



Report for Stoke Bruerne Parish Council Annual Assembly

22 April 2025

The last year has been a quiet one, since the Friends of the Canal Museum are now primarily a grant making organisation. The Canal & River Trust having directly managed volunteers for some years now.

However, the 'Friends' do support volunteering at the Museum. Many of our members are volunteers, and we are pleased to report that at our AGM in November, our Volunteer of the Year Award was presented jointly to Peter and Sarah Pamphilon of Towcester. Peter and Sarah joined the team last winter and have made a significant contribution to developing volunteering at Stoke Bruerne, through recruitment, the setting up of regular quarterly meetings, initiating the production of a quarterly newsletter, and the creation of an events team which has been busy staging training workshops and events all through the year.

We would like to make special mention of Kathryn Dodington, one of our Trustees, who was nominated for a national Lifetime Heritage Hero Award 2024, and was awarded a much deserved Runner-Up for more than 14 years of volunteering with the Canal & River Trust.

There are now over seven separate volunteer teams carrying out a myriad of tasks from lock-keeping; maintaining and operating the museum boat Sculptor; carrying out maintenance work; organising events; seeing wide-beam boats through the tunnel; guiding visitors and assisting staff in the museum, and helping with social media/website. In all, there are probably well over thirty active volunteers supporting the Museum.

The Museum and the 'Friends' also work very closely with the Stoke Bruerne Canal Partnership, and their Adoption Group, whose volunteers are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the canalside between the tunnel and bottom lock.

During the last twelve months the 'Friends' have not been called upon to make many awards of funding, however we have responded to requests for a few projects, and have, or are in the process of, making donations totalling around £700 towards the following:

A Music Licence (formerly PRS) for the Café and site
Resources to run events such as the Easter Egg Trail and training workshops such as Signwriting, Whittling, Jewellery Making, Crochet, etc.
Materials to create 'seaside' style canal family photo-silhouettes

We look forward to continuing to support the Museum, and to celebrate Sculptor's 90th Birthday this year!

Lynda Payton, Chairman, Friends of The Canal Museum