

## Mick's Musings

### ~~War~~ Insurance - What is it Good for?

Everyone usually pays insurance in some form or other. In a world of “where there’s blame there’s a claim” mentality we all have to cover our backs and insurance gives us peace of mind. Whether it is the man in the street insuring his home or car, to the footballer or actress insuring their legs, we like to know that our assets are protected.

You will read, in our two-page special, of the sad story of one of **our** best assets the workboat “Mole” sinking, and the subsequent uplifting (in more ways than one) news of her triumphant re-floating, thanks to the efforts of our heroic MOWS volunteers.

However, she was well-insured, and if the worst had come to the worst, we could have relied on our good old insurers to get us out of the silt ... or could we?

We made contact as soon as possible after the sinking and provided chapter and verse (and photographs) to explain what was after all a tragic accident. By return of e-mail we were told, and I quote “**Insurers will welcome (and to a large extent, expect) any actions you can take to minimise or avoid a claim in these circumstances, so do please proceed to do what you can to dry out and re-float the vessel.**”

We have religiously paid our premiums since the boat was new, a total sum to date of approximately £3,000 pounds, and have never, to my knowledge, made a claim. Now, in our hour of need, to be told we have to “do it yourself” is a shock to those of us who expected to get what we paid for.

This “physician heal thyself” attitude won’t win them many friends and it is particularly ironic since we are insured through the association that does most to promote boating and inland waterways in this country.

With apologies to that great soul singer Edwin Starr, “Insurance - What is it Good for? Absolutely Nothing”.

Mick

Mick Clowes



*‘Mole’ in happier days ... afloat and working*



# Mole in a (Watery) Hole!

Many of you have probably been following Mole's fate on Facebook, but if you're not already aware, these photographs will come as a bit of a shock. Due to the heavy rainfall we'd been experiencing over the past weeks, 'Mole' rose, the mooring ring snagged on a scaffolding clip and, with the water level still rising, became trapped, tipped, took on water and sank.

All the volunteers were devastated, but rallied round to come up with a plan to re-float her.

The society will be forever indebted to all our volunteers who have been involved in this rescue.



The rains came and the river rose several feet. 'Mole' got caught up and started to tip (picture left).

Sadly, no one could safely get to her in time and, as you can see from the photo (right), she went under.



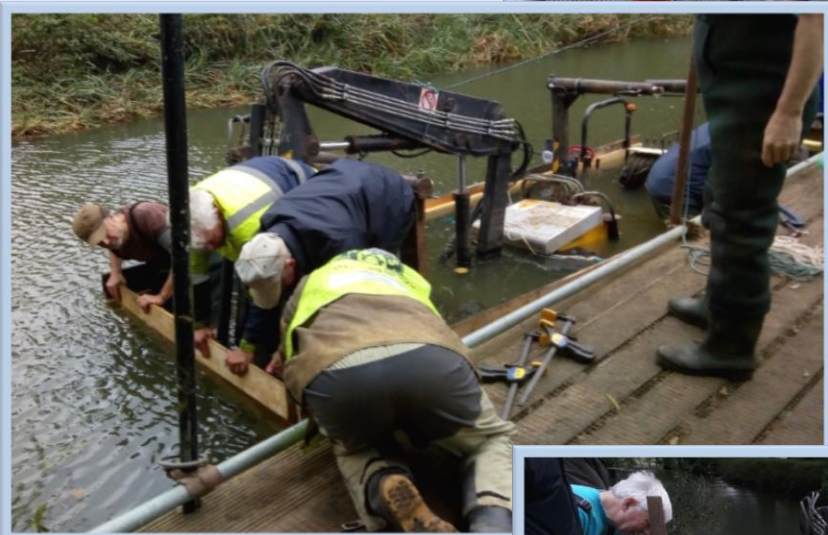
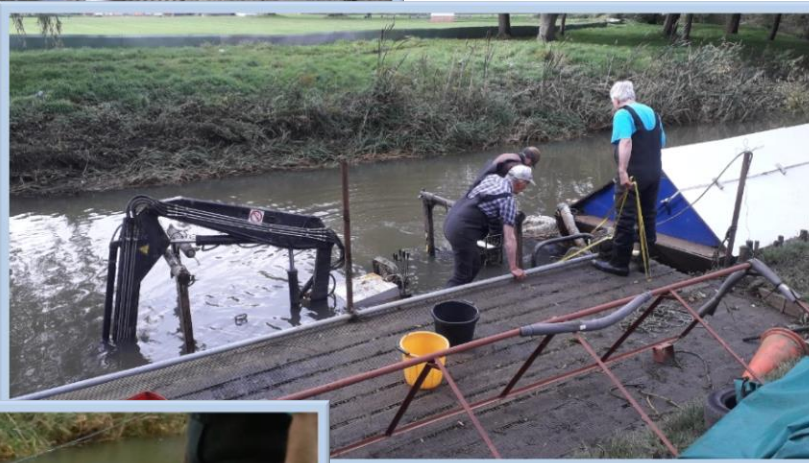
A few days later, the river had gone down sufficiently for a closer inspection. The only saving grace was that she had remained upright.





With the cover off, revealing the devastating sight, we needed to formulate a plan for re-floating her. With waders and thinking caps on, dimensions were taken to enable us to construct an upstanding 'collar' off site to later fit around the outer edge of the boat. The rescue was set for the morning of Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October.

The team fitted the collar, started the pump and baled frantically. After what seemed like hours, she slowly rose from the depths.



There was something almost spiritual about standing side-by-side with your fellow volunteers, waist deep in freezing, dirty water, and baling out until it feels like your arms are dropping off, and then slowly, almost imperceptibly, feeling the boat rise from the mud.

The euphoria was tangible, and forces your arms to work again, until, exhausted, you can lighten the load by scrambling out, and watching the boat sides break the surface.

Just the last few buckets to bale out and then the hard work of attending to the engine and hydraulics could begin. The ruined cover will have to be replaced too.





# Unstumped!

## Stumped!

Last Sunday's work party (8 April). Objective: To clear the new dock site but we have been well and truly stumped by this stump. Even after excavation, cutting through the main roots and putting approx 2 ton on the winch, it was still no go! The shear pin eventually did its job and sheared off, saving damage to the winch block.

Looks like we may have to leave this to the JCB during the main excavations.



Article from MOWS  
Newsletter of Spring  
2018

As reported in our Spring 2018 newsletter, the tree stump had our volunteers well and truly stumped. Out thanks to Jono, one of our newest members and volunteers, who lent us an extra winch, which got the job done.

It may have taken us 18 months, but ... the tree stump is finally out!



## AGM Date

Just a reminder that the 2019 AGM will be held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at Sysonby Knoll Hotel, Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0HP.

*Reminder!*

Proceedings start at 10.30am. Tea and coffee will be available on arrival. All welcome.

Special guests – *The QUO*.

## Welcome to New Members ...

Jono Hewitt, Paul Evans

## Society Contacts:

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