



Mick's Musings



B.O.G.O.F. 2018!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and things are now getting back to normal. However, my post-dinner Christmas day relax (usually sprawled out in front of the TV) is always disrupted by ad breaks filled with people telling me that I need to be on their doorstep at 6am Boxing Day to get the once-in-a-lifetime price on a new sofa. Swiftly followed by a fake tan man in an Hawaiian shirt imploring me to sign up now to get the best price on my summer holiday. What with Black Friday, Sofa Sunday and Cyber Monday, it seems no one pays the right price for anything anymore. That is, of course, unless you want to restore a waterway or build a boat dock here in Melton, whereby 'sitting ducks' like MOWS are spotted a mile off, as the authorities rub their hands in anticipation.

So, applying the Christmas hard sell to our cause, how about 2-for-1 Environmental Surveys or buy two Flood Permits, get one free? What about some No Claims discount for our public liability insurance, as we haven't had anyone claim in the last year for a paper cut whilst being handed one of our walk leaflets? Come on, give restoration groups like ours a break and make the task a little easier and cheaper (why are permissions and professional surveys so damned expensive?). If I were a more cynical person (if that's possible), I might think someone out there doesn't want us to succeed by constantly putting prices up and obstacles in the way. But that's a front page yet to be written ...

Happy, discount price, never to be repeated,
one day only, **New Year!**

Mick

Mick Clowes



Many of our local members will be aware of the work carried out at Wilton Bridge by the Environment Agency. Once we've had a look, we will report back in a forthcoming issue.

Top Marks to Grove School

by Gavin Simpson

In the course of our work we have passed the Grove School landing stage many times, but we tended to ignore it due to its overgrown state. However, on a recent work party outing, and being very nosy, I suggested we take a closer look.

Ian reveals the steps to the landing stage



The mooring was overgrown and covered in soil, which was probably due to previous flooding. After a bit of digging we found that the landing stage was in pretty good condition and could be rescued. The overall site itself was overrun with vegetation but as we were well experienced in clearances like this, we believed the area would form another wonderful addition, along with Toad Hall, to the new dock when built.



The site also happens to be next to our slipway which is on land belonging to the Town Estate. What could be better?

Staking the bank ready for weave and backfill

We were not sure who owned the landing stage initially, but assumed it must be either the Grove School or the Town Estate. It was agreed that I would be used as a 'Mole' to find out who owned the landing stage and I was then to 'Badger' them into submission and allow us to restore and use the site (sorry about that!). As a bonus there was also an old shipping container on the site which did not look used and would make a great storage facility for our equipment.

As an ex school boy of the Grove School I was very excited at the prospect of making contact with the school and the rest is history as they say. They have been fantastic in their support of the Society and what we do.

Upon my first visit to the school I noticed that the old air raid shelters are still there. I remember as a child we used to get up no good in these old shelters, but now 60 years later I can't remember what it was we used to get up to!

Our longer term goal is to restore the Grove School river bank and create a natural habitat for wild life by installing bird boxes, insect boxes and even a bird hide may be possible. I am sure the children at the school would appreciate this. However, this is something for the future as we have plenty to be getting on with for the time being.

I do feel that the future looks great for the Society even though we are sometimes underappreciated in the work we do. Things, however, do seem to be looking up a bit, because ...

Recently on our travels upstream towards the town centre we were beckoned by one of our regular riverside garden "wavers", who asked if we were able to remove some branches from the water in front of her house. This we duly did and as a result 6 cups of tea immediately appeared. After chatting for some considerable time and, as the sun was starting to disappear, we decided to get on to our intended worksite. We do, however, look forward to visiting the 'riverside café' again in the future. We are not used to this sort of hospitality, but are always grateful!

Anyway, moving on, it has recently been suggested that for 2019 we should produce a calendar. We could call it the MOWS Riverbank Boys Calendar depicting the work party wearing very little apart from our 'loppers'. Do you think this would go down very well with our members? Before going to print your response would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, I wish to say a big thanks on behalf of the Society to the Grove Primary School for their understanding and assistance in helping us in making all our lives a little bit better.

My contacts at the school have been: Steve Nash (Headmaster)
Nusrat (Business Manager)
Paul (Premises Officer)
Fiona & Kirsty (Office)

Top Marks to Grove School (cont'd)

Before ...



and after ...

Tool Appeal

During the open discussion at the AGM, it was suggested that the society put out an appeal for donations of tools for the volunteers to use on the work parties. We sent out an e-mail requesting if anyone within the Melton locality had any surplus/blunt/old tools that they no longer use and wish to donate to the society, to let us know. We weren't exactly inundated, but a few members contacted us and did happily give us their old garden tools. We would like to say thank you to those, but if there are any more of you that would be pleased to donate any of the following, we would be very grateful.

- Ladders / step ladders
- Yard brushes
- Tree loppers
- Hammers
- Old tool boxes
- Spades / shovels
- Rope
- Rakes
- Screw drivers
- Chain saws (petrol)
- Wire brushes
- Saws
- Wire cutters
- Strimmers
- Any timber, including scaffolding planks, shelving, etc
- Portable generator



Work party volunteer, Gavin Simpson, is happy to come and collect in and around the Melton area. His home number is 01664 561981, mobile 07973 333 841, email: nobsinn@aol.co.uk.

2017 Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM was held on Saturday 11 November, 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 Update
- Volunteers
- Guided Walks
- Parish Councils/Footpath Rangers
- Loan of our River Clearance Vessel "Mole"
- Partnerships
- New Website
- Events/Talks
- Melton Distributor Road
- Green Corridor
- Roles within the Society
- Keep Britain Tidy/Waterside Care

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 and accepted by the meeting. Retiring committee members, Dinah Rudman, Richard Booth and Mick Clowes, were all proposed and seconded.

There was then an open discussion which included:

- Tool appeal to members.
- CRT ownership of first 100m of towpath under 3-way bridge.
- Grove School landing stage and container.
- Tree removal for boat dock.
- Contacting 103 The Eye and Melton Times for regular articles and updates.
- Memories of Old Melton on Facebook.
- Sainsbury's Melton - Grants and publicity.

The Chairman official closed the meeting and many attendees stopped to chat, whilst having some light refreshments.

A copy of the minutes will be sent out in October, along with the 2018 AGM Notice, but is available now on the website.

Membership Subscriptions

It's almost that time of year again ...

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.

Unfortunately, we still have a few members, who renew by Standing Order, but are still paying at the old rate, so just a reminder to those ...

Could you please amend to the new amount at your bank in time for this to be taken out on 1 February.

The annual subscription rates 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**

Thank you.

*Welcome
to new members ...*

Kirst Elton
Carl Klan



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