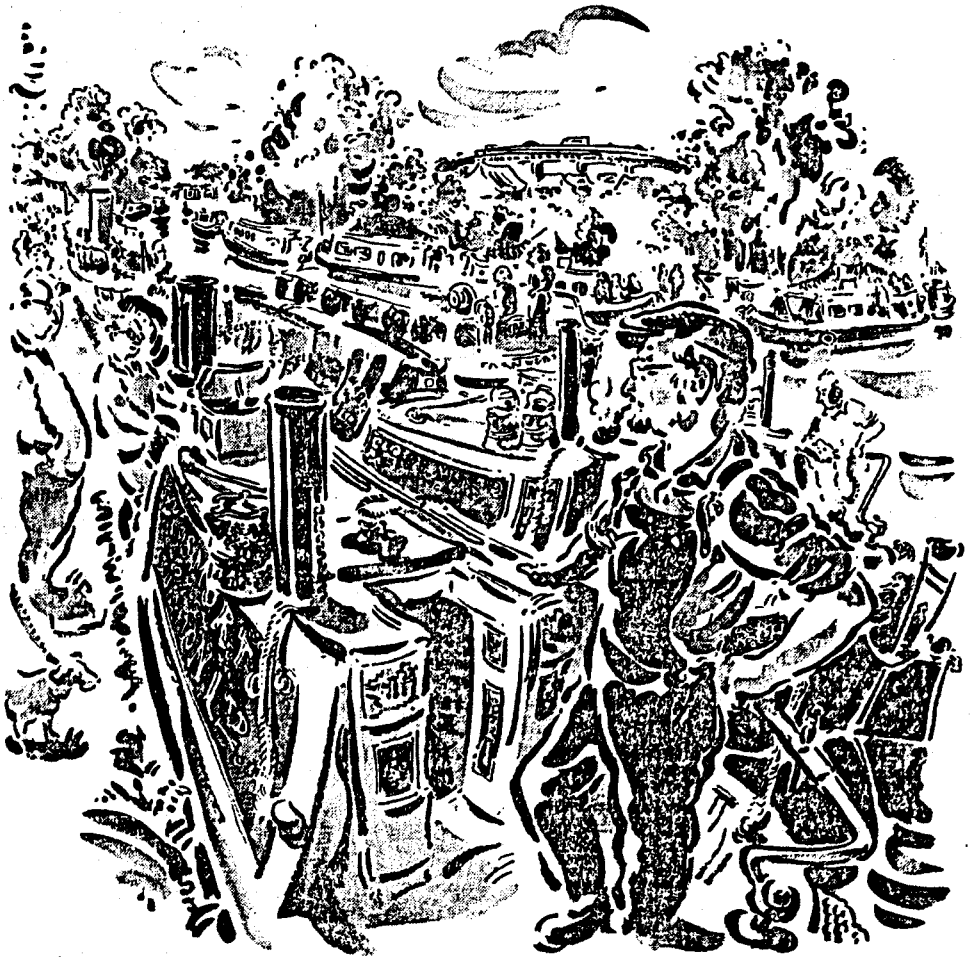


Friends of PRESIDENT

NEWSLETTER

No. 7

MAR·APR 1987



Crowded canal: the working boats are now largely pleasure boats. ILLUSTRATION by PAUL COX

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EDITORIAL

By the time you receive this edition of the NEWSLETTER the winter maintenance programme should be drawing to a close. Several members have been actively involved in carrying out work to ensure that 'President' will be both fit and safe to cruise during 1987. One of our committee members, Les Langworthy, has spent many hours stripping, cleaning and re-assembling the engine and has had to make some new parts during the operation. Without Les's expert knowledge and skill it is likely that the boat would require very expensive repairs and be out of action for some time. David McDougall has written an interesting article about 'President's' winter inactivities elsewhere in this NEWSLETTER.

Things are now beginning to take shape in the cruising diary. You will find the latest list of events elsewhere in this NEWSLETTER. There is also an application form for those wishing to take part in any of the events. You will notice that the schedule for May is very busy so get your form in to the Secretary as soon as possible.

You will all have had time to reflect on the last issue and in particular on the comments of the Waterways World editorial team. Any comments or suggestions would be a big help in trying to solve the problem which seems to have arisen. I have had one letter from Alan Pease who has sent me a copy of his letter to Waterways World. The editor of W.W. has not seen fit to publish it in the April edition. Maybe it doesn't suit him to have people writing in support of F.O.P.

NEWSLETTER seems such a dull word. Wouldn't it be better to call this magazine something more appropriate. How about "One-Nine-Five" (or "195")? Do you have any suggestions? With this in mind, I am running a competition and a prize will be given to the sender of the best entry.

Once again I must make a plea for contributions. The NEWSLETTER is only as good as the material provided, so the answer is in YOUR hands.

