

# 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.6 May 2006.

## SAFETY FIRST? SAFETY ALWAYS

In the thirty years of the Trust there has never been an accident, but safety has always been paramount. In the past it was the Skippers, who had been trained in all aspects of safety, who trained the Volunteers while on the job.

Now, since the "Marchioness" disaster, the Maritime & Coastguard Agency Regulations require the Trust to provide training for all Volunteers every year.

On Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Ray Fairbrother, Skipper of "Symphony", ran the first of seven consecutive training days. There were three experienced Volunteers and four new ones. Ray took them through all the equipment on the boat, starting at the back with the life belts and the "scrambling net" used in case of a man overboard, and showed them the location of the different fire extinguishers - a special one for the engine compartment and five more all-purpose ones inside the boat. He showed them the orange buoyancy aids on the roof



Man overboard!

and the bilge pumps that can be switched on if the boat is taking on water. He explained that the hatches must be left unlocked so that people can escape, and showed them where life jackets are stored. He pointed out the places on the floor where four of the chairs must be fastened down so that they could be used as steps to the emergency exit.

Once "Symphony" left the base he taught them how to tie the boat to a bollard while waiting for a lock - a special double looping knot, deceptively simple but quite difficult to grasp - and then how to work the locks. They went through a 'man overboard' exercise which involved throwing an orange life belt overboard from the bows and picking it up with a long boat hook at the stern.

Ray didn't forget the softer side of training: how to work the lift - only two people at a time; the number of wheel-chairs allowed on the front deck; the lay-out of the galley and the cups and saucers for tea and coffee. Each group of passengers is different requiring different kinds of support, from the arrangement of chairs inside the boat to the amount of contact with the passengers or their carers. Volunteers are chosen because they care about people and want to provide the right kind of support in ultra-safe conditions. The four new Volunteers listened hard to the instructions and were keen to start the real work. Pat Greave and Julie Jones decided that they would come for another day's training later in the week to consolidate their learning, whilst Margaret Masters looked forward to her first volunteering day when a group from her former employers, Shuttleworth Clark, who are very involved with disabled people, was coming on board.



Ray Fairbrother explaining about the lift.



Lock drill

## Refit for “Symphony”

Thanks to careful maintenance by a succession of Skippers, we have never had any real trouble with “Symphony’s” engine but last season we lost three days’ trips because of a gearbox fault and we decided that we should fit a complete new engine and gearbox, and new hydraulic steering.

We decided to do this work at our base so that Ray Fairbrother, the Skipper and a qualified engineer, could oversee the operation properly. With the aid of a crane and with great assistance from Bob Knowles’ man, Dave, who has been so helpful over the years, the new engine was carefully and accurately installed and connected up to the propeller shaft and all the pipe-work. Trevor Allman, our new Volunteer Skipper and qualified electrician, then did the electrics, including the complete rewiring of the boat. The Trust owes Trevor a huge debt of gratitude for all the work he has done on the boat, virtually for nothing and mostly in the evenings and weekends. Stand in the bows of “Symphony” now and you can hardly hear the new engine - and there is no vibration!



Out with the old...



...and in with the new

## Heel test for “Serenade”

The demand for day trips continues to grow and so we have registered “Serenade” with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency to carry more than twelve passengers. This gives us the flexibility to use her for day trips when she is not out for her usual four-night holidays with ten passengers sleeping on board.

The MCA Regulations are understandably stringent. We maintain all our boats to the highest standards of safety and have always complied with most of these requirements. Our main concern was that the boat should pass the “heel test”, where the draft of the boat is measured “light” - i.e. with full diesel and water tanks but with no passengers - and then with a full complement of passengers and crew.



Peter Walley taking precise draft measurements of the ‘light’ boat.

About twenty Volunteers were weighed and positioned around the boat in our new Wet Dock by Capt. Peter Walley, the MCA Surveyor. The other ‘Volunteers’ were sandbags, one advantage being that sandbags don’t move around! We are indebted to Travis Perkins, Loughborough, who kindly lent us two pallets of sand bags for this exercise. The result showed that the maximum heel with the full number of passengers and crew was 1.55° - the maximum permitted under the Regulations is 7°.



