



Quay Notes

December 2013

A MERRY XMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

Newsletter for residents of Merchants Landing

www.mlra.co.uk

Woe betide Very High Tides – plans to stem future flows



The blocked-up Bathurst Basin lock – a weak link in the City's defences

Engineers at a recent meeting in the Colston Hall told residents of Bristol City Centre, including Merchants Landing, of the risks of flooding in our area and the plans they have in place to mitigate those risks.

The meeting on 11th November heard from an array of engineers from the Environment Agency, Bristol City Council, and Wessex Water, who work closely together to deal with the threat. The threat posed is relatively small, assessed to be a 1 in 200 year flood, and requires the juxtaposition of unusually high Spring Tides, a storm surge in the Bristol Channel, and torrential rainfall in the Avon Basin, with consequent high flows in the Rivers Avon and Frome.

That small threat is still a matter of concern, particularly in the context of climate change (*"wetter winters likely"*) and rising sea levels. However, as Mayor George Ferguson said in opening the meeting: *"The threat needs to be kept in perspective – we are not the Philippines."*

The engineers spoke of the history of flooding in Bristol, and especially of the serious fluvial floods in the Frome and Malago valleys in 1968. Since then there has been some £230 million of investment in Storm Water Interceptors that had largely mitigated the threat of flooding from our rivers. The depth of the New Cut substantially reduces the risk from the River Avon itself.

The main risk posed now is of tidal flooding, with one of the weak points being the Cumberland Basin area, recently partially remedied by new lock gates; other work needs to be done at the southern end of Avon Crescent and, nearer us, at the old Bathurst Basin lock. In the case of these two areas, it is proposed to raise road levels as part of the scheme for the Metro Bus. In the longer term, a barrage in the Avon Gorge beyond the Suspension Bridge may be needed. The proposals will be the subject of public consultation *"in the near future"*. In the meantime, enjoy the wonderful character of our waterside area....

Residents

Association News

Joi Demery, Chair of Merchants Landing Residents Association reports:

Annual General Meeting

The AGM for MLRA took place on Friday 4 October on the John Sebastian. Seven of the members of the previous year's committee were re-elected (see overleaf for contact details), with Betta Eriks deciding to stand down - she was sincerely thanked for her contribution. It was decided to keep the membership subscription at £10 (see Invoice sent out with this edition). Three suggestions were made for the charities we would support next year – Diabetes UK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Rethink (a mental health charity), and it was decided to agree them all, one for each of the next three years.

The AGM also agreed to write to Bristol City Council about the problems of access for residents during events in the Docks and City Centre, as reported in the last edition of *"Quay Notes"*.

DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR SUBS!

Bob's Annual Quiz

Once again the brains of Merchants Landing were pitched in competition on a cold evening in November. Team scores were close (apart from the legendary music round!) and great fun was had by all. Many thanks to the teams, the John Sebastian for hosting us and especially to Bob and Steve Bishop for all their hard work in devising the questions and organising it.

MURDER MYSTERY EVENING

Local company Murder & Mayhem will be performing (and if previous events are a guide!) confusing us all on the evening of Friday March 28th on the John Sebastian. Further details in the next edition, but reserve the date in your diaries now!

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR NEWS OF OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR SUBS!

The Merchants Landing Residents Association Committee:

Anthony Rackham	5 Merchants Quay	9297562	Joi Demery	9 Merchants Quay	9213412
Geri Bowie	7 Merrick Court	9294689	VACANCY	VOLUNTEERS SEE JOI	VACANCY
Tony Little	13 Challoner Court	9227336	Sandy Conway	1 Draycott Place	9293454
Shirley Stark	8 Wapping Road	9293953	Jan Walsh	8 Bathurst Parade	9268714

Amenities Company News

Roy Demery, Chair of Merchants Landing Amenities Board reports: The AGM of the Amenities Company took place on Friday 18th October on the John Sebastian. Four of the previous year's Directors were re-elected (Roy Demery, David Johnson, Gaenor Cashman and Mike Thorne), one Director, Michael Hart stood down after several years service (for which he was warmly thanked), a new Director, Niki Thomas, was elected to replace Michael, and the nomination of a sixth Director, John Brentnall, was held over for possible co-option, as his nomination was considered not to have been submitted by the stipulated deadline. (The next meeting of the Board did duly agree to co-opt John). Contact details for the six Directors and the Managing Agent are listed at the bottom of this page.

