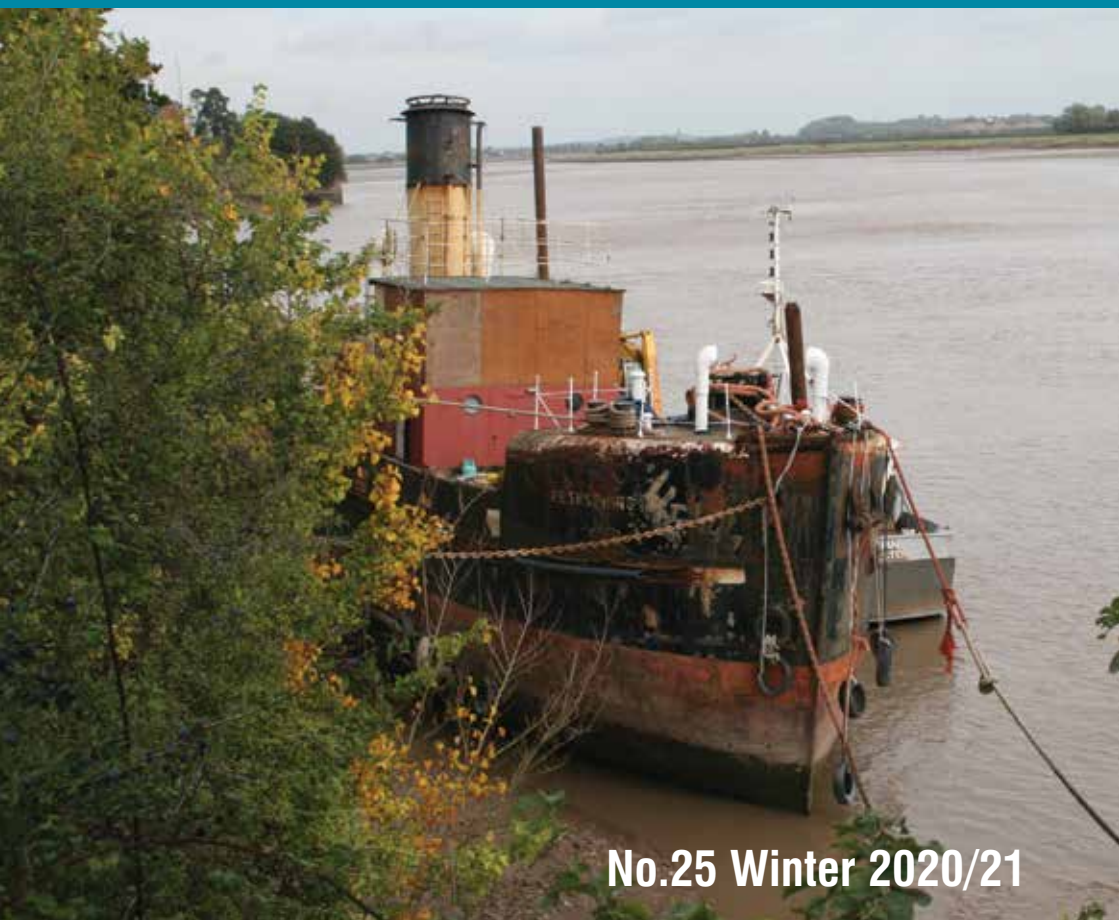


STEAMSHIP

FRESHSPRING

TRUST

MAGAZINE



No.25 Winter 2020/21

*Preserving the past to inspire knowledge for the future*

The Steamship Freshspring Trust is a registered charity, No.1151907.

**Objects of the Charity:**

To advance the education of the public through the preservation and operation of a historic steamship, and the promotion of maritime studies particularly amongst young people for the public benefit.

**Registered Office:** Little Cleave, Lower Cleave, Northam, Devon, EX39 2RH

**Patrons:** The Earl Attlee TD; Rear Admiral Nigel Guild CB CEng FREng;  
Captain Kevin Slade CMMar FNI.

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Keep up to date with progress/news via the Trust's website or Facebook page.

**Website:** www.ssfreshspring.co.uk

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/SSFreshspringTrust?fref=ts

**Membership Enquiries:** Please send an s.a.e. for a form to: Steamship Freshspring Trust, c/o Richard Ker, 4 New Street, Appledore, Devon, EX39 1QJ, or you can join online.

**Ship Visits & Volunteering on the ship:** The ship is currently closed to the public due to Coronavirus. However, members may visit by prior appointment, usually on a Wednesday or a Sunday. Please call Peter Gillett, our Local Ship Manager, on 01237 237 183 (email: peter.gillett@ssfreshspring.co.uk ) if you are interested in volunteering.

*Freshspring News is edited by Brian Gooding, and published by the Steamship Freshspring Trust, a registered charity.*

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## Editor's Ramblings. . . .

Welcome to the Winter 2020/21 magazine.

This is the 25th magazine (or newsletter) that I have produced since the Spring of 2014 and, I must admit, it has been an interesting project. It has followed the ups and downs (luckily mostly ups) of *Freshspring* from almost the beginning of the project, and what a lot has been achieved by the team ably led by our Chairman John. Like a lot of us, he should be putting his feet up and enjoying life, but having a great project to get one's teeth into keeps one young. At least, that is what I am telling myself with all the pies I seem to have fingers in!

Unfortunately I seem to have taken on too many projects, in addition to running a publishing business, and despite trying to take more of a back seat with a working museum I am involved with, the opposite has happened due to the dreaded Covid, but a silver lining came along with a DCMS grant to help reopen the museum next year; this means a lot more of my time as a trustee to manage a massive project. As you will read in John's report, I have taken the decision to stand down as a trustee from *Freshspring* but I will still be around to help out as needed, albeit from 200 miles away! You haven't got rid of me yet!

The award of funding from the DCMS (see page 12) provides a lifeline to help the Trust get through the winter period in the hope that the ship can reopen to the public in the Spring. Hopefully with the progress in the development of vaccines announced in the last few days, life can return to some sort of normality next year and the great British public may realise that taking domestic holidays or breaks instead of going abroad will produce a bumper year for the South West, and bring people to see our very special ship.

I know that maritime heritage is a bit of a niche market, and preserving an old steamship probably even more so, but the Trust needs more members to improve awareness nationally. We already have a superb management team and very experienced Patrons but we all know people who either may be interested in joining as members or, better still, in helping in some way. There are many ways people can help, even without leaving home, and 'volunteering' is apparently good for people's mental health, so why not spread the word?

Finally, I would like to wish you all a great Christmas and a good 2021. Let's hope it's a bit more 'normal' than this year has been!

**Brian Gooding**

**FRONT COVER:** A look back to October 2011 when I first saw the ship looking all forlorn at Newnham on Severn. Luckily a lot has happened since! **Brian Gooding**



## From the Chair

**Covid** continues to blight our lives and is likely to do so for quite a while yet. Having said that, we have been busy at *SS Freshspring* with more people volunteering than ever. This poses some challenges on work days to keep safe. Most people come and go during the day creating crossovers to keep on board numbers contained. We also have a very robust volunteer management system on the ship.

As Trustees, this has been a particularly busy time as we have been applying for and gaining support to see us through this difficult year and potentially the next. All thoughts of opening the ship have been abandoned unfortunately, but we are preparing for 2021 when we hope to have a bumper year. The South West has had a massive increase in visitors since the end of lockdown and I hope people will consider UK holidays next year. There is hardly a moment when there aren't people looking at the ship and I know many of them would like to come aboard.

I am sorry to report that we are losing a founding Trustee. Brian Gooding has decided to stand down as a Trustee. He is, in his day to day life, a very busy person who juggles to keep several magazines afloat and thriving. On top of all of this he is a major force in the success of the Hollycombe Working Steam Museum. Indeed, they have just been awarded almost a million pounds of DCMS support, which adds considerable pressure.

