Rickmansworth Waterways Trust
The home of canals, education and enviroment



The Batchworth Telegraph

Newsletter of the Friends, Winter 2020

Decking completes building work at Education Centre!



Inside

Our Chairman Speaks...



Mark and Rob Report



In Memory of Derek Gray



Back Cabin Replica



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Contents

Chairman's Chat	2-3
Mark and Rob Report	4-5
Decking Complete	6-7
2021 Festival	8
In Memory of Derek Gray	9
Pride of Batchworth	10-11
How the Trust Works	12-13
RWT Archives	13
Back Cabin Replica	14
Photo Caption	15

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Chairman's Chat...



Welcome to the end-of-year issue of the Batchworth Telegraph for 2020, which has turned out to be a year many people will remember for a long time (and probably wish to forget!).

We were looking forward to a very busy year at the start of 2020, but, obviously, all Rob's plans for a record number of Learning at the Lock bookings disappeared when we cancelled the year's programme during the first lockdown. The excellent programme of regular bookings by local organisations built up by Mark for the Education Centre also had to be curtailed. We had planned a 'Grand Tour' for Roger, taking in four festivals during the year, and we had produced new display boards, authored by Fabian, to tell Roger's story at external events. All these initiatives were placed on hold, and our Festival was cancelled. We very much hope 2021 allows us to get back to a more normal year of activities. Current indications are that after Easter this should be possible, and we certainly hope this comes to fruition.

Despite all of the challenges this year, we have continued to function well as a trust. We have provided our essential postal service through all the periods of lockdown, which has been much appreciated by all our users.
We were successful in obtaining government grants, based on the business rates we pay for our two premises, via Three Rivers District Council. We also recently obtained a further COVID Heritage Recovery Grant administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund. This latter grant is aimed at making up the shortfall in a charity's income vs. expenditure during the six months of autumn and winter. Receiving these grants, together with the sound financial position we were in at the start of the pandemic, places us in a good position to come through this year ready for 2021.

We have also benefited from the increased number of people using local outside spaces during the summer. Although our trip boat and charter operations were limited by social distancing requirements, Pride of Batchworth was very busy from early July when we started boat operations again. The implementation of a phone booking system and a regular timetable for trips worked well, and we plan to continue this when restrictions are eased. In a normal year we would have carried many more passengers, but, thanks to the efforts of our volunteers, a large number of families enjoyed a safe trip on the canal, and many visitors discovered us for the first time.

The social distancing processes in the Lock Centre, implemented by Mark, worked well and have been complied with by our visitors and volunteers. Using our COVID secure policy for the space, we benefited from new bookings for permitted activities in the Education

Chairman's Chat Continued...

Centre when we reopened. Several organisations found their regular school venues unavailable to them due to schools' COVID policies, enabling us to pick up new regular bookings. Based on this we have implemented a policy on bookings to ensure we can accommodate Learning at the Lock without disappointing regular bookers of the space. The Education Centre is certainly going to be busy next year!

We do not expect to be able to run Learning at the Lock as early in 2021 as we did this year, but Rob has already taken bookings for early May. Rob has also written to schools advising them on when we will be ready to reopen, so we expect many teachers to start selecting dates when they return to school after the Christmas break. We have also finally been awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Standard, and the certificate is on display in the Education Centre. This is the culmination of a great deal of work, both to demonstrate how we comply with the requirements of the standard, and, where we did not have everything that was required, to put in place several new processes. It gives teachers the confidence that we deliver a high quality, out-of-school learning experience, which is a very important criterion for schools selecting establishments with the best educational value for visits. Next year, with the completion of the decking to the rear of the centre, schools will benefit from an improved outside space to sit and enjoy their packed lunch in fine weather – more on this later. So, hopefully, there will be no more vacuuming egg mayonnaise and grated cheese out of the carpet!