IAN MYERS
Editor.

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The cover picture was published in the Daily Telegraph last August and depicts Maurice Parker standing on the counter of 'President' at the I.U.A. National Rally.

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WINTER LAY-UP

Where do a steamer and butty spend the winter? A cosy hibernation spot under Wolverhampton's Canal Street bridge - the one at the museum that is!

Airy shelter for the cabins keeps ice, snow and rain off the expensive paint job and cuts down the condensation inside. Nothing I can think of does greater harm to a wooden clad, traditional cabin than dampness freezing under the paint. Once spring finally arrives a good clean down followed by a freshening up of the red oxide on the cabin top and gunwhales should see 'President' in fine decorative order for the 1987 season.

New cotton cratch strings, those that have to be regularly recoiled and scrubbed, are also required. Four years service has been had from the once near impossible to obtain half inch cable laid cotton line. Now it is available once more (see owner of F.M.C.'s motor 'Dragon' if you want to buy some) your committee has purchased two 90 foot lines from funds and donated them to the boat's owners. The second line will replace the 'tatty bits of string' to quote one uncomplimentary crew member. The mooring lines were just starting to take on an authentic look I thought. The old lines will continue to be used for mooring to the iron rings on 'President's' museum mooring as this duty is very destructive due to rust.

Before the new cotton lines can be shown off however there is much to do down the engine 'ole.

Ice damage to the boiler, steam piping, Worthington pump, injector etc. is avoided by draining down everything well before the cold weather sets in for the winter. The Siberian cold snap during January froze the canal to a depth of twelve inches in less than a week. However this year the bilge water did not freeze, due undoubtedly to the lack of leaks. Hopefully no minor ice damage will be found during the forthcoming detailed inspection of every valve and pipe.

Then of course it is the turn of the boiler for the old insurance inspection. It's back to removing the firebars clambering inside and cleaning out the fireback.

Flushing out and desludging the water space. Removing the manhole lid and mudholes, then inviting the inspector to check out the internals.

