



POOLE MARITIME TRUST NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2023

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – August 2023

Since my previous report in May, work in the Trust has continued apace. The 2023 Turland award for the student at the Arts University Bournemouth, deemed by the Trust judges to have been the best for the year, was awarded to Jenny Kohler for her project based on her grandfather's time with the Italian resistance in WW II. A more detailed description of her work appears later in the newsletter.

Considerable efforts have been made by Trust members to improve the technical equipment needed to continue the task of preserving the archive to use for the long-term future. Much still needs to be done but progress is being made in the provision of the computer technology which Trustees and assistants use to undertake this task. As mentioned in my previous report, reorganisation of the office space continues to make study by visitors easier.

Visitors will also have noticed that the access to the office has been much improved by attention to overgrown hedges. More will be done in the weeks to come. As ever, the team look forward to seeing visitors to the archive.

Commodore G H Edwardes OBE, Chairman

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE NEWS

The summer, such as it is, has proved to be extremely busy for the team of volunteers who give, freely, of their time. We always seek new volunteers to undertake a range of interesting work. If anyone would like to come along and see what it is all about you will be very welcome to join our friendly group any Thursday from 10.00 at our headquarters on the first floor of Canford Cliffs library with access via the library car park and through the white gates. There is a lot of work that can be undertaken at home at a pace to suit the volunteer. Thanks to the generosity of some of the membership we have acquired a wonderful model of the old Poole Harbour tug "KINGSTON LACY" (pictured below). This is very valuable addition to our impressive and ever increasing archive.



To give some idea of what has been achieved: We boast a maritime and local history library boasting some 3,300 titles. Records 382 shipping companies with copies of sailing bills, manifests, correspondence and associated ephemera, with, probably another 150 to compile. There are over 7000 indexed images with many more to do and the library boasts over 3200 books. All contributions to this newsletter are appreciated. I am delighted to welcome some new faces in this issue. In particular, Andrew Cooke who has written a very interesting article on hovercraft production on the Isle of Wight. It is good to read something positive relating to UK marine building. Andrew and his wife Donna are great maritime enthusiasts. They balance the love of ships and the sea with their 'real' job. They are respected third generation horologists based on the island.

Whilst every effort is made to identify photographs, verify copyright and acknowledge the photographer it is always possible examples may slip through the net. In these instances we unreservedly apologise.

For future editions of the newsletter, please send submissions for consideration to : poolemaritimetrust@aol.com. If possible, please print articles on 'WORD' format.

Lilian Ladle MBE – One Of Our PMT Heritage Project Team

The Ferguson Award was given this year to a dedicated lady who has made an outstanding contribution to our region and particularly Poole Harbour. *(Please, also, refer to presentation report and image later in this newsletter)*. We would have made this award a couple of years ago, but covid prevented this. However, over that time our recipient's star has continued to rise to even greater heights. Much of what is written here was not used at the AGM and I am pleased to give you some background that shows remarkable dedication to understanding our past.

If I say that this individual was in contention for Archaeologist of the Year 2023, you may start to understand the level at which this great lady operates and the high esteem in which she is held nationally.



It all started many years ago at Bestwall, on the harbour's edge near Wareham. I am indebted to Dr Ann Woodward (formerly of Birmingham University) for kindly giving me an insight to those early days after Lilian had already gained

some local experience. Lilian was asked by Laurence Keen, then County Archaeologist, whether she might be able to take on the mitigation project at Bestwall Quarry, Wareham. Ann was involved with the project from near the beginning as prehistoric pottery and research consultant. Peter Cox of AC archaeology was engaged as fieldwork and management consultant. It was fortunate that the main phase of writing-up coincided with the availability of substantial funding through English Heritage as well as generous contributions from the extracting company, Aggregate Industries. The finances provided funding for the large number of specialist reports, including the very substantial assemblage of prehistoric pottery. It also meant that the results could be published to a very high standard in the DNHAS monograph series. After the excavations were completed, Lilian and her small team of helpers spent five years working in Portacabins where the complex process of writing the site narrative was undertaken. The timescale was very tight, and each week Lilian produced a draft section. Highlights included days when Lilian and Ann worked with Alex Bayliss of English Heritage on the highly complex radiocarbon dating project, which provided a detailed chronology for the site. The whole process was relieved by the lunch breaks, which were filled with anecdotes and laughter. The rescue excavations of over 55 hectares, ahead of industrial gravel extraction, began in 1992 and covered the area of 18 former modern fields. Structures and finds relating to the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods in prehistory, and to the later Roman, Saxon and Civil War periods, were discovered; many of the findings were of national importance.

The remains of a hunting camp sited in the shelter of a fallen tree dated from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age 10,000-4,000 BC) and contemporary flint arrowheads and tools were found all over the site. Deer, aurochs and elk were hunted, and such camps are rarely found.

Further flint arrowheads of Neolithic (New Stone Age) date (4,000-2,000 BC) were found, along with two polished granite axes which originated from Cornwall. Posthole remains of a rare multi-phased timber structure dated to the very earliest stages of the Neolithic. The Early Bronze Age (2,000-1,400 BC) evidence is of particular significance, as a whole system of ditches defining fields are among the earliest dated in the UK. Some important groups of Beaker pottery were also located. Perhaps the most important Bronze Age evidence comprised the Middle Bronze Age (1,400-900 BC) landscape. A series of individual round timber houses, or pairs of circular structures, were found within the extensive field systems. The houses were associated with pits containing masses of pottery alongside evidence for spinning and weaving. There were also a few cremation burials in pots. In the Late Bronze Age (950-800 BC) there were more sets of round structures and pits, but fewer than in the Middle Bronze Age. Early Iron Age evidence was absent, but by Late Iron Age and Roman times the area closest to Poole Harbour became the location for pottery production. Between 200 and 420 CE, a series of 32 very well preserved kilns were in operation, producing Poole Harbour Black Burnished Ware pottery. These pots were of such good quality that they were exported as far north as Hadrian's Wall and to the continent. It has been estimated that several million pots were produced at Bestwall. There were also some Roman graves and a couple of coin hoards. In the more recent historic period, an important assemblage of material related to a Civil War encampment of 1664 was discovered. Large quantities of clay pipes, oyster shell, buckles, buttons, coins and, last but not least, musket balls and gun powder measures were located in the region of the royalist camp. The excavations were undertaken by 189 volunteers, who worked a total of 24,168 hours! The finds included 48,348 pieces of worked flint, 12,595 pieces of Bronze Age pottery and two metric tonnes of Roman pottery. Following on from Volume 1 in 2009, Lilian went on to produce Volume 2 in 2013, covering the Roman and later periods entirely on her own. The books are now seen as 'the reference works' for Black Burnished Ware studies, as well as other ceramic and prehistoric materials. Although if you type 'Ladle Poole Harbour' into Google you do actually get her husband Mike's fishing diary at the top of the list! Lilian went on to lead a series of other important projects, including the multi-period Worth Matravers and Druce Farm Roman Villa with East Dorset Antiquarian Society. Both of these projects have recently been published and are rich in maritime connections. Many of you know of the Studland Bay wreck and some of you here have even worked on it. Well, the booklet in the museum telling the story, was written by Lilian and she is also a key member of our Poole Harbour Heritage Project Team along with our Professor Tim Darvill. Lilian is a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at Bournemouth University. Lilian was awarded an MBE in 2008 for services to archaeology and in 2021 was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. You will be pleased to know that Poole Maritime Trust has arranged for Lilian Ladle to give a talk to our members on 9th November called 'Delivering the Goods'. You can be assured that this will be an absolutely fascinating evening all about the early trade in our area.

Finding Wonderful Archaeology

This year our work on the water so far has been hindered by the jet stream keeping things wet and windy. We did get out before the deterioration with the sub-bottom profiler looking for submerged roads. Hopefully Peter Burt and I will be reporting more on this to members in January at the RMYC. Fortunately our work is wide ranging and we also have summer projects on land. Last summer, I took my old Ground Penetrating Radar to a field at Cerne Abbas where the great mediaeval Abbey was thought to be. It is right next to our PMT Presidents property and who also owns the surviving original ancient gatehouse to the Abbey.



