

Friends of PRESIDENT

“Steaming Up”

Welcome to this the first issue our newsletter. Those of you who were present at our recent AGM will recall that it was suggested that FOP should produce a newsletter between issues of “195”. The aim of this being to keep members better informed, particularly during this exciting period of restoration work. This is not designed to replace “195” but as a supplement to include the news section of “195” and diary dates. It will also be issued on a regular basis over the next few exciting months. **Simon Nuttall**

Progress update

If you attended the AGM then some of this will be old news to you. But I will bring the story right up to date.

About 30 members assembled at Ian Kemp’s Dadford’s shed on Saturday 10th November. It was fortunately dry, which gave us all a chance to thoroughly inspect the work carried out to date. At this time the hull steelwork



Members at Dadfords
shed on AGM day –
Photo Judy Spencer

had almost been completed, a major delaying factor had been the production of the rubbing strake. There was no stock of the correct profile strake anywhere in the country. Thus we were forced to have 3 tons produced at Dudley Port rolling mill. The downside of which being that we only needed half a ton. Thus FOP is now the

proud holder of the nations supply of correct profile rubbing strakes for an F.M.C. boat. Seriously it is hoped that the rest of the stock will be sold to other restorations. Indeed Ian Kemp has already requested some. The mill had been planning to produce the rollings in August, but it was late October before we received the stock. Without this it was impossible to start the riveting.

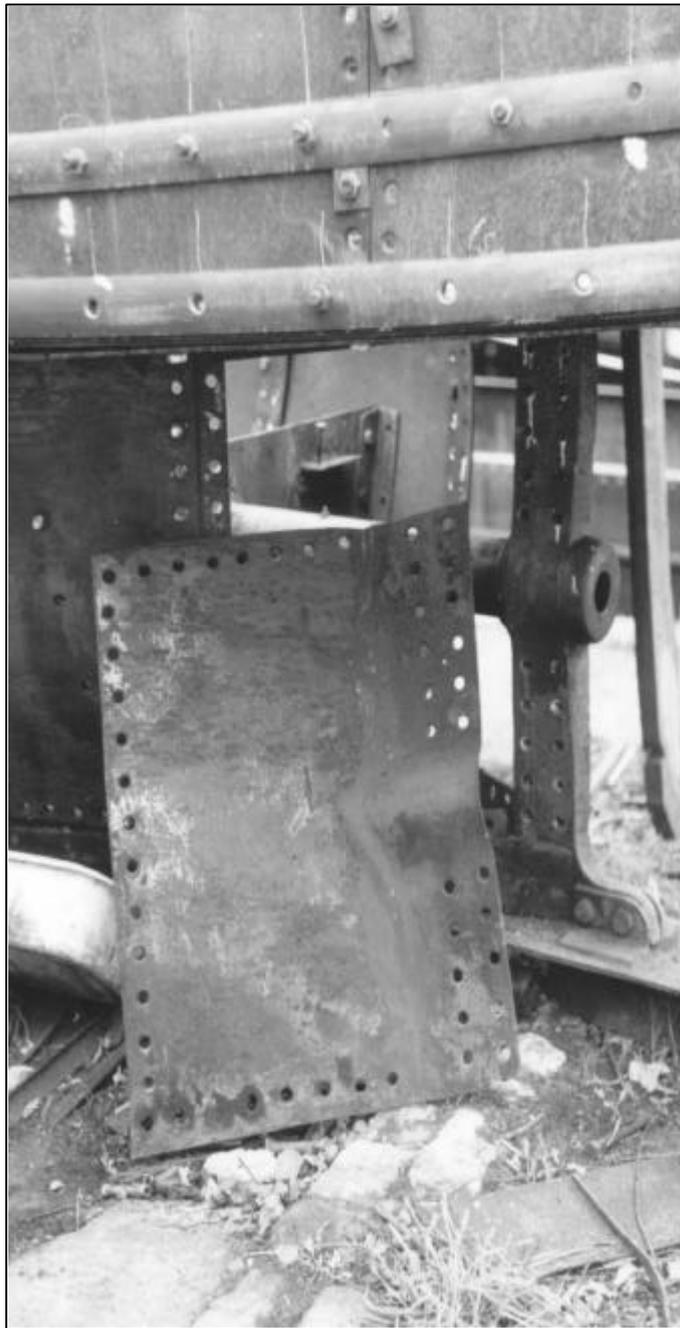
Since the AGM the riveting has been completed and the entire hull shot blasted. The exterior has been coated with



