

Newsletter December 2006

It seems like yesterday that we were pushing Dainty out of the sheds at Marchwood, and closing the doors behind us for the last time. Those doors will forever remain a fond memory as it took a serious team effort to get them to open. Along with a variety of buckets strategically placed on the boats to catch the water leaking through the roof, and freezing gales blowing through the sheds, with the loose tin roofing rattling in the wind, good times were had by us all.

Unfortunately, as we left the site, somebody attempted to have the sheds listed, and the owners had them pulled down immediately. Otherwise they could still have been there today.

As you will recall, our first plan was to move across the road onto the Army ground.

This had been approved, and all permissions and access permits obtained.

However this was not to be as somebody reported, at the last minute, to the Marchwood Security, that the ground was contaminated by asbestos. So that plan went out of the window...!

The Army at Marchwood however, came to our rescue, and allocated us space in the "Sausage Compound", where we are now well settled in with our office container, a stores container, a garage container with Dainty inside, and 2 stores containers belonging to the Dunkirk Little Ship team.

We have formed the containers so that we can store Ark Royal on her trailer, safely during the summer months. We do not have electricity laid on, so we have purchased a generator, which caters for all our needs in winter, as long as only one kettle is used at any one time..!

We also benefit from a floating berth for ST1502, and she lies safely alongside a pontoon within the Army boundary.

We have a lease with the MoD, and this will see us through to March 2008.

As you can see from the above we are very comfortably settled in at Marchwood, and although access for membership is difficult, the boats are safe and sound, as are all our records.

A weekly meeting is held at the office, where all affairs of the Trust are discussed and problems dealt with, by your ever efficient and enthusiastic team of Directors and helpers.

One such problem which we are dealing with at this time, is yet another nonsense cooked up about the state of the Trust.

It has come to our notice that rumours are being circulated that the Trust has, or is about to, dissolve.

Why these rumours are being spread, and by whom, we are uncertain, but please be assured, they are totally incorrect.

Unfortunately our information is second hand, or we would be taking drastic action against the originator.

We assume as the originator has not bothered to ask us for any confirmation, that they are spreading these untruths "with malice afterthought", and that is tantamount to libel. We would very much appreciate any information which you may have, which could lead us to the source of this outrage.

Our Treasurer, Terry Ford reports that we are in a sound financial position, and that with the help of our Membership income, we will remain so. Donations are always welcome, and as we have ongoing costs associated with the boats, every little bit helps, thank you.

Terry's address is...: 1 Janes Close, Blackfield, Southampton. SO45 1WJ. 023 8089 1628.

Our Membership Secretary, Tony Alston reports that our Memberships is staying very healthy, and we thank you all for this superb show of support for what we are doing. A few of your cheques will have been a bit late in being presented, but this problem has now been solved.

The boats themselves are still well housed and cared for, albeit scattered across the countryside..! ST1502 has been active this summer with a variety of trips. She was also taken out of the water courtesy of Marchwood Military, and cleaned. New propellers were fitted, and the boat can now achieve a handsome 20 knots.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Marchwood Management team, for their kindness and consideration in this respect.

We look to next summer as a means of obtaining funds, and any ideas for this should be addressed to Terry Ford, as team leader.

One Members has taken the trouble to get himself qualified to “drive” both 1502 and Ark Royal, at his own expense, so please feel free to feel safe on the water..!

The boat will be fully insured to carry passengers, as well as fully fitted out for LSA purposes.

FMB Ark Royal is wintering up at Oxford, in a hangar belonging to EISCA, for which we owe EISCA a big thank you. She will be returned to Marchwood in the spring of 2007, for use on the water. She attended the Henley Regatta, and won much praise for her turnout. We are well on the way to having her signed off by the HLF at last.

FMD Dainty is still in her store container, and plans are afoot to get her out in the spring 07, and complete her during the summer 07.

MTB331 is also housed in the hangar at Oxford, and EISCA are planning to obtain an HLF grant for her restoration in due course.

RASC Humber remains in the good care of George Black up in Norfolk. George has sourced 4 engines and gearboxes, and her rehabilitation continues.

S130 remains in Mashfords, and EISCA advise that she will be floated and housed at a local berth, as the shipyard is undergoing extensive refurbishment. Engines, gearboxes, propshafts and props have been sourced in Southampton, from the other ex German Navy boat, the blue hulled boat which used to lie at the quay at Marchwood, and her restoration is being vigorously pursued by EISCA.

The Poole Maritime Museum situation, which was our original intended destination, planned to become reality in September 2007, is apparently on track for commencement. It was intended that our boats as well as our records would be housed here once the facility was able to receive them. Stephan Walters of EISCA advises that all is well at Poole and we look forward to more information in this regard.

1387 Whilst not a trust boat, the Trust played a significant part in getting her to a new owner. In the process she was slipped here at Hythe boatyard, and spent a few weeks being cleaned off. She was returned to the water and now lies alongside a berth in Southampton, being tidied up.

We do apologise for the length of time between newsletters this year, but with management changes and the need to concentrate on the boats, we are sure you will understand. The website www.bmpt.org.uk is regularly updated, and many interesting items and discussions occur on our Forum, so please feel free to join in.

We all here at the Southampton end take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Xmas, and a Happy New Year.

