

Friends of PRESIDENT

NEWSLETTER

Number 5

October 1986

PRESIDENT is a most interesting boat. It has attracted a band of followers dedicated to its preservation and running. Most but by no means all this band are in Friends. Those that are not make very practical contributions such as the provision of money via grants and sponsorship. And of course in the world of canals there are very many indeed who know of President and admire it from a distance.

Cruising with President is a wonderful experience. No matter what you know about diesel boats, hire cruisers, or any other form of boating you have to relearn it when crewing the steamer. Given time, patience and a willingness to learn you will discover the delightful handling of the boat, its response to the underwater nature of the canal bed, the capriciousness of the wind on the high sided clothed up hold, the problems of navigating a boat with a draught of about one metre on narrow canals. You will discover the magic power of steam which can deliver silent power to the immense (in canal terms) propellor, and you will also learn the hard work that goes into obtaining that power, such as the early rising, the fire lighting at dawn, the stoking and the unwavering attention which must be given to maintaining the water levels in the boiler and the steam pressure at the required level, and of course the cleaning down of the boiler, the tubes, and the disposal of the ashes at the end of every day.

And when you done all this you have the sheer joy of using a 'proper' boat on the canals for which it was originally made. Wonderful. If you have not already tried it, join Friends now. If you are a Friend, get aboard as soon as you can. If you are already a regular crew member, keep up the good work !



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS.

With the final return of PRESIDENT to the Black Country Museum and the final cleaning out of the boiler at the end of the trip to Stourbridge the 1986 season finishes for the boat. I think it was a good season although there were some problems and surprises during the year.

The ownership of the boat by Dudley Council rather than the West Midlands CC created an understandable vacuum in the use of the boat for promotional purposes since Dudley had no prior plans which required President's involvement but I confidently expect the position to change next year as the council's policy on recreation and tourism sharpens up.

The main run this year was the Brentford trip where President and Northwich were teamed up at the National Rally. What an epic journey!

Membership of Friends increased even though the use of the boat decreased in terms of the number of local days in steam. Funds grew and the committee was able to make donations to the Black Country Museum. Membership of the committee grew and the load became spread among more people. President itself was kept in good condition by the Museum and by Friends.

All in all, a good year

HOWEVER almost nothing would have been achieved without the active and continuous support of Friends. No matter whether you crewed, fixed engines, paid subs, sold badges or simply attended the A G M your contribution to the group of very interesting people called the Friends of President made it all work.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE AND MYSELF, I THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED AND LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE COMING YEAR.

ALAN J GREEN
Chairman.

Extracts from the cruising log.. ..

VOYAGE TO STOURBRIDGE OCTOBER 1986

President journeyed to the Bonded Warehouse at Stourbridge again this year at the request of DUDLEY COUNCIL. Very short notice was given of the Council's decision on this trip which meant that the secretary was unable to notify Friends of crewing arrangements, for which he apologises. Happily a crew was assembled without too much difficulty. The following is an extract from the log kept by Les Langworthy of the trip which was of course the 'long way round' due to the continued closure caused by the excavation adjacent to the canal at Brierley Hill.

WED 15 OCT. An excellent day, rainfree but cloudy. Trouble free run leaving BCM at 13.45 and arriving at Wolverhampton top lock at 16.25, bottom at 18.30 and Compton at 19.30. Crew comprised L. and V. Langworthy, D. Stott, I. Pearson

THUR 16 OCT. Another excellent day, warm and sunny. Trouble free run apart from two obstructed bridgeholes. Fire lit at 07.30, and giving 100 psi at 19.00. Left Compton at 09.30 and arrived at Greenforge at 16.25 after burning 3.5 sacks of coal. Crew comprised L. Langworthy, J. and D. Mathias.

FRI 17 OCT. Yet another good day with trouble free cruising. Fire lit at 07.30, 75 psi by 09.00 and off at 09.45. At Kinver lock the boat was winded and taken astern to Whittington (testing the air draught of bridges on the way) Stourton Junction was reached at 17.45 after burning 3 sacks coal. Crew comprised D. McDougall, John Compton and Carol.

SAT 18 OCT. Cold wet windy day and heavy going for a short trip. Water at least 5 inches low and weeds very thick. Repeated clearing of prop in particular at Woodsley junction. Fire lit at 07.30 and arrival at Stourbridge at 11.30. Crew comprised Bill, Les, and Ian. 3 sacks of coal used even on such a short run, but this was required by the restricted lockage arrangements in force.