It was a long shot, but with the assistance of members of the Cerne Abbas Historical Society we set about looking for any traces of walls deep down. We scanned some small squares close to the existing cemetery wall. When i processed the scans we did some faint linear wall features. It was a positive experience for the members who always wanted to find the Abbey again. Their diligent hard work and our faint deep radar lines caught the attention of Sheffield University. They promptly sent a team to Dorset armed with the latest radar equipment and the results were stunning. The cloisters and large parts of the Abbey buildings were revealed in wonderful detail. So as I write this, excavations are about to start with students and volunteers. The Bishop of Sherborne and the Vicar of Cerne Abbas led a 'breaking ground' ceremony to mark this wonderful occasion. It is nearly 500 years since the Abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII in the reformation. Revd Richard Still gave a wonderful introduction about the tragic downfall of these great religious communities and the consequences of such vast destruction. Do watch the press for more on this wonderful story over the coming weeks.



Our small team have other exciting sites to find this summer around the harbour and I now have a newer radar that will hopefully improve our chances. Filming with the ROV underwater will start again when neaps tides and calmer

winds return. We do now have some new members aboard to support our work and please don't forget to let us know of anything interesting that may be worth investigating.

Robert Heaton

Poole Maritime Trust Newsletter

Port Update by Kevin Mitchell

An unexpected cruise ship visitor arrived from Dublin on 27th May in the form of Grand Circle Cruise Lines' *Corinthian*.



It is believed she was unable to call at the Isles of Scilly due to poor weather conditions, so diverted to Poole instead. This photo was taken during a previous call at Poole. This small ship is no stranger to Poole though, as she used to call regularly before the pandemic. Also that Bank Holiday weekend, Condor Ferries' freight ship *Commodore Goodwill* called at South Quay for layover in between its regular sailings out of Portsmouth.



This photo was taken by Daryl Morrell. And not forgetting that 29th June is the 50th anniversary of the very first cross-channel ferry arriving at Poole's new Continental Freight Ferry Terminal. At 7pm Truckline's *Poole Antelope* arrived

from Cherbourg, and these two photos taken during this occasion were taken by Graham Sutton Sadly, no events have been planned to celebrate this important milestone in the town's maritime history.

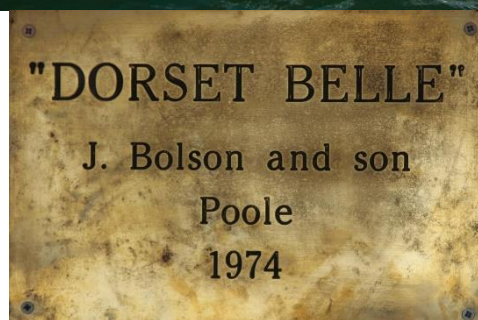


At the end of May Poole Harbour Commissioners announced that Harry Gregory has been appointed the new Harbour Master. He had previously held the posts of Harbour Master, Deputy Harbour Master and RNLI inshore lifeboat helm at Littlehampton in West Sussex, and will join PHC from 1st September. The current Poole Harbour Master, Captain Brian Murphy, will move to become PHC's CEO from 1st July. On 15th June another car ended up in the water at the Sandbanks chain ferry slipway.



It seemed the driver was waiting for the ferry, got out of the car but the handbrake had not been fully applied. Luckily no one else was in the car at the time, but the chain ferry service had to be suspended whilst lifeboats, the Harbour Master and police boats, divers and Jenkins Marine all arrived at the scene. The car was later recovered and taken to the commercial docks.

The last of the trio of 1970s Poole-built pleasure boats *Poole Belle*, *Bournemouth Belle* and *Dorset Belle* still operating in local waters has now left to begin a new career.



The *Dorset Belle* returned to Dorset in 2020 to run trips from Bournemouth Pier, but on the morning of 6th July she moved along the coast to Brixham under the name *Dolphin Princess*, and repainted in a bright orange and yellow colour scheme.



On 7th July the French Navy's sail training ship *Etoile* (Star), built in 1932, arrived at the Poole Quay Marina.



SAILING BARGE "ALFRED" & THE CORDITE FACTORY AT HOLTON HEATH.

(Barry Cobb)

Sailing barge "Alfred" was an Admiralty built Naval Armament Vessel, built to superior standards for the transportation of naval munitions and armaments including cordite propellant. This photo was taken from HMS Royal Oak in April 1932 in the River Medway off of Port Victoria near Chatham docks and Upnor Castle where Royal Navy cordite was stored. The connection with Poole Harbour was that 'Alfred' and a companion barge 'Egypt' were regularly on the RNCF Holton Heath runs to Upnor Castle. Four other barges the 'Emily' and 'Henry Gordon' supplied Priddy's Hard, Portsmouth with 'Maria' and 'Betsy' possibly Plymouth, Devonport. Sea transport of cordite was discontinued c1938 in favour of railway transportation.

Photo credit Edgar J March.



D-Day – OPERATION OVERLORD

Reference the “SHIELDHALL” berth at Southampton

By Kip Miller

All, (SHIELDHALL) BERTH 110 (D-DAY OPERATION OVERLORD) - One of my recent videos featured a picture of the Shieldhall at berth 110 in the Western Docks. The heritage ship is always full of maritime historians knowing about the story of this remarkable ship but unaware of the vital significance of the berth itself in WW2. The black and white image (below) shows one of the 3 Southern Railway train ferries at Berth 110 in WW2 with it's LINKSPAN lowered and connected to the spur railway to the SOUTHAMPTON MAINLINE. The figure commonly used is that 90% of the French rolling stock after D-Day (of which much was destroyed beforehand by the enemy) came through the port of Soton. Patton's famous THIRD ARMY might not have relieved Bastogne without these ships because they were to provide the railways that gave his tanks the gasoline he so desperately needed. There were two other dilapidated ships at Berth 49 in the Eastern Docks, HMS Princess Iris and HMS Daffodil (now mostly forgotten) and the US Army always make great play of the contribution of LSTs that were adapted to carry wagons but HMS Twickenham, HMS Hampton and HMS Shepperton at Berth 110 undertook most of the heavy lifting. (HMS Twickenham was one of the first ships to return to Cherbourg once it was reopened). Please repost if appropriate.





THIS IS THE "SHEPPERTON FERRY" IN HER PEACETIME ROLE CONVEYING TRAINS, VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS ACROSS THE ENGLISH CHANNEL



Newbuild Trio for Export

By Andrew Cooke



In November 2021 Griffon Hoverwork announced a £25 million hovercraft order with construction commencing in January 2022 at the relocated premises in Portchester, Portsmouth Harbour (previously at Woolston, Southampton). The craft were destined for a rejuvenated route between Oita Airport in Kunisaki and Oita City, Japan. This service had last used hovercraft in 2009. The three craft are modified versions of the 12000TD hovercraft that were introduced as the first of their type in 2016 and are operated by sister company Hovertravel Ltd, namely the Solent Flyer and Island Flyer. At 23.7m long, with a beam of 12.8m and capacity for 80 passengers, these new hovercraft are 2 metres longer (equivalent to one extra frame in the cabin) than the first two 12000TD examples. The cargo capacity aboard is 500kg and, as the title suggests, each craft has a 12,000kg (12 tonne) payload. Thanks to the innovative drive system, the 12000TD model of hovercraft only requires two power units comprising a pair of 12-cylinder MAN D2862 LE124 producing 1,586 kW (2,158 hp), enabling a top speed of 45-50 knots (92.6 km/h). Other modifications to the 2023 variant of the 12000TD craft include a change to the power output between propellers and lift fans plus a new form of “puff ports,” one on either side of the forward hull, to act as bow thrusters if required, although the variable pitch propellers make the craft highly manoeuvrable. The small electric fan thrusters originally fitted to the two Flyers were eventually removed as surplus to requirements. The first newbuild for Japan headed out from Griffon Hoverwork at Portchester for maiden flight trials on 21st June 2023, proceeding over to the Hovertravel slipway at Ryde. This first craft is named Baïen with the other two being christened Banri and Tanso when each are completed. All three craft are numbered, 01/02/03, and each has a unique livery. The Baïen’s livery on the front of the cabin resembles a robot with the cockpit masquerading as the head.



