

# MAID OF THE LOCH

# NEWSLETTER



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Photo credit: IAN NILSEN



Now that the “Ship on the Slip” and “The Historic Steam Winch House” are open for the 2024 we look forward to greeting visitors again when our very knowledgeable volunteer guides are ready to show you around and bring you up to date with our progress.

Despite the challenging winter conditions our volunteers have continued to make impressive progress. I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their dedication and efforts.

Behind the scenes the Board, with the assistance of our Project Manager, is laying the groundwork for significant grant applications. The development of a costed project plan is a critical element of the project which will provide the essential information for all funding bids.

The repairs to the hull making it watertight and the extensive refurbishment of the paddles, are without a doubt a major step forward in the journey of returning the ‘Maid’ to the pier and ultimately to sail again.

As ever we are very grateful for the volunteers’ efforts, financial support and support in kind that has brought the ‘Maid’ to this important juncture. We hope you will continue to help in whichever way you can.

*Iain Robertson, Chairman, LLSC*



# BOILER ROOM HULL ALMOST ALL RENEWED

Progress continues to be made in finalising the hull works with our contractor JPS Restoration such that final welding of the new panels has almost been completed. Photos show the tacked sections in place and the small section on the starboard bilge that is yet to be inserted.

Earlier delays in steel delivery has had a knock on effect on timing as we had programmed completion in January/February, but the end is in sight. Our volunteers continue to assist with adjusting props and tele-handler tasks as required.



# PADDLES KEEP TURNING

Paddle work continues on the port side but will have to be paused to allow repair of the spring beam pockets which are eroded. This will also delay refitting of the Jenny Nettles arrangement.



# BUILDINGS AS WELL!

Other works at the site include site surveys of our buildings courtesy of Community Led Local Development monies from the Scottish Rural Network for both the survey work and the mobile platform which we now own.



# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A FEW MONTHS MAKE

With funding from the Association of Industrial Archaeology, Eddie van der Stighelen of Vantech Engineering has spent many hours on an initial refurbishment of the Maid's steering gear. The improvement is very evident!





## FILLING THE GAP

GAP, the UK wide Plant Hire company, has become a major sponsor of our project with the supply and maintenance of a telehandler which has been vital for our recent work moving plate etc. Some of their staff recently came to Balloch on an arranged volunteer day and assisted us to prepare for public openings at weekends between 11am and 4pm. Their input was much appreciated.



## NEW MAID MERCHANDISE!

We have some new merchandise this year: light grey and navy polo shirts to add to the variety and also a new ship image for our caps, beanies and shirts. Along with our unique wood turner paddle pieces, all are available on our website <https://www.maidoftheloch.org/maid-shop>. If you don't have internet access we are happy to accept orders by phone using credit card or post and a cheque.

We will also soon have riveted 'souvenirs' of the old steel hull available to onsite visitors – for a price, of course! A real piece of maritime history from the last paddle steamer built in the UK!



## AS SEEN ON TV

We were delighted to feature on the most recent series of Great British Rail Journeys hosted by Michael Portillo – Programme 2 Arrochar to Balloch. You can see it now on iPlayer.







## FRIENDS OF THE MAID, NEW AND OLD

We'd like to welcome our recent new Friends, Diane, Tim, Roger, Peter and Jean and thank them and all our 'old' Friends for your continued support.

Having regular donations by either being a Friend or giving a BACS donation every month is vital to the Maid so if you can encourage anyone to join as a Friend then please direct them to the support page on the website.

<https://www.maidoftheloch.org/support>

Only Friends have access to our unique white and gold coloured enamel badges and enjoy a discount on hard hat tours of the ship.

## IN STEAM

The Winch House and Museum Cabin are the mainstays of our summer public openings and the boiler has once again passed its annual test although it will need some extra refurbishment over the next couple of years. Alex Forrest and George Gerc seen here during test days. The boiler will be 'In Steam' on the first weekend in every month this summer. Our 3 star visitor attraction is open every weekend 11am - 4pm until 27 October.



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