



The Batchworth Telegraph

Newsletter of the Friends, Summer 2023

Bon
Voyage,
Mark

Ahoy
there,
Warwick

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Our
Chairman
Speaks...



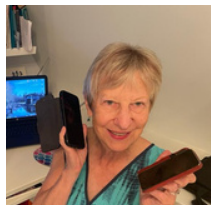
Festival
2023



Art at the
Education
Centre



Pam
Thanks
RWT



Mark Saxon



Warwick Gainsborough

Call **01923 778382** for more details or visit **www.rwt.org.uk**



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Chairman's Chat...

Welcome to the summer issue of the Batchworth Telegraph for 2023. As you will have seen from the cover, this is a fairly momentous issue marking the 'changing of the guard' with Mark retiring after ten years' loyal service as the Trust's General Manager. I was appointed as Chairman in August 2012, when we were a very different organisation to the one we are now, and, within my first year, the previous manager stepped down. We recruited Mark, who we knew as a volunteer, to replace him in August 2013.

Since this time Mark has been the face of the Trust for our customers and all our volunteers. He has helped the trustees develop our organisation from its fairly difficult early years to the strong and capable organisation it is now. You may remember Mark ran Learning at the Lock, initially (which I know as a shy and retiring person he really enjoyed!); as the breadth of the General Manager role increased, we brought Rob in as Education Programme Manager. Mark has been the first point of contact on our phone and enquiries email address, and the 'go to' person for any questions or issues our volunteers have had. He has always been available to help resolve issues out of his normal hours (like helping Cas and myself rescue Roger when it had been let loose on a stormy night after a Ceilidh) and has ensured our volunteers always felt supported. Mark has partnered with the trustees to not only develop our charity but also to overcome some significant challenges. Here are a few



examples:

- moving out of the Affinity Water mill and finding a new temporary classroom
- the design and building of our Education Centre and establishing the systems to run it
- winning the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service
- weathering the storm that was COVID
- developing our boating practices and training our skippers to the required standards
- ensuring we had a maintenance programme for our boats and managing the occasions when they let us down
- scoping and purchasing a second trip boat

These are just a few of the key areas of challenge and change that have occurred in the last ten years; there are many more through which Mark has ensured the Trust could grow and succeed.

I know you will all join me and the trustees in thanking him for all he has helped us achieve over these ten years. We wish him well for the future, and we will hopefully welcome him back as a volunteer once he has completed a well earned break from the Trust!

Warwick Gainsborough joined as our new General Manager on July 3rd and, by the time you read this, will have finished the handover process

Chairman's Chat Continued...

with Mark. He introduces himself later in this issue; we hope he will be an excellent successor to Mark. We are very fortunate he has decided to join the Trust, and I know you will make him very welcome.

Rob reports later that the number of Learning at the Lock visits seems to have been challenged by the teacher industrial action. It seems like we have not had a 'normal' year since before COVID, and just before this we were getting schools used to our new building.

Roger's last docking in December '22/January '23 confirmed that the life of a wooden boat is really about 25 years. It was identified that several major timbers will need replacing over the next five years, so the Trust is working out how this can be budgeted for and achieved. Roger has also experienced engine problems, with black oily smuts being blown out of the exhaust all over the crew, which curtailed our planned trip to Little Venice this year. Clive Pelerin and Bob Patey have spent many hours taking apart the exhaust system and cleaning it up. They are starting to put it back together, as I write this, so fingers crossed we have it resolved.

We have brought into our operation a second trip boat, the Spirit of Batchworth, which is now being used for

all school visits and our charters. This leaves the Pride of Batchworth to do the short trips and means we have a back-up boat if major mechanical issues occur with one of them.

We have also had another very successful Festival, but, as I report later, there are challenges for the Trust in how this event continues.

