

Friends of PRESIDENT



195

May 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 2017/8

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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 : £631.55p from 30 registered supporters

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

Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition. We have a trip report from Chris Walker about the boats being towed to Alvecote, and the Chairman's report that he gave to the AGM. I was hoping to have had the President's report as well but I forgot to ask him for a copy on the day. He's now on holiday on his boat. I was able to attend because of Nick's taxi service taking me to and from the meeting, thanks Nick.

The collecting boxes made by Alan Claridge were taken to the museum by Tony Tibbins

AGM

Those that study the list of committee members on the previous page will note that the existing members were all voted back in for another year in the same positions.

Chairman's Report

2016 was a new and challenging year.

Although I reported the *Kildare* work last year as it happened in 2017 I thought I should repeat.

We have completed the floor, upgraded the electrics, both 240v & 12v. We now have USB charging connections for all those mobile phones and a new cooker. We have a new water arrangement with the fore and after tanks separated, and a water filter installed in the kitchen, which means no more water carriers are needed for the drinking water. A lot of the work just being completed in time for us leaving for Liverpool.

The boating was also something new and special. We were invited and attended the Daniel Adamson re-launch in the Albert Dock, so a journey on the Leeds & Liverpool for the first time. On the way, we stopped off at Lion Salt Works in Northwich for a steam day. After getting back to the Museum we then planned to visit Crick but due to crew illness abandoned the run at Braunston where we stayed to attend the boat gathering, then back to the Museum. Jim did manage to man the sales stand at Crick but minus boats. We did then have a final journey of the year, an interesting out and back to Audlem, as they had been trying to get us there for years. There were lots of detailed reporting of these trips in 195 so I won't repeat them here. I'll take the opportunity to thank Neil at this point for always managing to produce a monthly 195 on 1st of the month, only occasionally missing, waiting for my input.

As soon as our boating programme was finished it was *President's* time for some TLC. It's 10-year time, so the boiler will be re-tubed. Due to the cost of the re-tube the planned repaint at John Barnard's was cancelled. Unfortunately, funds were not available for the work to start in January so it was necessary to do all sorts of re-planning, but with lots of work, ably lead by Dave Stott, the boiler was disconnected and was waiting to be collected.

A further bit of good news is that Will Derbyshire volunteered to look after our Facebook page and website content, and has now joined the Committee and dramatically reduced the average age.

Finally, thanks to all my fellow committee members and working party attendees, it was a very busy late summer and winter. Next year will be different or have I heard that before.

Trip Report - BCLM to Alvecote April 18th – 20th

This was always going to be something of a 'trip into the unknown'. The plan was to tow *President* and *Kildare* from the Black Country Living Museum to Alvecote Marina on the Coventry canal. Arrangements had been made at Alvecote for both boats to be docked for inspection and to carry out any necessary repairs to the bottom of *President*. The tow was to be carried out by *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar* who were to return from the boaters gathering held at Ellesmere Port over the Easter bank holiday.

It was estimated by the crews on *Kangaroo* (Laurence and Sarah) and *Jaguar* (Malcolm) that they would be at the bottom of the 21 (Wolverhampton) early on Tuesday and as long as they received assistance lock wheeling they would be able to get *President* and *Kildare* to Alvecote by Wednesday evening!

Our crew of 7 for this trip assembled at the museum during Monday afternoon and evening, and spent the time over a meal at the Pie Factory discussing the merits of the what we thought was a tall order, bearing in mind the number of locks and miles with 4 boats. We did think that it would not need much to go wrong for the plan to fall apart!

During this time we heard *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar* were at Brewood for the night and they estimated that they would be at the bottom of the 21 by 9.00am on Tuesday morning. We decided that on Wednesday morning Nick and David would take *President* and *Kildare* out of the museum and get a tow from one of the Dudley Canal Trust boats up to Tipton Junction to await the arrival of *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar*. Tony, Chris, Josh and Oliver would drive to Wolverhampton and be ready at the bottom lock of the 21 by 9.00am waiting for *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar*. They arrived 6 minutes late at the bottom lock but we made swift progress getting the two boats up the flight despite having to empty every lock.

