



**Canal &  
River Trust**

Making life better by water

## REFLECTIONS

16 May 2021

With some venues having been open in part from 12 April and the museums opening fully next week, life feels like it is moving forward. This edition contains news and updates about each site and continues to include items about those new developments to enhance the visitor experience.

### AIM Conference 2021

The AIM Conference 2021 is happening online from 16 - 18 June and early bird tickets are on sale now:

The conference focuses on:

What hard lessons are we learning in the face of the pandemic?

Have our reflections resulted in changes for good?

What skills or new ways of working have we developed – and might they help us prepare for an uncertain future.

Prices:

AIM Members Ticket – all 3 days of conference – Early Bird £45

AIM Non-Members Ticket – all 3 days of conference – Early Bird £90

You can find out more details of the conference from the link below:

[AIM National Conference 2021 - AIM - Association of Independent Museums \(aim-museums.co.uk\)](https://aim-museums.co.uk)



## **Supporting Sharing Strengthening**

**AIM National Conference  
16 - 18 June 2021**

Supported by **Art Fund**

and   

## **Learning**

This Thursday is Grace's final day on placement, having started back in January. She has worked on several projects, the largest of which was to develop a family friendly boat trip for Anderton Boat Lift. She has worked with staff, volunteers and external designers to put together a family friendly commentary and activity book which is also curriculum linked and suitable for school trips. Grace has said:

"I have gained some valuable experience and contacts that will help me with my future career in primary school education. I have developed some much-needed skills for the future and that I need for my university course.

I have really enjoyed my placement with the Canal & River Trust. I have learnt more about what it means to be an educator and have developed skill that will be very useful in my future career.

After my placement finishes, I will be finishing my university course and going on to do a PGCE and hopefully go on to teach primary school pupils (hopefully KS1)."

Thank you Grace.

## **Volunteering Opportunities**

If you are interested in volunteering in new areas within the Trust, then please visit [Volunteer Opportunities | Join Our Team | Canal & River Trust \(canalrivertrust.org.uk\)](#) where there are some new opportunities being advertised.

## **Trevor Basin Visitor Centre & Pontcysyllte Aqueduct**

It's been a great few weeks' being back open to visitors and everyone has enjoyed talking about the canal and World Heritage Site, it's felt like the old times! The new look shop area has received some lovely comments.

More restrictions are being lifted from the 17 May, the Visitor Centre will be fully opened to include the museum area for visitors to enjoy the exhibition and videos. Unfortunately, some interactive items and the seating area will still be unavailable. Social distancing, face covering, limited numbers and track & trace will be required to enter.

Current opening times are Wednesday to Sunday 10am – 4pm and it is hoped to open daily after the 21 June until the end of October.

Some activities are starting to get booked into the diary for the next few months – Let's Outdoor Yoga, Let's Walk & Talk, Let's Nordic Walk and Let's Fish. To find out more please follow the Facebook page @TrevorBasinVisitorCentre, call on 01978 822912 or email [TrevorVisitor.Centre@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:TrevorVisitor.Centre@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

## **Anderton Boat Lift and National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port**

As the government roadmap starts to support the opening of attractions, the one BIG team at Anderton Boat Lift and the National Waterways Museum continues to prepare for visitors. Anderton is already open at the weekends and in May, both the Visitor Centre at Anderton and the Museum will be fully open with a different visitor experience.

To illustrate the vision for this financial year, the team decided to share what they hope to achieve, in the form of a 'Peaky Blinders' film, building on the detail highlighted in the business plan for the NW region. With fabulous production from Chris and Barbara Kay, and colleagues happily 'dressing up', the film illustrates the range of strategic programmes that the wider team will be delivering this year to expand on the current offer. Feedback has been very positive in enabling teams across the Trust to recognise how, and where they can support both attractions. If you have a Trust email address, you can see this film at [My Videos - OneDrive \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

### **Canal Town - Clothes for Canal Town**

As part of the business plan, "Canal Town" is a project to bring the Museum site at Ellesmere Port to life on set days during the summer. To do this, on the limited budget available, there is a need to build up a wardrobe of clothes for participants, either donated or "on loan".

#### **Please can YOU help?**

The Museum is looking for:

**Men:** Dungarees, overalls, old (but clean) shapeless trousers, collarless shirts (either



custom made which could be a bit pricey - or any old shirt with the collar cut off), substantial leather belts (for carrying a windlass), work type jackets, overcoats - nothing smart, flat caps, (not too peaky blinderish), battered trilby hats, old clean trousers. Charity shops could be a good source. I think we should steer clear of

red spotted knotted kerchiefs - we haven't seen any photos of working boatmen or dock workers wearing them. Only people 'pretending'!