Roy also reports that in the communal gardens, work has commenced on replacing the frost-damaged edging bricks around the base of the trees. Problems associated with tree roots necessitate enlarging the existing beds and the opportunity has been taken to replant and re-landscape the courtyard area.

LONG LIVE (A)MERRICK(A)?

Following the piece in the last issue of "Quay Notes" about the origins of the name behind Challoner Court, Bob Bishop wrote: "Merrick Court is possibly the hardest of all our place names to pin down a definitive origin. I like to think that Richard Amerike deserves a mention. Latterly Richard Ap Meryk, in 1502 he was living in the Long Ashton area and had been appointed King's Customs Officer for Bristol as early as 1486. In 1481 he financed a cargo of salt to be taken to the fishermen off what we now know as Newfoundland, and MAY have helped finance Cabot's voyage to that same area in 1497. There is a 50/50 chance (along with the Italian explorer, Amerigo Vespucci) that Amerike's name led to the naming of America itself. Richard Amerike's coats of arms was a shield of stars and stripes!"

Support for that notion also came from John Conway. The Bristol Record Office had no information on the origins of Merrick, and they also told us that there is no entry for the name in the book by Veronica Smith: "The Street Names of Bristol – Their Origins and Meanings." More on other names in the next edition of "Quay Notes".

The Saga of the Bus Rapid Transit Scheme goes on and on and on.....

In chronological order the sequence of events over the last eighteen months has been:

May/June 2012: Public Inquiry held into the proposals put forward by a consortium of local authorities and business interests, including the BRT2 route over Prince Street bridge.

January 2013: Newly-elected Mayor Ferguson declares he will not support BRT2 going over Prince Street bridge, and asks officers to investigate alternatives.

June 2013: Mayor Ferguson & BCC Cabinet decide in favour of route along Cumberland Road, Commercial Road and Redcliff Hill. (Now called the Metro Bus project).

November 2013: Secretary of State for Transport publishes Inspector's Report with his approval for the original route via Prince Street bridge.

This month? City Council submits planning application (to itself), with detailed proposals for the Commercial Road/ Redcliff Hill route.

Still to be done? Agreement with the Government and the co-promoters of the original scheme that they will support the route now preferred by Bristol City Council.

And that is only a summary of events. More detail on our website if you can stand it....

** Looking for a Tradesman? Look at the page on the mlra website that lists recommendations by your neighbours **

** Had a good experience with a Tradesman? Spread the news on the website. Contact: info@mlra.co.uk **

Contact details for the Directors of Merchants Landing (Amenities) Ltd are:

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David Johnson	16 Bathurst Parade	johnsonjean@blueyonder.co.uk	0117 929 7602
Gaenor Cashman	5 Bathurst Parade	gaenor@talktalk.net	0117 927 7081
John Brentnall	3 Byzantine Court	john.brentnall@wards.co.uk	
Mike Thorne	15 Merrick Court	maggieandmikethorne@talktalk.net	01275 218712

Managing Agent: Bristol Leasehold Management, Oakside House, 35 Oakfield Road, Bristol BS8 2AT. Contact: Roger Bryan. Telephone: 0117 317 9588. Email: office@bristol-leases.co.uk

This Newsletter is edited by: Mike Thorne of 15, Merrick Court, Merchants Quay.
Comments very welcome, and contributions, preferably by email: maggieandmikethorne@talktalk.net
or, if that's not possible, through the letterbox.