

STEAMSHIP

FRESHSPRING

SOCIETY



# FRESHSPRING NEWS



Spring 2014

## Chairman's Report

At the end of our first year, I am pleased to report that the Trust is performing well. Our Trustees have been active in many areas as will be reported.

One project is arranging to have patterns made for the manufacture of a new turning mechanism, which is used to turn the main engine over when stationary. Many other works are being carried out on the ship as will be seen in John Austin's report. John is a stalwart volunteer with very valuable skills and has become the Project Manager for works on the ship. He has also been appointed as a Trustee to ensure his skills are available to assist with managing the overall project.

The AGM was very successful with virtually half of our members turning up. They came from as far afield as Newcastle, Preston and Cornwall. I am very grateful for the commitment shown as it ensured the AGM was lively and very constructive. At the end of the meeting, we all went to the ship to spend time looking at the work that has been carried out by the energetic volunteers.

Membership continues to rise and many members are indicating that they would like greater involvement, which is very good news. The project needs people in many ways, from working on the ship to the many jobs which keep the Trust operational and funds coming in.

We have ended the year with funds in the bank thanks to active Trustees and generous members. It is a good way to start the second year. We do, however, need to work hard to raise the funds required to really move the project forwards.

We are pleased that we now have the ship's bell. It was donated to the project by Donald Burgess, the brother of Oswald Burgess, who purchased the ship from MOD. The acquisition of the bell is a significant boost to the morale of the team.

I, along with others, have attended several meetings in Bristol to gain support for the ship returning there long term. This is looking very promising and a recent meeting with the Mayor and officers highlights a desire to embrace historic vessels in the city.

*Freshspring* is still lying in the berth at Newnham and we are concerned that she must be moved prior to next winter. She took a real battering during the floods and high tides with a tidal bore of up to four feet hitting her on each flood. No immediate damage has been caused but there is potential for material to become lodged under the hull and pierce the bottom. The



yard owner Fred Larkham has agreed to move the ship into a protected pill in the near future.

Recently, the ship was visited by Lord & Lady Attlee who showed real enthusiasm for the plans of the Trust. I look forward to keeping them involved.

Andy Banks, a shipbroker, ran the Blackpool Hilton Marathon on 6th April to raise funds for the ship and we have received some £1,500 which will be carefully used.

Some of you will have been members for almost a year now so please make sure you renew when the time comes as your membership is vital for the project to succeed. The ship belongs to its members and as a unique vessel, we must succeed in preserving her.

Once again, I would sincerely like to thank you for being a member of the Trust and hope you will stay with us for the long haul, bringing *SS Freshspring* back to a productive future. We have many tasks ahead and need a huge range of skills and abilities to manage the project, both during restoration and once the ship is operational. If you have time and would be prepared to help in some way, please let me know. No matter where you live, you can be a very valuable supporter.

**John Puddy**  
(Chairman)



The First ever Annual General Meeting of the Steamship Freshspring Society was held at the Dean Heritage Centre in the Forest of Dean on Saturday 8th March, a historic occasion indeed.

## Society Patron

*We are delighted to welcome Lord Attlee as a Patron of the Trust. Lord Attlee is active in the vintage heavy vehicle movement and I am sure will be a prominent figure in developing the status of the Trust. He became aware of Steamship Freshspring Society via an article in Nautilus Telegraph, a maritime union paper. John Puddy asked him for a few words which are reproduced below:*

"I am delighted to accept the position of Patron of the Steamship Freshspring Society. I have only recently become aware of even the existence of the ship, let alone her uniqueness and great potential when brought back into class as an operational steamship.

My experience of restoration to date is mainly with heavy commercial and military vehicles and I am currently totally rebuilding my Thornycroft Mk.II Antar. However, I am extremely determined and do understand the challenges that lie ahead with the restoration of SS *Freshspring*, which is a fascinating and valuable project. I am currently very active in the House of Lords and I anticipate that my main contribution to the Trust will be behind the scenes and in an advisory role supporting the dedicated team of volunteers."