Brian and I first met in late 2012 when he came to the ship at Newnham to meet me with a view to writing an article to support her being saved. In those early days it was a desperate fight even to attempt to save a 120ft ship, let alone get her afloat and bring her to Bideford. Throughout the life of the Trust, Brian has always been there as a positive influence and advisor. I feel we would not have got to where we are today without his visionary and professional input. I am pleased to say that Brian will still be active within the Trust, continuing as an advisor and valued colleague for which we are very grateful.

I am aware that we do not say much in the magazine about the ship and our plans for her and the Trust. It is important that our members have sound understanding of Trust objectives, therefore I am setting out our future strategy in this report. Patrons, Trustees and custodians of *SS Freshspring* need to consider a range of opportunities for the preservation and use of our ship.

This report is a possible, perhaps ambitious, outline strategy for the future. It does not include any timescales and should our studies determine that the ship can operate, it might take many years to become reality. I have not included permanent non-operation as that could be very different plan but we have considered current static uses.

## SS Freshspring Vision

Our aim is that *SS Freshspring* should provide a valuable resource for innovative engineering projects, demonstrate propulsion systems, provide support for mainstream STEM education and become a valued maritime heritage public resource. We should aim to positively inspire all people and embrace change.

## The Ship

We could carefully preserve the heritage of the ship by discreet installations, with the preservation of some key areas, maintaining her steam installations and overall profile. Regulations dictate that as a cargo ship, in open waters, *Freshspring* can carry up to 12 fare paying passengers. Cadets, having signed ship's articles, can be classified as crew for all sailings. A key element is to future proof the ship so she can move in years to come under her own power.

Once operational, she could provide affordable short excursions to the public in sheltered waters with a capacity to carry up to 100 people.

If we choose to install hybrid systems, visitors would experience steam, steam electric, electric, diesel electric propulsion. We would like the ship to be able to travel short distances on electric power alone and be capable of going to sea utilising diesel electric, indirect hybrid or steam power.

We plan, when funds are available, a feasibility study which will determine if and how we can use the ship and her operational parameters. Tanks, as void spaces, may be converted into flexible accommodation as determined at a range of levels, from basic to luxury, to workshops. Given a major aim is to promote and support careers in maritime and engineering, space can be allocated to the creation of workshops, study areas and an engineering hub to demonstrate and operate power sources. However, this is likely to compromise potential passenger accommodation and we should await the outcomes of our planned viability study which could determine the most sustainable operational modes.

The conversion of the ship is the trust's major consideration and its greatest expense. With void tanks there are many opportunities for conversion. Once propulsion systems have been agreed, space must be dedicated accordingly. Should hybrid be accepted, a large generating plant, capable of propulsion power, needs to be located along with batteries, gearbox, and propulsion motors. An independent diesel generator would be required and while in steam, we could propose a steam turbine to create electrical power. We should plan that the main engine can be turned when static by the battery and electric drive system. The ship must be future proofed, and her economic and environmentally sensitive propulsion systems would be key to this.

We would like the ship to carry operational boats. There could be a boat which can be utilised for RYA training and boat handling. Another boat for moving people from ship to shore and for shore clean-up activities. This boat could be a Rotork type vessel with bow ramp.

The ship should be fitted with the latest navigation aids to provide a training resource for deck cadets. Her power sources would provide electric and hydraulic systems for all services to include all emergency services, pumps, windlasses, steering and power.

Steam production could utilise heat from diesel fuel, or gas. Other systems to be considered could be fuels from wood to pyrolysis. The design of the conversion should consider fuel types, environmental sustainability and necessary storage.

Within the scope of conversion will be opportunities for a range of academic studies. These could include interior layout design, fuelling requirements, generators, batteries and storage, methods of friction reduction, stability and trim, and propeller design. It is likely that a bow thruster would be installed for restricted water use.

The transmission mechanics and the electric propulsion system can utilise aft water tank space, some of which could be required for boiler feed water and possibly crew accommodation.

The planned viability study should support and advise on sustainable potential. An aim is to operate the ship around the coast of the UK, spending time in areas to deliver maritime heritage public learning, career support, deck and engineering placements for cadets, along with sea time. The ship would engage with schools in areas visited to deliver a range of STEM related projects. We could carry up to 100 people in sheltered waters providing cruises for up to four hours. This has been determined by other operators as the most popular. Fares could be affordable providing live experience of an operational heritage steamship.

The ship will always be based in Bideford and operations would radiate from there. Initially we could focus on the Bristol Channel area from South Wales to Gloucester. Indeed, this could be our permanent operational range if it proves a success. The ship would be an ambassador for Northern Devon and could promote the area for tourism and its heritage.

A deck saloon could be constructed on the main well deck and an all electric galley fitted. Crew accommodation would be in the aft crew space, possibly including some aft water tank space. The ship should be fitted with a sewage system, refrigeration equipment and potable water storage.

Forward accommodation should remain nominally as is to retain heritage and house cadets, volunteers, and trainees.

## Learning and education

The potential for learning is a major opportunity and has served the Trust well throughout its life. If we maintain a strong focus on learning, we could gain funds for both the ship and to enhance our overall operation. This area can be our most ambitious and has limitless opportunity. We have focused on engineering and maritime and this bodes well for the future as they are key areas of development within the UK. Because we have always engaged in learning as a major objective, we are very well placed for the future and we have some powerful partners whose respect we are fortunate to have.

Over the past year, the world has changed dramatically. With greater restrictions

on accessibility, the need to provide innovative and distributable remote experiences is now more prominent than ever. The Trust has partnered with BMT and The University of The West of England (UWE) to create multi-generational STEM experiences. "Preserving the past to inspire knowledge for the future". The Trust has a vision to become a STEM hub by utilising cutting-edge technology. BMT have extensive experience in developing Virtual Reality (VR) applications in the Maritime Domain and UWE can provide many hundreds of hours of MSc student time.

With skills shortfalls in maritime and many engineering disciplines, there is a need to inspire future generations into careers in STEM. Equally, many adults have a passion for technology and have valuable skills to offer to STEM projects. This is probably our most exciting project yet and will open the ship up as never before. It will also lead us into groundbreaking education opportunities for use in schools.

Beyond the timely VR project, which has proved to be attractive to several of our major funders, we plan to develop Simulation to enable people to virtually operate *SS Freshspring* in a range of conditions. The system could be programmed to simulate a range of vessels to include tugs and towage. We could provide simulation utilising waters around several ports in the country and seaways. As we progress, simulation could provide a resource for engineering students and those interested in engineering as a career. A range of challenges could be provided. Basic simulation should be mobile and transportable to schools and other events.

Currently as a static exhibit, we should consider potential revenue earning projects utilising the ship. The ship has plenty of space in her tanks and within her awning. Subject to funds, we could consider converting these spaces for delivering education and training, which is meaningful for young people. This could include engineering from lathe work to fabrication, woodwork, to include boat building and an academic area for study. We could offer accommodation on the ship utilising existing crew accommodation. Ideally, we should acquire a motorboat so we can provide water borne training courses for young people. If we can keep the ship alive and her profile high, then we stand a much better chance of returning her to operation. Much of this conversion should not impact on passenger carrying capability and could enable us to run courses wherever we are.

In schools we should continue to work to develop mainstream projects from primary to secondary. With partners, we should provide resources for career shows and inspire events, highlighting engineering and maritime careers. At college or university level, we should provide projects linked to maritime, engineering, design, art, VR, simulation, propulsion, and opportunities to create innovative STEM projects for school use.

