

Friends of PRESIDENT



195

July 2017

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

(Registered Charity No: 504481)

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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 : £89.65p from 9,599 searches

By shopping online via <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fop>
Current total : £643.81p from 31 registered supporters

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

Editorial

Welcome to the delayed July edition because I had to go to Devon due to a serious family illness.

Not too much information this month regarding *President & Kildare*, but there is some good news if you want to take more of an active role in the running of Friends of President. I am going to be standing down from being editor, membership secretary and committee member for the time being.

I will stay as editor until the next print edition, which is the September edition, the same date will apply to the other two roles. Of course if anybody wants to take over before that date I wouldn't complain. Please let me know if you are interested and I can explain the roles.

Trip/Event Reports

To and away from the Braunston Historic Boat Show.

As my wife and I are thinking of buying a narrowboat, and only having two days experience on the Monmouth canal from fourteen years ago, I took the opportunity to get some current knowledge by responding to the request for volunteers to crew two boats for a week.

The plan was to take *Kildare* from Alvecote to Braunston for the annual Historic Boat Show, picking up *President* from Hillmorton where the new paintwork was being completed. The crew comprised of captain Nick Haynes, Tony Tibbins, Janet Ramsay, Martin Burke, and myself, Neill Ward. We would be living on *Kildare* which was well fitted out with the back cabin, four bunks, a bathroom, and comprehensive kitchen.

Leaving Alvecote, and the conviviality of the Samuel Barlow, on Thursday at 2pm we were towed by Malcolm Burge on a South Midlands Water Transport joshier *Jaguar*. Proceeding along the Coventry Canal we bow-hauled *Kildare* through the locks and moored up at the Anchor Inn just outside Nuneaton. A 6am breakfast on Friday morning ensured we were under way again by 6.45.

As we passed Hillmorton marina another South Midlands Water Transport joshier, *Lynx*, picked up *President* and formed a convoy. On turning left when we joined the Oxford Canal we headed down to Braunston where we picked our way through the multitude of boats moored outside the marina. We were unable to get to our allocated berth and were given temporary berths on an arm where we spent the night.

Saturday morning found us doing a photo shoot with Timothy West and Prunella Scales as two very generous cheques were presented to Nick by Tim Coghlan and Tony Hales. At 10am the parade then set off with Tim and Prunella steering a butty behind the lead boat which, for the first time in recent years, was not led by *President*. This allowed us to move up to our correct berth as the parade left the marina. Jim Garratt turned up to man the tent selling the merchandise, numerous items were sold and many people shown round the boats. On Sunday we had a rapid departure when the towing boats were able to get to us sooner than expected. We joined the parade leaving the marina and almost immediately turned left to stay on the Grand Union.

Sunday was a very warm day and we travelled just under 16 miles to spend the night at Long Itchington. Monday was another 6am breakfast and another hot day but we made it to Hockley Heath for our overnight stay. This meant 20 miles and 51 locks in total including the notorious Hatton flight of 21 locks. The major concession on the Hatton Flight is that both pairs of boats could be breasted meaning each lock only had to be operated once. Suffice to say we were rather

tired especially with the heat not making life easy. Monday was also the day I had my mishap. Whilst removing the tiller arm I let the tiller pin slip out of my sweaty fingers and it disappeared into the deep. Fortunately the tiller could be operated with the arm in place and a screwdriver was found to take its place. Nick had a similar experience when he failed the juggling test and his 'Floating Windlass' ended up in the cut, however it lived up to the advertising and it was successfully recovered.

Tuesday saw us heading back towards the museum where we arrived about 4.30. Nick made a pasta bolognese followed by apple pie and custard. The cloths were fitted to *President* and the following morning we cleaned the paintwork and locked the boats up at 9.30 to return home.

As this was my first trip I had no idea what to expect. I certainly learnt a great deal most of which should stand me in good stead when we get our own boat. It was hard work getting all the boats through the locks but the overall experience was very enjoyable, especially with the convivial company and if I have another spare week I would certainly like to do it again with *President* in steam. The canal planner says we travelled 94 miles and got through 84 locks.

One thing I would change is to give a briefing to anyone new such as myself covering the usual health and safety items, location of safety items, First Aid Kit etc, and a tour of the boats showing where everything is. I would like to thank Nick and the rest of the crew for welcoming me in to the team and showing patience with my inexperience.

Neill Ward

Captains Note – briefings are part of our training weekends, but with this being his first trip Neill hasn't yet attended one.

Fundraising

An increase of £8 in the money raised during June, it all came from easyfundraising. There wasn't any increase in the easysearch figures, so either nobody's been searching or there is a problem with easysearch itself.

The extra email that I sent out last month about the choir concert held by Richard Prince raised £150 after expenses, so thank you Richard. Waterways World also have a quarter paid write up on it in the latest August issue.

It was reported in last month's Towpath Talk that another body had been successful getting money from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Consuta Trust has been awarded £99,500 for the Consuta Project based at Child Beale Wildlife Park near Pangbourne. The trust maintains and operates the steam launch *Consuta*, built in 1898.

Membership Matters

Welcome to the following new members:-

631 - Murray Martin, Newark

632 - John Hurrell, Solihull

633 - Michael Tupper, Wareham

634 - Merlin Mellors, Leicester

635 - Leah Robinson-Savory, March

Well that's all for this month, **Neil**