**John Attlee**

## Secretary's notes

Just a quick note to thank all who were able to attend our inaugural AGM in March. It was good to see all of you and hope that you enjoyed your trip out to see *Freshspring*. Prior to the AGM, you should have received our statement of accounts and activities to date. If you did not receive this and would like a copy, please email me at [info@ssfreshspring.co.uk](mailto:info@ssfreshspring.co.uk).

With the end of year, I have been busy putting together the Trustee Annual Report as required by the Charity Commission. This is something that has to be submitted by every registered charity, but fortunately due to our current turnover, it is not too onerous yet.

**Stephen Attenborough**

## A visit to the NMM archives

I had learnt via Barry Smith last year that the National Maritime Museum held some documents relating to the *Fresh* class of ships after the MOD closed its Foxhill facility, including the Ship's Cover for *Fresh's* Director of Naval Construction's design file.

An email or two later to the very helpful staff at the archives, and I discovered they also held a number of technical drawings and ships' books for the class, though unfortunately not *Freshspring's*, but I was sure the books available would still be

useful to view. With appointments made, I took a train up to London, followed by a trip on the Docklands Light Railway (a first for me) which saw me heading for an anonymous looking archives building nestled away in the Woolwich Arsenal.

With a 'Fit to Tow' survey of the ship a week previous, the aim of this trip was to learn more about the information they held and if possible, get a copy of any 'trim and stability' data they might have. This data is particularly useful to us as it contains information required for any towage of *Freshspring*.

I found these few interesting snippets while reading through the archives: Reading through the book for *Freshpool*, it was interesting to read that when she was re-fitted in 1965, the lifeboats and davits were removed and two 20 man inflatable liferafts were fitted in their place, so it might be reasonable to assume that a similar course of action took place on *Freshspring* around that time.

I was able to find information relating to the sea trials of *Freshspring* on 4th February 1947 on the Ribble Estuary, which turned out to be eventful as during the 'Astern Trial from Full Ahead to Full Astern', to quote from the report, "*the vessel grounded on the sandy bank due to the fact that a pin in the reversing handle has become loose probably through vibration and had dropped out. This was not discovered until the telegraph had been put to full astern and it was found that the vessel did not respond. The engines were immediately stopped, but the weigh on the vessel carried her onto the bank, and with the ebbing tide it was not possible for her to be got off.*"

Fortunately for all concerned, she was floated off at the next tide and no damage was found due to the grounding. The remainder of the trials were completed successfully until, when entering the wet dock at Fleetwood some days later, avoiding action had to be taken due to other ships in the dock and she fouled the dock side, damaging hull plating, which was soon rectified so that she could be handed over on the following Monday.

Trials showed a speed of 10.377 knots over a measured course, at engine revs of 184.9 and a total indicated horse power of 437.

For her initial voyage to Malta it was recommended that they steam at half power (230 IHP), a speed of 8¼ knots, so that coal consumption could be kept down to 6¾ tons per day to enable them to have enough coal to travel from Falmouth to Gibraltar in one hop.

Together with her sister ship *Freshspray*, *Freshspring* was converted to oil firing in 1956, to be followed by *Freshpool* the next year, *Freshburn* and *Freshpond* in 1960 and *Freshlake* in 1963.

Towards the end of my time at the archives, I struck gold, finding a large sheet plotting out Curves of Statical Stability for *Freshpond* and a Statement of Metacentric Heights and Stability for *Freshburn*, both of which we now have copies in our own archives. Another trip to the archives in the future would be very useful as many of the pictures taken on my digital camera failed to come out clearly, but at least I managed to get the vital information we needed in the short term.

**Stephen Attenborough**

**Steamship Freshspring Society**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**on Saturday 8th March 2014, held at the Dean Heritage**  
**Centre, Camp Mill, Soudley, Gloucestershire, GL14 2UB**  
**Start:12:00. Finish: 2:45pm.**

**Attendance:** Fifteen members of the Trust, with four observers.

**Apologies:** John D Tucker, David Swain, Ian Finlator, Michael Davis, Humphrey Avon, John Kempton, Hugh Brading.

### 1. Welcome and apologies

The chairman (John Puddy) welcomed the gathered members and observers and received apologies.