There are still more changes happening within our organisation: Pam Paterson and Tina Berry-Chmiel stood down as trustees at our recent AGM. Pam has been a trustee for nine years and has been a very hard-working member of the team. She plans to remain as a volunteer, but we will miss her insight and good nature on the trustee board. Pam also acted as Rob's line manager, and I thank Mike Lansdown for agreeing to take over this role. Tina has been our Finance Director since 2011, and she has not only provided prudent financial guidance to the trustees and budgeting information each year, but has also pulled together all the financial information for our Annual Report. We hope we have identified a successor, but Tina will be a hard act to follow, and we thank her for all her dedication to ensuring we remained financially robust.

Nik Bennett stepped down as our Treasurer and Andy Holmes took over from him in April this year. Andy may be known to some of you as he helped run the trip boats for the Festival for many years. The trustees would like to thank Nik for all his diligence during his time as Treasurer, and we welcome Andy in to the role. We still have to get Andy fully trained on the Monday morning Treasurer/General Manager

Wenzel's pasty run, but I am sure he will get the hang of it...

Chris Burridge has been Mark's line manager for many years, and with Mark leaving it is only fair that another trustee take on this role. Steve Mander has kindly agreed to take over as line manager for Warwick.

Jillian Christensen, who has managed our charter operation for many years, which included all the bookings and allocating crew, has decided to step down. The importance of this volunteer role should not be underestimated, as it is a significant source of income and key in ensuring a good public perception of the Trust. The trustees thank Jillian for all her dedication to this difficult task and for helping grow this important part of our operation. Jillian is continuing to volunteer and is still looking after the ice cream orders for the Lock Centre. Currently the General Manager role is looking after charters, but we are looking to make some changes to the way we run these in the future, possibly moving to an online booking form as we do for the Festival traders and boaters.

So a lot of change this summer, all of which is important if we are to continue to develop and grow as an organisation. Many thanks, again, to Mark for his years of loyal service; to Rob and to all our volunteers. Your work ensures the success of our organisation.

Best regards,

David

Mark's Last Musings

Hello Everyone.

This will be the final article from me for the Batchworth Telegraph before you are blessed with a new (and much better) General Manager, Warwick Gainsborough.

I want to take this opportunity in thanking each and every one of you for the tremendous support and friendship you have provided to me over the last 10 years.



We are a much different and vastly improved organisation from that which I took over in August 2013, and this is down to one thing: you.

The amount of time and dedication you all put into the various aspects of the Trust is extraordinary. From the trustees right the way through the organisation, the willingness to maintain our presence and activities at Batchworth stands the Trust in good stead for the

future.

Whether it's one hour a year shaking a bucket at the Festival, or a regular slot in the Lock Centre, each and every time you answer the call for volunteers you come up trumps, and your contribution goes to making up the success that is the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust.

We've lost some volunteers on the way, some through moving away and some unfortunately through natural processes, and my appreciation for everything you and they have done is boundless.

We continue to go from strength to strength, and I know you will show Warwick the same level of enthusiasm and good humour you have shown me.

It's a big job, and he will need your support and knowledge as he gets to know the role. I have briefed him on all of you, so he is aware of what he's got himself into!

I have been asked if I will be coming back as a volunteer. In short the answer will be not for at least a year. It is important that Warwick is allowed to make his mark on the Trust without outside influence. I have told David that I will be available to help at the Festival in 2024.

So I'm now signing off. I wish you all good health and will say au revoir for now.

Mark



Mark Saxon

Introducing Warwick

I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce myself and express how excited I am to be joining the Trust as General Manager. I thought I'd start by giving you a brief overview of my background and how I've arrived here.

In terms of my professional background, I'd like to think I bring a diverse range of experiences that have shaped me. My previous experience includes working in the financial services industry, parking management, and, most recently, as a Visitor Experience Manager at the Postal Museum in London. I'd always had a passion for history and heritage so decided that I wanted a role that reflected my interests. As you may or may not know, the museum runs a small underground railway that used to transport the post across London, so I'm now firmly wedded to transport heritage! I can't pretend to be an expert on canals and boats, but I'm convinced, from what I've seen already, that I'll have plenty of help in getting up to speed. From trains to boats seems a natural journey to me!

