

THE TUB BOAT

Newsletter of the Bude Canal & Harbour Society

No. 78

Winter 2016/17



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Forthcoming Events: 2017

Friday 24 Feb to

Thursday 02 Mar Bude Canal Exhibition in the Willoughby Gallery, The Castle, Bude

Sunday 26 Feb

BCHS AGM Members Day in the Willoughby Gallery, The Castle, Bude. Meet at 10am for events followed by talk and slide show at 12 noon by Graham Wills about Pinkery Pond, a little known waterway development near Simonsbath on Exmoor.
Buffet lunch at 1pm. Formal AGM at 2.30pm

Contributions for the next edition of the Tub Boat should be sent as an e-mail attachment to walton50@btinternet.com or copied onto a USB memory stick or CD and sent to Peter Daniel (contact details on back page) to reach the Editor by 1st March 2017.

Trustees:	Chairman	Chris Jewell	
	Vice-Chairman	Stan Noakes	
	Secretary	Peter Daniel	
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	Minuting Secretary	Jill White	
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		Lesley Moores	
	Membership Secretary	Mike Moore	
	The Tub Boat Editor	(<i>non-trustee</i>) Chris Walton	

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“Creaks from the Chair”

By the time you read this issue it will be 2017 and Christmas and the New Year celebrations will have come and gone, and we will have a brand new year to play with. On behalf of the Trustees and myself I wish you all the very best for the coming year.

In this issue are updates on the meeting with Bude Community Network Panel on 10th October 2016. The AGM is on 26th February 2017 and the exhibition is between 24th and 25th February and 27th February to 2nd March 2017. It is important to note that the exhibition will be closed to the public on Sunday 26th February so that we can have our AGM in the Gallery at the Castle Heritage Centre, Bude.

Finally we have a new editor for The Tub Boat, Mr Chris Walton, a semi-retired printer. We welcome him. All items for the newsletter should now be sent to him at email address walton50@btinternet.com Copy dates are the middle of the month prior to each issue i.e. mid-December, mid-March, mid-June, and mid-September. So lastly our thanks to Clive Horton, the recent editor, for his efforts to ensure our newsletter continued.

Chris Jewell
Chairman

Membership Report

Although we have not received any new membership applications since September we have awarded Honorary Membership to Chris Walton in recognition of his offer to take over as Editor of The Tub Boat.

I must thank those members who have already renewed their subscription for 2016/2017 and particularly those who have given additional donations. However, some members have still not renewed. Would they please complete the enclosed renewal form by return to maintain their support for the Bude Canal & Harbour Society and receive future newsletters. Remember that only fully paid up members can vote at the AGM in February.

Can I also remind those members who are taxpayers and who have not yet completed a Gift Aid declaration that they can obtain a copy from the website or from me by calling 01288 361878.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Mike Moore

Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Bude Canal Trust report



For the remainder of Aug, work continued on substantially dropping the water level and adding piling to the areas to the left and right of the leaking sluice at Virworthy Wharf.



For the second year running we had to pull Himalayan Balsam plants, developing from seeds carried down to the canal at Virworthy by the stream from Sutcombe. Despite informing the EA, control of this invasive plant is so out of hand throughout the Country that it is down to individual groups and volunteers to attempt to keep it at bay. Also, work was started by the adjacent land owner to rebuild the stone support walls at the Holsworthy branch of the canal before replacing the long gone Lishperhill working bridge with a narrower footbridge.



The last of the fingerposts were refurbished and the picnic table and seats at Moreton were also given a fresh coat of preservative stain. September started off with a spell of good weather allowing the recently cleared section of the towpath approaching the Incline Plane to be mowed, the stoned overspill gully was cleared of accumulated debris and steps were cut into the steep bank down to the viewing point.





The two new information boards were placed along the same Vealand section. The Puckland section was revisited to remove some of the larger branches that had fallen into the canal from the far side bank, and make an assessment, with the experienced hedge layer the possibility of carrying this out instead of total removal. The ongoing repairs of Wooda Bridge were inspected.



Work continued to secure a permanent solution to the leaking sluice at Virworthy by again lowering the water level and gluing and bolting the final panel to the concrete face of the side wall before digging out an access into the large eroded cavity.



