



HISTORY ON LNBP BOATS

Dave Otway provides a potted history and some significant highlights

“OUR FIRST BOAT WAS ST MICHAEL, NO NEED TO SAY WHO PROVIDED THE BULK OF THE INITIAL BUILD FUNDING. THE BUILD TOOK PLACE DURING 1982/3 AND SHE WAS LAUNCHED IN JANUARY 1984. RENAMED MICHAEL IN 1986.

“WITH THE PROJECT GOING LONDON WIDE IT WAS DECIDED WE NEEDED A SECOND BOAT TO MEET INCREASED DEMAND AND FUNDS WERE RAISED TO BUILD MEGAN IN 1986, DULY LAUNCHED IN 1987. MERLIN FOLLOWED IN 1991, ORIGINALLY BUILT TO ACCOMODATE THE PARTIALLY SIGHTED.

“DESPITE A LOT OF TENDER LOVE AND CARE OVER THE YEARS IT WAS DECIDED THAT OUR AGEING OLD LADIES NEEDED REPLACING AND IT WAS DECIDED IN 2000 TO RAISE FUNDS TO BUILD TWO NEW BOATS WITH THE AIM OF PASSING ON THE OLD BOATS TO OTHER SIMILARILY MINDED ORGANISATIONS, AND THEY ARE KNOWN TO STILL BE IN SERVICE ALBEIT NOT TOTHE STANDARD OF OUR CURRENT BOATS.



“THE FUNDS FOR THE BOATS WERE KICKSTARTED WHEN WE RECEIVED A LEGACY OF £25,000 AND THIS ENCOURAGED US TO APPLY TO THE NATIONAL LOTTERY FOR AN INPUT. THIS WOULDN'T BE OUR FIRST APPLICATION TO THEM AS BACK IN 1995 WE APPLIED FOR A GRANT IN THE VERY FIRST DISTRIBUTION BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY, FOR £10,000 TO ASSIST IN THE RENOVATION WORKS REQUIRED ON MEGAN AND WERE ONE OF THE VERY FIRST LONDON CHARITYS TO RECEIVE AN AWARD.

HAVING WORKED OUT ESTIMATED COSTINGS TO BUILD AND FIT OUT TWO NEW REPLACEMENT BOATS AT APPROXIMATELY £260,000, WE APPLIED FOR £160,000 ON THE BASIS THAT WE WOULD RAISE THE REST OURSELVES HAVING ALREADY RECEIVED SOME ENCOURAGING SUPPORT. WE FAILED AT OUR FIRST APPLICATION BUT WERE ENCOURAGED TO REAPPLY WHICH WE DID AND IN APRIL 2001 WE WERE GRANTED £160,000 AND WE WERE ABLE TO PROCEED WITH THE BUILD OF OUR PRESENT COMMUNITY BOATS LANCELOT & GUINEVERE. WE WERE ABLE TO KEEP CLOSELY INVOLVED IN THEIR BUILD, WITH THE SHELLS BEING ASSEMBLED BY ROGER HARRINGTON OPPOSITE OUR MOORINGS WITH UNION CANAL CARRIERS, AND THE INTERIOR FIT OUTS COMPLETED BY UCC IN THEIR DRY DOCK. QUITE A BRAUNSTON FAMILY AFFAIR.

THE BOATS WERE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 2002 AND A NAMING CEREMONY CARRIED OUT AT THE 2003 BIRMINGHAM BOAT SHOW BY ALEX LESTER OF RADIO 2 AND WITH BOTH BOATS MOORED UP BY BRINDLEY PLACE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.



“IN 2003 WE RECEIVED A RUNNERS UP AWARD IN THE ANNUAL WATERWAYS RENAISSANCE EDUCATION SECTION.

WE HAVE BEEN ATTENDING THE ANNUAL CRICK BOAT SHOW SINCE 2003 WHICH HAS BECOME OUR MAJOR MARKETING EXERCISE AND WERE APPOINTED THE OFFICIAL CHARITY OF THE SHOW IN 2010 WHEN IT WAS RUN BY THE BRITISH WATERWAYS. WHEN WATERWAYS WORLD MAGAZINE TOOK OVER THE RUNNING OF THE SHOW ON BEHALF OF THE CANAL AND RIVER TRUST WE WERE APPOINTED THEIR OFFICIAL SHOW CHARITY PARTNERS, A POSITION WE HAVE HELD SINCE 2011, RUNNING THE TRIP BOATS AND PROVIDING THE FACE PAINTERS AND ALSO HAVING ONE OF OUR COMMUNITY BOATS MOORED IN A PRIME SPOT IN THE INNER MARINA AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.





HIGHLIGHT IN 2006 WAS RECEIVING THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES WITH REPRESENTATIVES BEING INVITED TO A BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY AND ALSO TO A ROYAL RECEPTION AT THE PALACE TO MEET THE QUEEN AND THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY, INCLUDING A PRIVATE AUDIENCE WITH THE PRINCESS ROYAL.





“WE CONTINUE TO RUN AS A COMPLETELY VOLUNTARILY RUN, NON PROFIT MAKING CHARITY, PROVIDING FACILITIES THROUGH ITS TWO 12 BERTH RESIDENTIAL BOATS FOR MAINLY YOUNGSTERS FROM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY TO BE INTRODUCED TO PART OF THEIR HERITAGE AND THE JOYS AND BENEFITS OF CANAL BOATING. SOME OF THESE ORGANISED GROUPS OF YOUNGSTERS MAY COME FROM UNDERPRIVELEGED BACKGROUNDS AND WE PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY THAT MAY NOT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN AVAILABLE TO THEM.

“SOME OF THE BENEFITS INCLUDE DEVELOPING TEAM BUILDING SKILLS, LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND IMPROVING PERSONAL SELF ESTEEM. THE GROUPS COME FROM A BROAD RANGE INCLUDING THOSE FROM INNER CITY BACKGROUNDS, SPECIAL NEEDS AND UNIFORMED GROUPS AND WE PROVIDE OUR OWN TRAINED AND EXPERIENCED SKIPPERS TO ASSIST THE GROUP LEADERS IN MAKING THE TRIPS A SUCCESSFUL AND ENJOYABLE EXERCISE.