



Mick's Musings

Pick 'n' Mix?

One thing that irks me about modern life (what just one?) is the current breed of "pick 'n' mix" tradesmen and businesses. If you are wondering what this term means, let me enlighten your darkness, as Del Boy would say. Let's say, for example, that you decide to get your front garden wall rebuilt after many years of sterling service. So, you turn to one of the adverts in your local paper/Pink Pages, etc, and pick out a suitable candidate.

Despite the large glossy ad, no one initially answers the phone and after many attempts when they finally do, it turns out to be some overstressed wife with a child screaming in the background, who promises to get the builder to "ring you back" later. Oh yes? Liar, liar, pants on fire!

This scenario is repeated ad infinitum, until someone finally deigns to talk to you, and after much persuasion attends your house on a day and time that suits his busy schedule, takes one look at your piddling little job and retreats immediately. Weeks later (if you are lucky) you receive a quote and - this is where the title of this piece comes in - that is either so overpriced it makes your blood boil, or so cheap that you wonder whether it is bricks or Lego he will be using. This is a well-known ploy to sort their workload into a priority list, based on whether they fancy the job or not - hence the "pick 'n' mix" mentality.

Had it been a housing estate you were proposing, he would have bitten your hand off, but your small wall is not enough it seems, to sustain his business and so instead of just a polite refusal, we have to go through the ring you back/expensive/cheap quote malarkey.

So ... what has this to do with MOWS you may ask. Well, as you will read on page 2, the double dock, despite rumours to the contrary is going ahead, **providing we can get a couple of reasonable quotes** and, as detailed above, this is where a problem has occurred in the past. Now where did I put that Pink Pages magazine? What? Oh, he'll ring me back? OK!

(Seriously, if any builder with experience of using interlocking metal piling is reading this and would like to quote for the dock build, just let us know).

Mick

Mick Clowes



Work Party Update

Recent work parties have concentrated on getting the Grove School Dock site shipshape in anticipation of our (somewhat wistful) move from Sysonby Knoll, a place that has been our home for many happy years. The landing stage is now waterproofed and has secure mooring spikes with rings to rise and fall with the water levels, and the container is now an orderly storage facility for our growing army of equipment. All the paths are now cleared and steps have been unearthed and added to, making the whole facility user-friendly.

The bank area has been cleared and beefed up with the addition of willow stakes, which should start to grow come the spring. All that remains is to possibly give the container a lick of paint and attend to some security. The latter is being addressed with the addition of a security fence and gate, thanks to volunteer, Ian Knapp, who provided the raw materials.

The photographs show the gate during fitting, other associated jobs and all work should be about complete as you read this.



Gate frame being fitted



Ian finishing the steps

Meanwhile (see front page), we will be seeking quotes for the work, which as a mixed skill development, has proved a tad difficult in the past and is compounded by the river authority's insistence that every "t" is crossed and every "i" dotted before allowing us to proceed. The amount of time and paperwork involved makes War and Peace appear to be a mere pamphlet to read!

However, despite being eternally grateful for the use of this area, we must not be complacent and should regard this as a temporary arrangement, which hopefully will continue for many, many years! The difficult question recently has been whether to pursue the dock build knowing that funding has not yet been forthcoming as the planning deadline looms closer. The change of build materials has sharpened our thinking, as when applying for this to be cleared by the council, has resulted in another three-year deadline being given allowing us time to apply to alternative grant bodies.



Mark making sure the scaffold poles on the landing stage are secure



The dock site tree stump confounds us still but, should we not remove it before work commences, the contractor can rip it out with a mere tug of a JCB lever. Still ... it has kept us oldies on the volunteer list reasonably fit attempting to dig it out!

Mark and Mick fitting the gate

WE LOVE
OUR VOLUNTEERS

Come and visit our stand at ...

The Grantham Canal Society
Charity No. 807337

Discovery Day

The Grantham Canal Society
Charity No. 807337

Sunday October 14th 10am—4pm

A Great Family Day Out

Free Admission

Refreshments

WW1 Field Kitchen — Homemade Cake

Dirty Duck Race

The silliest duck race ever



**The Maids of Clifton
Clog Dancing**



**Mistress of Ceremonies
Suzie Sparkles**



Clarty Sough



Wildlife Stands



Narrowboat Rides



Shrek the Boat Horse



Allington Morris Dancers

Canoeing

Live Music

Find us at

The Carpenter's Shop Canal Depot, Duck Lane, Woolsthorpe by Belvoir, Nr. Grantham.
NG32 1NY

With grateful thanks to the Belvoir Estate and licencees Jean-Francois & Lynne of the
Dirty Duck for permission to use their car park and facilities

More information visit - www.granthamcanal.org

Committee (and/or Non-Committee?) Vacancies

We are looking for a couple more committee members to join our happy band and complete our full quota. We number 10 at present and would like to bring this number up to 12 or 13.

We meet every six weeks at the Sysonby Knoll Hotel, Melton Mowbray. On average, the meetings usually last about 1-1½ hours.

If you could spare some time and think you might be interested, are curious about what it would entail, or are uncertain but would like to 'try before you buy' (so to speak), please contact the Chairman or Secretary (contact details below). Our next committee meeting is on Friday 9 November, so you could come along and see for yourself.

We will also bring a few nomination forms to the AGM (see details below), so you could talk to any one of our committee members at the meeting.

We are also still looking for a Publicity Officer, Events Co-ordinator and Health & Safety Officer. The Publicity Officer would be someone who could do Press Releases and/or Publicity. This would just entail contacting the local newspaper, TV and radio stations. The Events Co-ordinator would organise volunteers to man our stall and book us in at various functions. The Health and Safety Officer would need to be somebody who is experienced at formulating risk assessments, etc, and could enrol volunteers onto appropriate safety courses.



Annual General Meeting 2018

Our AGM will be held on Saturday 17 November at The Sysonby Knoll (Best Western) Hotel, Asfordby Road, Melton.

The meeting will commence at 10.30am. For further details, please see the official AGM Notice with this newsletter. The 2017 AGM minutes can be found on our website:

https://meltonwaterways.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MOWS-AGM-Minutes_Nov-2017.pdf

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