The craft names were announced by the Oita Prefecture back on 7th February 2023, each being inspired by the names of three Edo-era scholars and educators called Bungo no Sanken. The names of the hovercraft were publicly solicited, and multiple proposals were received for each name. Governor Hirose commented that the names appeal to Oita's local characteristics both domestically and internationally and are easy for foreign visitors to remember. The Baien undertook 100 hours of proving trials during her time at Ryde, being seen at various points between The Needles and Sandown Bay when out and about. All too soon the Baien was loaded aboard the 2022-built heavy lift vessel BBC Sebastopol at Southampton's Empress Dock on 14th July 2023 at the beginning of her delivery voyage to Japan. Upon arrival in August, the vessel will undertake pilot training and trials across Beppu Bay between Oita Airport in Kunisaki City and Oita City. The service will have a 25-minute duration, around half of the equivalent road journey. The craft made the 5,700-mile voyage from Southampton via Eemshaven in The Netherlands as hold cargo and was due to take around 5 weeks. The second craft, the Banri, was expected to be ready for her trials in September 2023 with the Tanso following late 2023/early 2024.



All images – Copyright Andrew Cooke.

BRITISH COASTING COMPANIES

National Benzole Co Ltd
London

Chris Witts

National Benzole had a small fleet of coastal tankers, several including those pictured were used to supply the Lake Pier MOD fuel dump from its inception in 1939 till the early 60s, not sure when the final consignment was discharged.
Photo credit, Chris Witts.



BEN HEBDEN 1947 - 1959



BEN HEBDEN

BEN OLLIVER 1935 – 1959



BEN OLLIVER

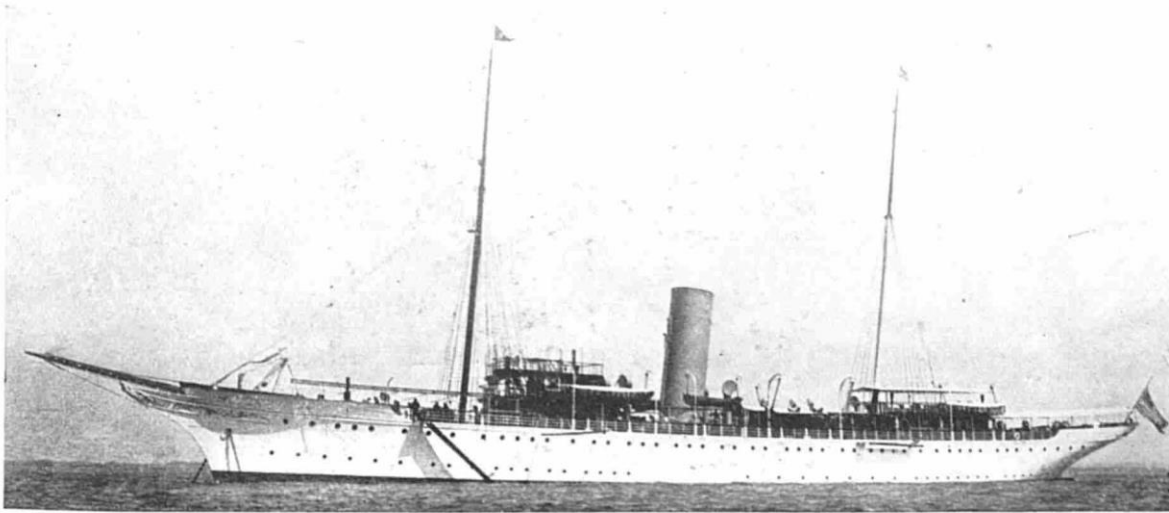
‘ALACRITY’ – AN EVENTFUL YEAR IN POOLE HARBOUR (Part 1 – the arrival)

When Britain’s largest steam yacht *Alacrity* entered Poole Harbour in April 1932, expectations were high. However, the promise of an upmarket floating club within the confines of the harbour was short-lived. Following a long-winded court hearing, the yacht was forced to leave the harbour less than a year after its arrival.

Built in 1900, her owners over the first 20 years included a Philadelphian millionaire, the Marquess of Anglesey, a Russian princess, the Russian Navy and the British Admiralty. The Admiralty renamed her *HMS Alacrity* and sent her out to the China Station as the despatch vessel of the Commander-in-Chief. In 1924, she was purchased by Commander Montague Grahame-White who refitted her as a yacht, retaining the name *Alacrity*. Graham-White then made several long cruises in *Alacrity*.

The first newspaper account of proposals to create a luxury floating club was reported in the press as early as February 1932,¹

Considerable interest has been aroused locally by rumour of a scheme, originated with the Hon. Arthur Eliot and Commander Montague Grahame-White, for a floating club house just outside the 3-mile limit from Poole Harbour, where day and night amusement with 24 hours drinking facilities will be provided. The idea, stated to have originated at the Punch Club, London, of which the Hon. A. Eliot is manager, is to use the steam yacht “*Alacrity*” owned by Comdr. Grahame-White, who would lease it as an annexe to the Club, providing satisfactory guarantees for the adequate control of facilities are forthcoming, as they are stated to be. The article went on to report that an application had been received by the Harbour Board for moorings both fore and aft, due to the size of the yacht. However the Port Authority knew nothing of any proposals regarding a floating club. About the same time., a photograph of *Alacrity* appeared in the Graphic.²



A FLOATING CLUB TO OUTWIT D.O.R.A.

The steam yacht *Alacrity*, in which the Hon. Arthur Eliot and Commander Montague Graham-White propose to establish a club where D.O.R.A.'s restrictions will be unknown. By mooring at sea off Poole, this floating club will have a twenty-four-hour bar in addition to a jazz band and all kinds of deck sports to entertain its members

The D.O.R.A. restrictions referred to in the caption above related to licencing laws that had earlier been imposed by the government. Many of the news articles referred to the proposed location of *Alacrity* (to be three miles off-shore) and to the club status of the enterprise, which would permit alcohol to be consumed 24 hours per day. However *Alacrity's* eventual mooring location was within Poole Harbour; it's therefore somewhat unclear as to how D.O.R.A.'s restrictions were overcome.



The luxurious furnishing of the large dining-saloon

Details provided in an article later in the year referred to the renovations that had been made to the yacht. The staircase in *Alacrity* cost £7,000 and that,

All the stairs were hand carved by Italian workmen. Many thousands of pounds were spent on paintings by eminent artists to decorate the sumptuous cabins, dining rooms and smoke rooms.

Hot and cold water runs through silver-plated taps in every stateroom, and there are electric fans and radiators of exquisite design. The bedsteads are designed in period styles to match the interior decorations, and the beautifully panelled walls...

...Suites formerly occupied by Royalty are now available at two guineas a night to members of the club, and staterooms occupied by millionaire guests of a princess can be had for twelve shillings.³

Ahead of this venture, *Alacrity* had been moored at White's Yard in Southampton. At a cost of £100, she was then towed from Southampton to Poole Harbour. There was no coal in her bunkers or water in her ballast tanks and she was therefore unable to get up steam at short notice if required. The original proposal was that she should be moored outside of the harbour, only coming in to the harbour when required. However from the outset, she was moored within the harbour.

H.M.S. "UNICORN" receives 'game changing' £1.1m restoration funding



HMS Unicorn, Scotland's oldest ship, has received £1.11m in funding towards its continued restoration and preservation.

