

MAID OF THE LOCH NEWSLETTER



March 2023 Issue 41
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70 YEARS YOUNG!

But no retirement in sight...

It is the Maid's Big Birthday, and we intend to celebrate with the whole Maid family.

Weekend openings of the Winch House, Slipway and Museum Cabin will be as interesting as ever with a return of our popular hard hat tours, interactive displays and activities for all ages. In Steam days throughout the season will add to the experience and we aim to reinstall the Steam Whistle, so come along and give a hoot!

Our knowledgeable guides will be telling the unique story that is the Maid and we'll have a new onboard art exhibition, "The Life Aquatic". There will be other events at Easter and Halloween.

Big excitement on 27 and 28 May when we'll have a look back at the 1950s and celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first sailing of the ship on Loch Lomond. This is an event for everyone. With vintage buses, cars, fire engine, model boats on the water, dancing, music and food and drink on the pier and more still to be added to the programme, so not to be missed!

Entry to our site is free with prices for additional activities like the exhibition or guided tours being minimal. We still need lots of donations to keep the Maid project going forward in these very challenging times. We really hope to see you over the season and don't forget to tell everyone that they can enjoy a unique day out with the Maid.

- Anne Urquhart, Volunteer Director.



LAUNCH EVENT

Friends, supporters and volunteers joined the directors of the Loch Lomond Steamship Company on 5.3.23 to celebrate 70 years since PS Maid of the Loch was launched from the Balloch Pier on Loch Lomond on 5.3.53



Birthday Cake

The busy event included a presentation of talks and sharing great stories and memories from over the last 70 years. Attendees ended the occasion by raising their

glasses for a toast after the birthday cake was cut by two of our longest serving volunteers – Hamish Teaze and Charles Inglis.

Thank you to those who made it along.



Cake cutting with Hamish and Charles



PADDLE PROGRESS



Components in the Dining Room

A small team led by volunteer Robert Cudahy is progressing well on preparing the components of the paddles for assembly.

A complex system of levers, brackets, arms, rods and swivel bearings all form part of the Jenny Nettles, the mechanism which adjusts the angles of the floats as the paddle wheels turn so they enter the water smoothly and are vertical when in the water for maximum leverage.

Components are held together by pins which are bolted tightly in the brackets and arms and a system of bronze sleeves, plastic bushes and spacers makes the paddle floats swivel as the paddles turn.

The team are currently trial fitting as many of these components as possible inside the dining room and making adjustments as needed to make them fit correctly.

Many of the parts are the originals from when the ship was built and have suffered wear and corrosion which makes them all slightly different. Every part and sub assembly is measured and identified so when full paddle assembly starts we know exactly which components go together. Once the smaller parts are finished the work will move outside on to the larger components as the weather improves.



Robert working with Jim Logan

VOLUNTEER FOCUS

GEORGE MCVICAR - MAID VOLUNTEER

George is a retired Civil Engineer, latterly working for Scottish Water as an Estimator until 2015. Prior to that he was a Resident Engineer on Water and Sewerage projects with Strathclyde Region and overseas in the Middle East.

He is a "Son of the Rock" and season ticket holder for Dumbarton FC (who celebrate their 150th Anniversary this year, a good few years more than the Maid), and enjoys music, attending festivals and gigs.

George told us, "I like to cycle, and one of my favourite routes is from Dumbarton to Balloch Pier, where I could enjoy a coffee from the pier café. On one visit, someone appeared wearing a boiler suit and we got chatting. He explained that he was working to restore the Maid, with a view to getting her sailing again.

I had no idea that this work was ongoing, and as I'd spent many happy hours ski-ing on Loch Lomond, and had fond memories of being on the Maid, I signed up as a volunteer. I was fortunate to have started just a couple of weeks before the engines ran for the first time for 38 years, in September 2019.

The engine was powered from an on shore boiler, and when the engine first turned it was like a sauna as there was so much steam. I'm sure that wasn't the only reason for so many wet eyes amongst the long-time volunteers.

One of my first jobs was to stop the leaks by replacing the packing around the glands, and although I'd some mechanical engineering experience, it was the first time I'd really used a spanner in earnest. I was very much the

apprentice. The only consolation was that I wasn't sent for "a bubble for a spirit level", or "a long ston", the usual apprentice's fate!