The routine work on our boats has carried on as usual, and Roger completed a regular docking in November. Our volunteers, observing COVID safe protocols, helped with the removal and replacement of all the ballast, and the engine has benefited from extensive maintenance work this year from Fabian and Clive. The fact that Roger remains in good condition is testament to the number of hours of volunteer work that has gone into its continued conservation, and to the excellent leadership from Fabian in its management. Next year, we will mark 20 years since the completion of Rogers's restoration and return to the water, so watch out for news of how we will celebrate this significant milestone. The Pride also had a successful boat safety survey and some welding work to replace two of the perspex roof panels, which had failed and started to leak, despite best efforts to resolve this fault. We have also started a project to look at a replacement for the Pride as we recognise it is becoming quite an elderly asset but is vital to our operations. You will find more information on this project later in this issue.

In the summer Batchworth Telegraph, I had to report that we had lost John Jones, our long-time treasurer, and one of the small group who founded the Trust. Since the summer we also sadly had to say goodbye to Derek Gray, another founding trustee, who played a significant role in helping us survive some very challenging early years. There is more about Derek later in this issue. I know, for all of us, it has been a year that we would not want to live through again, with significant restrictions to our personal lives, careers and businesses, and with personal tragedies. However, what it has highlighted is how important simple social interactions are in our lives, whether that is freely meeting with our friends and families or simply working with our team of dedicated volunteers on the Trust's many activities. I know we all look forward to a much better 2021, and I hope to see you soon at a Trust function, social event, or volunteering at Batchworth Lock or the Festival.

Best regards and keep safe,

David Montague

Mark Reports



As we approach the end of the year, I would normally be writing about the many goals that the Trust has achieved after a frantic and busy spring, summer and autumn.

Well, I can say that we've been open for visitors all bar 20 days, and, when we've been allowed to be, we have been quite busy.

Believe it or not, we've had over 6,500 recorded visitors, and you've given some 1,344 volunteer hours.

These numbers are, of course, significantly down on previous years, but we are extremely fortunate that our running costs are low and we have been the recipients of a number of grants, the latest one being from the Culture Recovery Fund.

The stop/start/stop/start nature of 2020 has, without a doubt, been challenging for everyone, both physically and mentally, but I do think it important to look forward to a brighter 2021.

The Pride of Batchworth will shortly have a brand new roof to replace the four perspex panels which have reached the end of their serviceable life, and the intermittent and frustrating starting problem has also been remedied. The boat has got a new hatch and rear door, and the internal cabin has been re-painted. I am confident that our boating,operations will be ready to go come January.

We have a number of new skippers who need to complete their training, which is also something to look forward to.

A number of boaters have remarked at how important the post service is to them, especially during the lockdown periods, and we should be extremely proud of that vital service to what can be described as a vulnerable group of people.

Whilst the Education Centre has not been filled with the vibrant sounds of children enjoying Learning at the Lock, it has been used by groups such as a mums and toddler group, the Inclusion Project, Mencap, exercise classes, self-defence classes, kickboxing, and our very own model railway enthusiast group.

The fee-paying groups provide the Trust with another source of income to supplement our other operations. We have received over £4,000 so far from these.

So, with good riddance to 2020, we can look forward to returning to some form of normality in 2021.

I want to thank the trustees, who have been magnificently supportive during this year, and each and every one of you who have contributed.

I wish you all a peaceful festive season and happy New Year.

Mark Saxon

Don't ignore it, report it!

Environment Agency

Emergency Hotline

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



'The Great Pause' is one phrase that has been used to describe the unusual circumstances we are now in. If you use the 'pause' button on your television, the action on the screen seems to stop, but actually the screen is still moving, albeit at a slower pace. This is how things are for 'Learning at the Lock' (LatL); although schools have not been able to visit us since March, there have been a number of changes and new initiatives underway. When life returns to near-normal, the school visits will be mindful of COVID. New cleansing and working practices will continue, which will improve the interaction between the children and the adults.