The preservation work is restoring strength and robustness to the hull to improve resilience ahead of a planned move to a nearby dry dock. The ship, which was moved to Dundee in 1873, will be the centrepiece of a new maritime heritage centre. The donation comes from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF). The Unicorn Preservation Society said the money provided 95.69% of the total financial investment needed for immediate conservation repairs to the ship, which launched in 1824. The restoration work includes replacing rotten timbers in the hull of the ship and retaining as much of the original fabric as possible. This work follows recently-completed £100,000 repairs to the ship's original roof to help prevent rainwater causing further internal damage. Ray Macfarlane from the NHMF said: "It is not only the oldest ship in Scotland but one of the oldest in the world, and incredibly one of the last remaining warships from the age of sail, still afloat." HMS Unicorn is the third-oldest ship in the world and has been under the

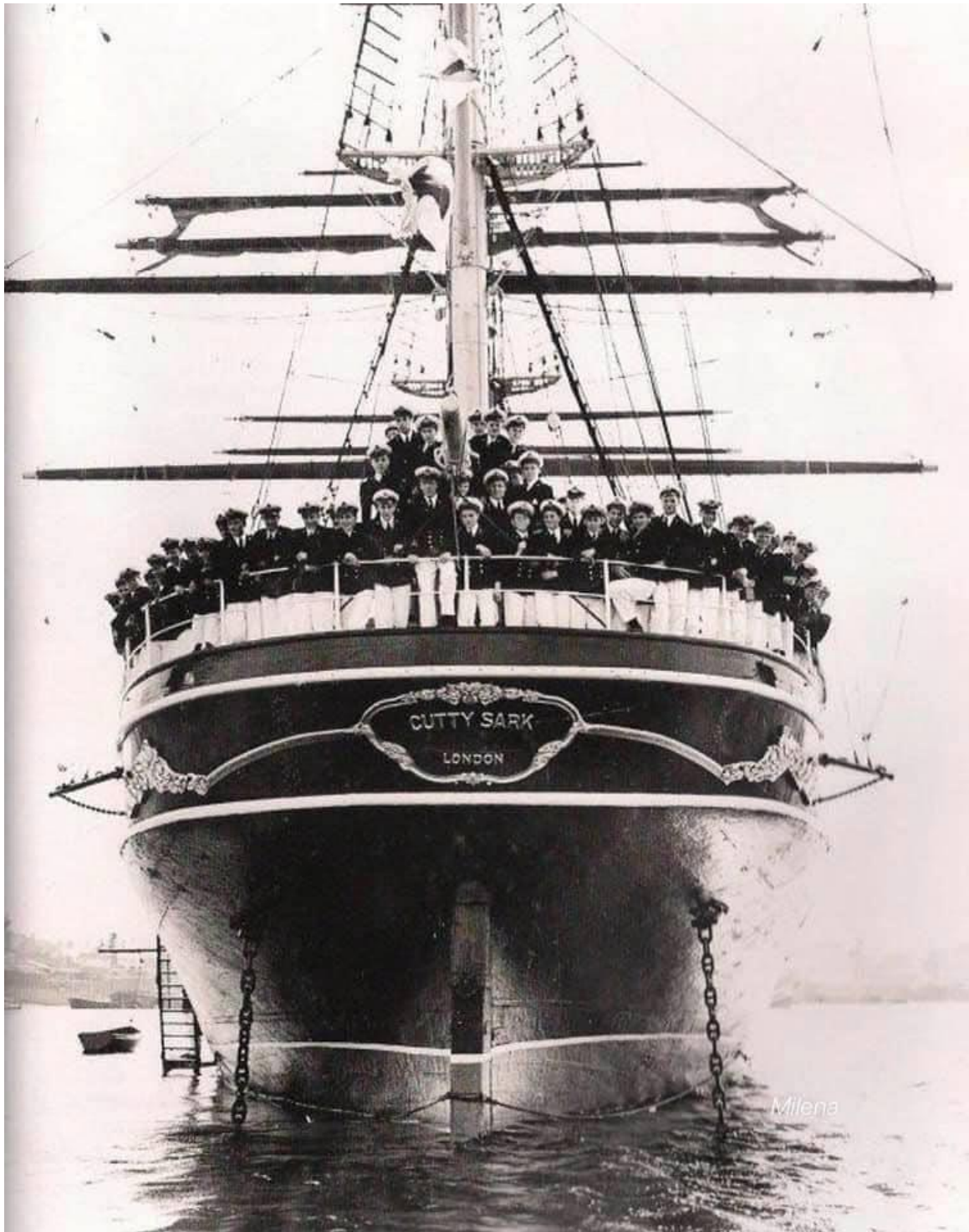
care of the Unicorn Preservation Society since 1968. The latest preservation work is expected to be completed in about 18 months. The ship will remain open to visitors while the work is carried out.



Museum director, Matthew Bellhouse Moran, said: "This is an absolute game changer for us as a charity as it allows us to press on with the critical preservation work which desperately needs to take place and is long overdue." "This work is essential to preserve the historic fabric of this much-loved ship, replacing rotten and missing timbers which is causing rapidly accelerating structural damage and strain." A £20,000 donation by American entrepreneur John Paul DeJoria, in November 2022 and a £100,000 grant received from the Headley Trust in February provided the remaining funds required to carry out the immediate conservation work.

CUTTY SARK

Cutty Sark is a British clipper ship. Built on the River Leven, Dumbarton, Scotland in 1869.



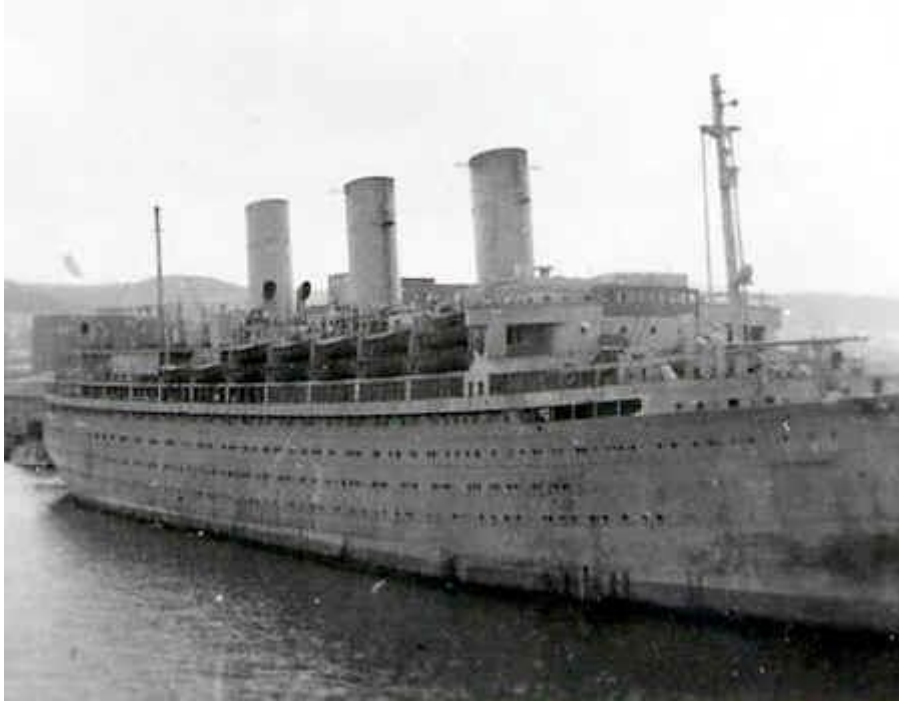
Master's opinion;

She was built for me. I superintended the building and fitting of her, and I never sailed a finer ship. At ten or twelve knots she did not disturb the water at all. Although she was a very sharp ship, just like a yacht, her spread of canvas was enormous, . She was the fastest ship of her day, a grand ship, a ship that will last forever.

—Captain George Moodie

THE “CAP ARCONA” TRAGEDY

**For almost 39 years, parts of skeletons were being washed ashore.
SS Cap Arcona was carrying around 5,500 concentration camp inmates**



RAF attack; 4,500 concentration camp victims were killed by the Allies



The Cap Arcona was a large German luxury ocean liner formerly of the Hamburg-South America line that was sunk with the loss of many lives when laden with prisoners from concentration camps. The 27,500 gross ton Cap Arcona was launched in 1927, it was considered one of the most beautiful of the time. It carried upper-class travellers and steerage-class emigrants, mostly to South America. In 1940, it was taken over by the Kriegsmarine, the German navy, and used in the Baltic Sea.