**Women:** cotton dresses (for fine weather), wrap-over pinnies or similar, shapeless cardigans, head scarfs, long skirts, blouses, pull-on old fashioned sun hats, shawls. etc. Nothing too smart, but hard wearing & practical - and clean. Any size.

Please will you let Bea Anderton, Events Co-ordinator at the Museum know if you can help [Bea.Anderton@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Bea.Anderton@canalrivertrust.org.uk). A donations box will be provided at the reception desk at the Museum.

**If you are able to help, please let Bea know before Friday 28 May. Thank you.**

## **Playground Opening**

The official opening of the new playground will be held on Saturday 29 May where there will be some surprise guests. Details regarding timings etc will be on the museum's web-site nearer the time.

## **Waterway Vloggers travelled through the Anderton Boat Lift**

Waterway vloggers Foxes Afloat recently travelled through the lift on their cruise through Cheshire. Thank you to Jason Watts and the team for making them feel so welcome resulting in a fantastic piece of footage. Hope you enjoy the video and we look forward to seeing them at the museum in a few weeks and sharing that with you.

<https://youtu.be/pWmrz-rerPc>

## **Behind the Cabin Doors**

Over the past few weeks, in discussions with the Front of House team, the boat care team has been working on preparing the boats ready for reopening.

### **BOX BOAT No 337**

The team has been cleaning and treating the boat ready for the summer ahead, this includes a linseed oil coating on the sheering which gives the boards a feed and helps stop them from curling and splitting.

Linseed oil is a natural preservative that has been used in boat maintenance for over a hundred years and is still the best treatment for the boats.



## George and Gifford

With the sun being out over the past few weeks, wooden boats can suffer from “sticky Hull” which is where the tar and pitch will heat up and become sticky to the touch and can run down the boat’s hull leaving bare wood on show. To prevent this, the boats must be turned around on regular basis.

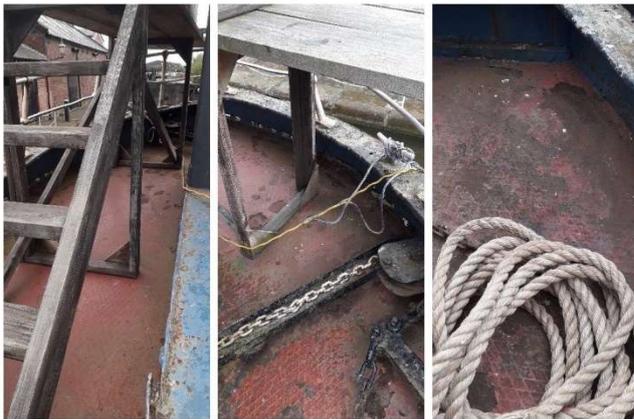
Also, the team gave Gifford’s Decks a deep clean, flushing out all the debris that was sticking between the boards. This is important because it can hold moisture which will lead to rot.

## GD101



The Boat Care Team has been cleaning the decks and superstructure of GD101 using a pressure washer which is the best and most efficient means of cleaning.

## Basuto



The Boat Care Team have been cleaning the decks of Basuto getting all the old mooring lines that have been left on the decks and clearing out the scuppers so the rainwater can freely run off the decks.

## **National Waterways Museum Gloucester**

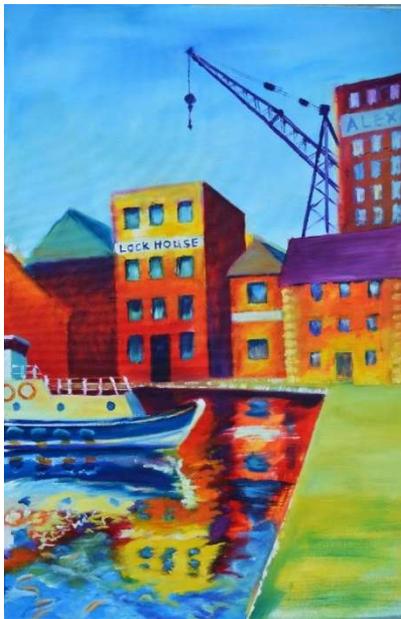
As the Gloucester team look forward to opening on Tuesday 18 at 10am, here are some updates on projects in the pipeline.