The Education Centre has been used by external organisations while the government allowed these sessions to take place. The groups have brought much-needed revenue to help with the running of the Education Centre, and this steady income will be needed at least until schools regroup. Schools will only be able to book LatL sessions on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, which frees up the other two days for the external groups. There will be bookings in the evenings, so putting our equipment away will be necessary. A new set of shelves has been brought in to keep everything organised. Only one school has made a booking for the summer so far, whereas I am usually hearing from three or four before Christmas. I expect schools will book later and give shorter notice than they have done previously. The situation with COVID changes quickly, but the signs for the future are optimistic.

During the period between the lockdowns, Pam, Mike and I worked on a new initiative to keep the Education Centre busy at the weekend or in the school holidays. The idea is to use the material that is used for the schools' programme for a group of families. The hope is that three family groups or 'bubbles' could be given activities over an extended visit. The Family Learning at the Lock will be given a trial in March, and we hope the programme will be able to start in the summer. Information to advertise the scheme will be sent out through the distribution lists that I use for contacting schools.

Mark and I went to Harlow to collect a replica cabin, which had been used by a charity called CanalAbility. This organisation used to run a programme for schools. I am concerned that volunteers may not be able to help small children onto the Roger, and we may have elderly visitors with some of our other programmes, so the replica will benefit people who cannot squeeze into the real cabin. At the time of writing this article, the trustees are deciding where to put the artefact.

The best piece of news is that we have achieved our 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge.' This will give our organisation a national profile, as well as bringing the LatL programme in line with other organisations using best practice. When you see the plaque in the Education Centre, please remember that you have contributed to this achievement, and it will need everyone's effort to maintain the standard that has been set when the award comes up for review.

LatL has faced a crisis before, when the loss of the classroom base was announced, but with imaginative adaptions to the programme and a resilience to keep going, the programme was able to pull through. The COVID pandemic has come when interest in the schools' programme was really taking off. Many new schools were booking for the first time and more established bookings were still being made. The strength of the organisation is in the people involved, so with enthusiastic volunteers and trustees, LatL can build on the success from past years.

I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a hope for a better New Year!

Rob Moore

Decking complete at Batchworth!

Those of you who have been to Batchworth since the Education Centre was completed will know that the side of the building facing the river looked a little unfinished with the doors opening onto mid-air. The plans had always included a riverside decking area to be used during education visits. However, we only had sufficient funds to get the main building completed, so we delayed this until we could afford it.

Since the opening of the centre, we kept the remaining building funds in reserve, which, thanks to generous donations, has been slowly growing. Blenheim construction, who are great supporters of our charity, submitted a quote for the work a little while ago, but we were still short of where we needed to be. We had specified the use of recycled plastic decking boards, as used for the front entrance steps and ramp, so they would be robust and maintenance-free. However, this material is very expensive. This summer, a couple of things happened which closed the funding gap and enabled us to proceed.

Firstly, Blenheim were able to come back with a better quote since they had completed a very large project in London, using the same decking, and could get a much better discount from their supplier. Secondly, we received several other generous donations, which, when added to the reserved funds we already had, meant we could afford to go ahead. As a result, construction started in September.

The riverside has already been planted with bulbs for the spring, and we intend to purchase some picnic benches, again made out of recycled plastic, so the children can sit outside and enjoy their picnic lunch when the weather is fine. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to getting this part of the project completed.

David Montague









Roping off the Education Centre

Now the decking is complete, we decided to fit some removable rope barriers to the exit points. Children attending Learning at the Lock are likely to have their lunch on the decking, and we don't want any of them wandering off without permission!

Here's Stephen Vincent in action and the final result.







Festival 2021

When I last talked to you about the Festival, the team had just finished the complex process of refunding all our traders, boaters and caterers after having to cancel the 2020 event. It has been a very strange year with no Festival filling all our time in the run-up to May, followed by the wrap-up, which can take until the end of June. I always imagined if I did not have the Festival taking up all my time for a year, my wife and I might take off on an early summer holiday - not so in 2020!

