent of the repairs to the fore end, time ran out on us and we weren't able to do more than prime and undercoat them. But we're hopeful of having *Raymond* in the wet dock the week before the Historic Rally to complete the job.

We also had our sales stall in both gazebos set up in the car park by the arm, next to where we'd moored *Nutfield*. In spite of a wet Saturday and Monday, people seemed to be out in droves, and Kath and Brian did an exceptional amount of trade – more than we might expect at, say, Cosgrove or Linslade.

The day after *Raymond* came out of the dock, we took her along to Pete Boyce's yard by the turn for Pete to replace the cants and ash strips around the hatches. As with the fore end, the more wood Pete removed, the more rot he uncovered. He's working on it steadily but, at the time of writing, it is by no means certain whether or not *Raymond* will be in a fit state to go down to Batchworth. And even if she is, her paintwork at the bows and stern will be in a fairly rough state, and will have to stay that way until mid-June.

After delivering *Raymond* to Pete Boyce, we continued to Napton with *Nutfield*, to see if she would now get into Lock 12 following CRT's repairs in January. Sadly, and not entirely to our surprise, she still stuck fast in the same place. But by good fortune, we were able to involve Steve Powell, the main CRT man on the Napton flight. He took lots of photos of *Nutfield* jammed in the tail of the lock, and has sent in a report to the effect that the January repair work was carried out in the wrong place – as he, and we had suspected. Unfortunately, it is most unlikely that any more work on the lock will be carried out until next winter, so it is doubtful that we'll be able to go to Banbury again in October, at least, not with the boats.

### This month

Meanwhile, back at the marina... we turned our attention to *Nutfield*.

We've removed the old top cloths, cleaned the side cloths, cleared out the hold, and installed and filled the IBCs that we reported on last month. Now, with around 4½ tons of ballast, *Nutfield's* trim is significantly improved, with the fore end about a foot lower than it was.

Norman has re-installed the silencer with the new baffles, we've cleared out the engine room and made a start on painting it, although this job will realistically have to be done in stages over the summer, as time allows. We've also repaired and primed the cabin gunwales and the port side cabin handrail, and Norman has modified and secured the steps down into the hold – which, apart from the appearance, will make access to the hold considerably safer.

We have taken delivery of a second tent which will enable us to accommodate four people – three on *Nutfield* and one on *Raymond* which may prove invaluable on the Foxton trip. When the new tent is installed, we will cloth-up *Nutfield* with the new top cloth. So, with a bit of cleaning and polishing over the weekend, *Nutfield* should be all ready to set off for Batchworth on Monday morning, with or without *Raymond*. We hope to be back at Braunston on Friday 23rd May.

#### Next month

*Nutfield* & *Raymond* (complete with dodgy paintwork) will attend the Harborough '75 event at Foxton on the weekend of 7th & 8th June. Back at the marina, we hope to have *Raymond* in the wet dock from Friday 21st June to finish off the painting ready for the Historic Rally. Then, of course, on the weekend of 28th & 29th June is the Braunston Historic Boat Rally itself.

A full edition of *FoR News*, complete with pictures, will be issued after the boats have returned from Rickmansworth.

With kind regards

Nick

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