

# On Board

The Newsletter of the Peter Le Marchant Trust

“Providing day outings and holidays on waterways  
for people of all ages with any kind of disability or serious illness”



**Patron:** H.R.H. The Princess of Hanover

(formerly Her Serene Highness, The Princess Caroline of Monaco.)

**Trustees:** Rev. Clare Le Marchant-Connell, Mr. Ian Scleater, C.V.O., Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, Bt., Mr. Paul Donert,  
Sir Francis Le Marchant, Bt., The Rt. Hon. Lord Crawshaw, Mr. Kelvin Robinson.

Registered Charity No. 273207

Issue No.4 March 2005.

A letter from a satisfied customer on “Melody”, our 65’ narrowboat -  
for hire by families or groups with a disabled member.



Just a short note to say thank you  
for letting me and my family on your  
fantastic boat. Although we were  
stuck because of the floods we still  
had a great time and can't wait to  
do it again.

Love from Kayleigh Sarson and  
Family.

P.s. My crew were not much good  
but I was alright at the tiller. Ha Ha

What are they doing? See over



Receiving a most welcome  
donation from Trent Bridge Rotary  
Club.

**STOP PRESS:** Visit our new website: [www.peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk](http://www.peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk)

## EVACUATION EXERCISE

On 13<sup>th</sup> October 2004 twenty six people including Skipper for the day, Ray Fairbrother, and three crew set off in "Serenade" from the Trust's base and "broke down" just above Pilling Flood Lock on the River Soar. Within minutes a colourful array of vehicles and uniformed people appeared on the opposite bank: The Leicestershire Police, the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, the Leicestershire Ambulance Service and British Waterways.



A canal is not the high seas and "Serenade" is not the Titanic, but evacuating twenty six people, many of whom may be in wheel chairs, from a boat and across a canal or river to the opposite bank on what appear to be wobbly lilos is a complex operation.

Chris Bilby, Assistance Divisional Office at Loughborough Fire Station, wanted the exercise to be realistic.

"How many on board?" he called on a loud hailer.

"Twenty six, including four disabled in wheelchairs."

replied Ray. "Are there any injuries?" "No just engine failure."

Everyone had to put on a red life jacket. On the bank the fire-fighters pumped compressed air into the inflatable Rescue Platforms and lashed two side by side. Ropes were attached from the back of the fire-fighters' Landrover to the bow of "Serenade" and served to pull the Rescue Platforms back and forth across the river.

The wheelchair passengers and their carers had to go first. The platforms are stable, but loading a disabled person on to the Platform and into a sitting position is a delicate operation and requires practice. The two Volunteer "disabled" - the Trust's Administrator, Lynn Smith and Trev Jones - landed up in a puddle of water. Jane Tindale and Peter Bostock, who both have MS, were safely ferried across, Peter in a sitting position, his back supported by a fire-fighter, and Jane strapped to a yellow stretcher. The rest of the passengers followed.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency Regulations say that the Trust must have a Search and Rescue Plan in place and that evacuation exercises must be carried out. From start to finish the exercise took forty-five minutes and was judged a success by all the emergency services.



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## THE JOY OF LANDSCAPE

One of the many benefits that the Trust offers to disabled passengers, who may be living in institutions or urban environments, is the sight, the sound and the feel of the countryside and the opportunity to drift safely along the canals and rivers beside fields and trees under wide skies.

Francis Le Marchant's paintings are all about the countryside and recently he held an exhibition of his work entitled "The Joy of Landscape". He is the brother of Clare and has been a keen supporter of the Trust ever since she founded it in 1977. He very kindly donated 25% of any profits from the sale of his paintings to the Trust.