We have been watching, with interest, the situation regarding any return to a more normal life, particularly the timescale the government has been talking about regarding Easter being more normal now vaccines are starting to roll out. Certainly, the hard-hit event industry, in general, is gearing up to start external events in spring and early summer, and tickets are already on sale for some events.

So, based on the improving situation, the team have started to plan for a 2021 Festival. At this stage, it is by no means certain that we will not have to cancel again, but we know from 2020 that we can decide not to run the event about six weeks prior to the weekend, without financial risk. We are telling all the traders, boaters and caterers that if we do cancel, any monies paid will be refunded in full as we did this year. Currently, the booking process will start for previous participants on 2nd January, and we will roll out the application process to new participants in the middle of the same month. We are keeping all pricing identical to 2020 with no inflation increase, and, from the quotes so far, we are seeing that many suppliers are doing the same for us. Since we had the entertainment schedule fully booked for 2020, we are also offering all performers first refusal on the same slot for 2021.

We have had one team-member change on the waterspace side of the event: Christine Thompson is taking over from Phil Bassett as Waterspace Manager. Christine was Phil's deputy in 2019, and she was one of the area harbourmasters and looked after the boat traders. She is also an RYA Instructor and handles training for Waterways Experience. She has been a boater for many years and has two boats, Andromeda and Merlin, so is a very strong addition to the team. One day soon I hope she can meet the rest of the team face-to-face for more formal introductions! Phil is still going to be helping with the Festival and will continue to apply his expertise to the event programme and online booking systems.

I expect the overall budget to continue to face challenges next year as sponsorship could be more difficult to obtain from local businesses after they have weathered the pandemic. As usual, Steve Mander will be managing this difficult task, so if you have a lead to any company or organisation that may be interested in promoting their business, either with an advert in the programme or by having their branding displayed around the Festival site, please get in touch with myself or Steve.

We hope the Festival will have all the usual mix of attractions and things to do, including the young people's explorer trail (YET!) which was looking to be very well supported by local organisations in 2020. With everyone discovering their local outside spaces, it is my hope that this will be just as strong, or maybe an even bigger attraction, for people in 2021. We again hope to make use of the space in the Education Centre for an art exhibition: plans for 2020 included using more of the foyer space for arts and crafts and having more children's activities.

So please pencil in some time in your 2020 diary to help with the running of the event on the weekend of 15th and 16th May. From the post I put out on the Festival Facebook page, I know there are a lot of people hoping the event goes ahead after everything stopped in 2020. We could be one of the first large community events in the area, so we need to ensure we have plenty of volunteers to run a safe event for everyone. Your help is essential to the running of an enjoyable event for our local community, and we could not do it without you!

David Montague

Derek Gray

4th June 1933 – 11th September 2020

in September, we were very saddened to hear of the passing of another of the founding members of Rickmansworth Waterways Trust. Derek Gray was a key member of our founding trustee board, and I know he personally played a very big part in ensuring the financial viability of our charity during our early days. I have been involved with the Trust for many years and worked with Derek on the trustee board from about 2000, so I know how much work he put into the charity and how passionate he was about us succeeding in our aims.

He was the Finance Director from our formation at the end of 1991 until he stepped down at the end of 2010 when he introduced Tina to our trustee board. He helped us manage through some very difficult times, and the strong and vibrant charity we are now is, in large part, due to his financial guidance and generosity. Even after he retired from the trustee board, Derek continued to make generous donations to the Trust, which have helped us significantly over the years.

I am so pleased that after helping found the Trust, Derek witnessed several of our recent achievements. The most significant of these included winning the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2017, and the fundraising, building and opening of our new Education Centre at Batchworth Lock in Rickmansworth. He was present at both these events and was a regular attendee at our AGM meetings. The photo below was taken at the opening of the Education Centre in March 2019.

