

BRUNEL'S OTHER BRIDGE NEWS

May 2022



OUR AIMS

- To preserve and restore the structure to working condition for use as a pedestrian and cycle crossing over the Entrance Lock.
- To explain the significance, history, and technology of the structure in the context of the Floating Harbour and Brunel's other works.
- To develop the site's educational and amenity value for all.
- To inspire interest in engineering and technology amongst people of all ages

Dear Supporter,

Welcome to our latest Newsletter. Since our December Newsletter much has happened and we have made good progress.

Structural Engineering Consultancy

The next stage of restoration of the Swivel Bridge is to design the structural repairs needed on the corroded wrought iron rotating deck.

The grants from Historic England and The City's Community Partnership Fund we reported previously have been confirmed, a brief has been approved, and the City Council's Building Practice has kindly agreed to manage the consultancy contract.

The project is currently awaiting a meeting with the City Council due to take place in June.

Management Group

Over recent years, and particularly since the ending of Covid restrictions, our care for heritage structures has widened from the Swivel Bridge to include much of the 'Tongue', ie, the island around the Bridge. More volunteers have joined us and so we have established a Brunel Swivel Bridge Management Group to plan and coordinate the work, and ensure we deliver it safely.

Our meeting in March ratified our team-structure, decided that we should paint the Bridge, and that we should progress with Bristol City the possibility of new signage for visitors to the Tongue.

Inevitably our plans are dependent on funding, so establishing a charitable organization was discussed. If you have views on this please contact Geoff Wallis on landgwallis@gmail.com.

Notes of Management Group Meetings are copied to the City Dock Engineer and representatives of local supporting organizations.

Graffiti Gang

Local residents Olivia and Matt have joined us and now head up our Team which cleans off or over-paints graffiti. Neil Burwell from Bristol City Council's Neighbourhood Services Team provide on-site training for us in February and supplied chemicals and paint for us to use. The chemicals are surprisingly effective at removing graffiti from many surfaces, yet are environmentally friendly. Thank you Neil for your help and advice.

As the graffiti keeps coming back we need more help please to keep it under control.

Gardening Gang

Armed with his strimmer and lots of enthusiasm, Chris B regularly comes all the way from Wiltshire to lead our gardening team. The Tongue has never looked clearer of weeds, and we have started cutting back the vegetation threatening the future stability of the south wall of Brunel's Lock.

Bristol City have a plan to plant the area enclosed by timber baulks adjacent to the yellow mooring bollard, and we would be willing to maintain it if they go ahead.



Engineering Team (AKA The Greasy Gang)

Work continues to reassemble the southern hydraulic ram after its past removal for inspection. Our stalwart engineers have made a series of new bolts to replace seriously corroded originals, and several more are in progress. The damaged gland casting has been repaired, and the impressive original bronze pressure-relief valve is to be refitted shortly.

Our young volunteer Charlie has now started his degree at Plymouth University, but still returns to Bristol for our workdays, and now leads some of our engineering activities. He was featured in the 'Harbour Hopes' Feedback see photo right and::

<https://harbourhopes.co.uk/playback.pdf>.



Database of Heritage Assets in Western Harbour

Hopefully by now you have checked out our volunteer John Willis's new database of heritage assets in the Western Harbour area., see

<https://bwhha.wordpress.com/> .

Please let us know of any corrections or additional information to add, and link the address to your own organization's website.

Please publicise this amazing resource wherever you can.



Early Film Footage of the City Docks

Click on this link to see a four minute film on the history of the Docks.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsZNTQijFCc>. Did you know a U-Boat visited the City? There is great footage of goods being handled, including bananas and lions for the Zoo, the old chain-dredger, and a glimpse of the harbour railway. Thanks Peter H for alerting us to this great video.

Hotwells & Cliftonwood Community Association

This active, friendly group represents the interests of residents living to the north of Cumberland Basin. They run the Piazza Project caring for the land under the elevated roadways, and have been very supportive of the BOB project.

You can find out more about their activities on <https://www.hotwellscliftonwood.org.uk/> or via admin@hotwellscliftonwood.org.uk or sign up to their informative newsletter on: https://www.hotwellscliftonwood.org.uk/sign_up_to_receive_newsletters

Bristol Industrial Archaeology Society

See <https://b-i-a-s.org.uk/>

The Society has supported the BOB Project since its inception and continues to do so. Their annual Angus Buchanan Lecture takes place this year on Saturday 21st May at 2.00pm at the Museum of Bath at Work, Julian Road, Bath.

This year's lecture will be by Professor Marilyn Palmer on Industrial History and Industrial Heritage in the 21st Century. Professor Palmer is a leading authority on industrial heritage and its archaeology, and an interesting speaker.

Tickets cost £10, from mobaw@hotmail.com for more details.

Avon Local History and Archaeology

If you have a more general interest in history and archaeology you may like to join the ALHA, see <https://www.alha.org.uk/>

Volunteer Workdays 2022

Planned for the 3rd or 4th SATURDAY each month, but check the website for late changes.

May 14th June 18th July 16th August 20th September 17th(Provisional), and October 15th .

We start at 9.30am, and provide free tea and coffee, so why not bring a picnic lunch.



Tasks planned for 2022

- Let an engineering consultancy contract to design repairs to the deck-plates.
- Investigate and record the hydraulic equipment below ground on the Tongue.
- Investigate how to release and re-tighten the southern top-tube tie-rods.
- Measure the twist on the bridge-deck, and the tail-wheel alignment.
- Carry out conservation on several localised severely rusting areas.
- Complete the installation of the south ram.
- Paint out graffiti on and around the Swivel Bridge.
- Control destructive vegetation on the 'Tongue'.
- Complete the video of the Western Harbour heritage.
- Prepare for the Project's tenth anniversary celebration in 2023.
- Continue to raise the profile of the Swivel Bridge and work towards its restoration.

WE NEED YOUR HELP.....

NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED - just turn up at the Bridge off Brunel Lock Road, BS1 6XS at 9.30am and we'll provide an induction and guidance on safe working.

If you are a newcomer, don't worrywe are a really friendly lot !

Contact Geoff Wallis on jandgwallis@gmail.com, M: 0758-4060806

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT.

www.brunelsotherbridge.org.uk
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