### 2. Chairman's report

The chairman related the history of *Freshspring* to date and how she was mothballed in the 1970s before being purchased by Oswald Burgess and brought to Bristol with the intention of burning waste. While at Bristol, some of the bridge equipment was stolen which rendered her inoperable. She then moved to Gloucester for a short period before being moved to her current berth where she has been for the past 20 years. The berth at Newnham is not ideal as constant movement has worn down the hull plates in several places. Work over the past year has included working closely with the Steam Boat Association (SBA) with articles published in *Funnel*, the house magazine.

### 3. Forward plan and general activity updates

The Chairman explained how a forward plan has been created with the aim to be self-sustainable by working as a coastal cruising ship around the United Kingdom. Some analysis of potential competitors has taken place, many of whom show very healthy bookings, further suggesting there is room for *Freshspring* to provide coastal cruising experiences.

The object of the trust revolves around education with a focus on young people. An educational programme is to be formed around maritime engineering and seafaring skills, promoting the advantages of careers at sea. The project will link with schools to provide lesson plans and activities that could culminate with a visit to *Freshspring* when she visits a port within reach of schools.

Work has taken place to raise the profile of the ship in the media as she is thought to be the last sea-going coastal steamer in the world and hence is important in maritime history. She is duly recognised as such by National Historic Ships. Applications for membership of the trust have also begun to be accepted since formation a year ago.

Forward plans are being made for *Freshspring* to be accepted into Bristol

floating harbour, where there would be improved access for members of public and volunteers. This move will enable education work to commence locally. Meetings have taken place with the Mayor of Bristol and his deputies, who are keen to see her back in Bristol. It has been estimated that Bristol gains £6m from visitors to the docks, so they are keen to further develop the presence of heritage vessels. It is envisaged that much of the restoration work would take place in the Albion dock in Bristol and provide jobs for locals.

We are planning to be in Bristol in 12 months. Cosmetically the ship requires attention and the hull has been surveyed and considered suitable for a tow to Bristol. After temporary repairs to the hull, she will be good enough to stay afloat in Bristol.

Current plans are for full restoration costing £1.8m, the majority of which would be sourced from the Heritage Lottery Fund. In many ways we are further ahead than *Daniel Adamson* (a steam tug in Liverpool) in that more of *Freshspring* has survived and she has not been neglected for a long period of time.

Over the year, volunteers have worked to keep the water out of the hull, undertaken works to slow down deterioration and carry out works towards making the ship fit to tow. The 'Fit to Tow' survey limits the sea conditions in which *Freshspring* can be moved, so we are restricted to local docks, being Albion in Bristol or Sharpness.

More volunteers are required as much of the works have been carried out by only four key volunteers so far.

A business plan is being created, with a planned schedule of steerable operation in year seven. The plan also includes research into fuel costs and revenue projections and has been prepared from the beginning with the aim of sustainability.

### 4. Financial report and acceptance of accounts

The secretary (Stephen Attenborough) reported that a total income of £17,416.92 had been received to date, including two donations, each of £5,000, given due to our educational aims. £805.89 has been received from HMRC for Gift Aid on donations, making it worthwhile to fill out the Gift Aid declaration when possible. Expenditure of £1,446.13 has been recorded, the majority of which is due to insurance costs. An additional cost for next year will be mooring fees.

Due to the relatively small turnover, the accounts do not have to be audited but will be submitted to the Charities Commission. Although not currently VAT registered, we will be investigating the benefits of registering.

### 5. Membership report

The membership secretary (Mark Rozelaar) reported that to date there are 41 members from all over the UK and one from Canada. A system has been included on our website so that new membership applications can now be made by PayPal. Junior members are welcome, but if they wish to be active on board, they would have to be accompanied by a relative, who must also be a member.

## 6. Ship report

John Austin reiterated the point that the on board volunteer group is small and requires more people. A task list has been drawn up that lists progress and priority of each task, so we work towards the correct goals.

In the year, two surveys have taken place, 'Fit to Tow' and a preliminary boiler survey, the latter indicating that the boiler is in good order, but will need the fittings serviced before further use and the air pre-heater re-tubed. We have been advised not to start too soon on these tasks due to the risk of losing track of components or accidental damage.