I know Derek achieved a lot in his very productive and active life, and, personally, I am pleased he was still enjoying life and his independence until just before his passing. It is very sad that we could not all come together to celebrate Derek's life as I am sure there would have been many, many people who would have wanted to participate. At his family's request, Rickmansworth Waterways Trust was the beneficiary of donations made in Derek's memory, and these funds are going towards the project to replace our trip boat.

David Montague



Refurbishing the Pride of Batchworth



You may have noticed that the Pride of Batchworth has been wearing a green plastic 'rain hat' over the last part of this year. This has been due to two of the perspex panels starting to leak along the seal with the metal structure of the roof. Mark, ably assisted by several volunteers, removed one of the old panels and replaced it with a new perspex sheet fairly recently. However, despite Mark's best efforts, the roof has continued to leak, probably because the steel and perspex will expand and contract at different rates, causing the sealant to fail. Those of you skilled in the boating art will know that a key objective in operating a boat is keeping the water on the right side of the structure, and water ingress into the passenger area is not desirable for our customers, or for the long-term integrity of the boat's fabric!

After persevering for several months in trying to stop the leaks, the trustees agreed that we would replace the two offending roof panels with steel. This work has now been completed by P&S Marine at Croxley Green, and the outside and inside has been finished and painted. Insulation and plywood sheeting has been fitted underneath the steel to avoid any condensation forming on the inside. The result is a waterproof roof and a much-improved appearance for the boat, as you can see below.

Since the return of the Pride from P&S, however, one of the other two panels has started to leak, so the trustees have agreed to take advantage of a cancellation at P&S and get the remaining two panels replaced in steel during December. So, when we start boating operations in 2021, the boat will have a complete new roof and, although slightly darker inside, it will be much cooler in hot weather and, more importantly, significantly less damp!

David Montague





Replacing our Trip Boat

You will have seen on the previous page that further work is being done to keep the Pride of Batchworth in good repair, as it is a key part of both our educational and visitor operations. The boat is now around 30 years old and was second-hand to us when we bought it. Some of you may remember it was an electric boat, originally, and after several years' operation in this mode, the batteries started to fail. Due to the expense of replacement and lack of range with electric technology at the time, we converted the boat to its current diesel engine. This has always been a compromise in terms of the old electrics in the boat and the space to service and maintain the engine. Due to the age of the boat, and the fact that we will have to spend an increasing amount on the boat to keep it in a safe operational condition, the trustees have set up a small team to look into specifying a replacement.

The team consists of Chris Burridge, Mark, Fabian, Phil Bassett and myself. You may know Phil as a previous Waterspace Manager for the Festival, but what you may not know is he has had a career in the narrowboat business and extensive experience in just the areas we need.

The first task the team completed was to prepare and agree a Statement of User Requirements which defines what we need the boat to do. This document was then used to derive a more detailed System Requirements Document. Fabian has guided us through this process, and he helped us very successfully with this approach to generate the same documents for the Education Centre. Without this robust approach, it is very easy to get 'scope creep' when embarking on a major project. Many times when discussing design details for the building we went back to our User Requirements to ensure the decisions we were making were in agreement with what we said we actually needed!

Having generated these two documents, we have narrowed down a list of all the boat builders in the UK to a shortlist to approach. We are at a very early stage in what will be a long-term project. One route in scope is going for a fully electric boat. The technology has improved dramatically from over 30 years ago: several companies are producing excellent boats with this technology, and a new all-electric trip boat has just gone into service with another charity. However, we have not ruled out getting another second-hand boat and converting it, if this would meet our needs.

So, at the moment, we have many routes we could take, but the key thing is that this will be a long-term project. Depending on the builder we choose, we could be waiting up to two years for a build slot (which we can hold with a deposit) and then we will have to raise the remainder of the money required. Although the Trust has some funds accumulated in a specific reserve for this, we are probably looking at a Lottery grant application to fund the project. So the Pride of Batchworth needs to be kept in a fully safe and serviceable condition for possibly up to three more years. However, the project is well underway, and I will give more updates as we progress.