The ship could be a valuable learning and training centre as she could demonstrate in real life, propulsion from the age of steam to the latest technology.

With the ship mobile, we should plan annual tours. The locations visited could, in advance, gain engagement with schools and other education providers to deliver STEM projects leading up to the ship visit.

In the future, we should endeavour to provide our own education pod, which we would use at the ship, at events, around schools and various other opportunities. The pod should have a cutaway engine, different types of engine, electric drive systems, virtual reality, and simulation to provide real experiences. I am sure our partners could support this type of engineering resource as it is stepping stone towards careers; e.g. BMT have a model which illustrates hybrid propulsion and a version of this could be made available to us.

## Flexibility of vision

In the process of achieving the above, the Trust could identify many more opportunities for delivery and valued use of the vessel. Many projects have failed because of blinkered vision and I am pleased to say that this Trust has an excellent mix of Patrons and Trustees, supported by first class Management and, of course, our funders and valued members. Thus, even in the short term, ideas might be modified as a result of research, partnerships and opportunity. We should gain and use funds to enable us to deliver our vision, not chase funds, which are outside the scope of our activity or likely to lead the Trust into areas of delivery which cannot be achieved.

Of course, what I have written down is a visionary statement and requires considerable dedication and drive to achieve. Given that this Trust started seven years ago, immediately focusing on education, and only four years ago *SS Freshspring* was in a breaker's yard, who knows, we might just make it.

Our first ever article was in *The Transport Trust* house magazine in Spring 2012. It was written by Brian Gooding and at the end of the article Brian wrote: "I am afraid matters have got much worse for *SS Freshspring* as she is now holed forward. I have tried all sorts to raise interest but with no luck. It is now likely that she will be cut up at the yard where she lies".

Thanks to you all we live to fight on.

John



*SS Freshspring now sports her two correct sized wheels after missing them for 40 years.*

## Treasurer's & Trust Report

**This year** has been difficult for all of us because of Covid and it is hard to predict what the next six months will bring. It is even harder to say what will happen beyond Spring 2021! While we are hoping for the best – that hope being a general re-opening of the economy and a return to some degree of normality by Easter – we must assume that this may not be the case and plan accordingly. I shall therefore be concentrating in this report on our ability to weather the storm.

### Current Financial Position

As has been mentioned in previous reports, we have been very successful in obtaining grants both for specific projects and to help us meet our overheads, and this continues.

We had applied to the Lottery Heritage Emergency Fund for a grant to cover four elements – our overheads for four months, funds to rebuild our website on a more adaptable platform – which will also allow us to create interaction with social media sites – funding to acquire some Virtual Reality equipment and fourthly funds to cover the two studies that will determine our long term potential. We were granted funding for the first three parts, but not for the studies.

We applied to the Lottery Culture Fund for further support but we don't know yet whether this has been successful. We also applied to, and received grants from, the Bideford Bridge Trust, The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights, Nautilus, Balsdon Trust, Torridge District Council and a Regional Development 'Kickstart' programme. We are immensely grateful for all the help we receive.

As previously mentioned, we also have funds available to us – either received or pending – from grants awarded prior to lockdown and we can, with agreement, repurpose these if we need to do so.

I can say with absolute confidence that, barring disasters, *Freshspring* has more than enough finance available to take the Trust through to Spring 2021 and quite possibly well beyond that time.

### Future Direction

John has mentioned that we are re-visiting our vision for moving forward and looking at the different options that may be open to us. I think there is little doubt that, in the foreseeable future, donors are going to be particularly interested in projects that help people and we need to see how we can reposition ourselves to accommodate that direction.

### Finally....

Charlotte's fixed term contract expires on 31st December but I'm delighted to say that she will take up a permanent contract of employment with us as from 1st January – two days a week but with flexibility as we move forward.

**Simon Tattersall**

November 2020

# Project Manager's Report

It's been a busy few months, despite the ship remaining closed to visitors.

We celebrated the four year anniversary of *Freshspring* moving to Bideford. Here she is being towed by the tug *Severn Sea* on the 16th October 2016.



We secured funding from a number of different sources for items such as VR headsets and a Digital Marketing Review, and with the help of Lou Boulter and Brian Gooding, we've also created a Freshspring Christmas card.

Much of the last few months have involved planning for the Trust's future. The Fundraising Team have been creating a working spreadsheet for income generation, listing potential funders, key dates and projects to be financed.

John and Annemarie have been working on a Vision Statement for the Trust, setting out potential options for the ship in future years.

We've also been trying to raise the profile of the Trust locally, compiling press releases and forging relationships with local media.

John has been working closely with BMT Global on the VR tour that I can't wait to see. UWE are donating 300 hours of student time to the project, so we feel really fortunate to have such great partners in this project.

I "attended" a day's training on Funding Strategy and Diversification in the current climate that helped me to realise how the Trust would benefit from increasing its funding streams. Grant funding is likely to become more difficult to secure in future years, so we need to think about diversification.

The Careers at Sea webinar reminded me of the range of maritime careers available and the important role that Careers at Sea Ambassadors play. Interestingly, a lot of the cadets at maritime college are on their second or third careers, so not necessarily young cadets taking their first steps in the world of work.

The ship volunteers continue to work on board, socially distancing and on a rota system as required. The awning frame has been altered to give more support along the roof where water may have a tendency to pool. The awning creates a wonderful area that will give *Freshspring* much more usable space for a variety of activities when normality returns.

Charlotte Squire



## New members

We welcome the following new members of the Trust:

Stuart McQueen

*Bere Alston, Devon*

Miss Catherine Ingram

*Kingswood, Bristol*

## Help for Heritage as Steamship Freshspring Trust receives lifeline from Government's Culture Recovery Fund

- More help for heritage in need with £14 million investment in England's historic sites
- Steamship Freshspring Trust is among 162 organisations receiving lifeline grant from the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund
- Culture across the country benefits as 70% of latest Culture Recovery funding awarded outside London

Lifeline grants from the latest round of the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund will protect a further 162 heritage sites to ensure that jobs and access to arts, culture and heritage in local communities are protected in the months ahead, the Culture Secretary announced on 7th November.

Historic sites including *SS Freshspring* will receive help to meet ongoing costs and support to restart activity when it is possible to do so safely.

More than £9 million has been allocated by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, which builds on £103 million awarded to more significant historic places last month. Grants of between £10,000 and £1 million have been awarded to stabilise 77 organisations.

In addition, £5 million will go to construction and maintenance projects that have been paused due to the pandemic.

Historic England has allocated £3,971,513 in awards from the Heritage Stimulus Fund, part of a £120 million capital investment from the Culture Recovery Fund, to restart construction and maintenance projects facing delays or increased costs as a result of the pandemic and save specialist livelihoods in the sector.

Steamship Freshspring Trust has been awarded £66,100 to support essential overheads, costs to support reopening and adapting to ensure future resilience.

**Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:** "These grants will help the places that have shaped our skylines for hundreds of years and that continue to define culture in our towns and cities.

"From St Paul's and Ronnie Scott's to The Lowry and Durham Cathedral, we're protecting heritage and culture in every corner of the country to save jobs and ensure it can bounce back strongly."

**John Puddy, Trust Chair, said:** "This essential Lottery support has enabled the Trust to positively look forward and prepare for a brighter future.

*SS Freshspring* is a valued maritime heritage attraction in Bideford, Devon and has become a must see local attraction. We aim towards a safe reopening of the ship as soon as we can provide safe access."

74 organisations are also receiving grants of up to £25,000 from the Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund, launched by Historic England and almost quadrupled thanks to the Culture Recovery Fund, to cover maintenance and repairs urgently needed on historic buildings and sites up and down the country.