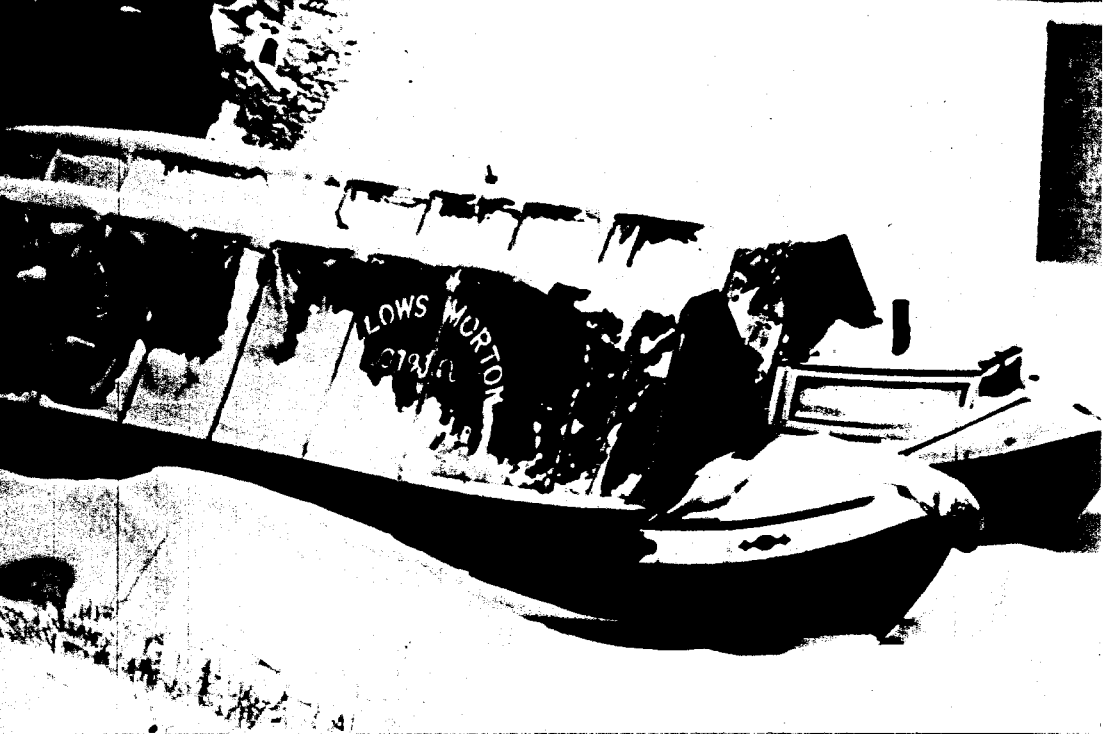
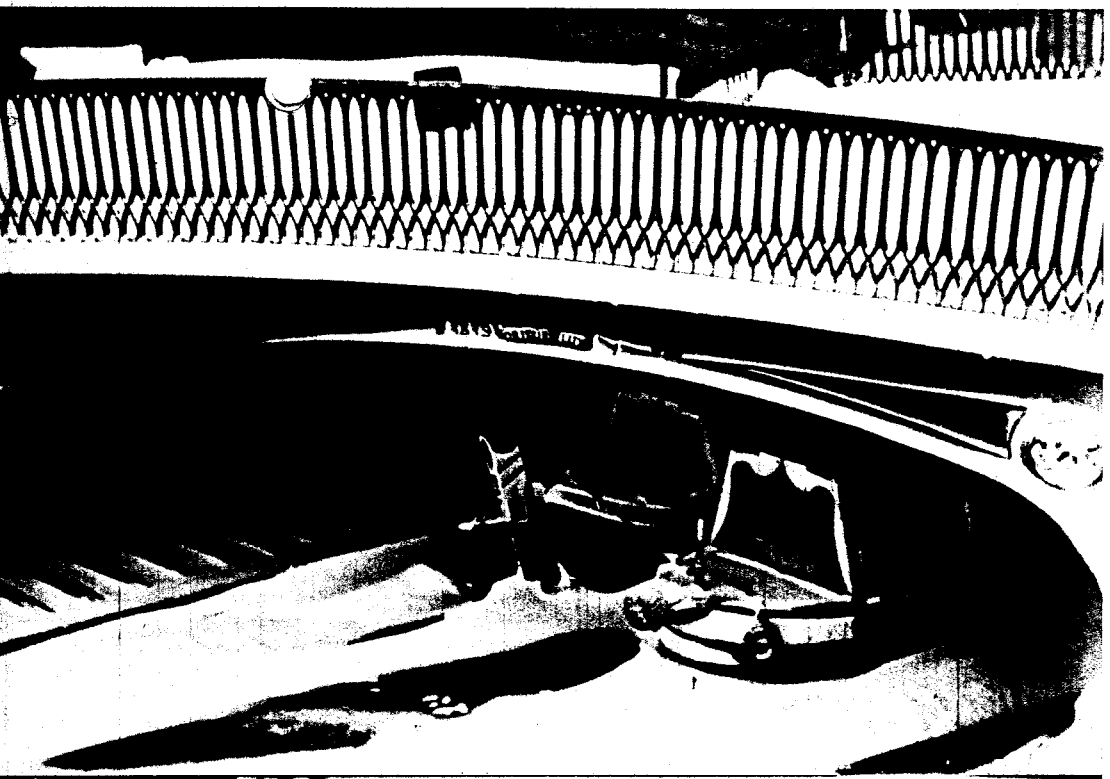
On Monday 16th of March, Dave Stott, Maurice Parker and Dave McDougall set about the boiler with spanners, hosepipes and a large petrol pump desludging. Not too much to remove but it made a mess in the hold nevertheless. 'President' became a hibernation home for a family of rodents during the bad weather. Everything in the hold seems to have been tested for edibility. Teeth marks on the Porta-Potti indicate desperation no doubt. The squeezey plastic flush button has a neat hole chewed in it and now has an interesting upward flush action. Coal stocks seem to be lower than remembered, surely the rats haven't left the ship and taken some with them!

Tuesday 17th March: 'President' features in stills taken for new Black Country Museum advert. Oily rag up funnel to produce smoke. Counter a bit high out of the water with the boiler empty. Watch out for it on Central Television, coming soon.

Friday 20th March: Can't be delayed any longer, due to boiler dry inspection booked the following Monday. Clean out boiler back for inspector. Fresh white bedsheet over engine turns jet black under a cloud of soot. Panda-eyes job again for museum employee - such is the romance of steam - anyone out there got a spare Bolinder? Can you use a Scotch marine boiler as a diesel tank? Could you run a whistle from a compressed air start bottle? All of these questions enter the mind as one sweats away in the bowels of the boiler. No wonder F.M.C. couldn't wait to get rid of their steamers!

David McDougall.

The photographs (courtesy of David McDougall) on the facing page show 'President' and 'Northwich' at their winter moorings at the Black Country Museum.



BOATING PROGRAMME 1987

April

11/12th 1930's Rally at the Black Country Museum ?
17/20th Crew Training at B.C.M.

May

2/4th Titford '150' Rally
9/10th B'ham Science Museum Traction Engine Rally
11/17th B.W.B. Pageant, Cambrian Wharf. ('President' working on 16th & 17th)
17-31st Ellesmere Port Festival (23rd - 25th)
30/31st 'Friends Live in the Village' at B.C.M.

June

6/7th Commercial Vehicle Rally at B.C.M.
22nd Crew Training at B.C.M.