SUN 19 OCT. Departure from site slow due to continued shallow water, blockages, bridgeholes and winding hole awkward, and gusty wet weather which persisted until the evening. Fire lit at 07.00, departure at 09.25, Stourton Junction at 13.20, Greenforge at 17.08. Crew comprised Bill, Les, Maurice, and another unnamed Friend.

MON 20 OCT. Of course, once away from the event the weather is fine. Fire lit at 07.00, 100 psi at 09.45. A trouble free cruise apart from being stuck under Round Oak Bridge. Wolverhampton bottom lock reached at 16.10, and the top lock reached at 18.45, a business like 2 hours 35 mins ascent. Crew comprised Maurice, Ian and Les.

TUES 21 OCT. Final run to the B C M on a wet day. Fire lit at 07.45 and under way at Broad St bridge at 10.45. An uneventful trip reaching the Museum at 14.30 with the same crew as Monday.



Picture: CHARLOTTE W

KODAGFA FOR SPONSORSHIP /

Whilst on the Brentford run it was very noticeable indeed that President must be the most photographed boat in the country. The photogenic pair of President and Northwich caused shutters to click practically continuously. Boat owners would dive below and re-emerge clutching Pentaxes at the merest whisp of steam through the whistle. Bridges would be decked out with photographers lined up to shoot the boat in the early misty morns, the midday summer sun and the gentle evenings. "Can you give us some steam please ?" "Could you blow your whistle again please?" "Any chance of going back into the lock and coming out again for us please? All of which made us think that the ideal sponsor for next year's run should be a film company. After all we must be making a fortune for them.

All the President's men

Workers from a Birmingham firm recreate a scene from a bygone age as they unload the President, the last steam-powered barge in Britain.

The 70ft-long craft stopped off on her return from the Canal National Rally in Brentford, to make a delivery for James Baldwin & Co (Steel Equipment), the Birmingham storage equipment supplier.

She left the Ovaltine wharf at Kings Langley, near Hemel Hempstead, loaded with 1,000 boxes of plastic storage bins worth £2,000.

The President, which is based at the Black

BARGE UNSHIPS CARGO

Country Museum, arrived to be unloaded yesterday at the bottom of the Farmers Bridge staircase of locks on the Birmingham Canal.

James Baldwin and Dexion, its parent company and main supplier, sponsored the 78-year-old barge's journey.

Mr Gordon Hateley, the company's field

sales manager, said: "We thought it would be a nice idea to sponsor the trip.

"We found out the barge would be passing near Dexion's headquarters at Hemel Hempstead on her return to the Black Country.

"We asked the museum if it would allow the President to carry a load of storage equipment to Birmingham for us."

The President was built in 1908 for £600 and was known as the "Josher steamer" by canal boatmen. She was one of 31 such craft operating between 1889 and 1927.

The article and photograph reproduced here are from the Birmingham Post and were printed on the day following the return of President and Northwich to Birmingham. The President was unloaded four locks above the Museum of Science and Industry and afterwards President was taken astern up to the top of Farmer's Bridge locks where Northwich was taken in tow for the final leg of the journey terminating at the Black Country Museum.

IWA NATIONAL RALLY AT BRENTFORD AUG1986

As Friends will know President and Northwich attended this rally. The editor has several contributions from crew members but not the time to assemble these into a narrative or log to be included with this issue of the newsletter. A formal log, with some illustrations if possible will be prepared in time for the AGM so that Friends can enjoy the intrepid voyages of the steamship Enter --er-- President by their Christmas firesides.

..... MAINTENANCE LOG

PRESIDENT'S NEW CABIN

President had a new cabin fitted this year. Jim Mathias and son David worked hard to get the boat ready for the Brentford cruise as the following log will show.

July 6 President collected from Caggy Stevens" yard at Tipton.

July 7 -9 Demolition work removing old decaying sheathing,handrails,felt and tar. Thank goodness for hot air strippers!

July 10 Rebuilding commences with felt pinned onto appropriate goo. 7.30 remembered wedding anniversary

July 11-13 Cutting and fitting new cabin side and roof sheathing.Moved President under motorway to get out of the rain.

July 14 Shotblasting all cabin metalwork,also right eyeball.

July 15 Nailing down cabin sides and roof - approx 1500 nails.

July 16-17 Stopping up nail holes. Sanding down and priming.

