

Marine Craft Restoration Team – Hendon Museum

Report by Team Leader – Nigel Simmons (19th July 2015);

Things at Hendon are currently in a state of flux due to the fact that the whole site is going to be redeveloped on a more up-to-date format. The good news is that the boats will remain there, which was in doubt earlier this year, but no longer in their present position. On the 16th July 2015 we had yet another meeting with the management to discuss this, I having been there as well.

Earlier this year the vessels were surveyed by a curator from RN's conservation of wooden vessels team, we were not invited to attend or have been made privy to his report, but it would appear that he said that if they were not dried out and put under some sort of cover the future outlook was pretty bleak for them. This underlines what we have been saying for many years. The upshot is, that for the short term, they will be covered by tarpaulins with air circulation for the winter months and we are assisting in the planning for this, the first thing is to get the engines out of 1374, and that will happen at the end of September. The site as you may know pretty open and the "windage" poses a problem as does the chafing of the sheets on any projections, as funding could well be a bit of a problem I feel that this may be the situation for a few years.

The museum funding was in a parlous state earlier this year and it was not until early July that monies became available for the purchase of paint etc for us to do any meaningful work on the hulls which much needed redecoration, but we are now pressing ahead with the preparation and painting of the port side of 1374 and the starboard side of 2757, these being their "public" sides. The team itself has shrunk to only three able to do the necessary climbing about on the trestles so it's not very high speed work.

The Club will be represented at the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain weekend at Hendon on the 12th-13th September, we are having a Gazebo set up by the launches with photographs of our work together with a Sea Griffon engine and a screen showing the film "RAF at Sea", hopefully to get a bit of public interest, a big yellow engine usually works.

If anyone Club member would like further information on the work of the team at Hendon, or perhaps how to get involved, please contact Nigel directly. Please be aware Nigel had a brush with throat cancer a few years ago and finds vocal communication a struggle sometimes. Therefore, could you please contact him by text or Whatsapp on 07906404699.

Nigel Simmons