The tragic WWII story of how the RAF attacked and The Cap Arcona and the loss of life is among the highest in maritime history. For weeks after the sinking, the bodies of the victims were being washed ashore, where they were

collected and buried in a single mass grave at Neustadt in Holstein. For nearly thirty years, parts of skeletons were being washed ashore, until the last find, by a twelve-year-old boy, in 1971. There are several versions of what happened and why the RAF sunk the ship: (1) *One version of the story is that the boarding of the prisoners with the knowledge that the ships would be attacked by Allied aircraft was a cynical trick by the German police authorities to have the prisoners killed.* (2) *Another version is that Count Folke Bernadotte, the Vice President of the International Red Cross had arranged for the transfer of prisoners to Swedish hospitals and that this was the purpose of the Cap Arcona's last tragic voyage. Such transfers had previously taken place. To this day, the responsibility of the German and British participants in the tragedy near Neustadt have not been judicially examined since the circumstances are not entirely clear. It is said that Red Cross radio operators attempted to warn the English against attacking the ships and to have notified them of the true situation aboard.* (4) *The last word is that the RAF has sealed all records connected with the attack on the Cap Arcona until 2045.* Cap Arcona, named after Cape Arkona on the island of Rügen, was a large German ocean liner built for the Hamburg Südamerikanische Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft ("Hamburg-South America Line"). She carried passengers and cargo between Germany and the east coast of South America, and in her time was the largest and quickest ship on the route. In 1940 the Kriegsmarine requisitioned her as an accommodation ship. In 1942 she served as the set for the German propaganda feature film Titanic. In 1945 she evacuated almost 26,000 German soldiers and civilians from East Prussia before the advance of the Red Army. On 30 March 1945 Cap Arcona finished her third and last trip between Gdynia and Copenhagen, carrying 9,000 soldiers and refugees. However, her turbines were completely worn out. They could only be partially repaired and her days of long-distance travel were over. During March and April 1945, concentration camp prisoners from Scandinavian countries had been transported from all over the Reich to the Neuengamme concentration camp near Hamburg. In the White Bus programme co-ordinated through the Swedish Red Cross – with prisoners of other nationalities displaced to make room for them. Eventually Himmler agreed that these Scandinavians, and selected others regarded as less harmful to Germany, could be transported through Denmark to freedom in Sweden. Then between the 16 and 28 April 1945, Neuengamme was systematically emptied of all its remaining prisoners, together with other groups of concentration camp inmates and Soviet POWs with the intention that they would be relocated to a secret new camp, either on the Baltic island of Fehmarn; or at Mysen in Norway where preparations were put in hand to house them under the control of concentration camp guards evacuated from Sachsenhausen.



Cap Arcona burning shortly after the attacks.

In the interim, they were to be concealed from the advancing British and Canadian forces. For this purpose the SS assembled a prison flotilla of decommissioned ships in the Bay of Lübeck, consisting of the liners *Cap Arcona* and *Deutschland*, the freighter *Thielbek*, and the motor launch *Athen*. Since the steering motors were out of use in *Thielbek* and the turbines were out of use in *Cap Arcona*, *Athen* was used to transfer prisoners from Lübeck to the larger ships and between ships; who were locked below decks and in the holds, and denied food and medical attention. On 30 April 1945 the two Swedish ships, *Magdalena* and *Lillie Matthiessen*, previously employed as support vessels for the White Bus evacuations, made a final rescue trip to Lübeck and back. Amongst the prisoners rescued were some transferred from the prison flotilla. On the evening of 2 May 1945 more prisoners, mainly women and children from the Stutthof and Mittelbau-Dora camps were loaded onto barges and brought out to the anchored vessels; although, the Cap Arcona refused to accept any more prisoners. Over eight hundred were returned to the beach at Neustadt in the morning of 3 May, where around five hundred were killed in their barges by machine-gunning, or beaten to death on the beach, their SS guards then seeking to make their escape unencumbered. The order to transfer the prisoners to the prison ships came from Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann in Hamburg. Marc Buggeln has challenged Kaufmann's subsequent claim that he had been acting on orders from SS Headquarters in Berlin. Arguing that the decision in fact resulted from political and business pressures from leading industrialists in Hamburg, who were already at this stage plotting with Kaufmann to hand the city over to British

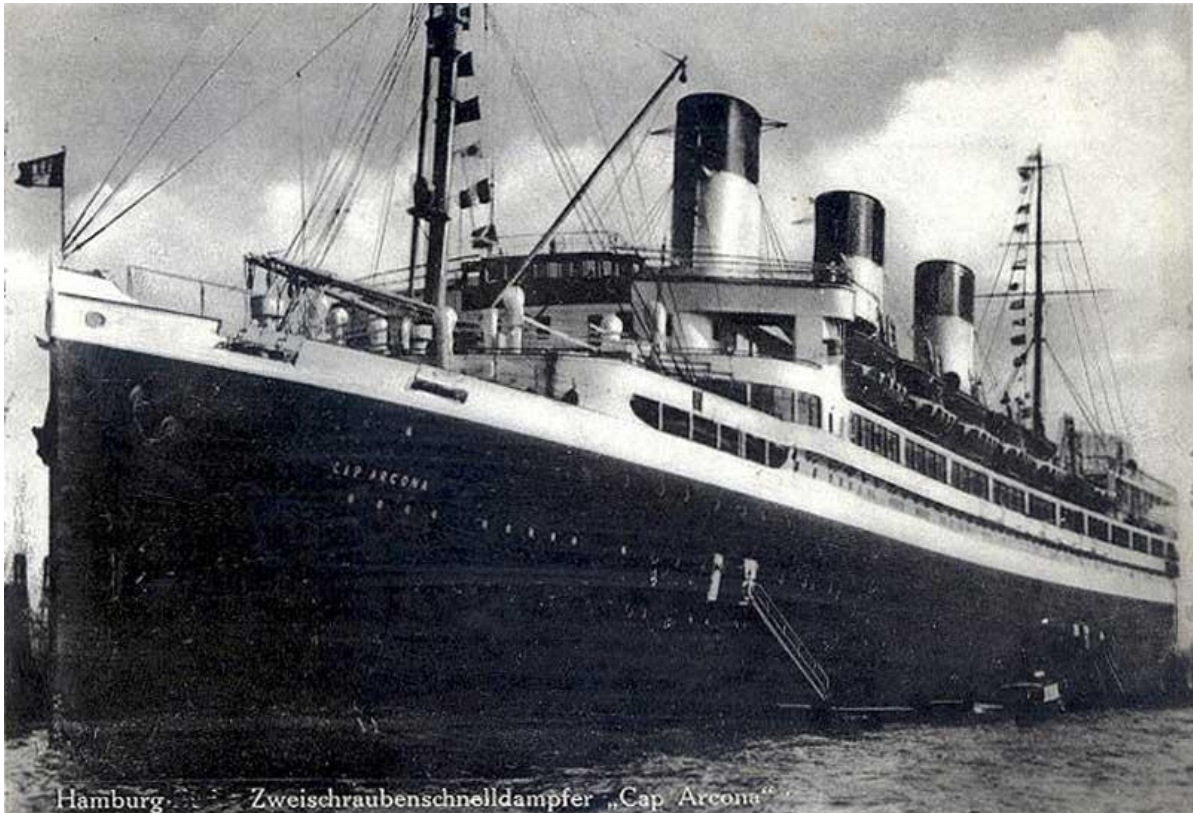
forces undefended and unharmed, and who consequently wished to whitewash away (literally so in the case of the Neuengamme concentration camp) all evidence for the prisoners' former presence within the city and its industries. By early May however, any relocation plans had been scotched by the rapid British military advance to the Baltic; so the SS leadership, which had moved to Flensburg on 28 April, discussed scuttling the ships with the prisoners still aboard. Later, at a war crimes tribunal, Kaufmann claimed the prisoners were intended to be sent to Sweden; although as none of the ships carried Red Cross hospital markings and nor were they seaworthy, this was scarcely credible. Georg-Henning Graf von Bassewitz-Behr, Hamburg's last Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), testified at the same trial that the prisoners were in fact to be killed "in compliance with Himmler's orders. Kurt Rickert, who had worked for Bassewitz-Behr, testified at the Hamburg War Crimes Trial that he believed the ships were to be sunk by U-boats or Luftwaffe aircraft. Eva Neurath, who was present in Neustadt, and whose husband survived the disaster, said she was told by a police officer that the ships held convicts and were going to be blown up.



