

# Kew News



left to right: Community play - creating a unique train layout together, Children learning about water filtration, Steam Explorers get a behind the scenes tour with Ricahrd.

## Hello

### Melissa Maynard, Interim Director

As we send out this newsletter, our new Director Hannah Harte will be starting and I'd like to offer her a very warm welcome to the Museum.

The last few months have been a busy time for us, we've welcomed new team members (staff & volunteers) and welcomed back some volunteers from pre-covid times. We've also had tests done on the steam boiler, major water works on the site, undertaken conservation work on the Magneta Clock, had training in conservation care, brought in new shop stock, held bubble discos in the gardens and more. As I said, it's been a tad busy and more details are inside!

I am taking this opportunity to personally THANK YOU all for your support over the last few months both for the staff team and for the Museum.

I will also be leaving the Museum as a member of staff on 14th July due to personal reasons. I will miss you all and the collections!

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# Hello from the new Director

I'm thrilled to be joining the London Museum of Water & Steam as the new Director. I'm coming to you from the National Trust as their Head of Conservation, Collections & Interiors. I joined them in 2020 and have been leading for the protection of, and engagement with, collections and interiors at over 300 properties. I'm responsible for two studios, both going concerns, that deliver remedial conservation for collections on a national scale - it's been really important to me to balance really excellent conservation work with engaging stories and generating real, tangible public benefit from the work. Before this I was the British Museum's first Head of Preventive Conservation and during my first year, I was a Fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme 2016/17. I also have a number of volunteer roles as a member of the Fabric Advisory Committee for Lincoln Cathedral, a Fellow of the RSA and a mentor for the charity Arts Emergency, a national network of volunteers in the Arts and Humanities coming together to create privilege for people without privilege. I'm really keen to build on all the great work that the London Museum of Water and Steam has done to date, and excited to take us forward, meeting some hefty challenges and discovering new opportunities and new directions.



*The London Museum of Water and Steam has been doing great work with communities, delivering real benefits to people during some very difficult times. The site, the collections and the impact the museum can have, all represent hugely exciting opportunities and I'm thrilled to be given the charge of bringing all this to life for our audiences now and into the future*

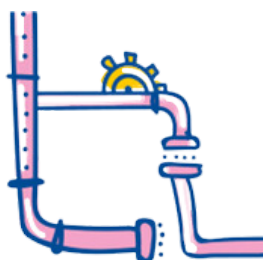
**Hannah Harte**  
Museum Director

## Water water everywhere ...



So how much water can be lost at any one time from failing valves in the water mains? Well for us it turns out to be the equivalent of 3 Olympic sized swimming pools being filled per day!

5 water valves being repacked, 1 water valve being replaced with a fire hydrant and a second fire hydrant being installed is the culmination of all of the works that Thames Water have had to undertake at the Museum over the last few months. Thankfully the front lawn has been filled in and the grass and wildflower seeds sown are starting to grow.



The Thames Water team led by Alan Robertse have been wonderful (there's too many to name here) and they've worked with us to both understand the water supply that goes through the site in more detail and limit how often and when the Splashzone had to be closed. We're continuing to work together to make sure that the older valves and pipework are looked after as much as possible.



# Kew Bridge Engine Trust Members Events

2023

## Talks and Events (For members)

Wednesday 7 June | 3pm

Summer Members Talk  
"Hidden Treasures. What's in the  
Museum's archives."

Wednesday 6 September | 3pm

Autumn Members Talk  
"A talk and discussion on the future  
direction of the museum." (tbc)

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 September | 7pm

Members are invited to join us for 'As the Actress said to the Bishop'; an exciting new radio style play performed at the Museum by the Riverside Players of Sunbury. Tickets are £12 per adult, plus a 10% discount for members using code: [KBETMember2023](#)



All events are free for members, unless stated otherwise. Full details, including booking information, for the talks and events will be shared around 1 month before the date.

## Retail success

For those of you who've visited in the last few months, you might have spotted some new stock in the shop. Blink and you'll miss them as they've been selling well each school holiday.

Joanna's built a new 'little engineers' stock range of toy work benches and construction kits as well as new water themed books.

This summer new adult ranges will be coming in. Plus there will be a new till system in place which will help us start an online shop via our website.