Meanwhile, to the left is a picture of the all-electric Pamela May 2 which is in service with the Droitwich Waterways Trust Ltd. It is slightly longer than we could go for, due to our need to turn at Batchworth, but it has an endurance of more than eight hours cruising, and, apparently, the solar panels kept the boat fully charged last summer! They have also chosen an excellent colour!

David Montague



How the Trust Works

Someone recently asked me about how the Trust functions and how we manage to achieve all that we do, and I realised that some of our readers may not know exactly how the Trust is organised and run – so here are the details!

We are a charitable Trust and a limited company, which means the volunteers that run the Trust are not personally liable if our financial position becomes untenable. We submit accounts each year to Companies House, and all the trustees are listed as directors of the Limited Company Rickmansworth Waterways Trust Ltd at Companies House.

Our trustee board is currently made up of nine volunteer trustees, which include me as Chairman and Tina Berry-Chmiel as our Finance Director. The trustees all bring different skills and experience to the board, and we are always looking for new people to join our team. We also have two key non-trustee positions, which are our company secretary (also listed as Secretary at Companies House) and our treasurer. Beryl Whittaker, our company secretary, manages all our formal submissions to Companies House, records all our trustee meetings, and records and sends out the notices for our AGM. Nik Bennett, our treasurer, manages all our day-to-day financial transactions. We have three authorised signatories on our accounts for all our payments, and two people are required to approve each payment we make. One other key volunteer is Fabian Hiscock who is our Roger conservation team leader, and he takes the responsibility for managing the yearly programme for keeping the boat in good condition. He also manages a detailed, documented conservation plan, which he has just updated to run to 2030, and this details the docking strategy, etc., so the trustees can budget for the necessary work. The trustees are supported by the people you probably see most when volunteering - Mark Saxon, our General Manager, and Rob Moore, our Education Manager. Mark and Rob are the only people in the Trust who receive remuneration for their services.

The trustee board, officers and our employees usually meet face-to-face (via Zoom since March this year!) about every two months, or sometimes more frequently when the need arises, such as at the start of lockdown. The trustee meetings focus on managing our finances and reviewing the strategic direction of all parts of our operation. Minutes are taken at all our meetings, and we track actions which are reviewed and closed at each meeting. The trustee meeting agenda will include, amongst other things, the operation of our Education Programme, Education Centre, boats, Lock Centre and events, including the Festival. We have also been looking in detail at our day-to-day finances since the start of April this year, to ensure the future of the Trust was secured through the COVID pandemic. The trustees frequently use email to review urgent items when quick responses are required, so we are not left waiting for a formal meeting when a decision needs to be made quickly.

An Operations Group committee meets monthly to review the running of our operation at Batchworth. The committee is made up of Mark, two trustees and two volunteers, and they take responsibility for looking after the detailed operation of the Lock and Education Centres, our boats, and the area around Batchworth. They can approve small items of expenditure, and if larger projects are identified, these are brought to the board for review and agreement. The Operations Group takes the need to focus on day-to-day operational issues out of the trustee meetings and allows the trustees to focus more strategically.

When we have a large project to manage, such as fundraising and planning for the Education Centre, a separate team is set up which reports to the trustees. For example, when planning for the Education Centre we had two teams in place, one to cover fundraising and another to cover design and build. This arrangement worked well and allowed the trustees to oversee the project, rather than get involved in all the detail, and resulted in the excellent building you can all see at Batchworth. We had another team, recently, who completed the pre-work and submission for the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Standard. We have also just set up another team to look at options for replacing Pride of Batchworth (more on this on

How the Trust Works Continued

page 11). Teams can be made up of both trustees and volunteers - the important thing is that we end up with a team that has the right skills to successfully manage a project.

