



“QUAY NOTES” - September 2006

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

www.mlra.co.uk

Collectables with a difference

John Bates of Bathurst Parade will be showing us an interesting slide show about items he has collected over the years. These are not glass or ceramic pieces, but unusual, low cost and sometimes quirky things - and we, the audience, have to guess what they are. There are usually three slides per item, to give us a better chance. After the slide show, there will be time for questions and a 'hands on' session with a selection of the items in the talk.

Place - the John Sebastian lightship. Date: Wed. 8th November 2006.

Time - 7.30 pm for an 8 pm start (give yourself time to get a drink and settle down), and ending by 9.45pm.

Christmas Quiz

The Christmas quiz will be held at the YHA (in the teaching room) on Wed Dec 6th at 7.30 pm. Bob Bishop will be our quizmaster, and this time some of the questions will have a Christmas theme (we'll have to have a few about Chanukah, divali etc Bob, or at least the mid-winter thing, and whatever it is we seculars have - Argos? or Very Large Socks?), and we'll have decorations and refreshments. All members welcome - and non-members can join at the time. Bring neighbours, friends and family and make up a table - or join others on the night!

Conquering the New Cut

Why does one never see any boats up the New Cut when clearly boats used to come in at least as far as the Velindra on Cumberland Road, and there was a ferry over the river so that people could get across to Southville from Bristol? This was a question that taxed us for some time after our arrival in Bristol. Perhaps the river itself had changed dramatically and had become more dangerous. The only boat we had ever seen on the river was tethered under the footbridge as a health and safety measure whilst the bridge was being painted. However, if that could get up the river why did no other boats ever go up there?

In theory we knew it was possible to cross the large weir near Netham lock when the tides were high, but although we had heard rumours of it being done we had never met anyone who had done it, until recently when Chris met Trevor from the narrowboat, Willow. Many years ago he had managed to go up the river, over the weir and back in through Netham Lock, despite a tense moment when he scraped the weir. His accompanying boat managed to cross the weir but had barely managed to get under the road bridge above the weir because the water was so high. Clearly not every boat could go over the weir. Trevor agreed to try it out with Chris and Don in our narrowboat, Ariel. That first attempt ended in ignominious failure when Ariel's engine cut out and she had to be rescued by the harbour master.

However, nothing daunted Chris and a few others from Cabot Cruising Club all decided to try again, this time with Ariel, Trevor in his boat Willow, Mark and his rib and some friends of Trevor's in their cabin cruiser. The tides were high enough on Saturday 12th August so at 9.00am they eventually left through the main locks at Cumberland Basin and set forth on an uneventful trip up the New Cut. By 10.00am they had crossed the weir and were waiting for the lock gates at Netham to open. Waiting by the dilapidated bulging wall immediately outside Netham lock was by far the most dangerous part of the trip. Fortunately, they were locked through rather than having to wait another couple of hours for the lock gates to open.

Trevor had checked the height and time of the tide and had also measured the water levels and placed a depth marker board against the wall at the end of the weir in advance of the trip. They were thus able to approach the weir confident in the knowledge that they would have sufficient clearance. They had also spoken to the Netham lock keeper in advance and arranged for him to lock them in at the end of the trip. All in all a very successful trip, although Trevor was disappointed to clip the weir slightly again.

Sadly, I missed their moment of triumph. Having cycled alongside them until we got abreast of the Showcase cinema complex the river path petered out and by the time I found a view point of the weir they had already gone past.

Jan. (8BP)





Summer Party/Cruise



A great time was had by all with lots of excitement on the way!

We conquered the Avon, not just the cut!

We boarded the Tower Belle at the Mud Dock and set off up river. At Netham Lock we had a short wait while the lock keeper waited for the tide to drop and then we pushed through the gates and headed into the river. This was not without incident as a narrow boat had come into the cut and had to back off while we came out; unfortunately the tide was running strongly and he ran his stern into the bank. He was still repairing his rudder when we returned. There was more excitement at Beeses where someone's boat had drifted onto the bank on the high tide and was nose down into the river by the time we passed.

Hopefully he managed to rescue the situation but I have heard no news.

There was a good crowd on board with lots of conversation, accompanied by a very good and informative commentary by the crew. Thanks go to the committee for organising the trip!