Loading 60lb RP-3 rockets onto a Typhoon

On 2 May 1945, the British Second Army discovered the empty camp at Neuengamme, and reached the towns of Lübeck and Wismar. No. 6 Commando, 1st Special Service Brigade commanded by Brigadier Derek Mills-Roberts, and 11th Armoured Division, commanded by Major-General George P. B. Roberts, entered Lübeck without resistance. Lübeck contained a permanent Red Cross office in its function as a Red Cross port, and Mr. De Blonay of the International Committee of the Red Cross informed Major-General Roberts that 7,000–8,000 prisoners were aboard ships in the Bay of Lübeck. In the afternoon of 3 May 1945, the British 5th reconnaissance regiment advanced northwards to Neustadt, witnessing the ships burning in the bay and rescuing some severely emaciated prisoners on the beach at Neustadt, but otherwise finding mostly the bodies of women and children massacred that morning. On 3 May 1945, three days after Hitler's suicide and only one day before the unconditional surrender of the German troops in northwestern Germany at Lüneburg Heath to Field Marshal Montgomery, *Cap Arcona*, *Thielbek*, and the passenger liner *Deutschland* were attacked as part of general strikes on shipping in the Baltic Sea by RAF Typhoons of 83 Group of the 2nd Tactical Air Force. Through Ultra Intelligence, the Western Allies had become aware that most of the SS leadership and former concentration camp commandants had gathered with Heinrich Himmler in Flensburg, hoping to contrive an escape to Norway. The western allies had intercepted orders from the rump Dönitz government, also at Flensburg, that the SS leadership were to be facilitated in escaping Allied capture - or otherwise issued with false naval uniforms to conceal their identities - as Dönitz sought, while surrendering, to maintain the fiction that his administration had been free from involvement in the camps, or in Hitler's policies of genocide. The aircraft were from No. 184 Squadron, No. 193 Squadron, No. 263 Squadron, No. 197 Squadron RAF, and No. 198 Squadron. Besides four 20 mm cannon, these Hawker Typhoon Mark 1B fighter-bombers carried either eight HE High Explosive "60 lb" RP-3 unguided rockets or two 500 lb (230 kg) bombs. None of the ships were Red Cross marked (although the *Deutschland* had previously been intended as a hospital ship and retained one white painted funnel with a red cross), and all prisoners were concealed below deck. The pilots in the attacking force were

unaware that they were laden with concentration camp survivors. Swedish and Swiss Red Cross officials had informed British intelligence on 2 May 1945 of the presence of prisoners on ships at anchor in Lübeck Bay, but the information had failed to be passed on. The RAF commanders ordering the strike believed that a flotilla of ships was being prepared in Lübeck Bay, to accommodate leading SS personnel fleeing to German-controlled Norway in accordance with Dönitz's orders. "The ships are gathering in the area of Lübeck and Kiel. At SHAEF it is believed that important Nazis who have escaped from Berlin to Flensburg are onboard and are fleeing to Norway or neutral countries".



Equipped with lifejackets from locked storage compartments, most of the SS guards managed to jump overboard from *Cap Arcona*. German trawlers sent to rescue *Cap Arcona*'s crew members and guards managed to save 16 sailors, 400 SS men, and 20 SS women. Only 350 of the 5,000 former concentration camp inmates aboard *Cap Arcona* survived. From 2,800 prisoners on board the *Thielbek* only 50 were saved; whereas all 2,000 prisoners on the *Deutschland* were safely taken off onto the *Athen*, before the *Deutschland* capsized. RAF Pilot Allan Wyse of No. 193 Squadron recalled, **"We used our cannon fire at the chaps in the water... we shot them up with 20 mm cannons in the water. Horrible thing, but we were told to do it and we did it. That's war."** Severely damaged and set on fire, *Cap Arcona* eventually capsized. Photos of the burning ships were listed as *Deutschland*, *Thielbek*, and *Cap Arcona*. Images of the emaciated survivors swimming in the very cold Baltic Sea, around 7 °C (44.6 °F), were taken on a reconnaissance mission over the Bay of Lübeck by F-6 Mustang (the photo-reconnaissance version of the P-51) of the USAAF's 161st Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron around 5:00 pm, shortly after the attack. On 4 May 1945, a British reconnaissance plane took photos of the two wrecks, *Thielbek* and *Cap Arcona*, the Bay of Neustadt being shallow. The capsized hulk of *Cap Arcona* later drifted ashore, and the beached wreck was finally broken up in 1949. As a light rain began to fall on the afternoon of May 3, 1945, British soldiers of 6 Commando, 1st Special Services Brigade, searched the beaches of Neustadt, Germany, on the Baltic Sea for survivors. The bodies of men, women, and even small children lay by the hundreds on the sands. Offshore, under a gray, smoke filled sky, the soldiers could see the still-smoldering hulk of the former luxury liner, the *Cap Arcona*, and scores of other damaged ships. A highly effective RAF bombing and rocket raid had destroyed the fleet and killed over 7,000 concentration camp inmates who had been imprisoned on the ships. One soldier found a girl of about seven clutching the hand of a woman beside her. He presumed she was the girl's mother. Both bodies were clad in black-and-white-striped wool garments of concentration camp prisoners. The heads and shoulders of floating corpses were visible just offshore, as victims of all ages drifted in. Even a full year later, the bodies were still washing up. It's a story no one would tell. The British government ordered the records to be sealed for 100 years. The sinking of one of the most glamorous ocean liners of the early twentieth century, appears in no history books. The governments of Germany and Great Britain continue to refuse either to discuss it or release pertinent records. So another war atrocity remains mostly a secret, like several other sinkings during the time period. 7000 dead is an awful lot to not even be able to mention it.

FISHING FROM SWANAGE IN THE 1950'S

Facebook article by : Nigel Humphries

Memories of fishing from Swanage in the 1950s

It was the Autumn of 1955 and like all young men at that time, I was due to be called up for two years of National Service. By September, the sailing season was all but over, but I still yearned to be afloat. I never was very keen on racing but had been running Maurice Lane's 18ft motorboat PE 9, as the safety boat for Swanage Sailing Club. This gave me the opening to ask Maurice if I could join the crew of his new 32ft fishing boat Lucky Me, PE 21. It was larger than any other boat in Swanage with a 30hp Lister diesel engine and a power winch. This ran from a dog clutch from the flywheel, via a car drive shaft to an upended car back axle, with the bottom end in a block of wood, and the other to a capstan drum. It was primitive but it worked, meaning that pots could be hauled in strings, thus bringing about a revolution in fishing in Swanage.



Maurice and his partner Brian Brown the winch man, were fishing for lobsters and crabs, working off Durlston Head and St Aldhelm's Head. My lowly job was that of bait boy, cutting up gurnard and impaling the pieces on pointed sticks, called skivers. These I placed inside each pot behind the mouth, to lure both crabs and lobsters. Each morning we would chug out of Swanage Bay, around Peveril Point and round 'back of the cliff' to haul six long strings of thirty pots. This was usually repeated at the following slack water, whatever the weather seven days a week. Towards the end of October 1955 my call up papers arrived, and thanks to giving fishing as my trade, was drafted into the Royal Navy. On 7th November I reported for duty at Victoria Barracks in Portsmouth, and within a couple of weeks, I found myself on the frigate HMS Flint Castle, tracking submarines off Portland Bill. After basic training on HMS Ocean, I was land based in barracks at Portsmouth and it was at this time in 1956, that I would join Maurice and Brian as a 'passenger' some weekends. It was then that I was able to take a camera aboard and take some memorable photographs. That same summer three of us lads, former pupils of Swanage Grammar School, got together

for a week of adventure sailing camping in Poole Harbour prior to returning to military service. I joined HMS Albion and in September sailed for the Mediterranean and the Suez conflict.