October remained mainly dry providing the opportunity to infill the ditch and cover the drainage pipe at the far end of the Wharf building with chippings, dig out and backfill the large eroded cavity at the sluice with concrete.



Finally, last week of the month, piling boards trimmed to height and backfilled to footpath level. The construction of a replacement picnic table was started, ready for the next spring visitors.

November weeks suddenly turned much colder and with just two of the regular squad available on the first work day, drain pipes were re-secured to the wharf building the picnic bench almost completed, another low branch on the Puckland section was removed.



Checking out on the south side of Brendon, over towards the canal, no serious damage but some smaller branches were cleared to keep the path open. To the north, urgent repairs to the broken gate at Lana, this and the plantation problem were reported back on.



The new picnic table was completed, the work on the spillway has allowed the water level to be raised to its full capacity and up to seven ducks have returned to the open water. Following torrential rain on week three which prevented any work, initial cutting back the excessive growth on the hedges between Puckland and Dexbeer was carried out and removal of two fallen trees at the base of the Vealand Incline Plane were completed.



These are all photos taken during the visit of Martin Watts to the Barge Workshop on 3rd October to inspect and report on the timbers stored there which were recovered from the river under Nanny Moores Bridge in Bude. These were thought to have originally come from the Tide Mill which was constructed near Leven Cottages in 1589 by the Arundels. Mr Watts has produced a report for The Heritage Centre which tends to support this hypothesis. Further investigations are planned.



Timbers at Barge Workshop during Martin Watts visit



Bude Community Network Panel - 10th October 2016.

As reported in the last newsletter BCHS had asked CNP to have the Bude Canal included in the agenda for discussion, on the basis that the future of the canal is not clear, especially the need to complete navigation on the canal. BCHS submitted, on the request of CNP, background information on the Regeneration Project, with information regarding BCHS and our concerns. This was done on the understanding that it would be circulated to the Panel members. However, on the evening of the meeting it was discovered that this had not been done. Fortunately Mike Moore and myself had brought some spare copies which the Chairman kindly allowed us to circulate to those present. However, we pressed on and made known our concerns about the need to replace Rodds Bridge to allow navigation and for a slipway above Falcon Bridge for entering/exiting the canal, preferably at Higher Wharf, which is the best site for a slipway. We made the point that if/when Cornwall Council sells this land, that a condition could be placed on the purchaser to provide a public slipway, with associated vehicles and trailers being parked elsewhere. Additionally we were concerned that the two inland locks are not in use at all and thus the outer gates of both sets of locks are left dry all year round which is not good for the gates, allowing drying out of the wood. We suggested that for periods of the year that both locks could be filled with water and left full so that these gates could be mainly immersed in water, to counteract their non-use. Other concerns included maintenance and dredging. Cornwall Council then made a presentation by the following Officers/ Ranger, Mr Jon James, senior Environmental Officer; Gareth Cann, Ranger; and Mr Rob Caulston, Engineer for Cormac Solutions who are responsible for Highways and Bridges. Mr James reported that CC had been granted £225,000 for works on the canal ie de-silting, and maintenance on lock gates, banks, and maintaining the current standards. CC have applied for £3 million EU funding for Cornwall to improve its land management and some of this will focus on the Bude Valley. A decision is expected by Christmas. Gareth Cann reported on the Bude Valley and canal and how use of these important facilities had increased since the Regeneration Project. He also acknowledged the help of the Bude Valley Volunteers for works under his guidance. The next contributor was Mr Caulston. He reported that Rodds Bridge is currently one of 370 in Cornwall that is classed as sub-standard. It is currently 171 on the list of priorities. The bridge is monitored every half year. To replace Rodds Bridge would cost £500,000 approximately but currently there are higher priority structures in Cornwall. Other options include closing the road and having a footbridge - but all cost money and such schemes may receive objections which complicate the issue.

There was a short questions period. This raised concerns about dredging priority, provision of a slipway and future navigation;

Dredging - within the next twelve months after lock repairs

Slipway - needs future discussion

Higher Wharf for slipway by developer - hard to ensure the balance is correct. Any condition might affect the value of the land!?

Future navigation - this would have to be a new project and would have to clearly demonstrate significant impact and benefits!?