*New stock ranges selling well*

# Back in it's rightful place

## The return of the Boulton and Watt model.

### Richard Albanese Volunteer

I can't recall the exact build date of this model but it's on a small plate on the front, behind the glass panel, on the centreline of the case.

The model was built with the assistance of grant funding and donations over several years as funds and time allowed. It's fair to say that it's the only interactive Cornish pumping engine model in existence and was designed and built by me within the Museum workshops.

Its purpose is to show how our Boulton and Watt engine works under steam, highlighting working parts either hidden below ground or not visible due to their iron construction. The model is big enough to be viewed by large school or tour groups and uses low pressure air to push the steam piston and white (baby) oil to show water in the pump and condenser tank.

In miniature it functions just as the full sized engines do, so that we can use it for initial engine driver training using the same control handles.

After many years of heavy service it has had a long overdue maintenance and rebuild; including a repaint, clean and adjustment of working parts, modernisation to electrical control systems, lighting and a new air supply fan.

It was tested while in the workshop by the Steam Explorers who were really excited to



*The Boulton & Watt model returns.*

then see it installed in the engine house once more.

During the install, we realised that the interpretation panels talked about the goldfish in the engine house. So seven goldfish have now also been rehomed at the Museum. As the weather gets warmer, you'll be able to spot them swimming closer to the surface.

My grateful thanks go to the anonymous donors who funded these works and to Clive Penfold who once again got the electric control system in order.

Hopefully it should survive the vigorous rigours of our younger visitors for many more years to come! Have a go yourself next time you visit!





# Work on the Magneta Clock ticks on

## Glen Williams, Volunteer

Following the article in the last edition of Kew News, I am pleased to confirm that works on the Magneta Clock have commenced and are progressing well.

Upon dismantling the clock, it became immediately apparent that the case was in a worse condition than first thought. Most concerning was the mahogany back panel which had shrunk by almost ½" across the grain and subsequently split in several places, weakening the case and distorting the brass fittings in the process. Given that the case supports almost 90kg in weight this was clearly not ideal, but thanks to the expertise of a friendly University joiner's department, this has now been repaired and re-polished with no loss of historic material.

The rest of the case has been cleaned top to bottom and treated for mildew, with the polish being touched up in areas where worn or damaged. The brass fittings have also been cleaned and the lacquer touched up, with new screws installed to replace non-original steel ones which had suffered from galvanic corrosion.

Most importantly, the clock movement and magneto is now back at the Museum, having been cleaned and serviced together with the secondary dials. Notwithstanding thirty years of dried oil and detritus, the clock movement's regular sticking was found to be caused by a number burred over teeth on the escapement wheel, which have been repaired. The clock was tested in the workshop and was found to run well, further testing and set up will almost certainly be necessary once the movement is reinstated to the case and full weight reattached.

The clock also has a new home in the Electric House, located in front of the external doors. This is a much more prominent location which, most importantly, is heated!

The remaining works to complete include cleaning and repairs to the large secondary dial, installation of the remaining fittings and setting up. We are also arranging for some tests on the steel weight band, as a belt and braces approach, as it was found with a kink in it when the clock was dismantled. Hopefully this is of no significance, but given the clocks history its better to be safe than sorry!

During the works, we've also discovered that this is one of only four left in existence.

The hope is that the clock will be ready complete and running in the next month or so.



*The restored case in its new location of the Electric House*

# Collection Care Training

Thanks to the AIM Pilgrim Trust Collection Care Funding, we have been working hard with paper conservator, Ann-Marie Miller, providing training for volunteers around collection care and good storage.

We've also stocked up on conservation tools and equipment through this fund and the Reduce, Reuse and Repurpose Museum Development support. We now have many of the tools and equipment needed to look after the collections in the future.



*How to handle books to clean the shelves, book tying and salvage after a small water spill were just some of the topics covered on the first 2 days of training.*

## New pricing structure

From Saturday 27th May 2023, we've made some changes to our admission prices to make it easier for visitors who want to visit just once.

### Day Pass

Adults	£11.50
Concessions	£9.50
Children (under 16)	Free

### Annual Pass

Adults	£19
Concessions	£17
Children (under 16)	Free

Had fun and want to visit again? You can upgrade for £7.50 from a day pass to an annual pass on day of purchase.

Don't forget to

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK tax payer and choose to Gift Aid your admission or donation, the Museum gets an additional 25p for every £1 from the the government.

