

## **Mick's Musings**

### **Life's Lessons Learned?**

My front-page musings have become famous (or is that infamous?) for my many rants about injustice, prejudice and the inequalities that life throws at us from time to time. However, as the new decade dawned, I thought we should start on a more positive note.

That same life sometimes teaches us lessons that are never forgotten and, after 22 years with the society, many trials and tribulations have come along to eat away at the enthusiasm that overtook me when I came along to that initial MOWS meeting back in 1997.

Harsh reality has taken the edge off my dreams and made me realise that any waterway restoration cannot be achieved in five minutes and that many, many years of hard graft and negotiation are needed before any tangible progress can be seen.

My spirit and belief in what we are doing has never faltered, but has been occasionally tested, possibly almost to the limit, but I soldier on because if life has taught me one thing, it's that in the end, good will always win over adversity.

Our present membership and volunteer workforce are so loyal and hard-working that it provides us with a solid footing to move forward, and as such it seems to be, that one or two of our newer members have exhibited the same enthusiasm that I enjoyed all those years ago and, just like the new buds on the trees in spring, I can see the shoots of a new wave of progress for the society.

As we emerge from the depths of winter, blinking at the sunlight of a new decade, let us take this good feeling forward into a new era and get this restoration done!

Happy New Year to you all.

*Mick*

Mick Clowes

## Mole in a (Watery) Hole – Part 2!

After her resurrection from her watery tomb, as detailed in our last edition, Mole's rebuild has come on in leaps and bounds, thanks to the help of several dedicated individuals.

Faced with a sea of mud and a (literally) flooded engine, electrics, battery and diesel and hydraulic tanks, the restoration group set to with gusto and cleaned out the boat's interior, lifting each grating and sweeping the baseplate clean of mud and water and years of accumulated debris.

The engine was emptied of water and stripped to its basic parts whilst new spares were obtained ready to refit. The whole of the mechanical parts, be it engine, HIAB arm and bucket, or controls were doused in protective spray to avoid rusting and drive out the water. The hydraulic tank was pumped dry and wiped clean internally and all the electrics dried out, tested and made good. Strangely, the battery, completely under water for a week was still reading 12.7 volts and has been reused, but other electrical parts have been replaced as necessary.

The engine was rebuilt, tanks refilled with the appropriate fluids and the whole fuel system was bled from end to end, and then the key was turned in anger for the first time in several weeks and ... I got home and played back my messages to hear a very animated gentleman saying "listen to this" - and lo and behold, the sound of Mole's sweetly ticking over engine came down the line!

She has been fully tested and is now, once again ready for work.

The society's undying gratitude goes out to those few individuals, who made this happen, and you know who you are. Personally, I never doubted the volunteer's ability to pull this off, and I now know we are up to tackling anything – but maybe we should give them a rest before suggesting something else!



*Rest? Rest? Who wants to rest? Volunteers back at work after the Christmas/New Year break ...*

*... and they certainly made a lot of progress cutting back the saplings*



# WANTED

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We are looking for members to join our committee. We meet every six weeks at the Sysonby Knoll Hotel. Are you newly retired and looking for a worthwhile venture? Or can spare a couple of hours every six weeks?

Our committee members have depleted over the past few years. We numbered around 12 members at one time, but now only have half that.

If you are not sure what being on MOWS committee entails, you would be most welcome to join us at the next one to see what we do (24 January). No obligation or commitment is required. Just come and sit in and if you think you may like to become a committee member, you can be co-opted.

Please do consider this and let us know. You can phone or e-mail anyone of the committee – contact details are on the back page of the newsletter.



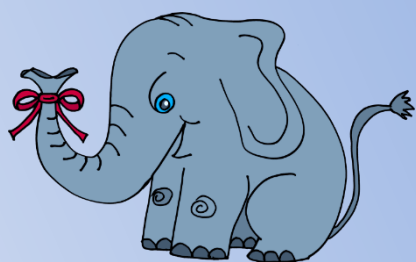
## Lock, Stock & Barrel!

The Environment Agency have decided to put a parcel of land around and including Eye Kettleby Lock up for auction. This was due to happen in December, but has been put back until March, when the necessary permissions will be in place. Any potential buyers should be aware of the responsibilities regarding the lock, the weir and several footpaths, and the danger of flooding.

The society understands that a local benefactor may be interested in purchasing and has indicated that they would not stand in the way of any restoration.



## A Couple of Reminders ...



## Subscription Renewals

Just a reminder that subscription renewals are due on 1 February. If you normally pay yearly, either by cheque or bank transfer, we have attached your renewal form with this newsletter.

## Membership Details

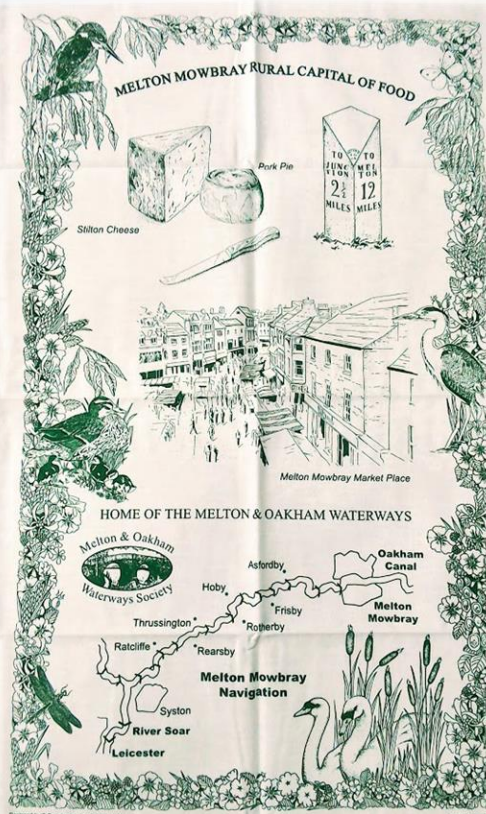
If you have moved house, changed your e-mail address and/or phone number, please keep us informed of these changes so we can keep our membership database up-to-date.

***Thank you.***

*Welcome*  
to our  
**New Members**

Connor Baker, Harrison Mousley,  
Shane Mousley, Oliver Newton

The special MOWS tea towel is now only available from The Melton Cheeseboard at £5.95.



## Society Contacts:

**Chairman:** Michael Clowes  
Tel: 01509 414140  
e-mail: lindandmick@btinternet.com

**Acting Secretary:** Jerry Filor  
Tel: 01664 566614  
e-mail: jfilor@talktalk.net

**Treasurer:** Jan Dadford  
e-mail: jdadford@live.co.uk

**Membership Secretary /  
Newsletters:** Linda Hulme  
Tel: 01509 414140  
e-mail: lindaahulme@gmail.com

**Website:** <http://www.meltonwaterways.org.uk>



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