**Duncan Wilson, Historic England Chief Executive said:**

"Historic places across the country, from Durham Cathedral embodying more than a thousand years of history to the Crystal Palace dinosaurs, much loved by children and grown ups alike, are being supported by the Government's latest round of grants awarded under the Culture Recovery Fund. This funding is a lifeline which is kick starting essential repairs and maintenance at many of our most precious historic sites, so they can begin to recover from the damaging effects of Covid-19. It is also providing employment for skilled craft workers who help to keep historic places alive and the wheels of the heritage sector turning. Our shared heritage is an anchor for us all in these challenging times and this funding will help to ensure it remains part of our collective future."

**Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said:**

"The Government's £1.57bn package for culture is unprecedented and it's important to acknowledge how valuable this has been for our heritage organisations and visitor attractions. Although we are not able to support everyone facing difficulties, today's funding package helps a diverse range of heritage organisations from across the country survive, adapt and plan for a brighter future through the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage.

"By the end of this financial year we will have distributed almost £600m of Government and National Lottery Funding to heritage organisations. Investing in heritage remains vitally important, creating jobs and economic prosperity, driving tourism, supporting our wellbeing and making our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live. There is a lot more work to do to address the ongoing challenges, but this funding has provided a future for much of our heritage and the organisations that care for it, when it might otherwise have been permanently lost."

All four nations are benefiting from the UK Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, with £188 million allocated to the Devolved Administrations to run their own process – £97 million for Scotland, £59 million for Wales and £33 million for Northern Ireland. This funding will enable them to increase the support already available to the arts and cultural sectors in each nation.

Over £18 million in funding will go to eight arts and cultural organisations around the country in the second round of grants between £1 million and £3 million awarded by Arts Council England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, it has also been announced today. This funding builds on £75 million in grants over £1 million for iconic venues like Shakespeare's Globe and the Sheffield Crucible last month.

## Scuttlebutt from the Quay

Anyone passing by the ship on a Wednesday lunchtime may well be puzzled by the strange noises coming from the wheelhouse. It has become band practice time and most of us involved are equally alarmed by the strange sounds we make. Our main man, Pete, is the only one who can play an instrument and is therefore our musical director and bedrock of the band. We are currently trying to learn a new song suggested jointly by Pete and Malcolm. It encapsulates much of the activity typical of a volunteer work-day and shows the determination, professionalism and camaraderie of our crew.

### Right said Pete

*(with apologies to Bernard Cribbins!)*

“Right” said Pete, “All of us together, grab an end and steady as you go”

Tried to lift it, couldn’t even shift it, we was getting nowhere.

And so, we had a cup of tea.

“Right” said Bill, “Give a shout to Malcolm”, up comes Malcolm from the deck below.

After straining, effing and complaining, we was getting nowhere.

And so, we had a cup of tea.

George had a think and he thought we ought to take off all the brackets,

And the things that made the racket.

Well it did no good, but I never thought it would.

“Right” said Neil, “We need to get the bolts out,  
to get them bolts out wouldn’t take a mo.”

Tried to turn them, even tried to burn them, we was getting nowhere.

And so we had a cup of tea.

“Right”, said John, “Have to move the bulkhead,  
that there bulkhead’s gonna have to go.”

Down came the bulkhead with a bit of deck tread,  
should’ve got us somewhere, but no.

So Mike said “Let’s have another cup of tea” and we said “Right ho”.

Dave had a think and he said “Look Pete, if we remove the oiler  
And the hatch above the boiler, you could crawl right through and  
I’m sure they would undo”.

“Right” said Pete, climbing in the boiler, shuffling in as far as he could go.  
Only took a minute, he really was stuck in it, he was going nowhere and so,  
The rest of us had another cup of tea and then we went home.

Pete Gillett

## Thinking of Christmas presents.....

Do you have family and friends who seem to have everything? It’s not easy to find a Christmas gift for everyone, but we have a suggestion that helps you and also helps us....

Why not gift a Freshspring Membership for a year?

For £25 you’ll give a loved one quarterly magazines, priority ship visits, access to our soon to be created Members only area of the website and the satisfaction of knowing that they’re supporting a piece of maritime heritage and contributing to our education projects.

We’ll send you a Freshspring Christmas card with Membership details inside, providing the perfect gift for friends and family without leaving the comfort of your armchair.

As a promotional freebie with new Membership this year, we’ll also throw in a copy of our newly published picture book ‘The Wish Fish’. This is a beautifully produced little book, ideal for pre-school children.

To order your Freshspring Membership Christmas gift, please visit:

<https://www.ssfreshspring.co.uk/get-involved/membership> and scroll to the bottom of the page for an application form,

email: [membership@ssfreshspring.co.uk](mailto:membership@ssfreshspring.co.uk) or write to:

SS Freshspring Trust Membership, 4 New Street, Appledore, Devon, EX39 1QJ.



A look back to where it all started: the view of Freshspring from the east bank of the River Severn in October 2011. **BG**



## “It’s all your fault!”

**Brian Gooding**

As you will have read earlier, for a number of reasons, I have decided to stand down as a trustee, a decision not taken lightly. However, the extra needs of my own business through the current situation means I have to concentrate more on that.

So I thought this might be a good time to look back at the start of my involvement with the ship. As John mentions in his report, we first met back in October 2011, nine years ago now, as a result of me trying to find out more about a ship I first heard about more than 20 years earlier and for which I had a line drawing plan of her arrangement. I had picked this up at a festival in Bristol and it had been tucked away in a file since then. I was able to make contact with John through National Historic Ships who put me in touch. We arranged a visit and I found myself heading for a tucked away yard in Newnham on Severn; even finding it was not easy!



*Freshspring as I first saw her in 2011. Note the precarious gangplank...*

My first sight of the ship was not encouraging, let alone the access. Tied up alongside was this sad looking, rusty vessel, sitting on the mud of the river, about four feet off the quay, with access via a horizontal ladder with a scaffold board in the middle, the ladder resting on an old lorry tyre on top of some pallets on the stern of the ship. Of course, if wobbled as I walked across, looking down at the deep mud below, should I slip...

Safely across, I met with the two Johns – Puddy and Richards – the latter had single-handedly looked after the ship for many years, and to whom we all owe our gratitude for doing that and for passing the ship on to the Trust. We talked about the ship, her past and present (there wasn’t much future), I was given a thorough tour of the ship and took lots of photographs. Despite her outward appearance, my overall impression was that this ship had a lot going for her and that internally she was in very good shape. She needed to be saved for the nation, and I concluded that an article in a national heritage magazine might help this along; and I was right.

Following publication of that article, a group of enthusiasts got together for a meeting in the Spring of 2012 from which the Steamship Freshspring Society was



*The view over the boat deck in 2011 – note no timber flooring.*

launched, and quickly attained charitable status with John Puddy as Chairman. I did not attend that first meeting but John soon phoned me to ask if I would become a trustee. I happily accepted as at the time my working life was a lot quieter than it is now. 18 months later, I became Editor and owner of a monthly heritage magazine, *Vintage Spirit*, and suddenly my life changed! We already had ownership of the long-standing annual *Steam Heritage Guide* which involved quite a lot of research every year and the content of which has grown year on year. I was also now putting together the Trust’s quarterly magazine – this one!

Despite the increase in workload, I was able to devote a reasonable amount of time to *Freshspring* and when she moved to Bideford, the Trust meetings became more



*A new access had been built in time for a visit by Transport Trust members in May 2013.*



*The engine was still in good condition.*



enjoyable as they were held in the town and I was able to spend a few days in the area which I enjoyed.

Once the ship had a stable base, volunteers came along to help look after the ship. Some of the original trustees left over time, and particularly when the ship was moved as travelling became too arduous for them. They all played their part to get the daunting project underway and we had some good lunches in the Newnham area.



