

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.

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FIRST PRIZE FOR A REMARKABLE LADY

The winner of the first prize of our raffle held last year, was Mrs. Dorothy Hayter, known to her friends as 'Mimi'. She was determined to take full advantage of her prize - a week's holiday on our narrowboat, 'Melody' - and on a reasonably warm Saturday in May, they set out - Mrs. Hayter, her daughter, Jo, with her partner, Peter and Jo's son, David. Mrs. Hayter is 102 and we got the feeling that she would outlive us all! She has a wicked sense of humour and a wonderful smile as the photographs show. She says that she thoroughly enjoyed her holiday and would recommend 'Melody' to anyone.



Clockwise from top left:
Mrs. Hayter and her daughter, Jo,
in "Melody's" main cabin.
Peter at the helm with "Melody" in
the lock.
Mrs. Hayter, Jo and David.
Mrs. Hayter leaves "Melody" at the
end of her holiday.
Mrs. Hayter, Jo and Peter.

WHY DO THEY DO IT? The Thursday Crew



Ann Rossell



Catherine Moore (left) and Maureen Wood



Robert Wood (left) and Colin Ferguson

Colin Ferguson was invited by Judy Cadwallader for a day on 'Symphony', saw what the Trust does for the disabled and immediately offered his services as a volunteer. A former Captain with Britannia Airways flying 757s and 767s, he loves working with a crew and providing a service. He joined the Trust in 2003, obtained his Skipper's Licence, and every Thursday skippers 'Symphony'. 'I've been very fortunate, and I wanted to put something back.' What he likes about the Trust is that it cares for its passengers in an utterly professional manner. He enjoys the challenge of navigating the canal and of providing a smooth and completely safe journey for his vulnerable passengers.

Ann Rossell is the Trust's longest serving Volunteer. She joined in the 1970s when there was only one boat, 'Matilda', and was initially involved with fund-raising as well as helping Police Cadets man the boat. She had TB as a child and an adult, has spent many years in hospital and in a wheelchair, and understands what it is like not being able to get outdoors and the joy when you do. She has three sons, was a childminder for many years, and then started a new business designing bridal headwear. She loves the work of the Trust and hardly ever misses a Thursday.

Maureen Wood joined the Trust in the late 1970s. She used to work as a children's hostess on passenger liners travelling to Australia and New Zealand, and was also a nanny in the Royal Households of Belgium and Monaco. When Clare Le Marchant was looking for someone to name the holiday boat, 'Serenade', Maureen approached Princess Grace of Monaco. Princess Grace was too busy but suggested her daughter, Caroline. Caroline named 'Serenade', came to the ball and the Trustees asked her to become the Trust's Patron. Maureen's love of boats and children fitted in with the Trust's mission and her commitment has never wavered.

Robert Wood is married to Maureen and joined the Trust at the same time as her. He captained P & O container ships travelling all over the world and would work as Volunteer crew during his long leaves. Now retired he is part of the regular Thursday crew and always enjoys the day out working as part of a team managing the boat and the passengers. 'Helping others is therapy for me, as well as for the people we are helping.'

Marjorie Morris has been a Volunteer for the Trust for at least twenty years. She met an elderly man who had been a passenger on 'Symphony' and was immediately attracted to the work. 'It was different. There was nothing else like that then.' She taught adults and children with learning difficulties and understood how little these people have and was impressed by the effect of a day on the water. She looks forward to the beginning of the season and doesn't want it to end. 'Each group is so different. Each Thursday is a humbling and inspiring experience.'

Judy Cadwallader joined the Trust about eight years ago. She grew up in a family who were deeply involved in the voluntary caring sector. Her mother was one of the first Samaritans and Judy was also a Samaritan for some years. When her husband was posted abroad, she worked for Cheshire Homes in Malaysia, and then Age Concern on her return to the UK. She loves being part of the Thursday crew and feels that their enjoyment in the work makes for a very happy atmosphere for the passengers and this helps them to relax and benefit from the day.

Catherine Moore joined the Trust in May 2003. Formerly in commercial foreign banking, she has looked after her elderly parents and relations when they needed her and has an empathy with older people. She understands how they can feel trapped and lonely in their own homes and what a difference a day trip on 'Symphony' can make, free of responsibilities and the struggle to cope. She loves working with other members of her crew and providing this service for the passengers.

David and Janet Jones: Very special thanks go to David and Janet, who have retired from the Trust. David was a Volunteer Skipper for many years and Janet crewed on the same days. They also did the turn-round every week-end for our narrowboat 'Melody' for many years and were at the end of a telephone if anything went wrong - a huge commitment. The Trustees consider themselves very fortunate to have had the loyalty and commitment of David and Janet for so long and send them their very best wishes for a long and well-earned retirement.