The 'Fit to Tow' survey identified a cropped hole between two of the water tanks that will require repair prior to the tow. As these tanks are being used as extra stores for wood and ropes, another of the tanks is being prepared to move the flammable materials, so the welding may be carried out in safety.

Where the original had been removed at deck level, a new combing has been reinstated on the aft deck over the engineers' accommodation to reduce the ingress of rain water and potential waves during the tow.

Works on board have included general weatherproofing, with blanking of redundant pipework and application of 'flashband' over rust holes in the superstructure. A 110 volt shore supply has been established and some 110 volt tools purchased. For safer access and working, a new gangway has been installed and portable ventilation equipment purchased.

The forward ballast tank was holed due to corrosion on the water line, but this has now been temporarily sealed and the silt pumped out to gain buoyancy. The chain locker is also holed very low down, which has required removal of the chains (now on deck) and work is progressing to flush the silt out.

Old fuel oil is being removed from the bunkers which are being dried out to reduce pollution risk and docking costs.

All machinery continues to be regularly oiled and turned where possible, but this is not currently possible on the main engine due to a failed turning gear, but Alan Freebury is working towards sourcing a replacement.

## 7. PR and publications report

Brian Gooding introduced himself with a brief history of his experience in the heritage sector, with his involvement in Hollycombe, *Vintage Spirit* and *Old Glory*. Over the year, articles have appeared in the *Nautilus Telegraph*, which is widely circulated to mariners, *Warship World*, *Funnel* and *Vintage Spirit*.

A banner has been commissioned for use at shows to promote our cause and help build our corporate identity, and a signwriter has created two wooden replica nameboards, based on the original we have from sister ship, *Freshburn*. The boards are of a high quality and hence can be used when at sea.

Brian is to attend the Great Dorset Steam Fair later this year and plans to promote *Freshspring* alongside *Vintage Spirit*. To help promote our cause, plans are in place to commission a model of *Freshspring* for display at shows.

## 8. Election of Chairperson and Trustees

All trustees stood down and trustees were elected as follows after each giving a brief résumé.

**John Austin** was proposed by John Puddy, seconded by Alan Freebury.

**Mark Rozelaar** was proposed by John Austin, seconded by Paul Collis.

**Alan Freebury** was proposed by Charles Donovan, seconded by Roger Hibbert.

**Brian Gooding** was proposed by Mark Rozelaar, seconded by John Richards.

**Martyn Ashworth** was proposed by Alan Freebury, seconded by John Richards.

**Stephen Attenborough** was proposed by John Richards, seconded by Mark Rozelaar.

**John Puddy** was proposed by Charles Donovan, seconded by Mark Rozelaar.

All were unanimously elected by a show of hands by members.

## 9. Election of President & Vice Presidents

**John Richards** was proposed to become a Vice President by John Puddy, seconded by Brian Gooding. A show of hands gave unanimous approval.

John Puddy continues to pursue a President or Patron for the trust as a name that could help the project.

## 10. Changes to constitution and vote

John Puddy explained the proposed change that would allow retiring trustees to be immediately re-elected at an AGM, rather than taking a sabbatical by removing the following text from the constitution '*but will be subject to annual retirement at every subsequent annual general meeting until they have had an interval of at least one year. A charity trustee who has served for a total of six consecutive years may not be reappointed for a seventh consecutive year but may be reappointed after an interval of at least one year.*'

The change was proposed by Charles Donovan, seconded by John Austin and a show of hands gave unanimous approval.

## 11. Any points raised by Members in question and answer session

Kevin Slater enquired after working party regimes. John Austin replied that working parties are usually on Mondays and a day every other weekend, but could be increased if more volunteers are available.

Rob Buckel suggested a 'scroungers list' be circulated, so that smaller parts and tools that might be required on board can be identified and if found by members, sent to the ship.

## 12. Summing up with action plan and how members can help

John Puddy summed up the meeting and encouraged members to get involved, be it on board or at a distance with publicity and promotion of the cause. He stated, this is your ship and we need as much support as we can get to ensure her future.

After the meeting, lunch was taken at the venue before a visit to *Freshspring*.

The Trust has just acquired this totally unique 1:32 scale model of *SS Freshspring* built to a very high standard by a local modelmaker. The model is four feet long and operable. It will be used to promote *SS Freshspring* at events and shows. This will help considerably in increasing awareness of the Trust and its objectives.