*An evening shot of Freshspring lying at her berth in Bideford in October 2016.*

With the ship in Bideford, the rest, as they say, is history; at least known history and it continues to make good progress despite this year's set backs.

For me, it was further to travel, though not that difficult and I was able to visit friends en route but gradually my work life became busier.

Since the early 2000s, I have edited the quarterly house magazine of the National Transport Trust, a national charity of long standing whose members are interested in all forms of transport. A few years ago, I was approached to see if I would take on editing (the 'editing' also includes designing and sending to print) the house magazine for the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society, eight times a year and a substantial tome of 64 pages. This was followed by the much smaller magazine for the Road Roller Association, which I agreed to, not realising that the Editor's post was a committee position, which meant attending meetings! A year or so ago, I was then persuaded to edit the magazine for the National Traction Engine Trust – I must be a glutton for punishment, but, in truth, they all have a different slant and style which means when I get bored of one, I can switch to another... somehow it works, but I do feel I have a monopoly on charity magazines.



*During a stint driving the Gallopers (roundabout to the uninitiated) at Hollycombe in August 2017, I was very pleased – and surprised – to see our Patron, Earl Attlee, smiling up at me from outside the fence.*

However, 37 years ago, in September 1983, I became a volunteer at the then privately-owned Hollycombe Steam Collection, at Liphook, on the West Sussex/ Hampshire border. The collection was the brain child of the late Cdr John Baldock. This was my first venture into the world of hands-on steam and in my first season,



*Hollycombe's Burrell showman's engine Emperor, with the Gallopers in the distance.*

I learned to drive steam road engines

and a curious traction engine on rails. This was back in 1984, since when I have driven most of what is at the museum – railway locos, road engines, fairground rides and more. At the end of the 1984 season, Cdr Baldock closed the collection for ever but we drivers formed a society to take it over from the 1985 season and it has flourished since, becoming a charity in 1997 – the Hollycombe Working Steam Museum. I was immediately a committee member of the society, and when that was merged with the trust some years later, I became a trustee. We now have two full time staff but due to Covid-19, they have been furloughed since March, while the museum didn't open this year. That meant that the executive trustees (two of us!) have been managing the museum, including getting volunteers back on site from July. Now with a large DCMS grant to make it safe to open next year, there is a lot of structural work to do, as well as all the normal maintenance checks before opening again next May.



*My own pride & joy – a rare Babcock & Wilcox 10 ton steam roller, Monarch, on trailer ride duties at Hollycombe in August 2019.*

So, you can see that, while I should be putting my feet up, or pottering about the garden, life is as manic as ever, which meant that something had to give. Sadly it had to be my trusteeship of *Freshspring* but you haven't got rid of me; I will still be producing the magazine and keeping in close touch with John...

And as for the title? John keeps saying to me that the whole project is all my fault! In a way, I suppose I am guilty as charged!

# The story of Sioux11

## John Puddy

**Sioux11** is an 18 foot clinker-built steam launch, which I have owned since the turn of the century. She was actually given to me by a good friend who had her stored in a barn. She was in very poor condition having lain there for many years. Even my journey home with her was fraught with snags, one of which was the trailer wheel seizing up.

This was my first foray into full size steam. Much of my childhood was spent with my father and his 3½ inch gauge locos, mostly on tracks in Bristol. Even my pram was hauled by a small steam engine. Of course, as soon as I could walk, I had a tiny bench in his workshop and there made my first steam engine. I was lucky as steam was mainstream on the railways and we often watched locos in our area, particularly the S&D *Pines Express* which passed Masbury Halt after climbing the Mendip hills with help from a banker.

I soon got started on *Sioux11* and found that the Illingworth boiler was seriously damaged by frost. Initially, I took it to a boiler shop for repair and after minimal action from them, I took it back and decided to do it myself. I was lucky as a near neighbour



John with Sioux on the River Dart with spray hood fitted.

had full size traction engines and his advice was invaluable. The boiler drum was fine and so could be used. I cut out all the old tubes, some 40 of them, and formed new tubes on a home made jig. I redesigned the tubes to give more heating area for efficiency. These were then swaged in place, which was a major and very tricky job in a 10 inch drum.

The boat itself had some problems too. The stem had separated from the planks and was cracked and there were several other areas that needed attention before the boat could even float. I quickly learnt boat building, mostly with an angle grinder and carried out major repairs, which I have to say, I thought looked good and have stood the test of time.

All pipework was useless and had to be replaced, so having refitted the boiler, I set to on this project. As I worked through I improved as much as I could. I fitted a feed heater working from exhaust steam, a coil on top of the boiler to add to this preheating of feed water.

*Sioux11* was built to be gas fired and as this was quite efficient, I continued with gas for a while but the range was limited and the diehards laughed at me. I considered both coal and oil as fuels and settled on oil as it is available and I liked the idea of building a system. This I did utilising a copper fuel tank from a demolished boat and a gas cylinder as a pressure vessel. The system is self charging from the engine and the fuel tank is not pressurised. The burner is a lune valley type which was common at the turn of the 20th century. This all works very well and provides a huge range.

*Sioux11* was built by Eversons of Woodbridge and was the first clinker steamboat built by them. An article in the 'Suffolk Evening Star' of 28th Jan 1975 states that the Everson yard had embarked on the building of the first ever steamboat on the River Deben. The yard was established in 1898.

She is designed to condense spent steam back to feed water for re-use and to improve efficiency, I built an air pump to provide vacuum, thus improving efficiency of the engine to a remarkable degree. The engine was fitted to the boat when built and is dated at 1899. It is a single cylinder slide valve type 3ins bore and 4ins stroke with Stephenson link reversing. The engine was clearly hand made with cast columns as all parts are individually fitted; many nuts and bolts are hand made. The engine runs extremely well in silence and powers the boat beautifully at around 5 knots. The boiler is fed by an engine-driven pump from a hotwell which stores warm water from the condenser.

She has an interesting history from her build at Woodbridge. She was ordered and built for an owner in Parkstone, delivered in 1976. In 1978 she was purchased by the 'Sioux Syndicate' of Old Lymington for £4,000. This was a very formal affair and even a syndicate tie was available. The nominated engineer was obliged to wear a peaked cap when on board. In 1983, she was advertised for sale and purchased by Mr St John, who kept her at Lechlade. In 1986, she passed to Mr Finlator and then to me in 2000. In 1982 she was used for extensive trials to determine optimum boiler pressure, valve setting and propellor size and pitch. The outcome of this is that *Sioux11* still sports

a two bladed 17 inch diameter and 40 inch pitch propellor, which was deemed to be "just right" by the testers.

During my ownership of *Sioux11*, I have made many trips. Regular trips are periods of up to two weeks on the UK canal system. The boat has what is effectively a tent which covers the whole thing and so it is quite comfortable to stay on board at night, particularly as the hot boiler keeps it very snug. I have covered a lot of the canal system and many rivers. I have also explored tidal estuaries and even made coastal trips. *Sioux11* has been to many events, including the Liverpool Festival where she carried a band around the docks, much to the delight of visitors. She has replicated historic steam boat movements such as at mills on the River Cleddau.

On one occasion while we were on holiday in Neyland, we were invited to join a rare trip to Pembroke by the local yacht club. This was extremely formal and all boats had to remain in the allotted position in the convoy. We even had a safety boat. After a good lunch at Pembroke, we all set off back with *Sioux11* last in the column as she was classed as a "steam kettle" by the yachties. As I passed the safety boat, I was hailed by them and thought I was in trouble, probably for noisily blowing off steam in Pembroke. After investigation, I found that it had broken down, which was rather amusing. *Sioux11* proudly towed the safety boat back to Neyland and ended up in the local paper for her efforts. So much for denigrating remarks about a "steam kettle".