July 18 - 22 Fitting new styling boards and handrails. Painting starts - signwriter booked for July 24.

July 23 Raining-back under motorway to paint.

July 24 Signwriter arrives,and so does half the Friends committee. Unofficial committee meeting while watching signwriter at work - fascinating.

July 25 Start making new slides for hatches. Meeting with D McDougall "just a few more jobs while you're at it "

July 26 - 27 More painting .Signwriter due on 28th. to do the other side. Hope we're ready.

July 28 Signwriter arrives,starts work,rain starts,back under motorway.

July 29 Still raining ,still painting,still under motorway.

July 30 - 31 Still raining,still painting,still under the b***** motorway. Weather forecast good for Aug 1 - well the morning anyway.

Aug 1 7 a.m. start varnishing . 10.08 p.m. President back at museum.

Aug 2 Rained.

Aug 3 Work party arrives,clears shot from hold,rain starts just as hold is clean. Retire hurt to Bottle and Glass.

Aug 4 Lovely sunny day,finish of all the odd jobs and retire triumphant to pub for the evening

Thanks Jim and Dave for a good job.



A happy crew snapped early one sunny morning on the Grand Union towpath beside President and Northwich on the return run from Brentford.

NEW MEMBERS

One of the purposes of the Brentford run was to increase the membership of Friends and in this we were very successful. More than twenty new Friends joined and the committee would like to welcome the following =

Alan Sibley - N G Ratcliffe - R Mathis - Kirk Martin Ffoulkes - Mike Fox (the second) - M G Nixon - Eric Kirkland - M and S Coates - N Adamson - C J Stephens - E and P Oades - Richard Doe - Mike Furse - David Powell - Peter Godfrey - Brian King - Richard Thomas - A R Sawyer - Mervyn and B Gamage - John Fowler - W R Berwick - Simon Henderson - Mr and Mrs A Brenchley

WELCOME TO FRIENDS OF PRESIDENT

HISTORY OF PRESIDENT

Is there a friend of President who is prepared to discuss the carrying out of research which could lead to the preparation of a complete history of President? If you are, please drop a line to the Chairman at 23 Douglas Road, Hurst Green, Halesowen B62 9HR.

Friends at the AGM will be invited to consider a proposal that the names and addresses of all Friends should be circulated to all other Friends, as is the practice in most groups of our size.

Many thanks indeed to new Friend RICHARD THOMAS for the donation of a BICYCLE which is vitally necessary of course for the art of lockwheeling .

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1986

Notice is hereby given that the third annual general meeting of the Friends of President will be held at 7.30 pm on the 11th December 1986 at the Long Boat public house, Cambrian Wharf in the centre of Birmingham.

Last year well over a third of the Friends attended - a greater number this year would be most gratifying. The committee invite formal motions from Friends to be submitted to the Secretary by 27th November.

Issues normally dealt with include the resolution of motions, election of a new committee and officers, as well as annual reports from the Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman. The annual accounts are offered for approval.

Copies of the Constitution are attached to this newsletter. This is so that Friends can evaluate certain changes that the committee will recommend at the A G M in respect of the transfer of ownership of President from the WMCC to Dudley Council, and in respect of the desirability of holding the A G M. in the early part of the year in future years.

WE NEED A WINCH

When President goes aground in a bridge'ole or any where for that matter, and this can happen very easily due to the fact that it draws 3ft 6inches when moving, it is sometimes necessary to use a winch to pull it clear of the obstruction. The crew would find this operation much easier if they actually had a winch!

Does anyone have such a device which they would be prepared to loan or give to Friends ? A suitable winch should be capable of being operated in a horizontal position (so a chain block is out) and should not be one in which a writhing snake of wire would lash about if a beakage were to occur. A tall order perhaps - but what else are friends for? If you do know of something suitable could you please ring Ian Myers.

Dudley Council have nominated an officer to join the committee of Friends of President to facilitate liaison with the Council so that they can use President more effectively in future, and so that President's' needs can be more readily met.

Friends of PRESIDENT

CONSTITUTION

1) NAME

The name of the Society shall be 'Friends of President', hereinafter referred to as 'Friends'.

2) OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the 'Friends' shall be to preserve and promote the use of the steam narrow boat 'President' and any associated vessels in conjunction with its owners, and in furtherance of the said objective to use 'President' for the promotion of the inland waterways and in particular the work of the West Midlands County Council and the Black Country Museum Trust Ltd. in relation thereto.