When the ship was moved onto the newly built cradle, I was involved in dismantling the Port side paddle floats and brackets, which was a major operation, taking over 5 months, and was a very steep learning curve for even the most experienced Engineers. In comparison, dismantling the Starboard floats and bracket took less than half the time once procedures had been established and perfected.

I also helped in the dismantling and removal of the boiler room pipework, internal metalwork, and sections of the hull, prior to the contracted marine engineers, installing the new sections of hull.

Most recently I've been helping build the new paddle floats, and preparation and painting of the starboard paddle.

I've learned so much, it's been a terrific experience, working with a great bunch of volunteers, and I'd encourage anyone who is looking for a fulfilling project to get involved."



HOLLYWOOD CALLS!

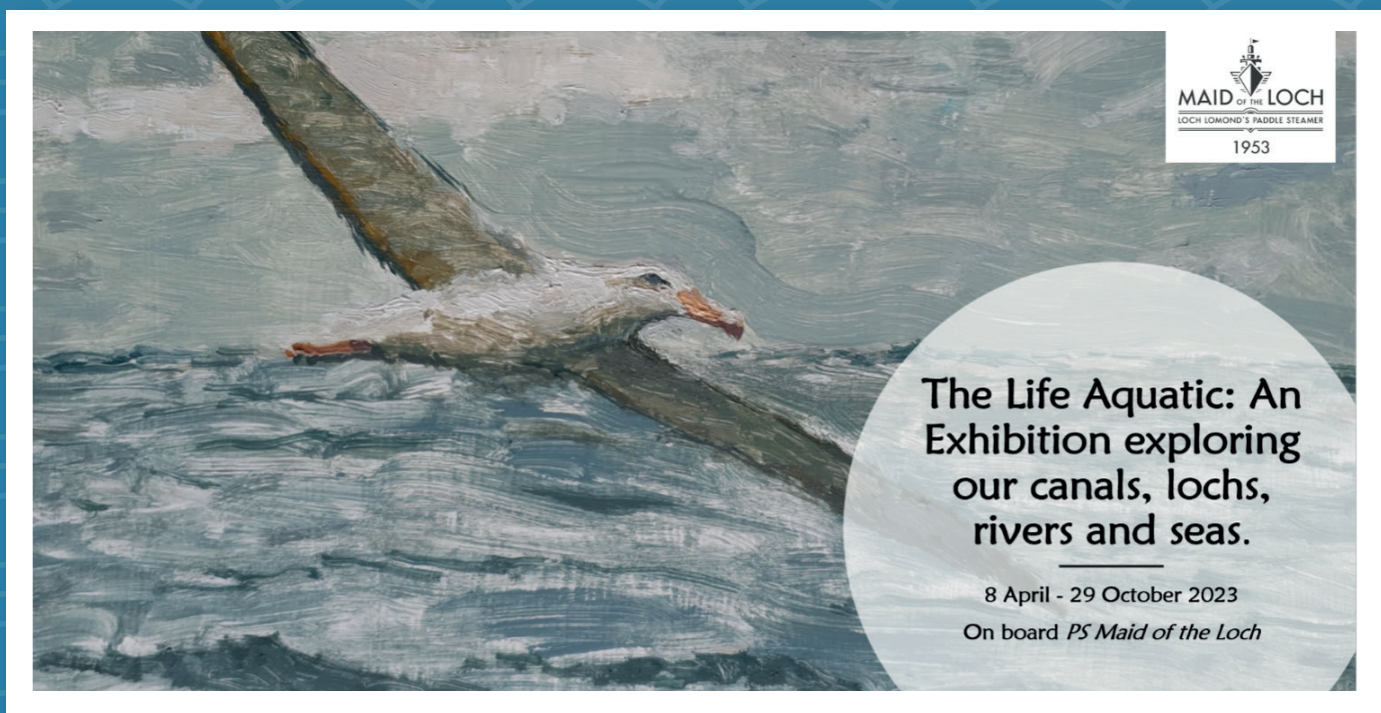
We don't know if the film mentioned here made it to the Baftas or the Oscars (did they exist in 1968?) but David McCallum, well known from his role in TV spy series 'The Man from Uncle', seems, according to this Australian newspaper, to have managed to grab some useful promotion for a comedy film by drawing attention to the Maid.