FOR SALE

- Electrolux eye-level oven and grill, 3 years old - £40
- AEG 4 burner gas hob, 3 years old - £30
- AEG cooker hood, 3 years old - £30
- Bosch large fridge freezer, 8 years old - £60
- Bosch dishwasher, 12 years old - £25
- Franke 1.5 bowl stainless steel sink, 3 years old - £25

All in excellent working order and condition.
Available first week of October - selling due to kitchen refit. For further information contact Scott or Geri,
7 Merrick Court, tel 0117 929 4689

Committee member needed!

There is still a vacancy on the committee following Hazel Hill's departure. Please volunteer, particularly if you live in Byzantine Court.

If you rent rather than own a property here, you are equally welcome to join the association, join in any events, and even join the committee. Get involved, it is your community.

One of the residents in Bathurst Parade recently came across an excellent new booklet called "[Celebration of the Avon New Cut](#)" It is printed by Fiducia Press 2006 Bristol. I.S.B.N. 0 946217 23 8 Priced at £7.00. It can be purchased from the reception desk at the local Southville Community Centre.

This book celebrates the 200 anniversary of the creation of the Avon New Cut which changed Bristol's geography and history for ever. The Avon New Cut is an integral part of Bristol's floating harbour. A group of local people have brought together a fascinating account of its geology, its history, its wildlife and ideas about its future. A must for every bookcase.

BEWARE! – Car parking in Draycott Place

The car park opposite the houses in Draycott Place does not belong to Merchants Landing. Two residents cars parked there, showing permits, have been towed away. Cost - £135 each!

Advertising signs.

Recently there have been a couple of instances of a company doing work on a property and then leaving advertisements on the outer fence. Some complaints have been forwarded to the committee that this is unsightly and that the company should remove the sign when work is complete. Is this right, or do you disagree? Let us know.

Gordon's Bristol Bites

THE MARCHIONESS SHED

Bathurst Basin was constructed in 1809 as a secondary entrance to the Floating Harbour from the New Cut. At some time a pontoon was built upstream from the entrance to allow loading and unloading of ships. Remnants are still visible from Coronation Road.

In 1883 a small brick shed was built for the Cardiff & Channel Steamship Company on the promontory between the basin & the Cut. In 1888 the company purchased a paddle steamer, specifically built for the Bristol/Cardiff packet service. The ship, the "Marchioness", used the shed and ran up and down the Cut with great regularity and turned at each journey's end in the entrance to Bathurst Basin. It was sold in 1913. The "Marchioness" shed however, still stands.

The promontory was also the location of a double-leaf wooden bridge across the basin entrance to Wapping Road. This was later replaced by the current bridge which was opened in Nov 1906. Its turning gear was the last hydraulic installation in the city docks although since about 1941 the bridge has been fixed. It was built adjacent to, rather than on the same spot as the original bridge. Therefore all the cobbled roadways and stonework for the 1809 bridge still exist. Much is beneath the dilapidated scaffolding and shredded plastic sadly visible to all.

SCAFFOLDING ON MARCHIONESS SITE - THE LATEST

You will remember that MLRA protested about the tatty scaffolding on the Marchioness Site by the mini-roundabout on Wapping Road. On 18th November 2005, the Planning Authority ordered its removal. Unfortunately, it then accepted the owner, Mr Pratt's plea for an extension on the grounds that that he hadn't decided what to do with that piece of land. He argued that by giving him time to think, the Council might avoid an expensive appeal. However, he has now gone to appeal, and we are invited to comment. The committee will submit a basic letter on behalf of MLRA, but our case may well be strengthened by adding individual protests as well.

Please write to the Planning Inspectorate, Room 3/26 Hawk, Temple Quay House, 2 the Square, Temple Quay Bristol BS1 6PN quoting reference number APP/Z0116/C/06/2022131. If you write, **YOU MUST SEND THEM THREE COPIES** (they can't afford photocopying). What you write will be shown to Mr Pratt as well as to the Planning Inspectorate, and if it is abusive or considered libel it will go in the bin, so temper those strong views. Alternatively, submit your views on line by going to www.planningportal.gov.uk/PCS When you get to the page, type in the reference number on the 'Search' page and click the search button, to get to this case. It didn't work for me, but you may have better luck.