Whilst working at the museum, I also worked alongside the learning team and really enjoyed our school visits. I was therefore delighted to learn about the work that Rob and the 'Learning at the Lock' team undertake and particularly how, with the breakdown of the 'Pride' last year, they

overcame adversity to maintain the schools programme.

Whilst at the museum, I managed many hosts and drivers, many of whom were volunteers, and I developed a deep appreciation for the power of volunteers in driving the success of an organization. Working closely with our volunteers, I witnessed first-hand their unwavering dedication, passion, and commitment: they truly are the lifeblood of any organisation. On reading a few issues of the 'Batchworth Telegraph', I can clearly see that the Trust is tremendously blessed in this area, and I'm truly excited about getting to know and work with each and every one of you.

Having spent some time with Mark I can already see I have big shoes to fill. It's apparent to me that he has been a first-class servant of the Trust over the last 10 years. I want to thank him for the time he's spent with me already and hope the two weeks induction I had before his well-earned retirement weren't too fraught and frustrating for him, and he

can now enjoy his break from RWT.

I've always regarded myself as a down-to-earth kind of guy so I'm not unaware of the challenges that lie ahead, not least in maintaining the boats so we can continue to deliver a great customer experience for our visitors and preserve our income streams. Moving forward, I hope we can expand our engagement within the community as well as increasing those income streams. I'm convinced this is possible with such a dedicated and skilled group of volunteers.

For recreation I have interests in photography and birdwatching (so don't be surprised if you see me with binoculars or a camera in my hand!) and for holidays I enjoy camping.

That's it for now. At the time of writing I'm only days away from joining and meeting you all, and I can't wait to get stuck in!

Warwick



Warwick Gainsborough

Rob Reports



There have been a number of changes to the programme this year, the first being the use of the new boat, the Spirit of Batchworth (pictured at the end of this article). Many of the volunteers had a preview of the boat at the Volunteer Meeting in March. The new boat does take longer to prepare for a school visit, but its extra space and stability makes it a better experience for the children. I am pleased to say there have usually been two skippers volunteering per session to lighten the load.

The Volunteer Meeting not only gave volunteers the chance a ride in the boat, but several options were looked at regarding which side of the canal would be better for the children to board and where the best place for the conductor would be. I was not able to attend the meeting, myself, or some of the early bookings in March, as I had had surgery to replace my hip. It is good to know that 'Learning at the Lock' can function without the Education Manager! Now we've had a number of school visits, a smooth routine has evolved.

The other main change was to create a new worksheet to use on the canal trip. The worksheet allows the children to learn that, although the canal is manmade, it does provide a haven for wildlife. The difficulty is that the wildlife can change with the seasons and from day to day, and the idea was to have one

worksheet that could be used in all seasons and conditions. The volunteers responded to the initial proposed worksheet with some good ideas, and the worksheet was passed on to a professional to finish. The new worksheet not only looks good, it has had input from the volunteers who are going to use it. The cost of producing the resource along with the simplicity of re-ordering makes the whole project a great improvement.

Another change I have made, which will not be noticed by the volunteers, is that I no longer use post for the bookings. The schools are asked about the booking system in the feedback form, and the responses are very positive. I do send an email to the school a week before their booking to say that everything is ready for their visit and to make sure the school has the right number of adult helpers. It is useful that the class is divided into either three groups for larger classes or two groups for small. Most schools are prepared in their groups, although a very few do not always look at the details as to where their coach can drop off! I also send out a reminder to the volunteers, to which I am thankful nobody replies to say they are not available.

The sad fact about this season so far has been the low number of bookings, especially after the impressive number last season. When 'Learning at the Lock' reopened after COVID, there was a release of a pent-up demand, and we had 28 bookings. One school had booked four sessions for one year group. Some of the

Don't ignore it, report it!