We also have volunteers who manage many other aspects of our operation. These areas include: our charter operation; keeping the Lock Centre stocked with ice cream; tracking inventory of Lock Centre stock, restocking and identifying new items to sell; managing the boaters' mail system; and running all the many aspects of our annual Festival. Mark now manages the individual volunteer rotas for activities at Batchworth (boating, Lock Centre and Batchworth maintenance, both landscapes and boats) and we have a coordinated volunteer rota sent out via our webmail system. Rob manages all interactions with schools and volunteering for Learning at the Lock. I have not listed all the other 1,001 things Mark and Rob do as part of their roles which keeps our day-to-day operations running smoothly!

I hope this gives you an oversight into how everything works. The result of what you see happening at Batchworth is down to a combination of the work of the trustee board, Operations Group, Mark and Rob, and a great team of volunteers. It may look like a swan on the surface but there is a lot of work going on underneath!

David Montague

RWT Archives

In all organisations, documents tend to accumulate, and over the twenty-nine years it has been in existence, the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust has built up a large collection of papers which has been festering in boxes.
At the beginning of the year, I agreed to look through these boxes, with the aim of pulling together a more formal archive of materials.

I spent six mornings at the Education Centre, looking through about twenty boxes and sorting out the papers into two groups – one for discarding and the other for retaining. Those for throwing away were largely duplicates or irrelevant material which filled several bin bags and were then shredded. The material for keeping was sorted into topics for filing, and a list is available showing the documents that have been retained. The final part of the project, which will be done in the New Year, is to file the papers into lever arch files for ease of access with an index at the front of each file.

The archive includes a lot of interesting history of the Trust and its principal heritage asset, Roger. It covers the Trust's relationships with various public bodies (British Waterways, Three Rivers District Council, etc.), and the trustees' hard work in fundraising and obtaining grants for work, including the rebuilding of Roger at the end of the 1990s and its Learning at Lock programme. Although much history is summarised in the Trust's Annual Reports and Accounts, which are also archived, the detail can be found in the many papers in the archive.

We shall continue to add papers to the archive to keep it up-to-date and ensure that the Trust's story continues to be preserved.

Beryl Whittaker

Working Boat Back Cabin Replica

Here is a photo of the replica back cabin that Rob mentioned in his report. Mark and Rob collected it from Essex. Assembly of the model was slightly fiddly and took Rob about 20 minutes single-handed.





RWT has been given this beautiful artefact on semi-permanent loan, as CanalAbility, a charity which provides canal boat holidays and day trips for people with disabilities, cannot use it at the moment.

As the photo shows, this is only one side of the replica, but we wouldn't use the side-bed part of the model as it's not necessary for us and would be too unwieldy.

This way, it takes up the space of a sideboard.

It is in very good condition, with the castles and roses pictures professionally painted.

This teaching aid will be invaluable to show children and adults alike how a family would have lived on a boat like the Roger.

Those who can't visit the actual Roger cabin for reasons of health, claustrophobia, etc., can still gain a very good idea of it. The structure is quite robust, but we won't be letting anyone lie on the bed!

This replica will be a godsend for Learning at the Lock volunteers while COVID restrictions are required, and when Roger is away.

Pam Paterson

Photo Caption Contest!

As usual, anyone conducting themselves in an inappropriate manner around Batchworth is likely to be captured in compromising positions for posterity. Here are a couple of Mark's most recent snaps!

Firstly, John Hawkins being closely 'supervised' by someone who knows absolutely nothing about laying bricks. You may know that John has had experience laying just one or two in his time volunteering with the IWA Waterways Recovery Group.





Secondly, a photo that proved that the electrics on Pride of Batchworth are laid out in a way that makes maintenance and troubleshooting 'simples'.



Upcoming Events

Monday 5th–Wednesday 7th May – **Roger at Canalway Cavalcade, Little Venice**

Saturday 15th–Sunday 16th May 2021 – **Rickmansworth Festival**

July 2021 (exact date TBD) – **Roger at Cosgrove Canal Festival**

July 2021 (exact date TBD) – **Roger at Linslade Canal Festival**

August 2021 (exact date TBD) – **Roger at Fenny Stratford Canal Festival**

Saturday December 4th 2021 (TBC) - **Canalside Carols at Batchworth**

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