*Sioux11* indirectly led me to *SS Freshspring* and you all know the rest of that story. As soon as I had the boat, I joined the Steamboat Association of Great Britain and what a great move that was. I immediately joined a band of somewhat eccentric people who had a desire to make boating oily and difficult. *The Funnel*, which is the Association magazine, in one edition carried a small piece about a steamship to be scrapped on the Severn. I was intrigued by this and got on my motorbike and visited the ship. I was met by the owner, John Richards who had been given the ship when



*Sioux at Liverpool Festival with The Boat Band.*

the previous owner died. Poor John had tried valiantly to keep her in good shape but it was impossible and after some 20 years at the yard, the time had come to cut her up. John tried to give me the ship, but valuing my home, I declined the offer. However, it did plant a seed. As it happened, Brian Gooding had also made plans to visit the ship to write an article for the National Transport Trust magazine. This was in October 2011.

The good thing about a steam boat is that nothing is simple. It only works if you do all things right and keep a close watch and all those moving bits, water in the boiler, steam pressure, heat source and, of course, where you are going, which can be a challenge. The other major requirement is to have burn cream available as burns are an inevitable occurrence.

Oil is a major part of the experience and I have two cans always at the ready, one is for steam cylinder oil and the other for bearings. *Sioux11* has a total loss system which means the oil runs out of lubricated parts and into a sump along with water. Maintenance requires a fully equipped workshop as there are few things that can be purchased and this, to me, is another plus for steam boating. One great bonus is the Windermere kettle which provides boiling water for tea at the flick of a knob.

I am fortunate that I live on the River Torridge and so can regularly steam around the area, giving *SS Freshspring* a toot as I pass her waiting for her turn to steam again.



*An unknown steamboat at Blackpool Mill in Pembrokeshire.*

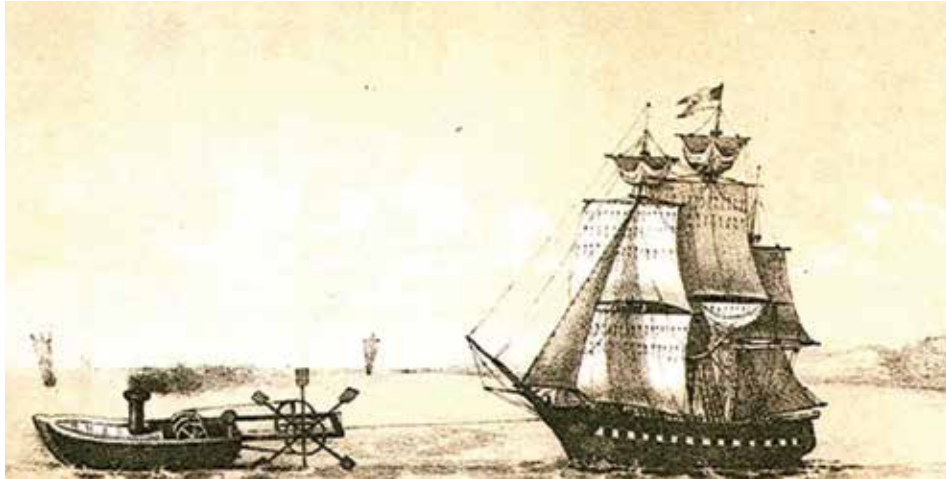


*John decided to re-enact the historic picture of a steamboat at Blackpool Mill (above).*

# Pre-Brunel steam vessels

## Dick Plumb explores our ancestry

This article started as a piece on I K Brunel's steamships, and indeed it will concentrate on this topic in subsequent parts. However, while we can discuss the details of Brunel's and other people's steam vessels, a wider interest may be stimulated by trying to understand the historical context and WHY things were done at particular times and places.



The great majority of steam vessels owned and operated by members of the Steam Boat Association are pleasure vessels, pure and simple, and indeed amusing their creators was certainly a part of why early vessels were designed and sometimes built. However, the prospect of making money from steam was always lurking, and the amazing transitions from propulsion by wind at sea, or men and horses on canals and rivers, would never have happened without commercial viability.

In this context, Jonathan Hulls of Gloucestershire was a most important – indeed pivotal – person, who most of us have never heard of. In 1736 he patented a boat to be powered by a Newcomen steam engine, with a purpose of moving large vessels in and out of harbour. His patent documents and a drawing exist, but a near-contemporary painting of his concept gets more to the spirit of the thing.

This painting tells us a lot: Hulls knew that existing steam engines were unlikely to be viable for full seagoing voyages, but even with their huge bulk per unit of power output, and phenomenal fuel consumption, they could perhaps still act as tugs to get sailing ships out of harbour in windless or mildly adverse conditions. The tug in the picture has a grossly underestimated engine and boiler size, and the stern paddle wheel reminds us of Heath-Robinson (and no steering gear is shown). It wouldn't have worked, but the ideas were bang on.

Hulls' patent makes it clear that steam would need to edge its way into a seagoing world dominated by sail, and few of us realise just how effective sailing vessels were. Ely Cathedral was built over roughly a century following 1000AD, and many of the financial accounts for the building still exist. The timber for the outer roof would be English, wouldn't it? Nope! It came from what is now Poland via Danzig, the North and Baltic seas being regular trading highways, not barriers. The absolutely astounding thing though, was that the cost of sea transport from Danzig, and up the river Ouse to Ely was less than the cost of hauling the timber the half mile up the low hill to the Cathedral site. Sail was some competitor!



Hulls' steam tug was never built, and he died a disappointed man.

One of the best claimants for the title of first operational steam vessel was *Pyroscaphe* of 1783, designed in France by Marquis de Jouffroy d'Abbans. She had a Newcomen engine: much heavier and less efficient than Watt's later engines. It was a remarkable achievement fitting the bulk and weight of a Newcomen engine into a 13 metre long hull, even with its reported

beam of 4.5 metres, and even more that the vessel was able to move under her own power. I do suspect, however, that the good Marquis may have shared with Phil Webster the chagrin of his new vessel being overtaken by swimming ducks.

There is a lovely model of *Pyroscaphe* in a Paris maritime museum, but the model dates from the mid-19th Century, and the only definite resemblance to the real vessel is the paddles, where the originals still exist. Beyond that, the boiler and engine are almost certainly inventions of the model maker, and the imaginative picture from a chocolate card (like a cigarette card) at least depicts a good sized boiler, lots of smoke, and a beam engine comparable to most Newcomen engines.

Designing and creating steam vessels almost for fun seems to have been the habit of Patrick Miller, a banker of



Dalswinton near Dumfries. He is rarely mentioned in the history of steamboats, but in 1785 sponsored William Symington to put one of his 'Improved Watt' engines into a pleasure boat, and an unnamed small double hulled boat was steamed on Dalswinton Loch in late 1788. Symington's 'improvements' were probably just a way of circumventing Watt's patents, and the language describing them is obscure, but they may have involved a water jet condenser in a second cylinder to the engine, rather than Watt's fixed chamber. Whether it was a real improvement is questionable.

The same pair of men then respectively sponsored and built a larger but similar (and also unnamed) vessel tested initially on the Forth and Clyde Canal in early December 1789. These trials failed on account of the paddles breaking up, but new stronger ones were commissioned by the end of the month, resulting in some success. The initial failure is curious, since competent millwrights making water wheels must have been common, and the differences between a power generating wheel and a boat propulsion wheel are not large. However, history does not record everything. The use of double, catamaran type, hulls may have been a very sensible move to avoid stability problems with the large weight and high centre of gravity of the steam plant.