24 RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON THE MARCHIONESS SITE?

Surprisingly, Mr Pratt also hopes to develop that smallish piece of ground by getting permission to build a block of 24 (yes! 24!) flats sticking out into the new cut, with walkways above the mud. He has engaged the services of well known architects and a planning agent, and prepared some sophisticated drawings that look, to the layperson, very unlike the scene on the ground. The committee has sent in a letter of protest, drafted by member John Ashford after consultation with others, that makes points on the various grounds the Planning Authorities will accept as relevant. These include:

1. Highway Safety - the access would be just over the bridge. With the agreed development at Wapping Wharf and the General Hospital sites, the extra traffic would be a hazard.
2. Policy - the Council has a policy of not destroying heritage - the Marchioness building is a link to mercantile heritage. It also has a policy of preserving key views, and the proposed block would interfere with the view of St Paul's church, Alpha Rd.
3. Amenity - it would prevent access to the river.
4. Environment - This is a conservation area and the tidal river forms a sustainable wildlife corridor, which would be badly affected.

The letter concludes, on advice from those in the know, that MLRA would be sympathetic to a small number of low rise mixed use buildings which had regard for all the above points. We believe that a completely obstructive position would be counterproductive.

THE TIME FOR CONSULTATION HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO 21st SEPT, SO IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH WHAT WE'VE WRITTEN, GET YOUR OWN POINTS TO THE COUNCIL! You need to head your letter 'The Marchioness Site' and quote the following reference numbers: 06/02971/LC/C, which deals with 'demolition of an existing building' requiring 'conservation area consent' and 06/02972/P/C, for 'outline planning approval to redevelop the site to provide 24 residential units (classC3)'

Your Committee Members

Caroline New	10 Bathurst Parade	9256740	caroline.new1@btinternet.com	Chair
Mary Rackham	5 Merchants Quay	9297562	rackham@onetel.com	Secretary
Janetta Mitchinson	3 Trin Mills	9276209	njkmitch@aol.com	
Scott Bowie	7 Merrick Court	9294689	sbbowie@ukonline.co.uk	
Michael Hart	2 Challoner Court	9215291	michael.hart8@btopenworld.com	
Shirley Stark	8 Wapping Road	9293953	shirleyistark@hotmail.com	Treasurer
Sandy Conway	1 Draycott Place	9293454	johndconway@onetel.com	

RUBBISH COLLECTIONS!

Are you confused? Join the club!

Despite being told that we are only having a fortnightly general rubbish collection, it seems that we are staying on a weekly collection. Jannetta has queried this and was told that Trin Mills was staying weekly, but didn't get an answer about the rest of Merchants Landing.

If in doubt, put your bin out!



Neighbourhood Watch

A car wash hosepipe reel was left at one of the carwash standpipe tap areas on the development. Please contact John Bates who currently has the item and would like to return it to the owner.

Merchants Landing now has a new Community Police officer. His name is PC 1794 Martin Turner of Bridewell Police Stn. There is also a Police Community Support Officer, PCSO 7921 Lisa Shahin. The above two do patrol the Merchants Landing area.

If you require any police action 24hrs Tel 0845 456 7000 – state who you are and inform the operator of your NH/Watch area – your code number and the name of your community Police officer.

Area – (Cabot) Code No (BC198) PC No (1794 Martin Turner) of Bridewell police Stn.

Any non-urgent Police response required can be left on the Bridewell answerphone both for PC Turner and PCSO Shahin Tel No 0117 9455023 and they will contact you.

For urgent Police action, emergencies or crimes in progress call 999. Please leave NH/Watch identification if you can.

Any specific NH/Watch situations that you think I should know about please contact John Bates on 0117 9211789.

Please keep your glove box lid open if your vehicle is parked outside and also remove any detachable radio panel and any personal effects that you may have in the vehicle. A belated thank you for the two neighbours in Draycot Place for helping to see off a Yob who intended to break into a parked Paramedic vehicle.

John Bates Tel 0117 9211789 (NH/Watch co-ordinator)

Recycling plastic items

There is a new large plastic recycling point for the Cabot area in Prewett St outside Proctor house flats.

AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 26th October 2006

7.00 pm - MLRA AGM

7.30 pm - Amenities Company AGM - Followed by a talk by Gordon Faulkner.

Quay Notes

Next edition will be out on 1 December 2006. Contributions to 5 Merchants Quay or preferably to rackham@onetel.com