President on the
Dock- AGM day –
Photo Judy Spencer

a two coat epoxy finish and the interior with two coats of primer. The hull bottoms have

been attended to. At the AGM Ian Kemp reported that he had been told of a possible supply of elm for the bottoms. At that time he refused to be committed as to whether he would use it. However, members will be pleased to know that it



The rear swim section, this photo clearly shows the work necessary to create each plate. Ian has hand made each plate. He first of all makes up a former using light metal and then makes the actual piece. As he doesn't have a press the metal is heated up using oxy-acetylene torches and beaten into shape. Photo Maurice. Parker

was of a very good quality. Ian has replaced the rear 35 feet of the hull and will inspect and repair any weak sections on the front section.

The next stage of the project is to produce a new boatman's cabin. This is to be designed to include all that is currently known about FMC cabins. The only aspect of the cabin that has yet to be decided is that of the door into the engine room. The old cabin had a full size door, it had been thought that in the interests of cleanliness the door would be replaced by hatch of some sort. But, this has been questioned from the point of view of tunnel safety. In particular if the boat was stuck in say Harecastle tunnel the engineman would be unable to escape from the engineroom. This issue is currently being looked into.

It is hoped that FOP can begin work shortly, there are a number of jobs to be completed on the hull; the inside needs painting with the correct semi-gloss "primer" used by us and the knees need to be painted blue. When the cabin is finished the mast and stand can be re-erected as can the cratch.

Incidentally Pete Boyce has kindly refurbished the mast with a new oak inner section. He has also had a new spring made for the loobey, which it may be recalled had a tendency to be flipped over and was difficult to return to it's correct position.

Work party dates

2nd February

16th February

2nd March

16th March

Because of the amount of work to be done we will be holding fortnightly working parties. We will all need to pull together to ensure the boats are ready. Please contact

Ron Spencer on 0161-9803539 to let him know when you can attend.

Steam plant report

Running in parallel with the work on the hull is a lot of work on the steam plant. It should be remembered that we are undertaking a restoration almost as full as that carried out in 1976. We have employed Derek from the museum to fully measure all components on the engine. This will allow us to quantify the way the engine is wearing over the next few years. Currently the ancillary parts of the engine are being prepared. A flywheel has been obtained from Preston steam and is being machined to fit. It smooth faced to ensure that there are no projections to catch clothing on.



Pneumatic rivet gun ready for action. Photo Simon Nuttall

Our existing barring wheel is also being machined to fit the new engine. This has two advantages, firstly it is cheap than buying or casting a new one. Secondly it will then allow us to connect to the existing shafting and avoid further cost.

The work on the boiler has been finished. This has included finally resolving the fusible plug debacle. Many of you will remember the multiple failures of the plug. For new members, the fusible plug is a safety device within the boiler designed to stop it exploding when the water level falls below the top of the water tubes. If it is exposed to the steam a lead section in

the plug will melt causing the boiler contents to empty onto the fire. As someone who was around when one went I can assure you it is not pleasant. Anyway, back to the problem. The original design was flawed in that it allowed scale to gather in the socket holding the plug. In turn this caused the overheating of the plug and it's failure. This problem was then exacerbated by the failure of the socket threads and then an incorrect repair by a local engineering firm.