The following year I completed my service time and returned to Swanage and what I thought would be life of fishing on the Lucky Me, but it didn't work out. In 1957 I joined the Merchant Navy, and served on a Union Castle liner, several oil tankers and a cargo ship. My last ship was the Esso Glasgow, delivering petrol and aviation spirit around the British coast. In 1961 my wife Gillie and I were married, and whilst on our honeymoon, a call came through to the hotel, offering me a job with Bob Harris on the 28ft Kentish Maid. This time I was the winchman, but by the Autumn Bob and I agreed to part. After travelling the world, tramping the oceans, and visiting amazing places, hauling string after string of lobster pots rolling about 'round back of the cliff' had lost its appeal. During those six years at sea, I always carried a camera and have a large collection of photographs. These are easily accessed, and I will endeavour to make regular contributions to Swanage Past and other local websites. In 1961 Maurice Lane left Swanage with Lucky Me bound for Ireland, but later ended up in Weymouth. Brian Brown didn't go with him but ran hire boats down by The Quay. Sadly, Brian drowned, whilst trying to secure a boat breaking from its mooring in an easterly gale.



UNITED STATES LINE'S "LEVIATHAN" IN THE 1920'S

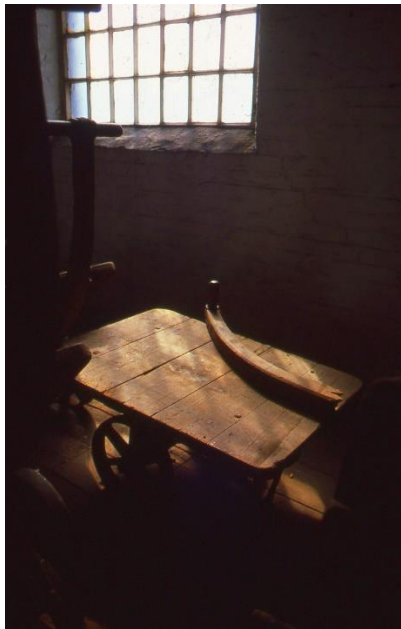


LONDON DOCKLANDS

By Philip Dubuque- Facebook

When I first stumbled upon the abandoned upriver Thames docks on Sunday, July 1st 1979 (44 years ago!) it was as if the dock workers had simply dropped their tools and walked away decades before. From Tower Bridge all the way down river to Woolwich and the Royal Docks I found the final remaining traces of the centuries old cargo handling trade.



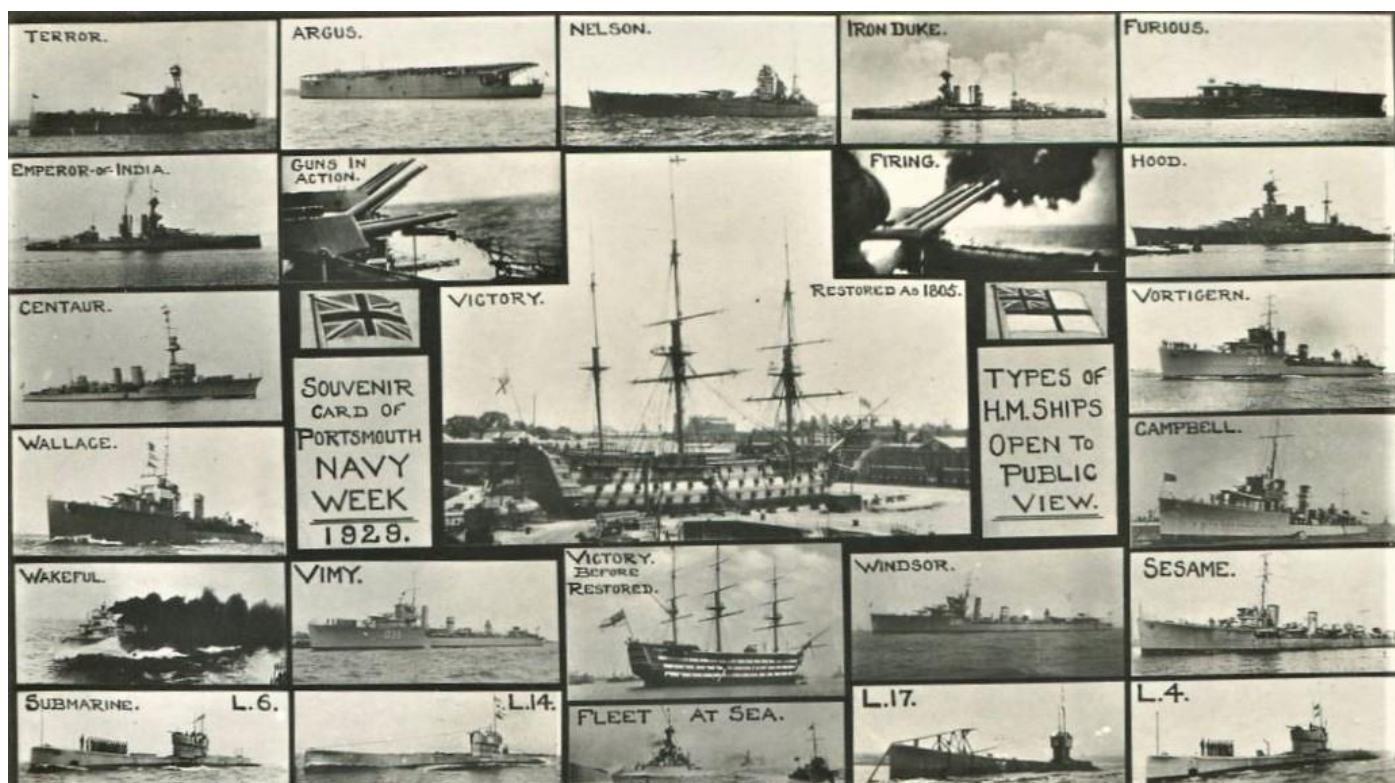




H.M.S. "VICTORY"



A PROMOTIONAL SOUVENIR OF YOUR VISIT TO PORTSMOUTH FOR NAVY DAYS IN 1929



PASSING GIBRALTER 1928

By Charles Pears





COULD POOLE HAVE SIMILAR ROLE IN THE FUTURE ?

This picture is from the ORP Błyskawica group, unfortunately there's no signature of the photographer. ORP destroyer Błyskawica , Polish Navy launched 1936 ,built by J Samuel White ,East Coves "Dar Pomorza " fully rigged Polish sailing ship built 1909 in B&V Germany ,formerly sail training ship in Germany. Both ships are preserved Museum Ships in Poland Gdynia at Skwer Kościuszki

We are indebted to Nicole Priscilla Young, a U.S. resident, for the above image.

PRESENTATION AT THE ROYAL MOTOR YACHT CLUB



Photos : Bob Reid.

FERGUSON AWARD

The Ferguson Award is given annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the community specifically the maritime well-being of the whole Poole area. At the 2023 AGM the award was presented to Lilian Ladle BY Peter Burt for her work in archaeology. Lilian gave a short speech thanking us for the award.

COATES AWARD

The Coates Award is presented annually to an individual who has carried out outstanding personal service to the Trust. The award is a silver rose bowl. At the 2023 AGM the Coates Award was presented by Peter Burt to Jan Marsh in appreciation of the work she has carried out for the Trust as Secretary and as a volunteer.

