

# The David Blagrove Charity Trust Chairman's Report

When reflecting on the trust's first full year it has made me realise what an immense effort by all the members and supporters has been to make the trust a success. This incredible input has been made all the more remarkable as the trust's members have had to deal with pressing personal and family commitments. The latter couple of months have been especially difficult due to the sudden death of Roy Sears, our Joint Chair and great friend, who was tragically taken from us in a car accident in June. Our thoughts continue to remain with Roy's wife, Christine, the trust's Secretary, and also their family through this very tiring time.

David's legacy and the trust's main aims are the two things that he was passionate about, enriching our local community and improving the lives of disadvantaged youth through experiences on the UK canals. Over the last year the trust raised funds that have been used to assist the village hall, with £500 being donated towards a new fire door and £500 to the church. Volunteering plays a huge part for the trust and as the bus service in Stoke has been effected by local government cuts the trust has started a free transport service to and from Towcester every Friday morning. All funds raised by the trust will be injected back into the community in one form or another.

The trust also gave 18 girls from the Active Communities Network charity in London, an opportunity to experience a rural weekend in Stoke Bruerne. This involved them camping in a paddock, kindly supplied by local landowner Alison Jones, and cooking and singing round the camp fire. The girls had a trip through the Blisworth Tunnel on *Indian Chief*, kindly donated by Andrew and Nick Woodward of the Boat Inn and spent a morning on NB *Progress* being shown the art of narrow boating which included operating several locks. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their weekend spent in the village and are looking forward to a repeat visit next year.

Joint Chairs, Trustees and current members all strongly feel to help with the continuation and future growth of the trust that we need to seek new opportunities to promote the trust. One way to aid this is to use our dedicated boat *Progress* to promote the trust but to also sell merchandise from the deck. As such, in the last few months the trust has obtained a rover traders licence from C R T.

The trust hopes to raise funds from selling merchandise and also to provide collaborative opportunities for trust members and the public to receive a taste of David's passions of local history and the canal.

The trust couldn't have had such a great first year without the support of several people and organisations; so our special thanks go out to the following:-

- Andrew and Nick Woodward for giving us the use of their cocktail bar for our meetings, and also the use of *Indian Chief* for the Girls from Active Communities Network charity in London.
- Mike Partridge for the use of *Charlie*, trip boat, for one of our fundraising events
- Ashley Woodward for building our website
- Alison Jones for the use of her paddock
- Trevor Whittling (marine surveyor) for advising us on the restoration of *Progress*
- Colin Dundas for recreating the original livery and painting of *Progress*
- Trevor Allum for storing all the trust's equipment in his unit

- Phil Kidd for supplying furniture and equipment
- Julian of The Navigation for sponsoring the printing of our leaflets and membership forms
- And, last but not least, for the continued and committed support of the trust's members and Trustees.

This is just a small beginning but we hope in 2019 to have our full charity status and infrastructure in place ready to carry forward not only David's legacy but also Roy's.

Bill Mann (Joint Chairman)

To find out more about the David Blagrove Charity Trust visit our <http://www.dbct.org.uk/> or visit our Facebook page <https://en-gb.facebook.com/TDBCT/>

## **Let us remember Roy Sears our former Joint Chairman**

Roy Sears, RIP, lost his life tragically as a result of an accident early in June. As our joint Chairman with Bill Mann, it has been a great loss to all of us personally and as an organisation.

A resident of Stoke Bruerne for over 35 years, Roy was dedicated and passionate about both the canal and the village, this was obvious in all he did from serving on the Parish Council several local committees, being involved in all village events, great advocate of the local bus service, up keep of the village green and being our enthusiastic Chairman.

Roy served on the Stoke Bruerne Parish council from 1990-2013. He was instrumental in raising funds and introduction of a new street lighting system for the whole village, as well as being a driving force behind the organisation of a number of concerts in St Marys Church around the time of the millennium, to raise funds to establish the new church floodlighting and the refurbishment of the church clock.

At any and every fund raising event, Roy and his wife Christine generously opened their beautiful canalside garden for strawberry teas, Champagne and musical entertainment.

Roy was always determined to promote the well being of the village community as well as his passion for the canal. These two aims became focused in the David Blagrove Trust, in which Roy played a fundamental role as Joint Chairman. Roy, with his wife Christine, was the main driving force of the trusts first fundraising event which was a resounding success. and enabled the trust to make its first contribution to the local community, £500 to the village hall and £500 to the church.

I am pleased to say that at our last meeting, the trust elected to combine both legacies of David and Roy and carry them forward.

Chrissie we are so sorry for your loss. Roy will be sadly missed by us all, we hope we can do him proud, and carry on his work through the trust.