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If you see:

- Damage or danger to the natural environment
- Pollution
- Poaching
- Risks to wildlife
- Fish in distress
- Illegal dumping of hazardous waste
- Flooding incidents

Ring 0800 80 70 60

Call free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This number is for emergencies only, not for general enquiries.

Prompt action can help the environment.

Rob Reports Continued...

bookings were from schools that booked twice. One for the year group that missed the visit in the COVID year and one for the current year group, so perhaps the number of bookings last season was inflated.

This season began well, with one booking in February and two in March, but the summer has not fulfilled expectations. The feedback from all the schools is excellent and always has been. This season, five new organisations have visited Batchworth. I say 'organisations' because, as well as schools, 'Learning at the Lock' has been presented to cub groups and a home-learning group. The home-learning group has passed on information to other groups, so I hope this is another avenue for future bookings.

The Adult Heritage programme has had one

booking. This was with a newly built development of flats in Rickmansworth. There are a number of leaflets and other advertising on social media, so maybe this will give some impetus to this activity. All leads that were supplied by volunteers were followed up, and a number of other leads from different sources have also been followed up. Despite some early interest from one quarter, no future bookings are looking likely. If you are a member of University of the Third Age or any other group, please help to promote our Adult Heritage programme.

Going back to the schools, things have not been easy for the teachers. The strikes are called within a month of writing, and booking an outing during this time is likely to be problematic. I am pleased to say that no school has cancelled a visit due to the strikes. The price of hiring a coach has gone up and the number of children in the classes seems to have fallen. The transport costs are much higher, as is the general cost of living. All we can do is carry on with the

excellent work, which is borne out by the great responses to the feedback forms, and hope that the bookings will come back when things settle down.

Rob



The Spirit of Batchworth

Festival 2023

Firstly, I can say that the 2023 Festival was a resounding success for the Trust, not only in returning over £40,000 to the charity, but also in delivering another fantastic event for the community. After our successful return in 2022 following the two year gap due to COVID, I did not anticipate a further highly successful event the following year. This was my 20th Festival as Festival Director and our 30th event since our first Festival in 1993, so a significant personal milestone for me and the Trust. However it was also one of the most challenging Festivals to deliver in my years of running the event.

Our costs have increased every year since I began keeping full records. In 2002, we required just £15,000 to cover the costs of the event. Since then the Festival has, of course, increased dramatically in size and scope, and this year our upfront costs reached a staggering £71,000: well over 10% higher than the previous year. The cost of living crisis really hit our budget and those of our suppliers, who needed to raise prices to balance their books.

This increase in costs was matched by a decrease in our ability to gain sponsorship. Many of the businesses that have regularly supported the Festival were unable to do so this year. Normally by January I hope to be able to report to the board that we have a balanced budget and that

our expected expenditure is covered by income from trade, catering and sponsorship. This January we were not in that comfortable position, and I had a £12,000 shortfall. The trustees made the decision not to cancel and agreed to underwrite any shortfall in funds from Trust reserves. This puts the Trust's finances at risk, as if it rained all weekend and no one made a donation we would still have to pay all our bills. We were very fortunate that Batchworth Community Council had generously agreed to a grant of £10,000 prior to this January trustee meeting, as the event would almost certainly have been cancelled if we had a £22,000 funding gap!

Following this agreement, we set about redoubling our efforts to bridge the funding gap. Fortunately, with the additional support of several generous sponsors, including Affinity Water, the Hill Group, and Croxley Green Parish Council, coupled with a Just Giving campaign, we reached break even and covered our bills just a week before the Festival weekend! This was a great result, but the impact of everything being late meant much of the information from sponsors needed to finalise the programme was also late. This also meant that much of the network activities in March, April and May running up to the weekend were on the critical path! As a result, the run-up to the Festival weekend was fairly frantic, so many thanks to all of you who helped keep us on track, including Phil Bassett, who managed to get the programme produced and delivered just in time.

Beside the high-level challenges

with funding, we also had a change in our beer tent operation after Tim Setchel, who had been our designated premises supervisor on our licence since almost the first event, decided to retire. This involved changes to our licence to add a new local publican as premises supervisor, so all that had to be done in good time for the weekend. We used a new Trackway company this year and will almost certainly be using a new toilet company, if there is a future event, after they let us down on the servicing of our toilets on Saturday evening. Not very convenient at all!

We also had changes in the Environment Fair area with a new format of multiple large gazebos for the exhibitors, rather than a single large marquee. This arrangement worked well, and, although organisations had less space to display, it integrated this part of the event much better with the other charity exhibitors. We also piloted a new Open Mic stage in the Environment Fair area which allowed performers on other stages (particularly from Batchworth Stage) a chance to perform in a different area.

We modified the position of one of our donation points, which proved very successful, and, thanks to David Whittaker, cracked the challenges we had with the Sum Up card readers, which meant cashless payments were a much increased part of our income from donations, trip boats and car parking. Pam Paterson again managed to provide a complete rota of volunteers to cover all areas,

Festival 2023 Continued...

and, since Pam is standing down, we will be looking for another person to take on this role in any future event.

We had several other challenges during the weekend, which the team managed well, and we have other areas we need to work on for any future event, particularly around our licence for the picnic area. However you may realise from reading this that the future of the event is not certain. There are concerns in two areas:

Firstly, the trustees need to gain confidence in advance of the event of the ability to raise the income to cover the costs. Feedback from the public shows that they really value the event, but this alone does

not secure its financial future. Since costs are expected to increase further next year, the trustees need to ensure they have a viable event earlier in the planning cycle. To this end, a stakeholders' meeting is planned in the Education Centre for 7.30pm on September 12th. Invitations are being sent to many local groups who have an interest in the Festival continuing, from whom we hope to get a constructive response.

Secondly, the trustees recognise that our volunteer base is aging, and we are struggling to find enough people to fill all the roles needed. To try and recruit people to the team, we are planning a volunteer evening to outline the roles we are looking to fill. We also need to seriously resolve the challenges with succession planning for key management roles. Without new people coming forward we will not have an event in the future.

Work is already underway in both these areas.

My personal thanks go to all the team leads and the volunteers that work with them for all their efforts again this year. A successful Festival weekend does give us all a significant buzz and is the only reward that our volunteers get for many days, weeks and months of hard work. Thank you from the Trust for donating all your time. We know the community really appreciates it; we just need a few more of them to step up and share the load!

If an event is possible next year, it will take place on the 18th and 19th May 2024, but a lot needs to happen to make this achievable.

David Montague



The Batchworth Buoys: Asher Rickayzen, Terry Smith and Mark Saxon, photo by Deborah Chamber Young





Art at the Education Centre

The weekend of 20th-21st May saw the third 'Lockside' art exhibition at the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust Education Centre, alongside Batchworth Lock on the Grand Union Canal, as part of the Rickmansworth Festival.

The work of sixteen artists was on display, including Beverley Clarke – a specialist who spent the weekend at the exhibition painting canal ware and explaining the intricacies of her work to visitors.



Beverley Clarke's work

Alongside the artists of Rickmansworth and District Art Society (RaDAS), six local guest artists offered a wide variety work, ranging from oil painting and painting on silk, to linocut prints and greeting cards.

All work on display was available for sale to visitors, 90 of whom took advantage of the opportunity to acquire a unique souvenir from the event. Of more than 500

visitors attending the event, over 350 voted for their favourite exhibit, the most popular of

which was Sharon Carter's 'Winter Sunset'.



Winter Sunset by Sharon Carter

Behind the scenes, the RaDAS support team delivered, installed, dismantled and removed the exhibition panel system in record time, with the minimum of fuss or disruption.