FUTURE MEETINGS, OUTINGS AND EVENTS

POOLE MARITIME TRUST

Autumn/Spring Programme 2023/24 Travellers' Tales / Poole Maritime Trust Talks at the

Royal Motor Yacht Club Sandbanks, Poole BH13 7RE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 21 st September 2023
12 for 12:30pm | Poole Maritime Trust Autumn Luncheon (PMT Members ONLY)
Helen Baggott will give a talk following the Luncheon.
The Canadian Titanic
When the RMS Empress of Ireland sank in 1914, more passengers lost their lives than on Titanic – yet few have heard of the tragedy. She will reveal the story of the sinking –and three families from Dorset and Somerset that were affected. Illustrated by Postcards and photographs, this talk remembers a forgotten tragedy. |
| 5 th October 2023
8pm | Jack Kitching – Master onboard the Condor Liberation.
Join him on a virtual bridge tour of the Condor Liberation and an Insight into his life as a Master of a high-speed ferry. |
| 09 th November 2023

8pm | Lilian Ladle- Will give a talk entitled: DELIVERING THE GOODS-
The Development of Early Trade in Southeast Dorset.
An independent Dorset archaeologist, awarded the MBE for services to archaeology in 2008 and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 2021. She is a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at Bournemouth University. |
| 4 th January 2024
12 for 12:30pm | Poole Maritime New Year Luncheon at RMYC (PMT Members ONLY)
Richard Hutley will give a talk on ATLANTIS
The Myth, Legend and Facts about the antediluvian lost civilisation of Atlantis first reported by Plato 3000 years ago. What do we know, where could it be? Is there evidence that exists today? |
| 11 th January 2024
8pm | Peter Burt and Robert Heaton (Poole Maritime Trust) Talk
'Underwater with PHHP in '23' – An archaeological update for work in and around Poole Harbour over the last year with our own PMT team from Poole Harbour Heritage Trust. |
| 8 th February 2024
8pm | David Bailey (Wild Life Photographer) will give a talk entitled 'Good Hare Days' . David is an author and fabulous photographer. |
| 7 th March 2024
8pm | Leigh Merrick and Richard Balmforth (Reuters – Eastern Slav Specialist and Bureau Chief) will give a talk on the Ukraine.
(Full details to follow) |

The Upstairs Bar at the Royal Motor Yacht Club will open from 7:30 pm the talks will start at 8pm. (RMYC members only allowed in the main bar downstairs). There are disabled facilities on the ground floor and facilities on the first floor. If you arrive by car there is parking on the main road, Panorama Road. If arriving by Taxi the main entrance to the RMYC is off Old Coastguard Road.

Poole Maritime Trust

MONDAY 28th AUGUST 2023

COMBINED COACH & STEAMSHIP EXCURSION.

**BY COACH FROM POOLE/WESTBOURNE TO SOUTHAMPTON TO JOIN
THE PRESERVED STEAMSHIP "SHIELDHALL"
FOR A GLORIOUS CRUISE FROM SOUTHAMPTON TO POOLE.**



Steamship Shieldhall is a member of the National Historic Fleet she serves as a sea going tribute to Britain's maritime heritage and is unique as a time capsule providing a working example of steamship machinery both above and below deck. Now believed to be the largest working steam ship in Northern Europe, she is owned and operated entirely by voluntary effort.

TIMES

The coach departs Poole, Selsdown Road (opposite the bus station) at : 08.00

Opposite Canford Cliffs Library at 08.20 and Westbourne Bingo Hall at 08.30

To Southampton Docks where we board "SHIELDHALL" for a 10.00 departure. Refreshments will be available upon embarkation including the always popular bacon rolls.

The "SHIELDHALL" has ample covered accommodation, a comfortable saloon, ladies and gents conveniences and a licensed bar and refreshment outlet that are open throughout the cruise.

The magnificent steam engines and boiler room are open for inspection once at sea.

A full commentary is provided and onboard entertainment by the "SHIELDHALL STOMPERS"

Sail away from the western tip of Southampton Docks passing the shipping in port.

We pass Hythe, Fawley, Netley, Hamble Point, and Calshot before swinging into the western Solent with the Hampshire Coastline to starboard and the Northern Coast of the Isle of Wight to Port. Once past the famous Needles lighthouse and rocks and Hurst Castle the "SHIELDHALL" will set course for Poole crossing the wide expanse of Poole Bay where we will greet the Poole pilot before entering the Swash Channel. Sailing past Sandbanks with the usual friendly greeting and whistle exchange with the Sandbanks Ferry we cross the harbour, docking around 16.00 (Times can vary according to shipping movements and other circumstances outside the control of the ship).

PLEASE NOTE : Upon dis-embarkation, passengers must make their own way home.

Combined coach and steamship fare £57

.....BOOKING FORM.....

Name..... Address.....

Tel e-mail.....

Please send me..... tickets for the combined coach & SHIELDHALL cruise on 28.08.23 @ £57.00

I enclose a cheque (made payable to POOLE MARITIME TRUST) to the value of £..... and a STAMPED ADRESSED ENVELOPE. Bookings can be made by post or in person at the Trust offices above Canford Cliffs library on Thursday mornings from 10.00. Tickets are limited to the capacity of the coach. Post to : POOLE MARITIME TRUST, First Floor, Canford Cliffs Library, 6 Western Road, Poole BH13 7BN

The Dorset Branch of the World Ship Society

The Dorset Branch of the World Ship Society meets on the second Saturday afternoon of the month between September and May at The Centre - Ferndown in East Dorset (BH22 8XH), 2.15pm for a 2.30pm start. All of our meetings are now "hybrid" sharing our Dorset venue event with a wider member community via Zoom giving local members the choice between getting together or enjoying the event at home. This enables us to welcome remote members who can use Zoom all the time.

WSS DORSET 2023/24 MEETING PROGRAMME

~ ~ ~

9th September 2023

~ *Stories of British India ships in the Gulf* ~

~ with Kevin Patience ~

Kevin's links to British India's Mulbera, Dwarka and Dara - all uncovered from passenger to diver!

~ ~ ~

14th October 2023

~ *Krispen's Travels: Coming to America* ~

~ with Krispen Atkinson ~

Krispen takes us to the United States and Canada - another exciting array of ships for us to enjoy

~ ~ ~

11th November 2023

~ *Bosphorus ferries and passenger ships seen in Istanbul* ~

~ with Bill Mayes ~

Ferries through history - many UK built - and enjoy a bonus collection of other passenger ships

~ ~ ~

9th December 2023

~ *British Liners of the 1950s & '60s* ~

~ with Bill Miller ~

Bill takes us back to the decades when Britain had the biggest passenger ship fleet in the world.

~ ~ ~

13th January 2024

~ *The Merchant Navy in the Second World War* ~

~ with David Parsons ~

An island nation at war with a near neighbour was critically dependant on it's merchant shipping.

~ ~ ~

10th February 2024

~ *Sunset Falls on the Intercontinental Ocean-liner* ~

~ with Ted Scull ~

Ted recalls ships that carried passengers across the world's oceans & memories of voyages

~ ~ ~

9th March 2024

~ *An overview of the Haven Ports* ~

~ with Derek Sands ~

Locations, facilities, shipping and cargoes passing through this network of East Anglian ports

~ ~ ~

13th April 2024

~ *Birger Jarl & Mariefred* ~

~ with David Trevor-Jones ~

A 1950s Sweden-Finland ferry and a 1900s Stockholm coastal ferry – enjoy two classic ships

~ ~ ~

11th May 2024

~ *Seven years at Sea in the Seventies* ~

~ with Steve Pink ~

A brief seagoing career - sixteen ships - times of seismic changes in passenger & cargo shipping

SOCIETY FOR POOLE

PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2023

12th Sept 2023 The Society for Poole will open the Guildhall, Poole as part of Dorset Architectural Heritage Week 10am-12 noon. Short presentation at 10.45am

PLEASE NOTE NEW MEETINGS VENUE

Meetings September to November will be held at Oakdale Club, Darby's Lane, Oakdale BH15 3EU
7pm for 7.30pm start.

19th Sept 2023 Jeff Little – Battle of Britain – Dorset and Warmwell

17th Oct 2023 Jackie Winter – Villages of Dorset

21st Nov 2023 Steve Roberts – A duffers guide to history

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER IS PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER.