



“QUAY NOTES” - March 2010

(News, views and information for residents of Merchants Landing)

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GORDON'S BRISTOL BITES

“Happy as a Sandboy”

The phrase “happy as a sandboy” is well known, although not so much these days as in times gone past. The modern phrase is more likely to be “chuff to little bits”. Either way it means that someone is very pleased and showing it.

In early Victorian times loose dry sand was in demand to be spread on floors, then mostly bare boards, to absorb any liquid spillage and so enable the floors to be swept more easily. Collecting and distributing the sand was done by “boys” (of any age) and it provided them with a living. They carried bags of the stuff around and sold it as required. It was particularly in demand for the floors of inns and hostleries

As may be expected these “boys” worked up a thirst in the course of their labours and, not surprisingly were often paid by a landlord, at least in part, with ale. Consequently they were usually half-cut (merry or jolly) Hence the origin of the phrase.

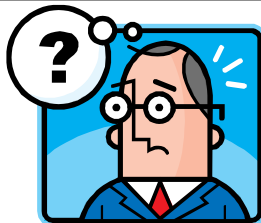
Charles Dickens was aware of the practice. He visited Bristol as a newspaper reporter in 1835 and there is a theory that he learned the phrase during his time here. In “The Old Curiosity Shop” (1840) he includes an inn called the Jolly Sandboys that displayed a sign outside depicting three drunken sandboys

Redcliffe caves had been a source of sand over many centuries and it is suggested that the phrase actually arose to describe those “boys” extracting sand from the caves and selling it to the adjacent “The Ostrich Inn” in exchange for ale. A bit far fetched maybe but “happy as a sandboy” had to start somewhere.

“My thanks to resident Jane Miller for drawing my attention to this snippet”

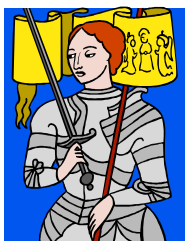
Quiz Night 2009 with Bob Bishop

Yet another great night, hosted as always by our resident QuizMeister and his sidekick, Steve. Very many thanks Bob. We raised £100 which went to “Children in Need”!!



DRAINS!

The experts are still trying to finalise the layout of the drains in the development. Evidently they disappear in a couple of places. Hopefully this can be resolved soon and the problems resolved before the next big downpour!



FORTHCOMING EVENTS !!

St GEORGE'S DAY CRUISE ON BOARD THE MATTHEW – 23RD APRIL

A fun evening with a harbour cruise and Fish and Chip supper on board

Tickets at £18 are available from any committee member.

RESIDENT'S SUMMER PARTY – 19TH JUNE

A repeat of last years successful party with music, games, food and drink.

AGM 14TH SEPTEMBER

QUIZ NIGHT WITH THE ONE AND ONLY BOB BISHOP - NOVEMBER

Make sure you don't miss these events!!!



Your Committee Members

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Review of Local Planning Developments Discussed at Recent RFG Meetings Reported by John Ashford

This report covers the period from December 2009 to the end of February 2010 and deals mainly with matters discussed that are in close proximity to Merchants Landings

Redcliffe Wharf Ref:07/05719/F

Discussions are still underway between Westmark, Bristol City Council and potential developers to bring forward acceptable plans for this important site. Redcliffe Futures (RFG) have been advised that Mr Mark Rolt, the proprietor of the Bristol Classic Boat Company is likely to move his business away from Redcliffe Wharf to a site located at the Western end of the harbour. This would be a disappointing move because it removes the last example of marine heritage from this historic site.

St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School Ref:08/03765/FB

Construction works are at a very advanced stage on this project. It was expected that the school closing date would be in October 2010 which would be marked by a closing ceremony. Students would return to new premises on 5th November 2010..

Contractors should finish all works including landscaping by Summer 2011 with a formal opening ceremony planned for September 2011. I have some photographs of the construction progress at the school site which I can make available to any member to view. Email contact me on john.ashford3@btopenworld.com

Bristol General Hospital

Barton Wilmore carried out their consultation exercise at BGH on 7th December 2009. 430 invitations to attend the event were sent out and 65 invitees attended. Redcliffe Futures has made its comments to Barton Willmore which will be considered with all others to help form the final version of the planning brief. In principle RFG were happy to see a hotel developed on the site but certainly not any student accommodation.

The proposal to incorporate some residential, office facilities, live-work units and A3 (Food and Drink) facilities were supported. RFG suggested that the new build at the south west corner should be of a substantial nature of up to 7 storeys high but stepped back to the Victorian listed structures. The southern and western frontages should be active rather than sterile. The car park to the west of the site will need development that provides enclosure to the highway and to Bathurst Basin as well as permitting access to the moorings. The site would benefit from 'incremental development' by contractors giving added security to the overall complex. When the planning brief has been revised and available I will advise MLRA.

Rapid Transit Proposals

There have been several developments to report on the Rapid Transport scene.

Bristol City Council adopted the BRT2 Ashton Vale to Temple Meads and Bristol City Centre proposals at their Full Council meeting held on 19th January 2010. The adoption resolution was carried by 56 voting for, 1 against and with 2 abstentions. North Somerset Council approved a similar resolution in Mid February and the consequence of this joint approval means that both councils will now apply for and promote an Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 to confer powers for the purposes of and in connection with the construction and operation of BRT2, subject to achieving entry status for funding from the Department for Transport.

At the Full Council meeting on 19th January I made a public statement on behalf of RFG asking for a commitment from BCC to change the designated route of BRT2 along Redcliffe Way away from the front of St Mary Redcliffe Church to an alignment along Portwall Lane. This statement is currently being examined by the BCC Executive Member for Transport and Sustainability, Cllr Dr Jon Rogers who will report back to me very shortly on his decision.

The next stage of the Rapid Transit project, BRT3, from Hengrove Park is now under discussion.

Thank you John, for your regular Contributions to Quay Notes !!

On March 1st - by Susan Hart

When crocus opened their mauve cups to the March sun, bees, just out of isolation wriggled against the orange stamens.

Their fur brushed the pollen and their glass wings sparkled.

The red admiral, with freshly painted stripes alighted there and sipped it's first nectar.

Today, all in the space of one terracotta pot in my backyard, I saw a waking thirst for life!

Quay Notes

Next edition will be out on 1st June 2010. Contributions to Mary and Anthony @ 5 Merchants Quay or preferably to rackhams@talktalk.net