Is there any truth in this story? Could David McCallum verify? He will be an elderly man now but perhaps remembers? Nice to have the Maid connected with some Hollywood glam.

Thanks to David Mitchell the Director of Conservation at Historic Environment Scotland for finding this story.



The Western Herald, June 14 1968



THE LIFE AQUATIC

COMING SOON...

Our Programme Manager, Charli Summers, invited a specially selected group of artists to explore our bodies of water. Invited artists range from Scottish Masters and New Contemporaries to New Graduates and Local Makers. We also invited Jean's Bothy, a local arts therapy organisation to respond to the theme.

Artists have responded to themes such as seafaring at its most dramatic and dangerous with storms, shipwrecks and naval battles to sunny beaches, harbour, or tranquil shores. We also wanted to challenge artists to consider the big issues affecting aspects of change, such as declining fishing communities or the effects of marine pollution or the climate crisis. Locally or globally, The Life Aquatic will prompt old and create new memories, and the exhibition aims to enthuse artists and viewers and to enrich our maritime heritage.

Many works will be for sale so speak to onsite volunteer invigilators for more details.

**WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE EXHIBITION WHEN YOU VISIT US THIS SEASON.
£4 ENTRY ONLY OR FREE FOR FRIENDS OF THE MAID AND HARD HAT TOURS.**



HARD HAT TOURS

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

Our Ship on the Slip programme 2023 includes our exclusive one-hour long hard hat tours, led by our dedicated team of experienced volunteers.

This is a unique experience to see a working shipyard and Clyde-built ship undergoing major restoration before she returns to the pier. The original steam winch house will be in action on the last weekend of every month. We open from the Easter Weekend.

Along with ticket price - visitors have free access to our museum cabin, winch house and special exhibitions.



Tour of the slipway, 2022

BOOK TICKETS HERE:

[HTTPS://WWW.MAIDOFTHELOCH.ORG/2023-EVENTS](https://www.maidoftheloch.org/2023-events)

DREAMBOATS AND PETTICOATS

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 2023
SATURDAY 27TH AND SUNDAY 28TH

We will be celebrating all things from the 1950s this summer - the year our Maid was built. There will be vintage cars, buses, fire engines, musicians, family activities and much more.

**DETAILS TO FOLLOW
ON OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.MAIDOFTHELOCH.ORG**



NEW EXCLUSIVE MERCHANDISE CELEBRATING OUR 70TH BIRTHDAY

Rosneath based wood turner Maggie Irving has created these unique and elegantly carved items for us using wood from the Maid's old paddle floats. Paddle wooden items will be sold with a certificate of authenticity.

THESE ITEMS AND MANY MORE CAN BE PURCHASED FROM OUR ONLINE SHOP AT:
[HTTPS://WWW.MAIDOFTHELOCH.ORG/MAID-SHOP](https://www.maidoftheloch.org/maid-shop)



A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

The Loch Lomond Steamship Company treated their hardworking volunteers to a day trip to Fairfield Museum in Govan. Thanks to the Scottish Community Alliance for helping with the travel and sustenance costs.

Fairfield Heritage is a community museum dedicated to telling the story of Govan's role in world shipbuilding. Many of the volunteers at PS Maid of the Loch have a connection to shipbuilding and Fairfield. One of our engineers served his apprenticeship there and others had parents or grandparents who were also employed there. Charli Summers, The Programme Manager met with Abigail Morris and the museum volunteers in 2021 when Charli was researching collections for our newly built slipway museum and she thought that it would be a good community and learning event for the volunteers.

Fairfield Shipbuilding & Engineering Company Ltd, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries revolutionised sea transportation, building the largest and fastest vessels the world had ever seen. The permanent collections and special exhibitions on display are of interest to our volunteers and the visit included looking at the history of the Clyde where PS Maid of the Loch was built in the early 1950s.

Many of the volunteers at both community museums have a shared interest and history and it was also an opportunity to share stories of both the Maid and Fairfield.

A jolly good day was had!



WILD HIGHLANDS COFFEE AT THE PIER

Wild Highlands will be open 7 days a week from April to October 2023.

REMEMBER TO VOTE FOR US TO WIN THIS YEAR'S SCOTTISH BUSINESS AWARDS!

DETAILS BELOW:



vote now at
www.nominees.info/vote

Or text Wild Highlands
Coffee Balloch to
07520634133



MAID OF THE LOCH



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