## Freshspring team goes to Gaydon

John Puddy & Brian Gooding attended the Annual General Meeting of the Steam Boat Association in March, which was held at the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon in Warwickshire. The meeting was well attended by SBA members and a lot of interest was shown in the SS *Freshspring*. We took along the new society banner and one of the newly made nameboards, as well as the ship's bell and a whistle that has been in

John's possession for many years.

The meeting was amiably chaired by Rev. Mark Rudall (right) and started with an auction conducted by Alan Keef (left). Later we heard from the SBA President, Sir Neil Cossons and Richard Clammer of the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, two very interesting addresses which made us all realise how precarious the world of ship preservation has been and continues to be. **BG**



A look back to the 1980s to when *Freshspring* was based in Bristol's Floating Harbour, as seen in Richard Clammer's picture above. The current vulnerability of the ship is clear in this dramatic picture of the *Freshspring* with only the funnel visible (below), taken earlier this year when a larger than normal Severn Bore almost overwhelmed the ship.





## From the Director, National Historic Ships

Dear John

I am writing to you to confirm the significance of *Freshspring* to the maritime heritage of the United Kingdom. The Statement of Significance below sets down in detail the importance of this vessel. I would draw particular attention to the fact that once conserved and restored under the national guidelines set down in the manual *Conserving Historic Vessels*, this ship will be the only vessel with the characteristics of the many steam coasters which plied the UK waters still in operational use. The Statement reflects all the known aspects of this ship's history and it is of the greatest importance that *Freshspring* is saved for an active and sustainable future role.

### Statement of Significance - *Freshspring*

*What is the vessel's ability to demonstrate history in her physical fabric?*

Completed in 1946, the hull and superstructure are entirely of riveted construction incorporating a traditional timber bridge amidships, a straight stem, and counter stern. Accommodation is deck crew forward and engineers aft, with the captain's cabin below the bridge. Lavatories and shower are in the forepeak and the galley is on the after deck. The boiler and triple expansion engine are original and are of similar configuration to those on sea going vessels from the turn of the century. All the steam-powered auxiliary machinery is original. Overall *Freshspring* is substantially intact from the time she was built whilst being highly evocative of early 20th century sea going steamships in style and features. Once operable, she will be the only small seagoing cargo steamship still in use.

*What are the vessel's associational links for which there is no physical evidence?*

*Freshspring* was the last of the *Fresh* class to be built, launched 15th August 1946, and completed 10th February 1947. Her engines and boiler were manufactured by the builders. She has become the sole survivor of her class. *Freshspring* on acceptance was directed to her first naval station at Malta, a passage which she made under her own power. We do not have the log for *Freshspring's* passage but we do have documentation for one of her sister ship *Freshpool* for the same passage which took 12 days, 9 hours 7 minutes and the coal consumption was 49 tons. The ship's best speed in favourable conditions is 9.5 knots. In the early 60s, she returned to the UK to operate on the Clyde and the west coast of Scotland. She was converted from coal to oil fuel in the 1950s. Surveyed and refitted at Ardrossan in 1969, she was then towed to Gareloch where she remained, 'mothballed', until being offered for sale in 1977. *Freshspring* was sold on 4th

July 1979 to a private owner, who towed her to Bristol, where she was going to be used for the experimental use of alternative fuels to power ships' engines. This never materialised and some time later, she was laid up in Gloucester and then Newnham on Severn where her condition continues to deteriorate.

*Freshspring* was the last coal fired seagoing steam cargo ship built at Lytham Shipbuilding & Engineering Co. with only the *Hazelfield* following her as an oil fired steamer. The yard had a famous and long history of building unusual sea and river craft. Richard Smith set up a shipbuilding company in Preston in about 1860 and built some 140 ships before the River Ribble was diverted to accommodate the Albert Edward Dock. This left the shipyard with no water in which to launch their ships. A new nine acre site was chosen in Lytham creek on the Lytham side of Liggard Brook where Smith set up business. The first vessel completed on this site was the steamer *Sunlight* in 1889 for Lever Brothers. Subsequently many ships were built for river and lake services within the colonies, many of which were boarded up and sailed under their own power to their destinations across the world. The yard never really recovered after the war and with the creek progressively silting up restricting the size of ships that could be built, it ultimately closed in 1955 with *Freshspring* and the steamer *Hazelfield* being the last ships launched. Now after constructing some 900 vessels, nothing remains except derelict slipways and piles of bricks.