A slight re-design of the smokebox doors has been carried out to allow us to fully remove all soot when winterising the boiler. In essence two removable panels have been cut into the lower edges. In addition the firebox doorplate assembly has been redesigned. The smoke box doors and hinges have been repaired to ensure a better fit and avoid the air gaps which could make lighting up a trial.

Finally the boiler firebars are being replaced. Most enginemen will have noticed that they were burnt and this had led to the gap between them closing up. The idea of firebars burning may seem odd to non-engineman. The problem is that if the fire is run with a very thin fire then the bars become very hot allowing the metal to be degenerated. This is to a large extent unavoidable because of the conditions and un-even steam load placed on the boiler. Unfortunately the original patterns have been mislaid. But, fortunately the Severn Valley Railway has produced the pattern free of charge and is now casting us a new set. A further revision will be made in that the firebar gap will be increased from $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " to aid draughting following the change to condensing operation. This change means that the engine no-longer exhausts into the funnel, which provided a measure of forced draught to the boiler. The new system involves the exhaust being sent to a surface condenser in order to generate a vacuum. Potentially this could make the boiler difficult to steam due to the lack of pull on the fire. The additional air gap between the bars should therefore provide additional draughting.

Boating programme

The committee has now been able to look at the boating programme for the year. It had originally been planned to attend the Little Venice IWA rally in early May. In addition we would have attended the Rickmansworth event. However, the delays encountered because of the rubbing strakes means that we are forced to scrub those events. It should be remembered that there will need to be extensive training of drivers prior to setting off on the first trip. We will also be arranging training for all crew.

Therefore we will be attending two major trips this year. The first leaves on 26th May and takes in the Crick show and Middlewich festival before returning to the Museum on 22nd June. The Second trip will be the Jam 'ole run leaving on 13th October and returning on 1st November. Additionally there will be the Birmingham boat show, Windmill End boating festival and the Parkhead Rally.

