

# Friends of PRESIDENT



# 195

# April 2017

'Friends of President' is a support group working for the Black Country Living Museum, Tipton Road, Dudley, DY1 4SQ

(Registered Charity No: 504481)

## **Committee 2016/7**

**President** - David Powell      email: david.powel@ntlworld.com      tel: 01799 523855  
1 Reddings Close, Saffron Walden, CB11 4AZ

**Chairman** - Nick Haynes      email: nickhaynes195@hotmail.co.uk      tel: 01527 517475  
42 Tredington Close, Redditch, B98 7UR

**Treasurer** - Simon Nuttall      email: simon@stationhouse.me      tel: 01249 720978  
Station House, Meadow Lane, Little Somerford, Chippenham, SN15 5JJ

**Secretary** - Janet Ramsay      email: fopsecretary195@gmail.com      tel: 01772 827012  
34 Beech Terrace, Preston, PR1 8DQ

**Chief Engineer** - David Stott      email: dw.stott@ntlworld.com      tel: 01782 259363  
13 Longfields Road, Hartshill, Stoke on Trent, ST4 6QN

**Membership Secretary** - Neil Ratcliffe      email: neilratcliffe@hotmail.co.uk      tel: 07549 149166  
Briar Cottage, Old Warwick Road, Lapworth, Solihull, B94 6JU

**Crewing Secretary** - Chris Walker      email: walker385a@gmail.com      tel: 0114 230 5751  
385a Fulwood Road, Sheffield, S10 3GA      mob: 07711 946011

**Editor** - Neil Ratcliffe      email: neilratcliffe@hotmail.co.uk      tel: 07549 149166  
Briar Cottage, Old Warwick Road, Lapworth, Solihull, B94 6JU

**Work Party Organiser** - Richard Prince      tel: 01763 271252  
email: c.pike252@btinternet.com

**Archivist** - Richard Thomas      email: thrifthouse@ntlworld.com      tel: 01992466180  
42 Admirals Walk, Hoddesdon, EN11 8AG

**Sales Stand** - position vacant

**Committee** - Jim Garratt      email: jimgarratt@hotmail.co.uk      tel: 07415 698473  
51 Springfield Crescent, Kibworth, Leicester, LE8 0LJ

- Will Derbyshire      email: [wilderby@hotmail.com](mailto:wilderby@hotmail.com)      tel: 07740-018933  
2 Lockyer Road, Plymouth, PL3 4RL

All items for inclusion in the newsletter to be sent to the editor, contact details above.

### **Help raise funds for Friends of President**

By searching the internet using <http://fop.easysearch.org.uk/>  
Current total : £88.73p from 9,516searches

By shopping online via <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fop>  
Current total : £618.63p from 31 registered supporters

**Website : <http://nb-president.org.uk/>**

## Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition. Some sad news to report first, the death of Richard Burke. There is a piece written by his brother Martin later in the newsletter.



Alan Claridge has made the items shown on the left as collecting boxes for the boat and sales stand.

He is now looking for a volunteer to paint them, perhaps in the style of a mast, or failing that, his suggestion is to attach the brass plaques that we get for attending various events.

Whatever choice is made they will need to be collected from his home near Huntingdon. At the time of writing he didn't know whether he would be able to get to the AGM. If he can't, is there anybody else that could get them to the AGM. If you can please get in touch with me and I will give you his contact details.

They measure approx 800 mm high and 200mm square.

Talking of the AGM, I'd like to remind members that it is being held on 22nd April at the Museum. I was hoping to attend but it is now looking unlikely as I have had a cataract operation on my left eye and am now unable to drive. So please take this as my apologies for not being there, and also for the committee meeting that is preceding it.

There is also more news on the plans for the boats this year.

## President News

The following has been received from Nick Haynes.

We can now confirm that the boiler is being removed in the first week in April and stored at the Museum until we are ready for the re-tubing to commence. Working parties are now ongoing to clean and paint the engine room before the boats leave the Museum for the summer work. Please get in touch with Dave Stott and volunteer your services, especially if the Museum is within easy distance for you.

Both *President* and *Kildare* will be picked up at the Museum and towed to Alvecote on 18th/19th April, by *Jaguar* and *Kangaroo*. I'm sure these will be a dawn to dusk couple of days. At Alvecote *President* will go into the dry dock where the bottom will be inspected and any work required will be undertaken, hull blacked and an insurance survey completed. *Kildare* will also be docked and hopefully hull blacked and also surveyed for the insurers.

We are still looking into the painting options, but know that both boats will be towed to Braunston for the show, and then towed back to the Museum. More news on this part of the summer in the next update.