I must admit that my abiding memory of the event is the work by some of the youngest visitors. Given the opportunity to make their own artwork with a box of crayons and paper on the sunny riverside decking, they confidently produced a dozen

drawings, inspired by their surroundings.

When offered the alternatives of taking their drawings home or having them 'hung' as part of the exhibition, all chose the second option and some were photographed alongside their creative work by proud parents. I'm pretty sure they'll be back next year!

Chris Slaney, 'Lockside 23' Exhibition Co-ordinator



Young artist at work



Young artists' work displayed

Festival Volunteers

Another triumph for RWT Festival volunteers! What a magnificent result to make such a profit for the Trust's work.

As we know, because of massive work done beforehand getting grants, sponsorship, etc., the Festival starts with virtually no debts, so it's up to the volunteers to make most of the profit! In come the army of volunteers to shake buckets at our collection points. Members of the public can normally enter these spaces free, but on two days of the year, the Rickmansworth Festival likes to ask for donations. It's a most interesting study of human psychology to see what happens. Most visitors are happy to donate, receive their sticker and enter the magical Festival. A tiny number complain bitterly and enjoy all the entertainment for free. The way the volunteers

tackle this is fascinating, with an amazing variety of tactics being employed.

Because we have two ferry boats now, a new voluntary role was created - Waterside Safety Steward. This person welcomed the visitors, managed the queue waiting to board the ferries, helped them on and off, and maybe even recruited new volunteers. The new role meant we could dispense with a crew member for each boat, i.e. two volunteers for the price of one. 'My Festival highlights were as Waterside Steward, a great job, and sounding the Super Hooter in the new boat!!' wrote one skipper.

Another change from last year was a new position for the Stockers collection point by the Bury Lake Young Mariners boat yard. This is a narrow pinch point on the path. We could persuade visitors to queue up to enter the Festival. Few escaped!

Our volunteers are generous with their time and energy:

"I'm free all weekend. Please

give me a variety."

"My wife and I like to collect together."

One lady in her eighties, recruited last year when she paid a visit to the Canal Centre, shook a bucket again this year. She came by bus, offered us an hour and stayed for two. She emailed me as soon as she got home to say how much she enjoys it all and asking if she can volunteer again next year! I shall certainly give her name to my successor, as I am standing down. It is an enjoyable, rewarding job for the few weeks before the third weekend in May.

I'd personally like to thank all the volunteers who filled up my rota slots: running the Canal Centre, presenting the Roger, skippering the boats, stewarding, counting money and collecting cash in buckets or sum-up card machines. Didn't we do well?

Pam Paterson



Few escaped our volunteers at the Stockers collection point!

Volunteer with the RWT

I'm a trustee for the RWT and an active volunteer. Indeed, my interest in becoming a trustee was fuelled by my positive experience as a volunteer. One of the aspects of the RWT I like is that all the trustees are, or have been, active volunteers; meaning the day-to-day operations of the Trust are connected with the strategic and financial responsibilities of the trustees.

The range of volunteering opportunities is wide and includes:

- in the Lock Centre shop
- skippering and maintaining canal boats
- providing education sessions for adults and children
- at the Rickmansworth Canal Festival

There is something for everyone, whether it's indoors, outdoors, physical, cerebral or both! We have been lucky that our soon-to-be-retiring General Manager, Mark Saxon, manages volunteering activities in a way that never loses sight of the fact that a volunteer is just that – a volunteer! Volunteering must be a fulfilling and enjoyable experience, and the chances of this being so are improved if the activity matches what the volunteer wants to do, there is training and support so they feel confident and competent, there is real work to do, and they are thanked for their efforts.

As a volunteer, I have always felt appreciated and part of a wider social group. The annual RWT coffee morning and garden party are particularly special events to which all volunteers are invited, and on a day-to-day basis I never feel my contributions are taken for granted. We have no doubt, as trustees, that our volunteers will be equally well looked after in the post-Mark era, given our new General Manager's (Warwick Gainsborough) background at

the Postal Museum in London, where he had a lot of experience with organising volunteers.

