

Dear Member,

Well, I promised you good weather in my last Newsletter, and we have certainly had it. Wall to wall sunshine for quite a while, and we have managed to avoid the hose-pipe ban, up to now. A little too hot for some? I personally do not like it very hot, but it does bring out the pretty dresses! The lack of rain has not affected the running of the engines at the Mill, as all the water stored in the Lancashire boiler, once it has been turned into steam, is then condensed and returned. So, we use very little water, and the Lancy boiler is still almost full. It is however very hot in both engine houses, and the boiler house. The only issue is that in hot weather the cooling tower does not work as well and so the condenser is not as effective as it might be at generating a vacuum.

That is the end of the compulsory comment on the British weather. As mentioned before, our two stalwarts, Brian and Peter, have made an amazing overhaul of the Pilling loom, which is now churning out excellent tea-towels. They then turned their attention to the Cooper loom, and have rebuilt that. They have just started to weave some plain white cloth, which we hope to sell for things such as curtain lining. We used to do that in the past, but I do not think the loom has run since the early nineties.



Financially speaking, the Trust has done reasonably well this season. Not only with visitor numbers, but also by way of donations - some of them very generous, In spite of this, all donations are very gratefully received, as we are in need of a great deal of funding for things beyond our day to day running costs. There is the always pressing need to keep the chimney in good order, and of course, we never know what work may need to be done to the Cornish boiler each year. As if he has not done enough for us already with his work on the looms, Peter, shown in the photo above has decided to celebrate his 78th birthday in September by walking the Three Peaks of Whernside, Ingleborough and Pen-y-Ghent and he invites you to support him with donations to the Trust, which you can make either by post to the Mill or using the 'Donate' button on the Home Page of our web site. Thank you Peter!

We still need to carry our repairs to the front wall of the old garage now housing the Bradley Engine. One of our members has drawn up plans for a number of options and we hope to apply for planning permission in the near future. We will then need to seek Grant Funding for the majority of the cost.

We are still involved in an on-going dispute over Highways Drainage charges with United Utilities, which has hung over us for a long time, like the Sword of Damocles. They have suggested a way we might reduce the charge, but are now failing to respond to our letters.

During the Steaming at the end of May we found a leaking 2 inch water pipe in the cellar. It should have delivered cold water to the condenser, but was washing the floor instead. It was removed the following weekend and found to be corroded all along its underside where it had been in contact with the damp floor – as you can see on the left! ‘The newness had gone out of it’ – as they say. No one can remember when it was put in, but it was a long time ago. A new pipe was put in with clearance from the floor. We are very fortunate that one of our volunteers (another Jim) used to do this sort of thing for a living and still does it with great efficiency. The new pipe is the one in the front in the picture



on the right.



At the following Steaming it was found that the return pump from the hot-well was not operating as it should. It was discovered that a piece of absorbent material, used to soak up surface oil films, had been drawn into the end of the pump pipe. (The Treasurer [who is typing this] was implicated in this school-boy error!) Young Pip was duly summoned and, lying at full length, with his arm up to the armpit in water, managed to extract the material.

We had had a couple of private Steamings in July; one for the Rotary Club of Ribblesdale, the other was for works outing for the employees and families of an I.T. firm, more than 80 people all together. Most of them arrived in an old London Transport double deck bus - which the young children thought was marvellous. They had organised a large marquee at the top of the car park, and caterers to provide a large variety of goodies and a barbeque. Of course, in addition, both our engines were in steam. It was a very hot day and everyone, except perhaps the Engine Tenders and the Firebeater, appeared to have a very good time. The following day was a regular public steaming day and the Land Rover Series 2 Club made another visit, which attracted a car park full of vehicles - some quite interesting and unusual. This was also the day we had invited the Mayor of Pendle to visit (something we try to do every year) and he surprised us by bringing with him Andrew Stephenson MP - MP for Pendle and a supporter of the Mill.



If you or any of your friends would like to hire the mill for a Private Steaming, perhaps as a birthday surprise, please get in touch with Ian McKay, the Secretary on 01695 424166 or info@bancroftmill.org.uk

Ady, the fire beater, seems to be able to keep pressure up for both engines as the Eastwood one does not use a lot of steam. We try to run them alternately to even the supply of steam out. So far, this season, we have certainly not been short of wood for a change. The piles of pallets rather clutter the yard up, but we are restricted so far as storage space is concerned, and we dare not refuse any offers of decent boiler fodder. We have five steaming days to come this year, so must get what we can. We get through a large amount of wood each steaming day, as you may imagine.

Before I leave the subject of steaming days, may I remind you that the National Heritage Open Weekend takes place on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th September. Try to come if you can, and bring some friends with you - remember it is free entry on that weekend so your friends can come for free, but we do encourage them to spend money in the Café and shop – we have replenished our stock of unique Bancroft Mill tea-towels!

Our email address info@bancroftmill.org.uk continues to bring interesting and unusual questions. In early August we had an enquiry from a gentleman in the Netherlands who was interested in Green's Economisers of the sort fitted behind our Lancashire Boiler. He had found a photograph on the internet, but wanted further details of the drive mechanism for the scrapers (seen on the right) and asked if we could supply him photos from a different angle. We sent him some within a week and he was so pleased that he very kindly sent us a donation of £40.



A great number of you who could not attend the AGM in June sent in your postal or email votes on the very important question of setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which would in due course replace the present Bancroft Mill Engine Trust. All those at the meeting and who sent in their votes were in favour of the motion and so work has begun on setting up the CIO. We await news from the Charity Commission. We will keep you up to date with progress, but just to reiterate, outwardly, it will not be any different, and we will still be a charity with the same objectives, but it will put important safeguards in place, especially with regard to the Trustees. Life Members will still have free access on steaming days and instead of offering annual membership in future we will offer an annual admission ticket for the same price as current membership.

Here are the remaining Steaming Days for this season:

- Sat 8th September Heritage Weekend
- Sun 9th September
- Sun 30th September
- Sun 21st October
- Sun 11th November With Sid Calderbank and friends from the Lancashire Society

We look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Jim Gill. August 2018 (Tel: 01282 865626)