The Museum is now actively pursuing the fundraising and hopefully the boiler work won't be delayed too long. Target is still to be in steam for the Boaters Gathering at the end of September.

On another note, both boats will be missing a visit from the BBC to film the Antiques Roadshow in June. Hopefully the *Peaky Blinders*' filming won't start until the boats are back, but not sure if they'll want a newly painted *President* in shot.

Just a bit more detail from Dave Stott.

The boiler will be lifted out on Tuesday 4th April at 08.30. It will be stored at the end of Hallems mill to the left of the chimney, where it will be covered by a tarpaulin. *President* will be moved to the mill side on Saturday 1st April.

### **Work Parties**

Some future work party dates for you, a bit of late notification for one of them but if you are quick you could get there.

Sat 1st April and Thur 6th April.

The plan is to clear the hold and the engine room of all equipment not needed. Clean the bilge and prepare the boats for the tow. There are also new roof sheets to put on the Bolinder shed. Plenty to keep us amused!!!

How much of this is still to be done hasn't been made clear, but there have been some work parties at the end of March.

If you have attended any of the previous ones or attend either of the above dates, please don't forget that I need reports so that the membership keeps up to date with the work.

### **RIP Richard Burke**

On 15th March 2017, my brother Richard passed away after a year or so of irritation and a few weeks of crippling annoyance. He lived a life that was full but as far as he was concerned it was far from completed: he had no intention of "abandoning ship".

His first experience of narrowboats was jumping on and off coal boats and others as they traversed the Perry Barr locks on the Tame Valley Canal, a little over a mile from the family home.

After that he was pretty much unaware of them for thirty years or so. When I bought my narrowboat I did not tell my family about it beforehand. One weekend I suggested that we have a day in the country, taking in a canalside pub. There I told them that I could not afford to buy a place in London, so I had "bought a place up here instead", gesturing to my boat moored outside the pub (The Boat, Long Itchington/Stockton Locks on Grand Union).

We cruised to Braunston Marina, with those who wanted to try steering being tutored by Ron Jackson (a fellow FoP member and someone I have known for almost fifty years). I explained water pumps and pump-outs to the family in the cabins. On popping out to the stern I discovered I had a real problem: Richard had the tiller in one hand, a can of ale in the other – and a really silly smile on his face. I think he did more cruising on my boat in the next two years than I did.

I remember with satisfaction when we – a crew of two - went up the Hatton Flight for the first time. We worked so well together: almost poetry in motion.

He enjoyed his trips out on *President* and would have preferred to do more but family and work commitments were more essential. He had hoped to go on the Liverpool trip last year but medical appointments and deteriorating health – though not always obvious – caused problems. He was, however, able to take a relaxing cruise to New York on the QM2; a not-so relaxing cruise to Birmingham along the Worcester and Birmingham Canal with a crew that included five grandchildren; and a cruise to Clare Island off County Mayo.

Not long after Christmas, it was clear that no useful medical intervention was possible. Walking became impossible in February.

He could not fight the cancer but had to fight the annoyance, the infuriation of having to leave with so much yet to be done. This may happen to many of us: most will leave this world too early, things left unsaid, things left undone – as we are undone. Nevertheless, we should make the commitment to fight the good fight as long as we are able: let us embrace life until we are embraced by death.

It is now expected that his service will be at the Torquay Crematorium at 14.45 on Friday 7th April. Not known yet whether the “formal departure point” will be their flat in Paignton – Primley Gardens - or their trailer on the "Beverley" caravan/camp site, where he and Pat could look over Torbay, the Paignton to Dartmouth steam train service, humanity, ...

Formally: no flowers but it will benefit others if people want to make donations to Cancer Care/Research (and the home hospice care people - they did some quite fast and responsive work on his behalf in the last few weeks). Richard, of course, would not object to donations/work effort, etc to *President*.

Pat told me that he wished for half his ashes be cast overboard from *Vigilance*, the Brixham trawler (National Historic Fleet, Certificate No. 741) that he has been crewing, and the other half to be cast overboard from *President*. He did feel that just because he was dead, that should not stop him getting around a little.

**Martin Burke**

### **Fundraising**

With purchases and searches we have now broken through the £700 mark. Easyfundraising now stands at £618.63, an increase of £10.64 this last month, and easysearch at £88.73, an increase of £0.83. This makes a total of £707.36 raised since the start.

We also gained another person registered to raise funds for us, we now have 31.

### **Membership Matters**

No new members joined during March, so the current membership stands at:-

Individual - 67    Family - 39    Corporate - 2    Honorary - 8

Well that's it for another month. Don't forget, with the absence of trip reports I will need articles for future 195s.

**Neil**