The working life of *Freshspring* is typical of the small ships which served the warships of the Royal Navy. They were sent to various bases from Iceland to the Mediterranean and were designed to make long journeys by sea and the accommodation and facilities reflect this.

An ex RN Commander remembers *Freshspring* and adds this note: "*Freshspring* is the Naval water carrier that I recall; my memories are firstly of our difficulty in connecting to her enormous discharge hose with the 2in. deck fitting of our 52ft HSL *Bonnie Kate*. Finally they found us a reducer that served. Secondly, I remember the glitter of her engine room. The engineers had plenty of time to polish every scrap of non-ferrous they could find".

*How does the vessel's shape or form combine and contribute to her function?*

*Freshspring* has a large-volume hull to accommodate the cargo tanks. Her straight stem with whaleback housing heads and showers and full bows contribute to achieving maximum capacity within the overall dimensions of the ship, whilst the counter stern brings an element of elegance to her workaday hull-form. The galley, crew cabins, toilets and wash facilities installed for prolonged operations are simple and basic as was the norm on early steam ships. The Captain's cabin is below the bridge and slightly more lavishly appointed.

*Freshspring* – Registration Number 28 - was one of the first vessels to be registered on the National Register of Historic Vessels.

Yours sincerely

**Martyn Heighton**



# VOLUNTEER REPORT - Work on board

## 'Fit to Tow' update Feb 2014

David Byrne surveyed the ship in August 2013. His report included advice on works needed to prepare the ship for tow. Since then, work has been carried out in several areas to continue to stabilise the ship's general condition and to prepare to tow.

### 1 Enabling work to facilitate safe work on board

A heavy duty 110v transformer has been installed and connected into the ship's main distribution panel (shore 240v supply is connected when power required on board). Original ship's lighting has been restored and some deck lighting fitted. Further equipment has been purchased including water and oil pumps, high volume ventilation fan and ducting, 110v tools, and safety equipment.

### 2 General weatherproofing to reduce deterioration from rainwater ingress.

An ongoing task including items such as:

Replacing cracked/smashed glass in skylights and portholes.

Fitting blanking plates in lieu of loose covers where pipe fittings had been removed at deck level.

Cutting out corroded section of engine room escape hatch frame and welding in new.

### 3 Fit to Tow

#### 3.1 Forward Ballast Tank

Remove silt and fix temporary patches.

#### 3.2 Aft Accommodation

Fabricate 18 inch high coaming from 6mm steel and weld in place over deck hatchway. (Cover has been made and is ready to fit with hinges and hatch.)

#### 3.3 Chain Locker

Anchor windlass has been freed off, chains pulled out and ranged on deck. Silt has been removed to expose perforated shelf on which the chains rest and which permits runoff to drain to the bilges. Sections of this plate have been removed to date but further work is needed to remove the remainder and expose hull plating to allow patching of hull.

High river levels, even at low tide, have forced suspension of work because we need the berth to dry out while we attend to the hull.

#### 3.4 Fuel Oil

Port bunker is now drained of oil and dried out.

Starboard bunker has been pumped down to less than an inch remaining.

Completion is scheduled within the month.

### 3.5 Water Tanks

Port No.1 tank has been pumped out and is now being dried out to take the ropes and other combustible material currently stored in the No.2 tanks. This is preparatory work for weld repair to cuts in the longitudinal division between the tanks.

In addition to completing outstanding actions listed above, we intend to survey the pipe runs and valving arrangements within the ship as part of the 'Fit to Tow' work. We have two new volunteers with suitable experience.

It is envisaged that door/hatch seals will be replaced in the immediate run up to towing.

### The Bore

The Severn Bore has been a big concern this Spring, both from mooring and damage considerations.