Very few details of these early steam vessels, or their trials, have survived, but they stimulated Lord Dundas, a director of the lucrative Forth and Clyde Canal company to sponsor yet another prototype steamboat for evaluation as a tug on his canal. The commercial money-making purpose surfaces again, this time with horse towing being the competitor.

As with sail for the open seas, horses were stiff competition for steam on canals and small rivers, with the extra and major problem for steam of dimensions restricted by canal and river depths and widths, when the pay-off from steam would have been much better with larger vessels.

Symington was again responsible for the machinery with a Symington patent engine and rather quirky side paddle wheels buried somehow within the hull. The sponsored vessel was steamed, but the canal company directors were (probably rightly) unimpressed with her towing ability and by the wash she produced. Again, very few details have survived, but according to some local reports she was called *Charlotte Dundas* after Lord Dundas' daughter. One wonders what the young lady thought of her namesake: did she just think it was a nasty dirty thing liable to deposit smuts on her fine clothes, or did she enjoy the smell and sound of new technology, and persuade the crew to let her have a go at stoking and controlling the engine?

Meanwhile, Watt's patents were about to expire...

It seems that Lord Dundas was a far-seeing as well as a wealthy man, and saw promise in that initial trial vessel. Another vessel was designed and constructed, primarily using Symington's expertise again. This time they were able to use a Watt engine, giving, I suspect, some reduction in weight and complexity, and an increase in efficiency. Less obvious, but no less real, were background improvements in steam technology as steam engines became commodity items in factories and mills.

This vessel was the one I usually known as *Charlotte Dundas* (we could call her The Real Charlotte if Somerville and Ross hadn't nicked the title just before 1900).

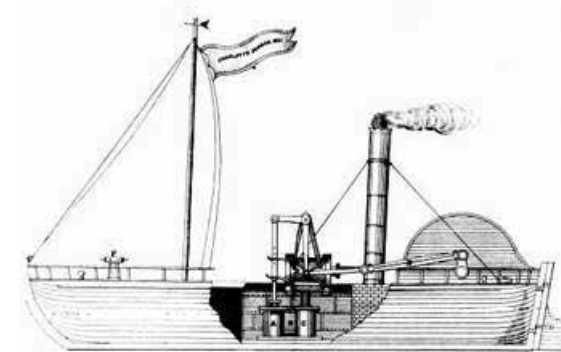
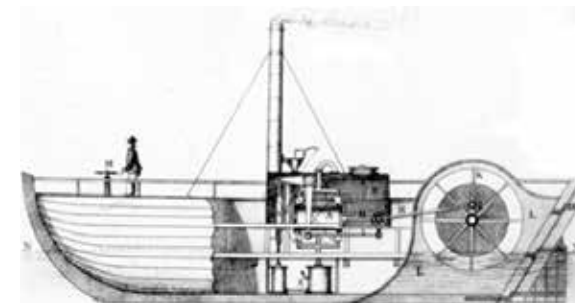
The famous drawing by Bowie shows her main features, the horizontal engine, single rear paddle in a tunnel, and a moderately large boiler mounted remarkably high up within the hull. No detail is visible for crosshead or slide bars, but one assumes they must have existed.

1801 is often mentioned as the date of initial steaming trials, but it seems that Symington was allowed to make substantial 'improvements', and more fully documented trials were carried out in March 1803.

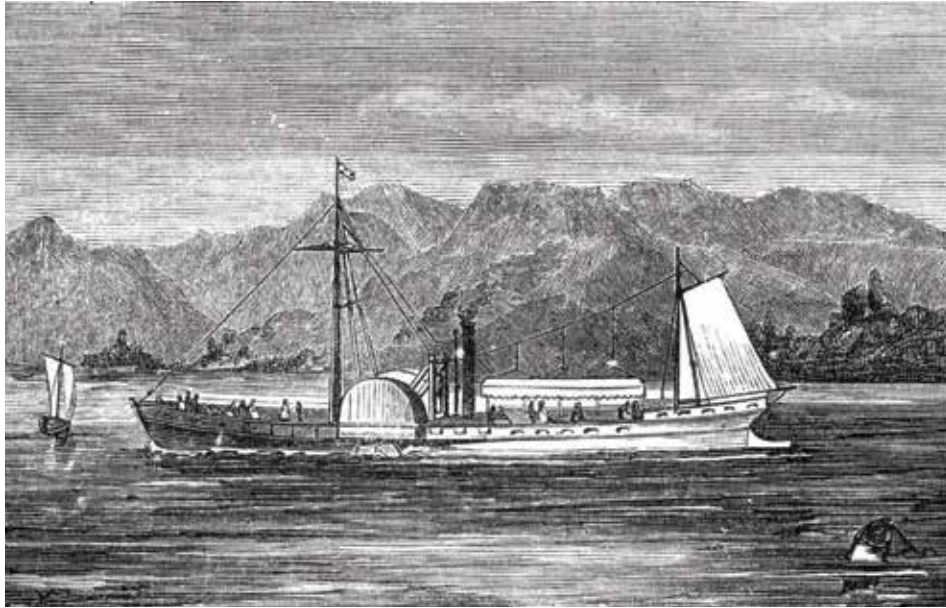
Later drawings show significant changes: the hull and paddle box are very similar, but the funnel has moved from forward of the boiler to aft, a foremast has appeared, and the engine now looks like a vertical half beam type. The differences are presumably Symington's improvements, but the reasons for them are not on record. It would be tempting to speculate that the funnel position might have been a result of introducing a very early return-flue boiler: the Science Museum model of *Charlotte* might tell all.

Some pictures of the later *Charlotte* make her look very much like the ancestor of the Clyde Puffer, which she was.

*Charlotte's* speed of 2mph for 10 hours when towing two 70 ton barges is unimpressive to modern ears, but compared with horse towing, it wasn't bad at all, and, of course, did not need a towpath. The curious centre stern wheel clearly made her much narrower than a side-wheel paddler, and the wheel would also have been protected from shallow water, and perhaps produced less wash than side wheels. *Charlotte* has often been marked down as not being commercially viable, but she probably was: the Duke of Bridgewater, proposed a fleet of steam tugs based on her, but it appears he was prevented by his aristocratic family, who refused to be associated with dirty, noisy steam engines.



Another commercial avenue was for high-value cargoes over short distances in sheltered waters. In other words, ferries. Robert Fulton travelled in *Charlotte* and with his wealthy backer Robert Livingston, introduced a steam ferry to the Hudson. Fulton claimed to have invented a new and revolutionary engine, but Boulton & Watt, who built it in England, listed it as a normal side-lever Watt engine. Fulton was a bit of a showman!



The first *North River Steamboat of Clermont*, as launched in late 1807, was 150 feet long but remarkably only 12ft in beam. and managed about 5mph with her 19hp Watt engine. However, after little more than a month in service she was laid up for the winter, and then rebuilt to a beam of 18ft and shorter at 142ft, reportedly to cure her earlier unpleasant rolling: really a new vessel.

As rebuilt, in 1808, she returned a useful profit, and Fulton followed her by another steam ferry in 1809. The original *North River Steamboat* was out of service by 1814, having secured her place in history. Most pictures of Fulton's boat are really of the 1909 replica, which was built from a few key dimensions and personal verbal accounts. The picture above is probably quite like the original.



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### Civvy Life

Searching for a new career wasn't easy and I spent a long time getting interview experience selling myself to prospective employers. In the end I settled for a job at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment (AERE) based in Didcot, Oxfordshire mainly because I would be allowed to attend college on day release to improve my qualifications but I had to take a large reduction in salary.

I moved back to Newbury in Berkshire for my new job as a Professional & Technology Officer, being responsible for a cryogenic experiment called 4H5, located within DIDO nuclear reactor (25Mw) where I learnt about cryogenics, very low vacuums and nuclear radiation. My wife joined me later in December 1980 after selling our home in Portsmouth.

