



Mick's Musings

To Be, Or Not To Be ... Retired?

That was the BIG question facing me recently. (Just to qualify, this is from my full-time job and not Chair of MOWS!). A question I dare say a few (or many?) of you have already answered in your own lives.

It is an old cliché I know, but I never did think I'd see this day arrive. As a callow youth just leaving school, I thought I would never see 25, let alone 65, and believed those that did became wildly out of touch and a little bit grumpy (which has proved right, as it happens).

But, as my 65th birthday draws near, my decision to retire has left me with a bit of a dichotomy. I am told that I don't look 65, quickly followed by the wry remark "but you must have done once". How deflating, but on the other hand, most days I don't feel as if I am ready for my pipe and slippers just yet. So, what to do? Work part-time? Become a recluse or start a new career? As I am one of those fortunate people who has thoroughly enjoyed my working life, I feel I may regret my decision to cut myself off completely from the nine-to-five routine. Looking back on my working life has been easy - three interviews, three jobs, simples! All this proves is that I may be the average workman but I'm absolutely brilliant at interviews!



Vintage? ... not quite yet!

But retirement brings many advantages and it is these I am focusing on. That extra hour in bed, followed by a leisurely breakfast, the extra time to participate in the things I enjoy - riding motorbikes (whilst the authorities still let me), archery, music (in all its forms), pub culture and watching my beloved motorcycle speedway. This should keep me out of trouble, unless there's a place called Trouble that has a speedway track, in which case ..., well, you get the idea.

But perhaps the best spin-off (from your point of view) of my decision will be the extra time I can devote to MOWS activities. So, let's hope this pays dividends and brings our restoration even closer!

Happy New Year from a new senior citizen.

Mick

Mick Clowes

Oakham Canal Display

If you didn't find time to visit the Oakham Canal display at the Rutland County Museum in Oakham, you missed a treat. Back in November, we made a day of it as, strangely enough, we have never visited the town of Oakham before!

We found the display extremely interesting. There were quite a few visitors and Mick got talking to some people who had also just come to see our display.



Burley Milepost



Need to get closer to read this ... ooh, my back!

Actually, if, like us, you have never been to the museum, you should go. It is fascinating and much larger than we anticipated. The building itself was the the old Riding School of the Rutland Fencible Cavalry, which was built in 1794-95.

The museum has a very good website: <http://rutlandcountymuseum.org.uk/>. Admission is FREE and the staff are very friendly and helpful.

Membership Subscriptions

It was agreed at one of our later committee meetings in 2016 that we, regrettably, need to increase our annual subscription fee. For a single yearly subscription, this will now be £10 per annum. The fee for additional members at the same address will remain the same. Although this is only the second increase in the 20 years the society has been going, it was still a tough decision.

The new annual subscription rates from November 2016 are:

Full Members (21 and over): £10.00; (18 - 21): £5.00;
Additional members at the same address: £5.00;
Family members under 18: Free;

Single Life Membership: £150.00;
Joint/Family Life Membership: £225.00;
Corporate Membership: POA

If you pay yearly by cheque or bank transfer, your membership subscription renewal form is attached to the e-mail with the newsletter (or enclosed if you receive the newsletter by post). If you renew by Standing Order, could you please amend this amount at your bank in time for this to be taken out on 1 February.

Partnership Meetings

The first Western End Partnership meeting took place on Monday 5 December at Syston Town Council Community Centre.

Attendees included representatives from Syston Town Council, Everards Brewery (which owns 'The Gate Hangs Well') and the owners of Harris's Boatyard. Unfortunately, the owners of Wanlip Gravel and an Inland Waterways representative could not make the meeting at the eleventh hour.

Committee member, Paul Dadford, took the meeting as the chairman was also unable to attend due to illness. Paul was able to show everyone the drone video which we had commissioned and shows the river from the junction at Syston to Lewin Bridge.

IWA Legacy Grant

We put in an application for an IWA grant in October. It was for the £25,000 we need for building the boat dock in Melton.

We were, unfortunately, unsuccessful in our application. There were a total of 28 applicants, so besides ourselves, many other societies were disappointed. But, on the up side, it was a learning experience as it was one of the first and largest grant applications MOWS has made.

2016 Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM was held on Saturday 12 November 2016 at Sysonby Knoll Hotel, Melton Mowbray.

The Chairman gave his review of the Society's activities during the past year, highlighting the following:

- Boat Dock
- Inaugural Partnership Meetings
- Syston Plans
- Work Parties
- Events Attended
- Membership
- Oakham
- Merchandise

The chairman then thanked everyone who had helped the society during the year - the Town Estate, MBC, the sterling group of volunteers, members of the committee, amongst others.

The Accounts were presented by Treasurer, Jan Dadford. These were proposed, seconded and approved by the meeting.

Re-election of retiring committee member, Hugh Butler, was proposed and seconded. Committee member, Peter Samways, had tendered his resignation in September.

There was then an open discussion which included an appeal for more committee members and other roles which we need to keep the society alive and up-to-date with social media, etc.

The chairman official closed the meeting and our guest speaker, Rosemary Gibson, assisted by Tony Jackson, of the Grantham Canal Society, gave us a really interesting talk about the Grantham Canal, with fascinating old photographs, along with more up-to-date news of the society.

A copy of the minutes will be sent out in October 2017, along with the Notice for the 2017 AGM, but should also be available on the website very soon.



Your Society Needs You

As you probably know, our hard working committee are stretched to the limit, so we are therefore looking for more members to join us. We would also like to put out a request for volunteers for the roles listed below. These do not need to be committee members or even members of the society. If you, or you know someone who wishes to do some volunteering (this could be a student project, work experience, or for a Duke of Edinburgh award or similar) that could be added to a CV for a young person.

a) Website and social media

- Develop and maintain the Society's website.
- Develop and maintain a social media presence for the Society including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, etc.

b) Publicity, community and events

- Deal with press enquiries on behalf of the Society.
- Actively seek and develop opportunities to promote the work of the Society within local towns and villages.
- Actively seek and develop opportunities for the Society to present to local clubs and societies and to attend suitable events.
- Consider and evaluate opportunities for an annual event to promote the work of the Society and generate revenue.

c) Education

- Work with local museums, local authorities and others to consider educational opportunities designed around the Melton Mowbray Navigation and/or Oakham Canal.
- Together with such bodies, develop and deliver education programmes to inspire and engage the young in the Society's activities.
- Consider opportunities for the development of a "junior" membership programme, aligned to the Canal and River Trust Explorers programme.

Candidate must have relevant teaching experience and / or qualification and current DBS.

d) Commercial

- Actively seek, and make applications for, funding opportunities to support the Society's activities.
- Actively seek and develop corporate sponsorship opportunities to support the Society's activities.
- Consider commercial / revenue generation opportunities to support the Society's activities.

e) Environment / ecology

- Advise the Society on environmental / ecological matters.
- Liaise with external bodies on behalf of the Society in respect of environmental / ecological matters.

Candidate should have relevant environmental / ecological qualifications and / or experience.

f) Health and safety

- Advise the Society on health & safety matters.
- Liaise with external bodies on behalf of the Society in respect of health & safety matters.
- Develop and maintain appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work in respect of the Society's activities.
- Develop and deliver suitable health & safety training programmes.
- Carry out health & safety inspections as required to monitor the Society's compliance with relevant health & safety legislation.

Candidate must have a relevant health & safety qualification.

Please do consider this request seriously and, if you can help us, contact any committee member (contact details below).

Many thanks.

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