Peter Walley moving sand bags. Note the white plumb line in front of him.

## Boatmaster's Licence for Trevor

Trevor Allman has become the latest Volunteer to qualify as a certificated Skipper. On a very windy March day - difficult conditions for controlling a boat, especially under the watchful eye of Capt. Peter Walley of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency - he passed his test and is now the proud holder of a Boatmaster's Licence. This means that he can skipper either of our broad-beam boats when they are carrying more than twelve passengers. Volunteer Skippers, like the rest of our Volunteer crews, are vital to the running of the Trust: we need the extra hands to give our paid Skippers the occasional day off during the busy season.



Trevor being put through his paces by Capt. Peter Walley



Trevor entering Pillings Lock on a very windy day - not a bump was felt

## Wet Dock

Every winter we have to paint the boats. The weather is either too cold so that the paint will not 'take', or it's raining! This winter we installed a Wet Dock, a temporary structure that can be easily dismantled. With no weather delays, this ensures that all the boats are ready for the new season in good time. For example, Ray Fairbrother was able to re-lay the non-slip decking at both ends of "Symphony": he would never have had time to do this if he had been forced to wait for the right weather.

The pontoon, supplied by Jetfloat, was put together on a cold December Saturday with the aid of the Loughborough Sea Cadets who live next door to us and to whom we are very grateful for their help - and their lovely hot soup! The hoops, from First Tunnels, fitted neatly into the lugs on the pontoon on one side and into special fittings bolted to the quay on the other.

The cover was made by Pritchards of Loughborough, who also made the cratch cover for "Melody". East Midlands Airport contributed towards the cost of the cover, for which we owe them many thanks.



Building the pontoon



The hoops in position



Fitting the cover

## Donors

As always, we are indebted to all our Donors and wish to extend to them all our heartfelt thanks for their support for the important work we do. In particular we would mention the following donations of £1,000 and over since our last Newsletter:

The estate of Mrs. A.D. Bradshaw  
The customers of the Blacksmith's Arms  
The Hedley Foundation  
Beeston Marina

Sir John Eastwood Foundation  
Breedon Gold Club  
East Midlands Airport  
Charles Littlewood Hill Trust

T.S. Shipman Charitable Trust  
Unison Lodge No.4761  
The estate of Miss E.M. Knott  
The 29<sup>th</sup> May 1961 Charitable Trust

We would also like to mention with gratitude all the contributions made in memory of the late Trev Jones, one of our Volunteers, who is much missed.

Bequests: we have been very fortunate with bequests in the past year. Do please remember us in your Will - a bequest to a Registered Charity is not liable to Inheritance Tax.

# Back page Round-up



## Peter Le Marchant Trust

*All enquiries to:*

*Canalside Moorings,  
Beeches Road,  
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[www.peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk](http://www.peterlemarchanttrust.co.uk)

Registered Charity No. 273207



Horace Weedon, a Volunteer of long standing and a man with a keen sense of humour, turned up for a Training Day wearing a new pair of trainers. He asked the Skipper to take careful note of what was written on them but Ray Fairbrother was heard to say that when all was said and done, he was still the Skipper!



**Off into the bright sunlight for the fourth trip of the season....**



**....and coming back alongside  
at the end of a good day.**

### Sits Vac !

Are you good with people and boats?  
Rod Foreman is retiring at the end of this season and the Trust is looking for a suitable replacement as permanent Skipper of our trip-boat, "Serenade" (65'x10'6"). You need to be experienced at boat-handling, have a good knowledge of diesel engines, gas and electrical installations and general maintenance. A Boatmaster's Licence would be an added advantage. The position will become available in January 2007.

Whilst your passengers will have their own carers, it is essential that you are empathetic with disabled and seriously ill people.

For further details and full job description, please apply no later than 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006 to the General Manager, Charles Grace, 16 West Park Road, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DA, or email [c.grace@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:c.grace@blueyonder.co.uk).