We were able to make the following comments;

1. A condition of the sale of Higher Wharf to provide a slipway would also depend on how much Cornwall Council want a slipway for THEIR canal
2. The return of navigation to the canal had always been one of the main objects of BCRP and this intention was recognised by CC in 2009 as something for the future. The CNP members felt that the Higher Wharf condition on the sale was worthy of consideration. Mr James to report to the CNP meeting in spring 2017. There were other comments about the lack of vision by Cornwall Council and concern that future navigation had been rejected by CC. In relation to the latter BCHS has written to Mr James for clarification about the future of the navigation. Was it his own conclusion or a decision made by the Cabinet of Cornwall council to abandon the aim of achieving future navigation rather than it being a project for the future when conditions ie funding/staff are more conducive to such projects. This letter was sent on 23/10/16 and we still await a reply. Finally BCHS has also recently written a letter to the Bude & Stratton Post in response to an article about the CNP meeting which had missed some points raised and to register our concern about the aim of achieving navigation which seems to have been abandoned. Bude Canal and Harbour Society is a waterways society whose aims are enshrined in our constitution, one of which is 'to preserve, conserve and encourage restoration of the Bude Canal where possible and to promote and stimulate public interest in and the fullest appropriate use of the canal and its environs'. So we will continue to press CC on their intentions for the future of Bude Canal and in particular the return of navigation between Bude and Helebridge and the benefits that can bring to Bude and its tourism profile.

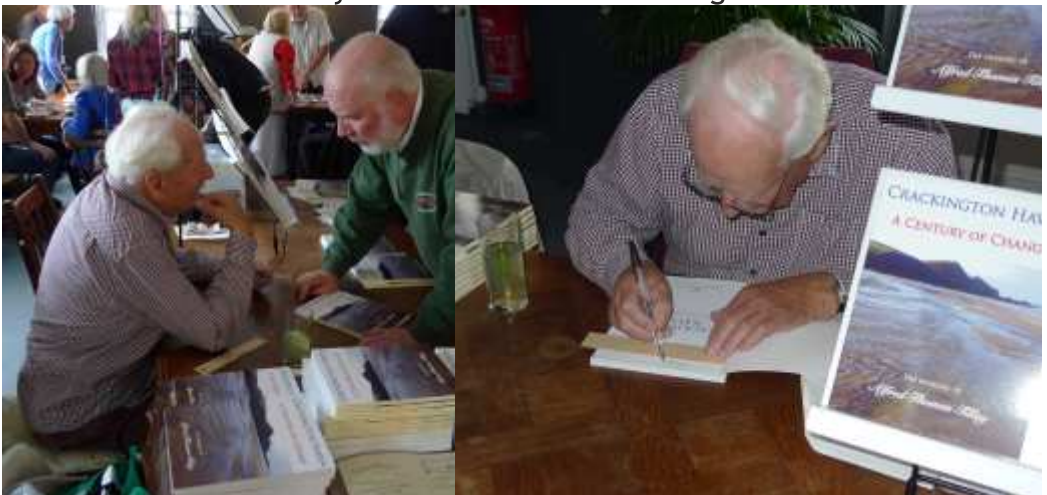
Chris Jewell

Picture Gallery 2

These photos were taken at Alfred Tilley's book launch at Coombe Barton Inn, Crackington Haven on 5th September "Crackington Haven, A Century of Change".

Alfred Tilley is a member of BCHS - probably our oldest member!

Alfred Tilley's book launch at Crackington Haven



General view of the Lower Wharf



The Iron Bridge showing original metalwork prior to rebuilding

Film of boats passing through the Sea Lock



There may be members who have never seen the Sea Lock in use or others who haven't seen it for some time. You may therefore be interested in a short (2 ½ minutes) film that is available on youtube. It was made recently and shows boats coming into the canal for the winter.