When a wall of water several feet high hits the ship, it causes the bow to suddenly bob up, it funnels between ship and shore pushing the ship out, and as it carries all sorts of rocks and debris with it, these can be deposited under the ship ready to cause damage the next time it settles.

This Spring, one of the two forward ropes (attached to anchors buried well downstream) parted and the anchor buried in the adjacent field was dragged to within six feet of the edge. The gangway came off the quayside and ended up overboard. We have reattached the mooring rope and run a new one across the field to a tree. The gangway has been bolted and welded down.

### The Leak

The really big problem has been the leak!

Those of you who came on board after the AGM will remember that water was almost up to the floor plates in the boiler room, we presume as a result of damage from the Bore of a few days earlier.

Volunteers have spent many mucky days pumping out and trying to find the leak. In the way of these things, water only came in when no one was looking, and then not on every tide! However, the leak worsened considerably last week and after two days pumping out and clearing silt from odd corners, it was finally identified late on Saturday 12th April. On Sunday we went to the ship with the intention of sealing the leak with concrete, but the tide did not drop as low as expected and we ended up using a pad braced against the fixed floor plate. This can be replaced with concrete whenever there is a suitable tide.

The leak is actually a series of holes along a nine inch length of joggled joint between plates.

It is on the starboard side and just inboard of the bilge keel. The plates are damaged either side of the leak, just where objects could be trapped by the bilge keel.

## Housekeeping

While all this has been happening, we have made a start on improving the initial impression of the ship. Stephen has been busy removing algae from the superstructure and John R has started a clear up of the Captain's cabin.

## Asbestos

One big thing we are considering is asbestos. We are close to commissioning a professional survey and will then consider where to 'manage' and where to 'remove' – if in fact there is any asbestos. We have checked the ship ourselves and believe that contamination could be confined to boiler and engine rooms, although there is the possibility of small amounts being in the electric heaters and in spare gasket/packing material. In situ gaskets and packing will be subject to management.

## More Volunteering

None of the above work would have happened without volunteers, but we need to finish off the jobs we started before Christmas, and get *Freshspring* 'Fit to Tow'. Would old and new volunteers please contact me and we will arrange working days to suit.

**John Austin**

**john.austin@freshspring.co.uk**

**07967 114 346**

## Scrounge List

John would like to hear from anyone who can donate any of the following:

Any power tools, preferably 110v.

110v extension leads and work lamps.

240v heavy 16A extension leads.

Any Whitworth taps, dies, spanners, bolts, nuts, etc.

Clamps.

Painting/welding/other useful stuff.

## Archives

Records held by the SS Freshspring Society include a range of engineers' logs (for both *Freshspring* and a sister ship), drawings and photographs. We were also lucky enough to be given a selection of paperwork relating to other sister ships by the late Barry Smith. This includes further drawings including pipework diagrams and details of the disposal of these ships. I have started by scanning some of the A4 material we have, including some boiler records.

Whilst on my travels in Scotland, I found a booklet on Dawson Downie pumps which has also been scanned. This has some wonderful cross-sections of the pumps which I'm sure members will enjoy. If you have, or see anything like this that may be of use to *Freshspring*, please do get in touch.

## Membership

I'm delighted to report that we are now up to 48 members. These span the UK, including the Orkney Islands, Northumberland, Isle of Man and Cornwall, but our furthest afield member, however, is in Canada. It is very encouraging to see a steady flow of membership applications supporting the *Freshspring*.

Since our last *Freshspring News*, and in view of the articles in *Funnel* (the SBA magazine) and *Vintage Spirit*, we took the decision to add an online application form to the website with payment using PayPal, which does charge a small percentage, but it was felt that if joining is made as easy as possible, we stand the best possible chance of someone joining and thus keeping their interest and support.

Once again thank you for your support.

## Mark Rozelaar

*The Chairman adds:*

The Trust has now been inviting membership for one year and progressively more of you will be due to renew your membership. Thank you very much for ensuring that people are made aware of the project. Many people have joined on the recommendation of existing members. We will remind you when your membership is due for renewal, and sincerely hope that you will continue to support the SS *Freshspring*, which belongs to all Trust members.

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[www.ssfreshspring.co.uk](http://www.ssfreshspring.co.uk)

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