# *A very warm welcome*

A very warm welcome to our new volunteers.

- Robin Pike, Front of House
- Syed Haider, Front of House
- Evelyn Gregory Care and Collections
- Nakshatr Velagapudi, Front of House
- Raquel Palacol, Front of House
- Valentina Loginova Gardens
- Maria Rutkowska, Learning and Community
- Charlie Dawson, Front of House
- Nathan McIntyre, Front of House
- Cheryl Chung Learning and Community
- Adam Leulmi, Front of House
- Evelyn Solano, Work Experience Student
- Jamie Villacis Lara, Work Experience Student
- Jacob O'Connor, Work Experience Student
- Sam Taylor, Work Experience Student

## Volunteering Update

### **Jade Husseyin, Volunteer Coordinator**

I have had a very busy couple of months supporting our volunteers and recruiting new ones. As work experience season creeps up on us we have had many students interested in working in the museum. The special few we have picked have wonderful childhood memories of the Museum and are aspiring engineers and history students.

I attended the West London Volunteer fair at Boston Manor, it was wonderful to talk to other museums and gain an insight in volunteering

in other museums.

We will be welcoming many corporate groups over the coming months who will be working in our gardens to get us summer holiday ready.

We are currently looking for

- garden volunteers, as the gardens need much care and attention ready for the warm weather.
- Wednesday Front of House volunteers for the summer holidays.

## Funding Appeal - building repair fund

One of the hardest things to fundraise for are capital costs for building repairs and day to day maintenance.

The Grade I and II buildings and other buildings are the reason we are here. Without them and our ability to maintain them we wouldn't be able to open for visitors or protect our engines and other collection items.

Every little helps us to maintain our historic site and with Gift Aid those little amounts add up.

### **Key areas for us at present are:**

- The front doors & entrance hall.
- Repair of squirrel damage & prevention of future pest ingress.
- Repair to skylights.
- General maintenance and re-decoration.

If you are able to help in any way, we would be very grateful.



# Squirrels in the Archives



I really do think that that name would make a good album cover and I'd love to see some artwork for it. However the actual grey squirrels are a BIG problem at the Museum causing damage and costing additional amounts that we don't necessarily have spare.

In the workshop we're working hard to squirrel proof with wire netting & new roof sheeting plus plugging gaps into the main visitor spaces, while fundraising for additional work needed. As we're working on this our pest control contractors are trapping and removing squirrels.

Unfortunately the cunning rodents managed to get into the main Museum areas, using the engines as climbing frames, including the death well to find their way to a crack in the wall and making their way into the outer archive room.

With the squirrels running free within the main Museum for a short amount of time, we've ensured that our cleaning contractors were in for a day's deep cleaning to ensure everyone's health & safety with additional cleaning happening in the main workshop space as well for this same reason.

For those who might be interested in how much this all costs, here are the staggering amounts!

- Costs so far: £9,800
- Additional costs to be fundraised (replacement window frame near Benham Engine, roller shutter doors in the workshop, additional building repairs): c. £12,000

## Update from the Co-Chairs

**Tom O'Leary and Heather Thomas, Interim Co-Chairs of Trustees**

When we last updated you we were in the process of recruiting a new Director for the Museum. As you may be aware this was completed successfully and Hannah Harte will be starting in the role at the beginning of June. Hannah joins us from the National Trust, and we are really looking to working with her to build a sustainable future for the Museum. Along with most parts of the heritage sector we are seeing an increase in visitor numbers as Covid recovery continues, and the Museum has had a good start to this year with some very busy school holiday periods. That said, we remain in a challenging place due to inflationary pressures, particularly utilities and the backlog of maintenance we need to carry out on our buildings and collections. We will be working with Hannah to agree a new strategy for the Museum and look forward to sharing this with you in due course.

We'd like to take this opportunity to put on record our thanks to Melissa Maynard who has been a brilliant interim Director for the Museum, and has been a pleasure to work with. Without her stepping up to take on this role, we would have really struggled and the museum owes her a debt of gratitude.