The following link should take you direct to the film -
<https://youtu.be/XIJJ8lgwgyk>



Peter Daniel

No Fool Like an Old Fool *(continued from issue 77)*

We took Orbis for a short trial, apart from some minor problems she performed well. It was no faster than with the previous engine but the reaction time was much better: its acceleration and deceleration was impressive! In May 2016 my work in construction dwindled so it seemed an ideal time to go on an extended cruise before a sea trial. We decided to head north towards Boston and the Wash. So we headed up the Trent through Lincoln, down the Witham and to Boston. We consulted with the lock keeper, who advised us to wait for a suitable weather window. It took four days for the bad weather to abate. We had on board some safety equipment and some navigation aids: 2 x chart plotters, a sat nav, vhf radio, two compasses, life jackets, life rings, and all the charts necessary. Six other narrow boats were also planning to cross the Wash and enter the Nene navigation. They had employed the assistance of a pilot. The lock keeper suggested that we contribute to the cost of the pilot, and join the six boats. We did not want to cross with the six or to cross with a pilot. It would seem that there is an unwritten rule that if your passage is coinciding with a piloted transit it is expected that you contribute to the cost. As such we changed our planned course from the Nene to the Great Ouse. Whilst waiting for the weather to break, we befriended a couple who were also wishing to go to Kings Lynn. They had previously completed this very passage. I was confident and thankful to be proceeding on our first sea foray with an experienced boat buddy. Prior to entering the lock, all fuel filters and oil filters were changed. The fuel tank was a new one, so I was confident that there was no contamination present. I had 450ltrs of fuel on board all was prepared. Raw water strainers checked and a full nut and bolt check completed. On leaving the lock our hearts were racing, the excitement was palpable. The Wash was very calm, almost pond like. Less waves than on the tidal Thames. I began to wish for some excitement (careful what you wish for) I was to regret this wish later! Our companions weighed anchor as the tide began to turn. We however decided to continue towards King Lynn. I had plotted a route, the passage being aided by marker buoys highlighting the channel. We continued for 3nm before we ran out of water and were grounded. This at first caused some consternation until it became apparent that one just has to wait for the tide to turn and re float the boat. On arrival at Kings Lynn our companions had caught us up, they chose to moor on a council floating pontoon, at £28.00 per night. We decided not to moor there and continued on down the Ouse. It should be noted that with the benefit of hindsight, this was not a good idea! There was nowhere else to moor for a further two hours, and when we did it was not without its hazards. I had to cross the fast flowing tidal stream beam on and attempt to moor on a floating pontoon. The navigation we were heading for was up stream of where we had moored, the lock was completely submerged so we had no choice but to moor where we did. We spent the night on the mooring, phoned the lock keeper to arrange passage on to the midlevel navigation. Having checked the air gap under the many bridges all seemed fine! On arrival at the lock the tide was still very high; the lock was still under water, a bizarre sight. One has to be very careful as the tide drops at 2inch per minute and there are hazards under the water i.e. hand rails and other protrusions. The navigation was very low on water; we dragged our way along the bottom which as it turned out was lucky. One of the bridges was much lower than publicised, so much so that the bridge scraped the paint off the wheelhouse roof. It took us a day and a half to complete the navigation which brought us to Peterborough. I would like to, at this point, highlight the absence of services on the Nene, and the midlevel's. There is no fuel point between Peterborough and Northampton. There is also a complete absence of elsan points, very few places to moor and few water points.

(Continued page 13)

Tied up alongside in Watchet Harbour



Photos by Lee & Vicki Bond

Tied up alongside MV Oldenberg in Ilfracombe harbour



Heading for River Severn Bridges



Halfway between Steep Holme and Watchet Harbour



Passing Steep Holme



About to pass under River Severn Bridge



No Fool Like an Old Fool (continued from page 11)

During our trip down the mid-level's the silt and crud thrown up by the constant dragging caused significant wear in the cutlass bearing. Consequently the prop was wobbling and making an awful noise. It needed to be addressed and quickly. I carry a spare prop and cutlass bearing. I tried to fit the new cutlass bearing but the thread was not compatible with the stern post spigot. We were miles from the nearest dry dock or crane. Plus our funds would have been pressed to finance the job. Having looked at the problem it seemed that if we could widen the bearing centres, it would aid the support of the cutlass bearing. This necessitated moving the engine and gearbox forward 100mm. Quite a task moored on a river bank. Having completed the task, we continued cross country off the Nene and on to the Grand Union and then the Stratford on Avon canal. Then on to the river Avon, and the Severn River, all without a hitch. The prop was also much quieter.

Gloucester docks: 'wow' what a fantastic vista truly something all boaters should aim to see. From there we proceeded down the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. No locks, fantastic! On reaching the Severn proper we were once again at the weathers mercy; we had to wait 6 days for the windy, rainy weather to abate. We had charts for all the planned passage. I use a Portland chart plotter for my navigation backed up by sat nav for latitude and longitude. Combined with two spare compasses.