We saw them both away from the top lock just before 11.30 and drove back to Tipton ready for them arriving to give us a tow. We just had time for a quick bite to eat before they arrived at Tipton where *Jaguar* picked up *President* and *Kangaroo* picked up *Kildare* on short lines. The sound of the Bolinder engine on *Kangaroo* was wonderful as we all set off. At this point we were unsure which route the crew of *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar* would choose to Alvecote or where they proposed to stop for the night. In the event we set off on the Wolverhampton level to go down the 3 Smethwick locks to cover the 9 miles or so to Birmingham where we eventually moored in Gas street basin for the night. Smethwick locks gave the first insight of how locks would be tackled using *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar*.

Good old Weatherspoon's provided us with good steaks that evening and the opportunity to get to know Malcolm, Laurence and Sarah better, and to discuss what was expected of us the following day. It was stressed in no uncertain term by Malcolm that the boats should always be moving, forwards, up or down all the time!!

We were told that we should be ready for setting off by 6.30. In the event we slipped our moorings at just after 6.00am and we quickly found ourselves busy locking down Farmers 13 in cool but bright weather, *Jaguar* and *President* first followed by *Kangaroo* and *Kildare*. This was quickly followed by the 11 at Aston and onwards to Salford Junction with the one and only very brief stop of the day for bacon and egg sandwiches on the Tame Aqueduct. Following the A38 away from the centre of Birmingham along the Birmingham and Fazeley it seemed like no time at all before the 3 Minworth locks came into view. Now that the locks were more spaced out the towing boats waited until *President* and *Kildare* had descended each lock and picked up the tow saving us having to bow haul between locks.

Seeing how the crew of *Kangaroo* and *Jaguar* operated the locks gave us an insight of what it would have been like when commercial operation of the canals was in full flow. The skills demonstrated in strapping the boats, using the boat to close the top gate was impressive (but probably not to be recommended by *P & K*) and we all learnt new rope handling skills when strapping boats at the lock entrances.

After Minworth there was another brief rest from locks before we started the 11 at Curdworth, where we were joined by Brian and Pat Empsall, who assisted *Jaguar* and *President* down the flight leaving the rest of the crew to tow and bow haul *Kangaroo* and *Kildare* down the flight. Onwards again for 3½ miles to the tricky right turn at Fazeley Junction to join the Coventry, only two more lock to do! After the two locks at Glascote all that remained was the 2 mile run to Alvecote arriving at about 7.30. The Samuel Barlow pub was thankfully serving beer so we felt that it would have been rude not to quench our thirst after 28 miles and 40 locks (160 lock operations) in the day.

After dropping the running gear on *President* first thing on Thursday morning Malcolm towed *President* and *Kildare* with *Jaguar* the 3 miles from Alvecote to Grendon ready for the boats going into the dry dock on 2nd May.

Chris Walker





All photos by one of my spies, John Glock, who just happened to be passing through Birmingham on his boat.

Fundraising

Another £13.84p raised this month, £12.92p from easyfundraising, and 92p from easysearch. This brings the total raised by these two methods to £721.20p. Our number of supporters is shown as down by one to 30, but I'm told this is temporary.

The sale of shirts is part of our fundraising so I will include this news here. We can no longer get the shirts from our current supplier, the material isn't available. An alternative one is available but our order would have to be for at least 200 shirts, approaching £5000 in value.

So Nick has found another supplier, the shirts aren't identical to the current ones but are very close. The company is the same one that supplies the BCLM. Hopefully they will be on show and available to purchase at Crick.

Talking of Crick, don't forget to get in touch with Jim Garratt if you can help out on the sales stand for one or more days. I know from experience that we raise more money when there are at least four people on the stand, and we definitely need the money this year.

Membership Matters

One new member to welcome to our group this month:-

630 - Sue Blake, Telford

Website & Social Media News

Will Derbyshire has been doing a lot of work on the website and also updating our Facebook page. Well done Will.

Other News

Received this link from Eddie Oades the other day

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-39678924>

For those without an internet connection it is about the 114 year old steam tug tender, the Daniel Adamson, setting off along the Manchester Ship Canal for Salford after its £3.8m restoration.

Well that's all for another month, don't forget I still need work party reports.

Neil