July

4th British Rail Fun Day at B.C.M.
18/19th Working Steam Day at B.C.M.

Consideration can be given to an extra event during July/August, if a suitable idea/event can be found.

August

22nd-6th I.W.A. National Rally, Hawkesbury (29th - 31st)...

September

19/20th Black Country Boating Festival, Windmill End
26/27th Boaters Gathering, B.C.M.

October

17/18th Bonded Warehouse Weekend, Stourbridge
31st/1st Hockley Port Bonfire/Boaters Gathering ?

Please send all applications to the Secretary on the form provided.

M.J.U.

5.3.87



Photograph - Ian Myers

'President' and 'Northwich' outside 'The Greyhound' at Halesbury Junction for the I.U.A. National Rally during August 1984. They will be there again in 1987.

TOURISM CASH BOOST



Millions of pounds of private money are behind the Black Country World tourist initiative.

Local businessmen who formed the Dudley Tourism Association have recognised the potential for earning vast amounts from the rapidly-growing tourist market.

Mr Ian Walden, director of the highly successful Black Country Museum, who has been appointed

chairman says:

"The DTA has been formed to coordinate the efforts of the various parties keen to see the initiative succeed."

Councillor David Sparks, who is heading the £5 million Black Country World project said at the launch: "Dudley Tourism Association will consolidate the century old tourist industry in the Black Country.

"I am optimistic that by using this money to attract private sector support, we will increase the amount of tourist cash coming into the area," he added.

Mr Walden and Councillor Sparks are pictured on the Broad Street Bridge above the world's only steam-powered narrowboat 'President' which is to tour Britain this year promoting Dudley and the Black Country.

Taken from: 'Dudley Business' March 1987

INTRODUCTION TO NARROWBOAT PAINTING AND DECORATION

A series of one-day courses on Narrowboat Painting and Decoration is to be given by B.C.N.S. member John M. Hill (Fishley), at the Round House, Gailey Lock, on the Staffs and Worcs Canal and A5.

Saturday courses will be held on March 14 and 28 and April 11;

Sunday courses on March 22, April 5 and 26.

For further details please contact John on 0922 - 475557 (evenings only).



THE NATIONAL CRUISING AWARD



The National Cruising Award has arrived! What, you ask, is the National Cruising Award? Do not worry as all is about to be revealed.

Firstly, it is an award for cruising our canals and rivers that is open to everybody, whether they own a boat, hire boats for their holidays, or just potter about in a canoe or dinghy. In fact anyone who can get on the water is a possible entrant and this includes you!

Secondly, there are three grades, so you can win one even if you have limited time at your disposal for boating, say just a few weeks a year. The grades are "Bronze", "Silver" and "Gold" and the awards will be appropriately coloured minted medallions mounted in presentation slide cases, which are suitable to display at home or perhaps on a boat. We have to admit though, to achieve a "Gold" you will need more time and much winter boating - but it can be done!

Thirdly, the paperwork is simple. You have a rule book and a map which are cross referenced, so if you don't know where the 'Little Grot Stub End Navigation' is, you can soon find out. When you look it up in the rule book, you will see at a glance how many points you get for cruising it. There are no miles, furlongs, locks etc., to work out, as each section of canal or river is allocated a number of points and you just add up the points relating to your cruising to obtain your total for the year. You will need about 20 minutes to work out the total number of points you have obtained for a typical log.

There are probably a lot more questions we could answer but the best way to find out all you want to know is to get a rule book and see for yourself. These are available direct from the organisers:-

The National Cruising Award,
39 Comberton Avenue, Kidderminster, Worcs, DY10 3EG.

priced £2.30 including post and packing.

* They are also available from..... at \$1.95 each.*

We look forward to being deluged with your logbooks and entries.

The start date for the National Cruising Award is January 1st 1987 and cruising before then will not be eligible. We think we have included most relevant waterways, but if you have a particular axe to grind, or if we have not included your favorite ditch, please let us know and we will look at it for future editions.....

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Waterways Recovery Group is holding a work camp at Ironbridge between 11th and 18th of April. They will be working on the disused Shropshire Canal. If you can spare some time then report to the entrance building at Blist's Hill Museum. Further details can be obtained from Neil Edwards on Chelmsford 322449.

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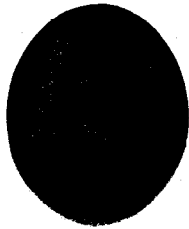
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The next issue of the NEWSLETTER will be published at the beginning of June. All items for inclusion to reach the Editor by 21st of May.
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Members are encouraged to send letters, articles etc. for inclusion in the NEWSLETTER; Small advertisements may be included free of charge at the Editor's discretion.

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All opinions or comments expressed in the NEWSLETTER are those of the Editor or individual contributors and are not necessarily the official view of the Society unless otherwise stated.
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