We left Sharpness at 7.40am, 1 hour before high water and made our way down following compass bearings taken from the chart. There are buoys and land marks, the passage was easy. Under the second bridge the water flows very fast, the tidal stream bullies the boat, moving the rudder made little difference. Full throttle provided the reassurance and direction that we needed.

We continued down the Somerset coast between the two rocky outcrops: Steep Holme and Flat Holme. Our intended destination, which was booked in advance, was Watchet harbour some 60 miles away. To catch the right tide we had to cover the distance in 10hrs. This we did. On entering the harbour the tide was at high water and with a strong flow. In the harbour, which is quite small for a 60 foot leviathan, we had to navigate across the harbour beam on, to a strong tidal flow. With the help of some local residents we managed to moor and not damage anything! The mooring fee was £50.00 for the night.

To avoid the strong tidal flow we had to leave at 7am the following morning, 1 hour before high water. Our next hop was Ilfracombe, only 25m away. Our arrival was not in sync with the correct tide time, so we anchored half a mile off shore. The sea state was moderate to fair, which according to the Beaufort scale, is up to 1mtr waves.

This is what we encountered; nothing for a sea gong vessel but for a narrow boat is frightening. My first inclination that a Narrow boat has all the sea worthiness and the technology contained therein of a tin bath! In fact I would now contend that the tin bath is more sea worthy. We had to wait for 4hrs to enter the harbour.

Lee Bond

Picture gallery 3



Sea Lock gates



View of the Iron Bridge looking upstream

The Nantes-Brest Canal (365kms)

This 19th century waterway was originally conceived to link the arsenals of Nantes and Brest and provide a safe inland route for supplies to the Atlantic port at a time when the English navy were blockading Breton coasts. The actual towpath today stretches in a continuous line from Ecluse 2 at Quiheix (20kms north of Nantes) to Guily Glas, near Chateaulin in Finistere, a distance of over 350kms. The truly adventurous can create a more complex journey by making their way up the Edre from the centre of Nantes to start with, and following the Aulne to the Rade de Brest and even to the Atlantic port itself at the end. This will be our new playground whilst staying at our holiday home in Corlay (which is located roughly where the “D” in Cote D’Armor is written on the map)

Clive Horton



View from the North



Well 2016 certainly was an interesting year! First we had Brexit, then along came Trump; both major events in their own way but neither predicted by the pollsters. Both however will, I expect, have some impact on the Horton family movements over the coming years. At this time last year we didn't have a home in France and we still hadn't been to California for our son's wedding. We also didn't have a world record holding daughter in law. On 11 November Fiona, Craig's wife, smashed the world record for continuous push ups by a female which previously stood at 302, by setting a new record of 555. That's quite some achievement, and also raised money for charity at the same time. In terms of BCHS milestones, in 2016 the Tub Boat celebrated its Diamond Jubilee edition. So what does 2017 hold for us? Well for you a newly formatted BCHS AGM together with a new Tub Boat editor, Chris Walton and for me the opportunity to send in articles entitled not just View from the North but also View from the South (If I'm in France) or View from the West or East (depending on which way I'm looking when I'm in America). Wishing you all a Happy & Prosperous 2017

Clive Horton (Life Member BCHS)

Bude Canal Then and Now

The sea lock looking towards Barrel Rock.



AGM 2017

The AGM is on Sunday 26th February 2017 and will take place in the Gallery at the Castle Heritage Centre, Bude. As reported in the last issue this year we are trying a new approach and will have an AGM day. The programme for the day has been agreed as follows.

10am - 10.30 am	Meet for free coffee and introduction
10.30 am - 11.30 am approx.	Guided tour of exhibition - BCRP 2007-9 and questions
11.30 am - 12 noon	Comfort break
12 noon - 1 pm	Presentation 'Pinkery Pond and canal' by Graham Wills
1 pm -2.30pm	Buffet lunch (must be booked)
2.30 pm - 3.45 pm	AGM
3.45 pm	Dispersal

The buffet lunch is £6.75 per person and **MUST** be pre-booked and paid. A booking form was included in the last issue. If you need another they are available via the website or contact info@bude-canal.co.uk

We hope you can support this 'new approach' especially the buffet lunch. Bookings must be received by 15/01/2017. If successful, we would look to develop the AGM into a Full Day for the future. Your thoughts and ideas would be welcomed on AGM day or after.