His pictures portray peaceful rural settings at different times of day in different countries: hot afternoons in Tuscany or the Lot, or cooler river pictures of trees and water in middle England reminiscent of the sort of landscape that is so therapeutic for the Trust's passengers. At the Private View over 60 beautiful oils and watercolours of landscapes in England, France and Italy hung on the walls and started collecting red spots. There was a large crowd, including Lady Le Marchant, the mother of Clare and Francis, enjoying her son's pictures and supporting the Trust as she has done with such enthusiasm since its inception.



Sir Francis Le Marchant



Clare Le Marchant-Connell  
In conversation



Lady Le Marchant

### **A special lady**

It is early March and the snow is falling outside but Mrs. Hayter is looking forward to the warmer days of May and her trip on "Melody". Mrs. Hayter is a neighbour of one of our trustees and attended a coffee morning he gave last Summer to sell tickets in our raffle. Mrs. Hayter won first prize. What is so special about Mrs. Hayter? By her appearance and behaviour she would pass for someone at least twenty years younger; Mrs. Hayter is 102. She says that she may not spend the full five days on "Melody" but has every intention of enjoying the Leicestershire countryside for most of the time. She will be accompanied by her daughter and some of her grandchildren and great grandchildren.



### **The other winners in our raffle**

Mrs. Sloan - Leicester

Mrs. Perry - Sawley

Mrs. Wilkinson - Moira

Mr. Needs - Leicester

Jenn Lundy - Loughborough

Joan Southall - Coalville

Thelma Houston - Corby

J. Greenhalgh - Loughborough

Mrs. King - Sawley

Doreen Gadsby - Loughborough

Keith Rowbottom - Arnold

Mrs. Hazledine - Quorn

Mr. Hardy - Coalville

Mrs. Cox - Leicester

B. Stanton - Loughborough

W. Slate - Arnold

D. Birch - Loughborough

Ben James - Leicester

### **Donations:**

It is pleasing to report that the Trust finished the year 2004 in a healthier financial position than for the past few years. This was partly due to an unexpected legacy and to the sale of "New Venture", the Trust's cabin cruiser on the Norfolk Broads, the use of which had declined in recent years. The Trust also greatly benefited from donations.

Legacies under Wills are gratefully received and, of course, bequests to Registered Charities are exempt from Inheritance Tax.

We wish to acknowledge, with grateful thanks, all donations to the Trust made since our last Newsletter in September 2004. We would particularly like to thank the following, who have each given £1,000 or more:-

Trent Bridge Rotary Club

J.N. Derbyshire Trust

Sir John Eastwood Foundation

The Baily Thomas Charitable Trust

Beeston Marina

Lollipops

The Lady Hind Trust

and a special mention to all those who contributed to the Trust in memory of Tony Beadsmoore, one of our much-loved Volunteers.

In order to make the trips affordable to all, we charge £5 per head. All donations go towards paying for the remainder of the cost of the trips and for the maintenance of the boats. Thank you for continuing to make our important work possible by your donations.

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### **More photographs from the Exhibition**



Clare Le Marchant-Connell opening the Exhibition



Miss Rosamund Pike, the actress, who starred in "Die Another Day" the recent Bond film.



Charles Grace, General Manager, talking with Mr. Paul Donert, trustee, and Mrs. Donert.

# Back page Round-up

## Peter Le Marchant Trust

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Registered Charity No. 273207



◀ Every year the boats have to be dry-docked for inspection by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, which they have always passed with flying colours, thanks to the constant hard work of our Skippers. Here, "Serenade" is waiting for her turn to enter the dry-dock.

This elderly lady (right) celebrated her birthday aboard "Symphony". Sadly, she died two weeks later. ▶



◀ Hard on the heels of a similar fender made for "Serenade" last year, Burt Madgewick and his team of riggers of Fleet Support Services at Portsmouth Dockyard have made another for "Symphony". We are very grateful to them all, especially as they are in the process of making another for "Melody". Their beautiful handiwork will be seen all over the East Midlands waterways this season.

***Seen on the back of an Age Concern minibus parked at the base: "No elderly people left on this bus overnight"***