DIDO was a materials testing nuclear reactor using enriched uranium metal fuel, and heavy water as both neutron moderator and primary coolant. There was also a graphite neutron reflector surrounding the core. In the design phase, DIDO was designed to have a high neutron flux, largely to reduce the time required for testing of materials intended for use in nuclear power reactors. This also allowed for the production of intense beams of neutrons for use in neutron diffraction.

In 1982 the Falkland's war kicked off and I felt really bad having left the RN less than two years earlier. My brother was still in so I took the decision to join up again to try and help. Unfortunately after a trip to the recruiting office in Reading, I was to be told by a Bootneck Sergeant that they wouldn't need me and I was refused re-entry! This was devastating to me!

Following the closure of the 4H5 experiment in 1983, I changed my role to the DIDO Reactor Maintenance Foreman which was more in tune with my skill set. During this time I recommended an improvement to the reactor cooling system which was implemented and then in 1985, after pursuing promotion, I was selected for the Site Boiler House Superintendent, responsible for the supply of steam to the five square mile site. From this role I was selected for the Site Mechanical Services Manager, responsible for all site mechanical services.

During the 1980s, the Thatcher government was pursuing a change to many government agencies switching to private management and Harwell was one establishment which fitted that criteria. This took it through a period of change where many of the on site research facilities were sold to private companies to provide profits for the government. I chose this time, October 1989, to change jobs and found what I thought was a suitable job working for the BBC in West London.



*Dido.*

### BBC

I took a pay drop and increased my travelling time to work for the BBC as a Mechanical Services Manager responsible for several buildings within Shepherds Bush. Well, it seemed good at the time but I was starting at the bottom of a large organisation management structure, learning to deal with unions and arty TV types. It wasn't long before the BBC went through a restructure, placing many of its departments into the control of private contract companies. This was called TUPE transfer which involved BBC Security, Cleaning, Catering and Engineering departments, saving the BBC money which it was to plough back into making its programmes.



*bbc building.*

The TUPE transfer to Haden Maintenance was completed in 1995 and I was moved into the Television Centre as the buildings I had responsibility for were being closed. I was placed onto shift as an Engineering Shift Technical Manager responsible for the operation of the mechanical & electrical building services supplying this massive studio complex. For this role I undertook cross training in electrical and high voltage switching which was a duty requirement. The shifts were 12 hours and having to drive in from Newbury 60 miles away I soon found this 14 hour day very tiring which led me to seek alternative employment either internally or externally. Fortunately I was offered promotion to the Branch Manager at BBC White City located just up Wood Lane from BBC TV Centre. This was a little more interesting for me as I was responsible for BBC Elstree Studios where Eastenders & Holby City are made. However under Haden Maintenance, more promotion opportunities were available. I was asked to apply for a role with another contract with the Royal Bank of Scotland and Nat West Bank for which I was successful.

### RBS

Starting in the role in September 2001 as the Southern England Contracts Manager, I was responsible for the services at some 500 banks, large and small throughout southern England. This contract was to last for three years, requiring me to travel around the country in a company car. At this time RBS were amalgamating with the Nat West Group and we had to set up a planned maintenance system for the whole RBS group to bring the maintenance up to date. At the end of the contract, RBS bid the contract renewal on the internet and unfortunately Haden Maintenance lost the bid which meant that I would have been TUPE transferred to the winning bid company in April 2004. I could have remained in the role; however, as the salary did not include my pension, I decided to search for other employment.



## BBC

Fortunately I was offered a role back in BBC Television Centre, now contracted out to the maintenance company George S Hall, as the Primary Engineering Services Manager. The role was responsible for the Energy Centre which had steam boilers, 2 x 5Mw gas turbines, diesel generators, UPS and cooling towers, all necessary to keep the BBC on the air. At this time, the TV Centre consumed a third of the total BBC's energy needs which was extremely expensive. I remained in this role until June 2006 when the maintenance contract changed to Johnson Controls; again we were all transferred under TUPE. At the time the contract changed, the BBC decided to amalgamate the BBC Principal Engineer TVC role and the Contract Branch Manager. It was during this period of change that I was offered the new role of Contract Principal Engineer responsible for the maintenance of the BBC TV Centre. Although the role name was again changed to the Senior Operations Manager, I remained in the position for the period of the contract which ended in April 2014 when the company Interserve won the contract. Interserve took over the contract with the knowledge that the BBC TV Centre building had been sold to a property developer and all the staff on site were to be made redundant taking place in October 2014. During my time at the BBC I had dressed up in the BBC Children In Need Pudsey Bear costume several times to help raise money for their charity.



*A bad day in the office.*



*Stavros Dalek carriage.*

Following redundancy, I was offered a role with Cynergin, a privately owned energy consultancy which was expanding and as the Senior Operations Manager, I helped set up a Planned Preventative Maintenance System to cover all of their Combined Heat and Power Units and Energy Saving installations throughout the country. I moved down to Devon with my wife in August 2015 with the knowledge that I could still carry out my duties for Cynergin, but leaving behind family, my daughter a Solicitor, now married and my son, an IT specialist.

Two years later the owners of Cynergin wanted their investments back and so the company was sold to Veolia leaving the staff to be TUPE transferred into Veolia. I had enjoyed the work for a small company and having been transferred to another large company, I decided to retire in July 2018.

Having led a very active working life and moving to a new home at Westward Ho! in Devon, I happened to notice the SS *Freshspring* advertisement calling for volunteers for which I applied. This was a great move on my part because I am very interested in the restoration of a historic ship with the big plus of increasing my circle of friends which has proved the move to Devon was the right decision. I can now help with the charity, using my training and experience to good use.



*Pudsey Bear.*



*View of Television Centre.*

## Freshspring Steam Beer!

Continuing our successful relationship with Bideford's Clearwater Brewery, The Steamship Freshspring Trust is excited to announce a new recipe for our 'Freshspring Steam Beer'.

The new Freshspring Beer is 4.2% abv and is a golden hoppy beer with a distinct clean and crisp edge... very drinkable!

Freshspring Beer comes in 500ml bottles and is 'bottle conditioned' which means some of the natural ingredients are present in the beer. This gives a more intense flavour but the bottle needs to stand before drinking to allow it to settle and requires careful pouring.

The beer is available direct from the brewery at £2.50 per bottle including VAT and can be ordered through sales@clearwaterbrewery.co.uk or by phone on 01237 420 492.

Delivery for a minimum of 12 bottles can be made for free within a 10 mile radius. Deliveries further afield will be made by courier with a £15 charge.

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## Leaving a legacy to the SS Freshspring Trust

The Steamship Freshspring Trust has benefitted greatly from the generosity of its members and friends who have left or given money to the Trust.

Legacies provide very necessary financial support in helping the Trust to meet its stated objectives of preserving the past and inspiring knowledge for the future

If you would like to think of giving the SS Freshspring Trust a legacy, it could not be easier: The following codicil can be completed by you, witnessed, and kept with your Will.

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I (full name).....

of (full address).....

.....  
declare this to be the (1st/2nd/other.....) codicil to my Will dated.....

I give, free of Inheritance Tax, the sum of

£..... (.....pounds)

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Testator's signature:.....Date.....

Signed in the presence of:

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Signature

Second Witness  
Signature

.....  
Full name

.....  
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Marsh Christian Trust    Trinity House  
National Heritage Memorial Fund    University of the West of England  
National Historic Ships UK    West Buckland School  
National Maritime Development    Whitelands Engineering  
Group    Woods Group  
National Transport Trust    Worshipful Company of Shipwrights  
Nautilus International