



1st May 2009

PRESS RELEASE

100 Year Old Boat Steams Ahead to Birthday Celebrations

President the only preserved steam powered narrowboat on the waterways today, celebrates its 100th birthday on the 2nd May 2009 at the Black Country Living Museum with a party fit for a centenarian, before undertaking a 5-month Birthday Tour of the canals and waterways.

When President narrowboat steamed into action 100 years ago - the world was a very different place. Edward VII was on the throne, Commander Robert E Peary had just conquered the North Pole, Louis Blériot had taken 43 minutes to cross the English Channel in an aeroplane, Selfridge's department store had just opened in London and the Black Country was at the heart of the industrial revolution.

Today, a century later, the waterways have been replaced by motorways and the once arterial canals - the life blood of industrial Britain have become mere echoes of the past. The canals have now established themselves as scenic routes used by leisure crafts and holidaymakers with many historic routes preserved in this way.

President' was built in 1909 in company dock at Saltley, Birmingham and cost just £600. The company built and operated 31 steam narrow boats between 1889 and 1931. In 1983 President was bought by the Black Country Living

Museum and the Friends of President was formed the following year to assist in the operation and maintenance of this unique vessel.

In its heyday the steamer would have usually worked 'fly' (day and night) on the canals between London, Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Leicester and Nottingham with a crew of four men or women working continuous shifts. The busiest part of the route, however, was between London and Braunston. Cargoes would have been valuable spices, tea, wool, cheese, soap, sugar, wheat, barrels of beer and spirits, tinned goods and even bedsteads and bicycles.

David Powell Chairman of the Friends of President said: "We are very proud that 'President' is 100 years old this year. For over a quarter of its life it has been in the care of the Black Country Living Museum, and we hope that it will be around for the next hundred years. President can be seen this year at many locations around the country promoting the Museum and the Inland Waterways. Full details can be found on our website www.nb-president.org.uk."

Photo Opportunities

The boat will be making scheduled stops at locations listed below. Journalists/photographers should contact Fiona Carding, Media Relations Officer on Tel: 0121 521 5692 or mobile 07901 575995 or Emma Middleton, Marketing Manager on Tel: 0121 521 5603 or mobile: 07747 312196 to arrange interviews/photo opportunities en route. More info available at www.nb-president.org.uk

Route

Saturday 2 nd - Monday 4 th May	Birthday Party Weekend at the Black Country Living Museum
Saturday 9 th - Sunday 10 th May	Black Country Living Museum
Saturday 16 th - Sunday 17 th May	Black Country Living Museum
Monday 25 th - Friday 29 th May	To Etruria, Wolverhampton 21, Atherley & Great Haywood Junction
27 th -28 th May	At Star Lock in Stone, Staffs

Saturday 30th - Sunday 31st May
Monday 1st June - Saturday 6th June

Saturday 6th - Sunday 7th June
Saturday 13th - Sunday 14th June
Thursday 25th June
5pm - 25th June - 7pm 26th June

Saturday 27th - Sunday 28th June

Monday 29th June

Tuesday 30th - Saturday 4th July
Sunday 5th - Friday 10th July
Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th July
Monday 13th - Friday 17th July
Saturday 18th - Sunday 19th July

Monday 20th - Sunday 26th July
Sunday 26th - Saturday 15th August
Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd August
Saturday 8th - Sunday 9th August

Saturday 15th - Saturday 22nd August
Sunday 23rd - Thursday 27th August
Friday 28th August
Saturday 29th - Monday 31st August

Tuesday 1st - Monday 7th September
Saturday 12th - Sunday 13th September
Saturday 26th - Sunday 27th September

Etruria Bone Mill Festival
Return to BCLM via Great Haywood &
Atherley Junction, Wolverhampton 21
Weekend at BCLM
Weekend at BCLM
To Fazeley Street
Fly run from Fazeley Street to
Braunston
Braunston Historic Boats Rally -
features a celebration of presidents
Centenary and her launch in June 1909
To Stoke Bruerne (including photo re-
creation at Buckby)
To Marsworth for crew change
To London Canal Museum
At London Canal Museum
To Henley
At Thames traditional Boat Rally,
Henley on Thames
To Braunston
At Braunston Marina
At Braunston Marina in steam
At Stoke Bruerne for 'in steam'
weekend
To Leicester, via Foxton
To Nottingham, via Loughborough
To Red Hill Flood Lock, River Soar
At IWA National Festival at Red Hill
Flood Lock, River Soar
Return to BCLM, via great Haywood
Weekend at BCLM
Boaters Gathering at the BCLM