3) MEMBERSHIP

- a) Application for membership may be made by anyone who is interested in the aims of the 'Friends'.
- b) Application for membership must be made to the Secretary of the 'Friends', and approval shall be at the discretion of the Committee.
- c) The Committee shall have the power from time to time to invite persons to be honorary members of the 'Friends'.
- d) Membership shall be renewable annually on the first of January upon payment of the subscription.
- e) There shall initially be five categories of membership, namely, Family (couples and their children under 18), Individual, Junior (under 18), Unwaged and Corporate.

4) OFFICE BEARERS

The Committee shall consist of the following:-

Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Five other members

The Committee may at its discretion co-opt up to three additional persons onto the Committee. Such persons should be members of the 'Friends'.

The Committee shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting of the 'Friends' and the Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancies that may occur from time to time.

The size of the Committee will be reviewed in relation to membership, by the Annual General Meeting.

5) COMMITTEE

The Committee shall administer the 'Friends', seek means of furthering the objectives of the 'Friends', and shall be empowered:-

- a) To recommend subscriptions for membership
- b) To assist in the organisation of crews for 'President'
- c) To organise routine maintenance and cleaning of 'President'
- d) To organise research projects and the preparation of educational material.
- e) To appoint auditors.

The Committee shall seek the agreement of the West Midlands County Council and the Black Country Museum Trust Limited in the carrying out of its functions in relation to 'President'.

The Committee shall meet whenever necessary but not less than quarterly. A quorum of the Committee shall consist of four persons.

6) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held in each calendar year at such time and place as the Committee shall decide, but not less than twelve months and not more than eighteen months after the previous Annual General Meeting.
- b) The Secretary shall normally give all members a minimum of 21 days notice in writing of the date of the Annual General Meeting.
- c) Any resolutions from members for presentation at the Annual General Meeting shall be forwarded to the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. Resolutions received less than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting shall be accepted at the discretion of the Committee.
- d) Nominations for election to the Committee shall be forwarded to the Secretary prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- e) Voting at the Annual General Meetings of the 'Friends' shall be restricted to paid-up members.
- f) The Secretary shall forward to each member at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting a copy of the Annual Report, Financial Statement and the Agenda for the Meeting.
- g) A quorum at all Annual General Meetings shall consist of 15 members present and eligible to vote.

h) Voting rights shall be as follows for paid-up members:-

Family membership	2 votes
Individual membership	1 vote
Junior membership	No vote
Unwaged membership	1 vote
Corporate membership	2 votes

7) EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) Extraordinary meetings can be called by a minimum of 15 of voting members who must notify the Secretary in writing of the reason for the meeting.
- b) The Secretary must then notify all members that an Extraordinary meeting will be held not less than two weeks and not more than four weeks after the request has been received.
- c) The only items on the agenda will be the subjects that have been notified to the Secretary.
- d) The quorum and voting rights will be the same as stated in paragraphs 6g and 6h.

8) CONTROL OF FINANCE

- a) All monies shall be lodged, in the name of 'FRIENDS OF PRESIDENT', in such bank or banks as the Committee may decide.
- b) Payments to be made by cheque shall be signed by any two of the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- c) The Treasurer shall keep proper account books, shall report on the financial position at all Committee meetings, and shall prepare a financial statement for the Annual General Meeting.
- d) The financial year shall be from 1st January to 31st December.
- e) The accounts shall be audited prior to presentation at the Annual General Meeting.

9) AMENDMENTS OF CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution can be made at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting and are subject to the same procedure as resolutions with the exception that two thirds majority is required. All members must be notified of proposed amendments prior to the meeting.

10) DISSOLUTION

In the event that membership of the 'Friends' in total falls below fifteen paid-up members for a period of twelve consecutive months,

it shall be deemed that the Society is no longer able to function properly. In these circumstances the 'Friends' shall be wound up at a special meeting called by a Committee Member who shall notify all members at least fourteen days beforehand.

a) Debtors and Creditors

All outstanding debts shall be cleared and all monies owing to the 'Friends' shall be collected as far as possible. All equipment owned by the 'Friends' shall also be gathered together.

b) Assets

All assets whether in cash or in the form of equipment shall be offered to a beneficiary nominated by the Committee after consultation with the West Midlands County Council and the Black Country Museum Trust Limited.

The 'Friends' will then be formally dissolved.

(12/85)