### **New Kitchen**



The new kitchen on the ground floor will make a huge difference to staff and visitors and it means that it is possible to offer an extended menu in the Tea Room. There will also be no more trips in the lift with a rattling trolley to use the dishwasher on the 3rd floor! Sam tested out a potential new cream tea on the team last week and it was confirmed that it was delicious. The cream-tea will be offered on a pre-booked basis.

### **Let's Sketch**



The Gloucester team are working on some interesting new activities under the 'Let's' heading, the first one being a small-group urban sketching activity with artist Mary Parsons. Mary is experienced at providing wellbeing art activities through NHS social prescribing projects. She will be working with a pre-booked group using the museum as a base and she is particularly keen to welcome people who might be anxious about getting out after the lockdown. Whilst drawing together and feeling part of something, it will also be possible to socially distance and learn a new skill. The Let's Sketch - urban sketching activity is scheduled to happen towards the end of June.

*Artwork in the Gloucester docks by Mary Parsons*

## **Visit Gloucester**

With a new team at Visit Gloucester the museum is benefiting from some great support to get the word out about what's on offer this summer. There is a Visit Gloucester city-wide Peter Rabbit Trail at the end of May to coincide with the new Peter Rabbit film. Visitors will try and spot Beatrix Potter books in the windows of city destinations and the trail and the venues that take part will be widely promoted by Visit Gloucester.

## **Explorers' update**

Anna Birt has been busy running virtual Water Safety sessions for Beaver and Brownie groups and schools in the region. Feedback is very positive where teachers and leaders feel more confident when planning to take children down to their local waterways. There is a new Explorer volunteer who has recently jumped on board. Anthea is a former primary school teacher and sounds like she will be a brilliant addition to the team. She brought her class to a workshop on Sabrina 2 years ago and has now been inspired to join up as a volunteer!

Anna has also been planning for education visits to the museum and is pleased to be welcoming a local Brownie group in June. Hopefully this will be a good starting point to invite children back to learning more about their local history in a safe and exciting way.

## **Historic Photos on Sabrina 5**

Grateful thanks to volunteer Trevor Hunt who has been working throughout the lockdown, painstakingly searching through old photos of the docks and the Museum to create a display on Sabrina 5. It contains both printed photos and a digital display of photos he has scanned. He unearthed photographic evidence of when there was a live horse in the museum café and it's a sight to behold! Thank you Trevor.



*Photo of display on Sabrina*

## **Stoke Bruerne Transformation**

Canal & River Trust curatorial volunteers have led in the production and installation of the new design for interpretation at the Canal Museum, Stoke Bruerne as part of the first phase of transformation.

From sourcing archive materials, photographs and artefacts, to writing and designing the graphic panels and interpretative features, the small team of volunteers have worked together over the last few months, supported by Steve Bagley (National Collections Manager) and Jannette Warrener (Destinations & Attractions Manager) to revamp the museum which is due to re-open again on 17 May.

“Handing over the delivery of the interpretation plan to our team of enthusiastic and committed volunteers has trialled a new way for us to work. Their in-depth local knowledge has influenced and shaped how we tell the stories at Stoke Bruerne for our visitors and we are really keen to roll this approach out across other sites moving forward.” said Steve Bagley.

The new interpretation will feature across all 3 floors of the site creating a canal experience that will make you want to come back to find out more.

“Whether you are nipping in for your morning coffee and homemade cake, visiting the second hand bookshop or a real canal enthusiast visiting the Grand Union, we hope that all the hard work led by the volunteer team will create a real sense of place for all our visitors.” said Jannette Warrener.

The work has been funded by the Friends of the Canal Museum.

## **Request from Bea Anderton**

As a Community Leadership student at University of Central Lancashire, I am conducting research into the ‘Impact of Covid-19 on arts and cultural engagement for people with disabilities. I would be very grateful if you could help with my research by filling out the questionnaire posted below.

The aim of the research is to assess how COVID-19 has impacted, whether positively or negatively or not at all, on the ability of people with disabilities to engage with arts and culture. One might argue that the digitalisation of events seen during the pandemic has improved access for everyone and has been particularly beneficial for people with disabilities. As such, the data for this research will hopefully strengthen the argument that arts and cultural digital content should be a core element of accessibility policies, and not just as a response to the restrictions imposed because of COVID-19. Thank you.