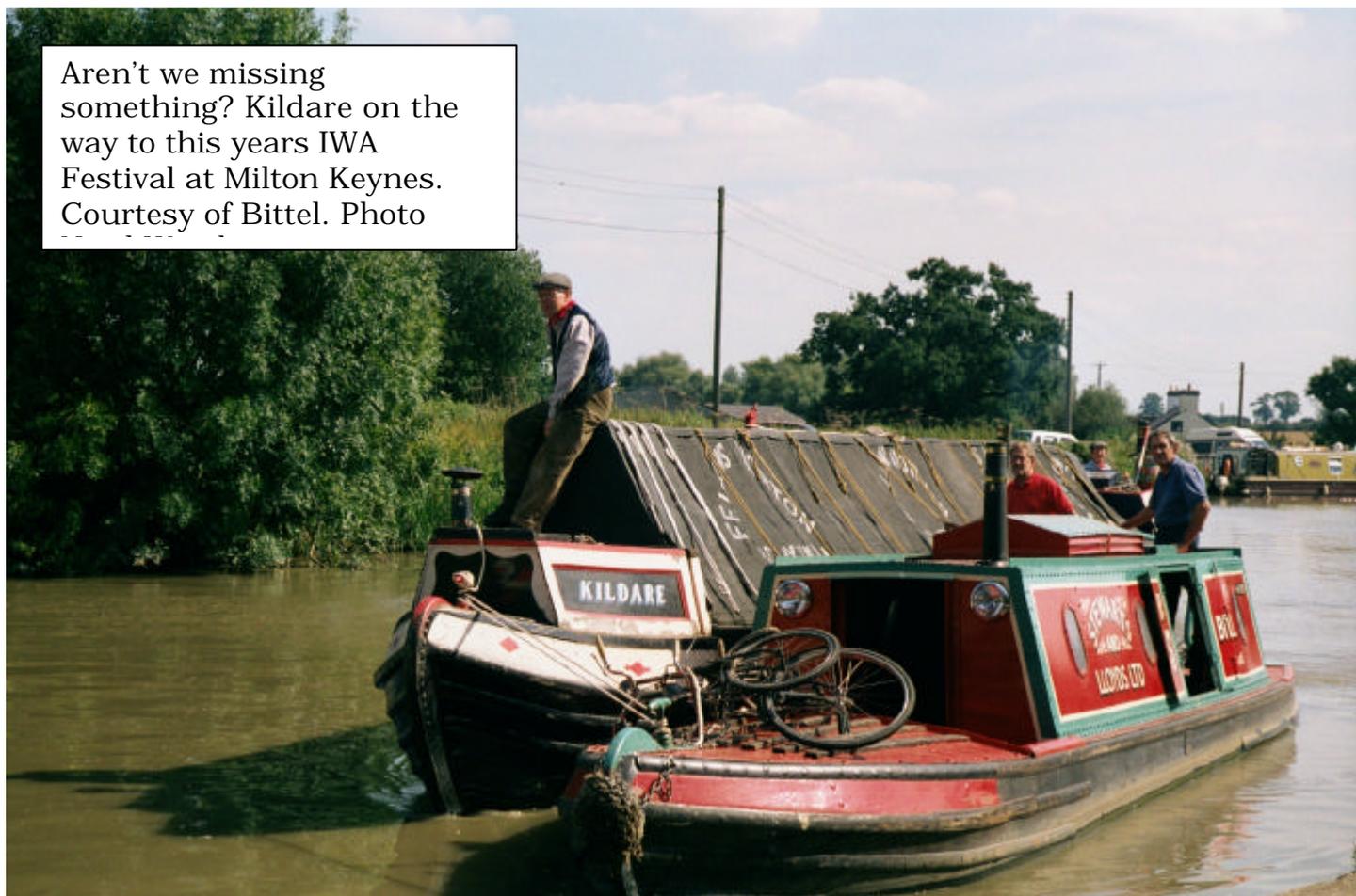
All in the boats will be out for over 7 weeks so there is plenty of opportunity for all members to see the new engine in operation.

Included with this newsletter is a crewing form. Please complete it and return it to Richard Thomas as soon as possible.

Fundraising

The total cost of the project, including the new engine is estimated at £45,000. The committee and particularly David Powell is working very hard to raise this sum. At present we are approximately £20,000 short. However a number of applications for funding are still pending. We are still very much in need of contributions from members. If you have already promised to support us over the next few years then please do not forget to send your contribution to Bob Jervis. If you contributed on a one off basis last year then please carefully consider making an additional donation.

Aren't we missing something? Kildare on the way to this years IWA Festival at Milton Keynes. Courtesy of Bittel. Photo



BOATING PROGRAMME

As you will have learnt from the newsletter, we are forecasting that President will be out and about by June 2002, and has a fairly full programme of visits and events during the latter half of the year.

Once again, we are asking for volunteers to crew the boats. Please fill in your wishes below. If you can only do part of a journey, indicate this, though preference will be given to those who can do the whole run.

Please return the lower part of this form to me, Richard Thomas, at 42 Admirals Walk, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 8AG

Name	Telephone	
Address	email	
Event	Dates	Yes, please
Journey to Crick	26 th – 31 st May	
Crick Boat Show	1 st – 3 rd June	
Journey to Middlewich Festival	5 th June – 15 th June	
Middlewich Festival	16 th – 17 th June	
Return to the Black Country Living Museum	18 th – 22 nd June	
Birmingham Boat Show	18 th – 22 nd July	
Windmill End Boating Festival	15 th – 16 th September	
Parkhead Rally	27 th – 30 th September	
Journey to Braunston	13 th – 19 th October	
Jam 'ole Run (Braunston/Hawkesbury/Southall/Braunston)	20 th – 27 th October	
Return to the Black Country Living Museum	28 th October – 1 st November	