The RWT are always looking for more volunteers. We make it easy to join, and we make it easy to try things out if you're not quite sure. We are very flexible in the commitment we ask volunteers to make, recognising it's an activity that has to fit in with people's lifestyles.

If you're interested or you know someone who is, please get in touch. We are planning on holding a volunteering evening (date to be confirmed) for anyone who would like to help with next year's Rickmansworth Festival. You don't need to wait for this date, however, just send an email to enquiries@rwt.org or call our General Manager on 07875 393703; we would love to find out how you can help.

Asher Rickayzen

Watford Writers

On May 22nd The Education Centre at Batchworth Lock played host to local writers' group, Watford Writers. Since COVID, we now meet mainly on Zoom but continue to convene face-to-face once a month at a meeting hall in Watford. When this became temporarily unavailable, the group were delighted to take the offer of a session down by

the lock!

About sixteen members made their way from as far afield as Watford and Ruislip and all managed to find both the centre itself and the free parking available nearby. Taking the theme of 'water' as a focus for the evening, we read and discussed some previously written pieces and, responding to the Centre's beautiful setting and watery environment, spent some time writing a few new ones. These can be seen by visiting www.watfordwriters.org, clicking

on the 'More' tab on the top right, and finding '[Water Writing Prompts](#)'.

I hope you enjoy reading our efforts. I think we may well use the Centre again in the foreseeable future.

If developing creative writing could be of interest to you, we are a friendly group who are always happy to welcome new members.

Mike Lansdown

Thank you, RWT

Heart warming and life affirming is how I'd describe RWT, in general, and the trustee board in particular. We really are a special charity.

Years ago, Brian Morgan, a good friend and RWT Chair at the time, said, "Pam you were a teacher. Come along to see what they do at Batchworth. You could go on the list but you wouldn't need to do anything." So I went, loved it all, joined the Learning at the Lock (LatL) team, and never looked back.

I showed children the Roger. Modern children struggle with the fact that a family could live in such a small space and

function without TV, smart phones or supermarkets. I took some history sessions too. Dressing up as canal boat children of Victorian times, doing washing using a dolly or washboard is a highlight for them. The LatL days are hands-on and really worthwhile. The children learn more with us in a few hours than they could at school with books. To a retired teacher like me, it is a joy. We only sign up for times that suit us, and we are home by 3pm!

Before long I was asked to become a trustee. I really didn't fancy more committees, but then I realised who the other trustees were and thought it might be fun. And so it proved. This group is unique in that everyone pulls their weight. Everyone has different skills, and a massive amount of work gets done. I hit a lucky patch. We were thrown out of the old Mill, which seemed a

a disaster at the time, but RWT turned that into the huge success story of fundraising and building our magnificent Education Centre. Then our ferry boat, the Pride of Batchworth, began to give us trouble. We looked at commissioning the building of an electric boat. That, however, would not have worked for us at that time, so we decided to buy a pre-loved boat, now The Spirit of Batchworth. Exciting stuff.

There is always something in the pipeline to keep us interested. Although I'm leaving the board after nine years, I shall certainly continue to volunteer. It has been a huge privilege to be part of such a proactive team. I've really enjoyed it. Thank you all for the fabulous fun.

Pam Paterson



Pam Paterson standing in during Mark and David's absence in 2021



Upcoming Events

Saturday 22nd July-Friday 4th August – Roger's cabin shown at
Colne Valley Park Festival Fortnight

Saturday 2nd December (TBC) – **Canalside Carols at Batchworth**

Saturday 4th-Monday 6th May 2024 - **Roger at Little Venice**

Saturday 17th-Sunday 18th May 2024 – **Rickmansworth Festival**
(TBC)

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Rickmansworth
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T: 01923 778382

www.rwt.org.uk