THE IMPORTANCE OF A DAY OUT



Most of us leave our home each day to go about our business or leisure, but there are people who don't have this privilege. For seven days a week from the beginning of April to the end of October, the Peter Le Marchant Trust provides a day out for people who sometimes don't get out more than once a week, or once a month, or once a year. The effect of a day like this cannot be over-estimated.

The Different Stroke Group has been coming on day trips for many years and returned for another trip this July. Most of the members live at home but are often quite isolated. A day on 'Symphony' means they are with friends on a canal boat and can look out at the passing countryside and feel safe and cared for, and at the end of the day have happy memories to take home. Marion, who is in a wheelchair and who came with her husband, Brian, loves the relaxed atmosphere and the fact that she can 'see everything' through the large low windows even if it's raining. Margaret loves getting on the canal again. When her husband was alive they cruised on the canals in a thirty foot narrow-boat. Others talked about the importance of a break, a change of scene. 'It's always different each time we come.'

The effect of a day out is illustrated vividly by the following examples:

- It was raining but an elderly lady was anxious to get outside the cabin and onto the front deck. She said that she hadn't been out in the rain for two years and so the Volunteer crew got her a chair, kept her dry under bin-liners and she sat there for half an hour. In the ambulance going home she was in tears, saying what a wonderful day she'd had.
- The husband was in a wheelchair and looked very pale. His wife glanced round anxiously and kept apologising when the Volunteers offered a cup of coffee or any help. Her husband had not been out of the house for four and a half years and it took time to settle into their new surroundings and feel cared for. Gradually they relaxed and began to smile.
- It was a blue, crystal clear autumn day and Ann Rossell, a Volunteer, was concerned that the young woman sitting in her wheelchair in the bows of the boat might be cold and asked if she would like to come inside. 'Oh no,' she replied, 'please sit with me. This is my last autumn.' The two of them sat together holding hands for the rest of the trip.

Donations: We acknowledge with grateful thanks the following donations of £1,000 or more received since the last Newsletter was published:-

1961 Charitable Trust
Harry Dunn Charitable Trust
The Helen Jean Cope Trust

Lloyds-TSB Foundation
Four Winds Trust

Beach Capital Ltd.
Audrey & Stanley Burton
Charitable Trust

Many thanks also to Sir Francis Le Marchant for his sizeable contribution through the sale of his pictures at the Exhibition, reported in the last Newsletter, and to all our many other donors, some of whom prefer to remain anonymous.



◁ A rare shot of both "big boats" together.

Back page Round-up

Charges: Although our financial position has now improved significantly, it is still difficult to raise money for running expenses. We are, therefore, reluctantly and for the first time, increasing our charges as from the 2006 season. The new charges will be:

"Symphony"	£7 per person per day
"Serenade"	£30 per person per 3/4 night holiday
"Melody"	£100 per person per week (minimum, for the boat, £500 per week)

By any standards, these charges are extremely reasonable, and it is hoped that the increase will not deter any of the groups who use the boats regularly.

Health & Safety: We have recently heard of instances where specialist schools have cancelled trips for their children because they are frightened of the consequences of something going wrong. If sensible precautions are taken, there is no reason why such outings should not be quite safe. Sadly, it is the vulnerable passengers we carry who are most at risk of having their trips cancelled because of these fears - and they are the ones who really need the holidays ! We would like to emphasise the following:

- The safety and comfort of our passengers has always been our prime consideration,
- We are regulated by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency who lay down stringent conditions for our operation,
- We operate a continuous Risk Assessment programme; details are available on request;
- We carry £2,000,000 Public Liability insurance, plus insurance cover for our staff, Volunteer crew members, visitors' property etc. Full details of the cover are available on request.



Peter Le Marchant Trust

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Volunteers: We mourn the loss of two long-serving Volunteers - Ken Marshall and Trevor ("Trev") Jones, both of whom were much loved and great characters; they are much missed.

◁ The late "Trev" Jones in a wheelchair, pretending to be disabled for the Evacuation exercise of October 2004.

Anne Jones, Alec Chadwick and Pat Goodwin have retired and the Trustees wish to express their grateful thanks for their long service and commitment to the Trust.

We welcome the following new Volunteers: Phil Davies, Heather Sheppard and Lawrie Tillen, We hope that they are enjoying their work for the Trust and that they will stay with us for many years.