Chris Jewell

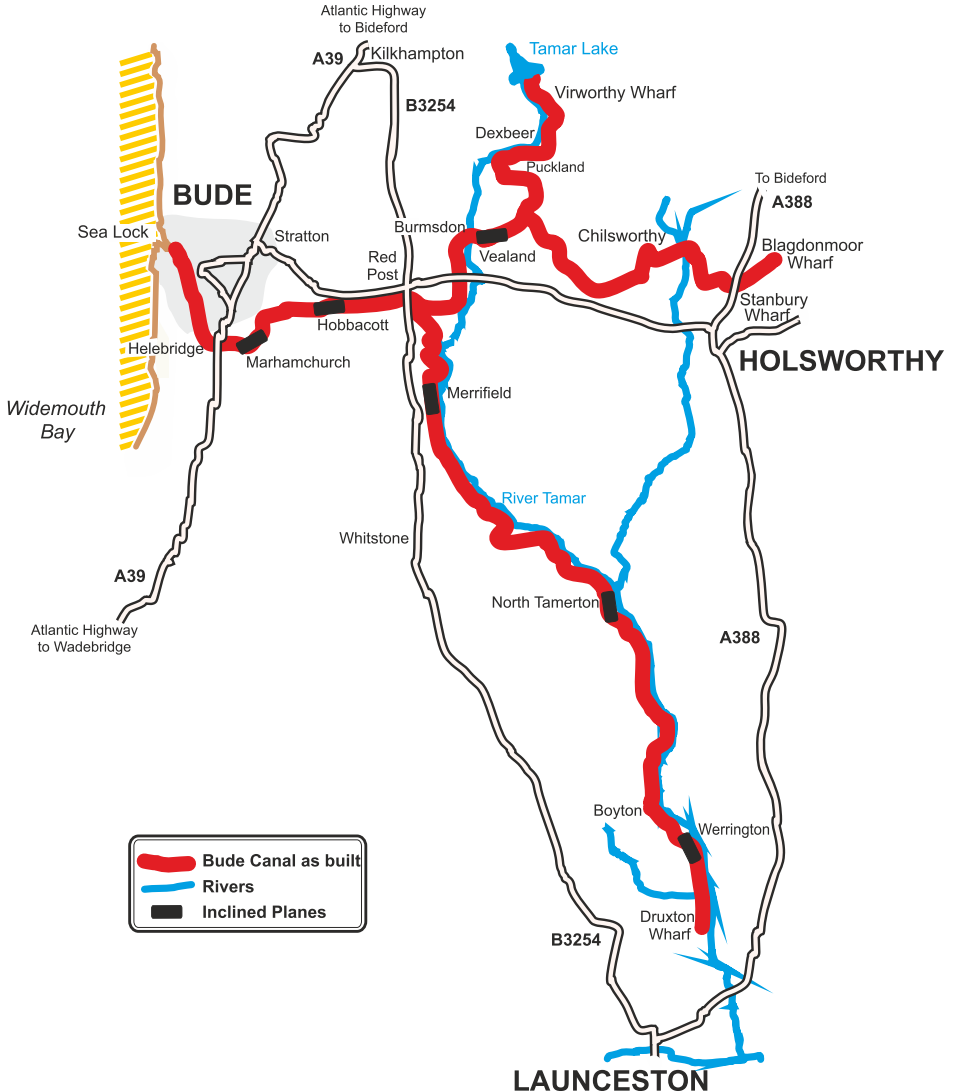
View from the Bay

Hello, I am the new editor of the magazine, I was looking for something I could get involved in and make a difference to the areas no matter how small it may be. I reside next to Creathorne Farm and this is the view I wake up to every morning, I am blessed! I have worked in the printing industry ever since I left the RAF in 1980 where I worked as a radio and radar technician. I now work from home as a print broker and was looking for something else to fill my time as I am not able to get out and about as much as I used to due to ill health You can contact me at: walton50@btinternet.com or call 07830315245 Chris Walton.



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