<https://forms.office.com/r/pHkYvSqH9T>

## **Staffing News**

### **New Archives Manager**

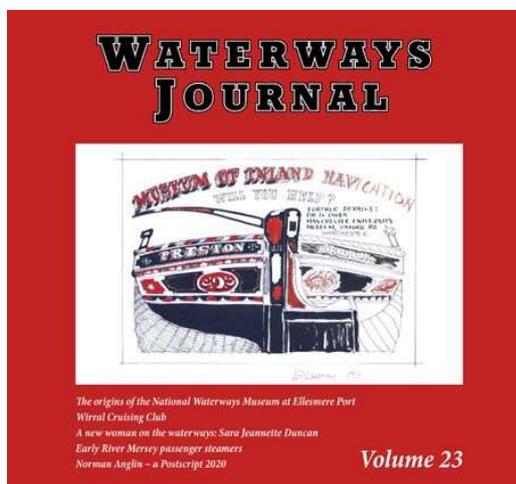
A warm welcome to Louise Bruton who has been appointed to the post of Archives Manager. Louise started on Monday 10 May and has come from her post of the Special Collections Archivist at De Montfort University (Leicester). She previously has worked as an archivist at the London Metropolitan Archives, Historic Royal Palaces and the British Library.



### **New Collections Officer**

Georgina Wilson-Williams, currently one of the Duty Managers at NWM EP, has been appointed to the position of Collections Officer (North) based at Ellesmere Port and will take up her new post on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Congratulations George.

### **Waterways Journal Volume 23 now available**



The latest edition of Waterways Journal has been published by Canal & River Trust and is now available for purchase. It can be bought from the Museum Shop from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May when the museum reopens and should be available in other Trust outlets very soon.

## **Contents**

### **The origins of the National Waterways Museum at Ellesmere Port 1970 – 1974: Cath Turpin**

It was in September 1970 that a small group of canal enthusiasts met together to discuss setting up an Inland Waterways Museum in north west England. Initially it was intended to be at Preston Brook, at the junction of the Bridgewater and Trent and Mersey canals, but over the succeeding four years, plans and objectives changed. This article tells the convoluted story of how Ellesmere Port was eventually chosen to house what is now the National Waterways Museum.

### **Wirral Cruising Club Part 2: Joseph Boughey**

In Waterways Journal Volume 22, Joseph described the origins of the Wirral Cruising Club, an early but small, short lived organisation based at Ellesmere Port. Here he completes the story, putting this club within the context of private canal boat ownership in the early 1950s, at the beginning of the leisure use of the canals.

### **A new woman on the waterways: Sara Jeanette Duncan (1861-1922): Jodie Matthews**

Jodie takes the novel 'Two Girls on a Barge', published in 1891, and looks at it from the cultural context of late Victorian attitudes to women's roles in society. Illustrated by copious drawings by F.H. Townsend. It tells of a voyage from Paddington to Coventry aboard a converted working narrow boat, the "Industrious". Another, even earlier use of canals for leisure, but by people who had a completely different agenda to people who owned their own craft.

### **Early River Mersey Passenger Steamers up to circa 1840: Terry Kavanagh**

Terry returns to his interest in early paddle steamers which used to work on the River Mersey from Liverpool to Seacombe, Runcorn, Eastham, Ellesmere Port and Chester. He uses contemporary newspaper accounts of incidents and the dangers of navigating this busy waterway in the first half of the nineteenth century.

### **Norman Anglin – a postscript 2020: Joseph Boughey**

Norman Anglin, an early precursor of L.T.C. Rolt lived on a converted narrow boat, the "Russian" and by the end of the first part of this account in volume 15 of Waterways Journal the boat had seemingly been abandoned at Pershore. In this postscript, Joseph continues the story into the 1930s and includes reference to meeting Cyril Herbert Smith, who also wrote of his travels on the Avon in pre-war years.

### **Addendum - Buns and Ginger Beer: Alan Jones**

As a follow-up to his article in Waterways Journal, Volume 22, Alan has found an account in local newspapers of an event which brought much pleasure to children from Preston Brook in 1854.

**Please remember to share your stories with us.**

**Please look after yourselves, families and friends and stay safe.**

Please send any contributions to Michelle

Kozomara [Michelle.Kozomara@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Michelle.Kozomara@canalrivertrust.org.uk) and Barbara

Kay [Barbara.Kay@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Barbara.Kay@canalrivertrust.org.uk) by 5pm on Tuesday 8 June 2021. Thank you.

If you no longer wish to receive Reflections please contact Michelle Kozomara [michelle.kozomara@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:michelle.kozomara@canalrivertrust.org.uk). If you have colleagues who don't currently receive Reflections but would like to, please ask them to contact Michelle with their email address. Thank you.