# Update on the Lancashire Boiler

**Melissa Maynard**

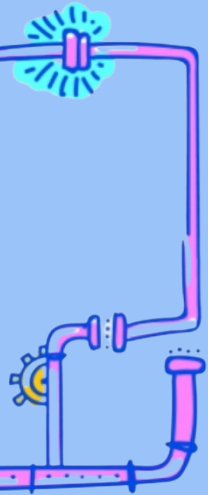
Many of you may be wondering what's been going on behind the scenes regarding the Lancashire Boiler and returning to steaming.

From the visitor facing side it looks like nothing is really happening, however behind the scenes we are working as fast and as hard as we can. I'd like to say a GINORMOUS Thank You to the Thursday Team for all their time and efforts in preparing the boiler for all its tests. This team of four, have spent 3 hours every week working on the boiler wire brushing and angle-grinding, etc. to make sure the boiler was ready for its non-destructive testing (NDT) - ultrasound testing - on 20% of rivets and seams for the whole of the boiler inside and out!

- July 2022: The Lancashire boiler failed its annual inspection due to a failed rivet. Legally we are not allowed to operate the boiler until it is repaired.
- September 2022: Guidance and quotes were received from our insurers for the testing required.
- January 2023: The Museum received private donations to cover the cost of the NDT required for the boiler, plus some additional works.
- February 2023: The old 1970s insulation was removed and disposed of. The troublesome Crown Valve was tested and a further 5 failed rivets were discovered.
- March-May 2023: The Thursday team prepped the boiler for its 10-year NDT. This was an enormous task!
- May 2023: 10-year NDT test discovered another 12 failed rivets. The insurers have requested a further NDT to be undertaken.
- June 2023: The Thursday team will prep the boiler for the next NDT.
- July-August 2023: The additional NDT will take place over the summer.
- September 2023: Results will be returned, and we will plan the next steps.

There are many steps that we must go through to get back to steaming, which frustratingly takes longer than any of us would wish. Hopefully we will have more news by the next edition of Kew News.

# Accessible Museum & Family Resources

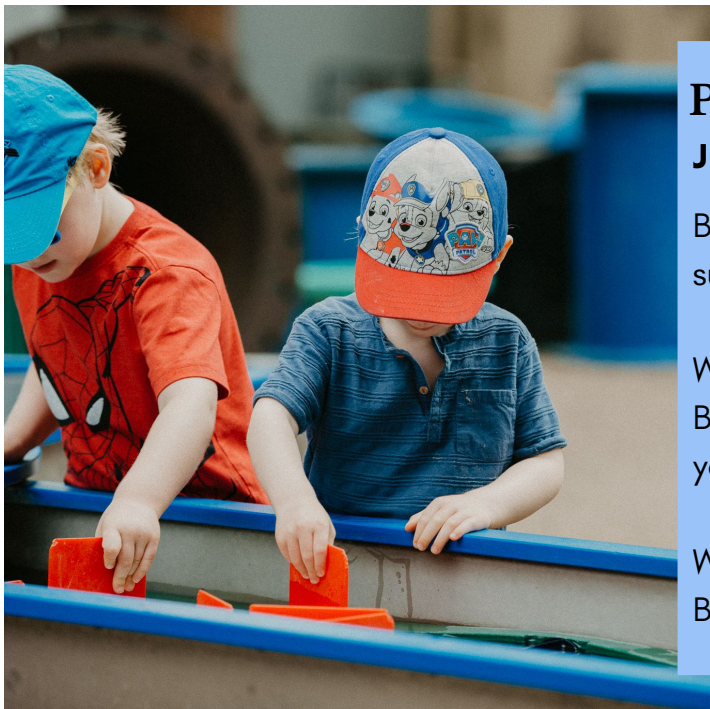


We're delighted to announce that we have received funding from City Bridge Trust & others to support our work to become more accessible.

This summer we will be working with Centre for Accessible Environments to undertake an up-to-date accessibility audit of the Museum site and buildings.

We will also be working with Speak Out in Hounslow to look at how accessible our interpretation and activities for families are. Through this we will be developing new activities and trails for the summer holidays.

## Upcoming events



### PLAY

**July 22- August 28**

Be prepared to have splashy, playful fun this summer!

We've got everyone's favourite Wet and Bubbly Science Show, workshops for 8 - 11 year olds and lots of hands-on activities.

We'll be open Wednesday to Sunday, plus Bank Holiday Monday, 10am to 4pm.

For a full list of upcoming events,  
please visit:

<https://waterandsteam.org.uk/events>



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